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THE

PRACTICAL WORKS

OF

RICHARD BAXTER:

WITH A PREFACE, GIVING SOME ACCOUNT OF THE AUTHOR,
AND OF THIS EDITION OF HIS PRACTICAL WORKS;

AN

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AND A PORTRAIT.

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THE

SAINTS' EVERLASTING REST:

OR,

A TREATISE

OF THE

BLESSED STATE OF THE SAINTS IN THEIR ENJOYMENT OF GOD IN GLORY.

IN FOUR PARTS.

WHEREIN IS SHOWED ITS EXCELLENCY AND CERTAINTY; THE MISERY OF THOSE THAT LOSE IT; THE WAY TO ATTAIN IT; ASSURANCE OF IT; AND HOW TO LIVE IN THE CONTINUAL, DELIGHTFUL FORETASTES OF IT, BY THE HELP OF MEDITATION.

WRITTEN BY THE AUTHOR FOR HIS OWN USE, IN THE TIME OF HIS LANGUISHING, WHEN GOD TOOK HIM OFF FROM ALL PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT; AND AFTERWARDS PREACHED IN HIS WEEKLY LECTURE, AT KIDDERMINSTER, IN WORCESTERSHIRE.

TO MY DEARLY BELOVED FRIENDS, THE INHABITANTS OF THE BOROUGH AND FOREIGN OF KIDDERMINSTER, BOTH MAGISTRATES AND PEOPLE.

My dear Friends,

If either I or my labours have any thing of public use or worth, it is wholly, though not only, yours; and I am convinced, by Providence, that it is the will of God it should be so. This I clearly discerned in my first coming to you, in my former abode with you, and in the time of my forced absence from you. When I was separated by the miseries of the late unhappy war, I durst not fix in any other congregation; but lived in a military, unpleasing state, lest I should forestall my return to you, for whom I took myself reserved. The offers of greater worldly accommodations, with five times the means which I receive with you, was no temptation to me once to question whether I should leave you: your free invitation of my return, your obedience to my doctrine, the strong affection which I have yet towards you above all people, and the general, hearty return of love which I find from you, do all persuade me that I was sent into the world especially for the service of your souls. And that even when I am dead I might yet be a help to your salvation, the Lord hath forced me, quite beside my own resolution, to write this treatise, and leave it in your hands. It was far from my thoughts ever to have become thus public, and burthened the world with any writing of mine; therefore have I oft resisted the requests of my reverend brethren, and some superiors, who might else have commanded much more at my hands: but see how God overruleth and crosseth our resolutions.

Being in my quarters, far from home, cast into extreme languishing, by the sudden loss of about a gallon of blood, after many years' foregoing weakness, and having no acquaintance about me, nor any book but my Bible, and living in continual expectation of death, I bent my thoughts on my everlasting rest; and because my memory, through extreme weakness, was imperfect, I took my pen and began to draw up my own funeral sermon, or some helps for my own meditations of heaven, to sweeten both the rest of my life and my death. In this condition God was pleased to continue me about five months from home; where, being able for nothing else, I went on with this work, which so lengthened to this which here you see. It is no wonder, therefore, if I be too abrupt in the beginning, seeing I then intended but the length of a sermon or two; much less may you wonder, if the whole be very imperfect, seeing it was written, as it were, with one foot in the grave, by a man that was betwixt living and dead, that wanted strength of nature to quicken invention or affection, and had no book but his Bible, while the chief part was finished; nor had any mind of human ornaments, if he had been furnished. But, oh how sweet is this Providence now to my review, which so happily forced me to that work of meditation which I had formerly found so profitable to my soul! and showed me more mercy in depriving me of other helps than I was aware of,

and hath caused my thoughts to feed on this heavenly subject, which hath more benefited me than all the studies of my life!

And now, dear friends, such as it is I here offer it you: and upon the bended knees of my soul I offer up my thanks to the merciful God who hath fetched up both me and it, as from the grave, for your service; who reversed the sentence of present death, which, by the ablest physicians, was passed upon me; who interrupted my public labours for a time, that he might force me to do you a more lasting service, which, else, I had never been like to have attempted: that God do I heartily bless and magnify, who hath rescued me from the many dangers of four years' war, and after so many tedious nights and days, and so many doleful sights and tidings, hath returned me, and many of yourselves, and reprieved us now to serve him in peace; and though men be ungrateful, and my body ruined beyond hope of recovery, yet he hath made up all in the comforts I have in you. To the God of mercy do I here offer my most hearty thanks, and pay the vows of acknowledgment which I oft made in my distress, who hath not rejected my prayers, which in my dolour I put up,[a] but hath, by a wonder, delivered me in the midst of my duties; and hath supported me these fourteen years in a languishing state, wherein I have scarce had a waking hour free from pain; who hath, above twenty several times, delivered me when I was near to death: and though he had made me spend my days in groans and tears, and in a constant expectation of my change, yet hath he not wholly disabled me from his service; and hereby hath more effectually subdued my pride, and made this world contemptible to me, and forced my dull heart to more importunate requests, and occasioned more rare discoveries of his mercy, than ever I could have expected in a prosperous state. For ever blessed be the Lord, that hath not only honoured me to be a minister of his gospel, but hath also set me over a people so willing to obey, and given me that success of my labours which he hath denied to many more able and faithful;[b] who hath kept you in the zealous practice of godliness when so many grow negligent, or despise the ordinances of God; who hath kept you stable in his truth, and saved you from the spirit of giddiness, levity, and apostasy, of this age; who hath preserved you from those scandals, whereby others have so heinously wounded their profession, and hath given you to see the mischief of separation and divisions, and made you eminent for unity and peace, when almost all the land is in a flame of contention, and so many that we thought godly are busily demolishing the church, and striving in a zealous ignorance against the Lord. Beloved, though few of you are rich or great in the world, yet for this riches of mercy towards you, I must say, ye are my glory, my crown, and my joy; and for all these rare favours to myself and you, as I have oft promised to publish the praises of our Lord, so do I here set up this stone of remembrance, and write upon it, Glory be to God in the highest: hitherto hath the Lord helped us: my flesh and heart failed, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

But have all these deliverances brought us to our rest? No; we are as far yet from it as we are from heaven. You are yet under troubles, and I am yet under consuming sickness; and feeling that I am like to be among you but a little while, and that my pained body is hasting to the dust, I shall here leave you my best advice for your immortal souls, and bequeath you this counsel as the legacy of a dying man, that you may here read it and practise it when I am taken from you; and, I beseech you, receive it as from one that you know doth unfeignedly love you, and that regardeth no honours or happiness in this world in comparison of the welfare and salvation of your souls; yea, receive it from me as if I offered it you upon my knees, beseeching you, for your souls' sake, that you would not reject it, and beseeching the Lord to bless it to you: yea, as one that hath received authority from Christ to command you, I charge you in his name, as ever you will answer it when we shall meet at judgment, and as you would not have me there be a witness against you, nor all my labours be charged against you to your condemnation, and the Lord Jesus, your Judge, to sentence you as rebellious, that you faithfully and constantly practise these ten directions:

1. Labour to be men of knowledge and sound understandings. A sound judgment is a most precious mercy, and much conduceth to the soundness of heart and life.[c] A weak judgment is easily corrupted; and if it be once corrupt, the will and conversation will quickly follow. Your understandings are the inlet or entrance to the whole soul; and if you be weak there, your souls are like a garrison that hath open or ill-guarded gates; and if the enemy be once let in there, the whole city will quickly be his own. Ignorance is virtually every error, therefore let the Bible be much in your hands and hearts: remember what I taught you on Deut. vi. 6, 7. Read much the writings of our old, solid divines. You may read an able divine when you cannot hear one. Especially, be sure you learn well the principles of religion. Begin with some lesser catechisms, and then read the greater; then Doctor Ames' "Marrow of Divinity," now Englished, or Usher's. If you see men fall on controversies before they understand these, never wonder if they are drowned in errors. I know your poverty and labours will not give you leave to read so much as others may do; but yet a willing mind will find some time, if it be but when they should sleep, and especially, it will spend the Lord's day wholly in these things. O be not ignorant of God in the midst of such light! as if the matters of your salvation were less worth your study than your trading in the world.

2. Do the utmost you can to get a faithful minister when I am taken from you, and be sure you acknowledge him your teacher, overseer, and ruler, 1 Thess. v. 12, 13; Acts xx. 28; Heb. xiii. 7, 17; and learn of him, obey him, and submit to his doctrine, except he teach you any singular points, and then take the advice of other ministers in trying it. Expect not that he should humour you, and please your fancies, and

[a] Aerib. Concil. de Gratia et Liber. Ariba. l. i. c. 10.

[b] Nam cum gaudere in hoc omnes fratres oportet, tum in gaudio communi major est episcopi portio. Ecclesiæ enim gloria præpositi gloria est. Quantum dolemus ex illis quos tempestas inimica prostravit; tantum lætamur ex vobis, quos diabolus superare non potuit. Hortamur tamen per communem fidem, per pectoris nostri veram circa vos et simplicem charitatem, ut adversarium prima hac congressione vicistis, gloriam vestram forti et perseveranti virtute teneatis. Adhuc in seculo sumus; adhuc in acie constituti, de vita nostra quotidie dimicamus. Danda opera est, ut post hæc initia, ad incrementa quoque veniatur, et consummetur in vobis, quod jam rudimentis fœlicibus esse cœpistis. Parum adipisci aliquid potuisse: plus est quod adeptus es posse servare; sicut et fides ipsa et nativitas salutaris, non accepta, sed custodita vivificat. Nec statim consecutio, sed consummatio hominum Deo servat, ut John v. 14. Cyprian. Epist. vii. ad Rogat. &c. p. (mihi) 19.

[c] Male autem vivitur, si de Deo non bene creditur. Aug. de Civit. l. v. c. 10.

say and do as you would have him; that is not the way of God, for the people to rule themselves and their rulers. If he be unable to teach and guide you, do not choose him at first; if he be able, be ruled by him, even in things that to you are doubtful, except it be clear that he would turn you from the truth: if you know more than he, become preachers yourselves; if you do not, then quarrel not when you should learn: especially, submit to his private oversight, as well as public teaching. It is but the least part of a minister's work which is done in the pulpit: Paul taught them, also, from house to house, day and night, with tears, Acts xx. 20, 31. To go daily from one house to another, and see how you live, and examine how you profit, and direct you in the duties of your families, and in your preparations for death, is the great work.[d] Had not weakness confined me, and public labour forbidden me, I should judge myself heinously guilty in neglecting this. In the primitive times, every church of so many souls as this parish had many ministers, whereof the ablest speakers did preach most in public, and the rest did the more of the less public work, which some mistake for mere ruling elders.[e] But now, sacrilege and covetousness will scarcely leave maintenance for one in a church; which is it that hath brought us to a loss in the nature of government.

3. Let all your knowlege turn into affection and practice; keep open the passage between your heads and your hearts, that every truth may go to the quick. Spare not, for any pains, in working out your salvation; take heed of loitering, when your souls lie at the stake; favour not yourselves in any slothful distemper: laziness is the damnation of most that perish among us. God forbid that you should be of the mad opinion of the world, that like not serving God so much, nor making so much ado to be saved: all these men will shortly be of another mind. Live now as you would wish you had done at death and judgment. Let no scorns dishearten you, no differences of opinion be an offence to you: God, and Scripture, and heaven, and the way thither, are still the same. It will do you no good to be of the right religion, if you be not zealous in the exercise of the duties of that religion. Read oft the fifth and sixth chapters of the third part of this book.

4. Be sure you make conscience of the great duties that you are to perform in your families. Teach your children and servants the knowledge and fear of God; do it early and late, in season and out of season. Pray with them daily and fervently; remember Daniel's example, Dan. vi., and the command, 1 Thess. v. 17. Read the Scripture and good books to them; restrain them from sin; keep not a servant that will not learn, and be ruled. Neighbours, I charge you, as you will shortly answer the contrary before the Lord your Judge, that there be never a family among you that shall neglect these great duties. If you cannot do what you should, yet do what you can; especially, see that the Lord's day be wholly spent in these exercises. To spend it in idleness or sports, is to consecrate it to your flesh, and not to God, and far worse than to spend it in your trades.

5. Beware of extremes in the controverted points of religion. When you avoid one error, take heed you run not into another, especially if you be in heat of disputation or passion. As I have showed you, I think, the true mean in the doctrine of justification and redemption, so I had intended to have wrote a peculiar treatise with three columns, showing both extremes, and the truth in the middle, through the body of divinity; but God takes me off. Especially beware of these times: antinomianism comes from gross ignorance, and leads to gross wickedness. Socinians are scarce christians: Arminianism is quite above your reach, and, therefore, not fit for your study in most points. The middle way which Camero, Ludov. Crocius, Martinius, Amyraldus, Davenant, with all the divines of Britain and Breme, in the synod of Dort, go, I think is nearest the truth of any that I know who have written on those points of redemption and universal grace. And for the points of predestination, and the nature of the divine influx on the will in the working of grace, which are most hotly agitated, and where the heart of the controversy seems to lie; I think I had never yet the happiness to read or speak with the man that himself understands them; and those least, that are usually most confident. As for separation, the mischief of it lies not in the bare error of judgment, but in the unchristian and church-dissolving division and alienation which thence followeth; contrary to that humility and love which is the visible character of christians, and to that oneness which is still in Scripture ascribed to the visible church. Alas, that pride and ignorance should have such power among believers, that men cannot be of several judgments in lesser points, but they must needs be also of several churches! God will make us value peace and union a little more, before we shall taste of the perfect everlasting peace and union; yea, before we shall see the blessing of union in the church. Wounding is a dividing; healing is a re-uniting. A building is of many stones or pieces orderly conjoined; a church is an aggregation of individuals, an association of believers. What then is it to demolish, but to separate and disjoin? And what is it to dissolve churches, but to break their association; to reduce them to individuals; to cut them into shreds? As for the differences in way of government between the moderate presbyterians, independents, episcopal, and Erastian, I make no doubt but if men's spirits stood not at a greater distance than their principles, they would quickly be united. But of all the four sorts, there are some that run so high in their principles, that they run out of the hearing of peace or truth. Will God never put it into the hearts of rulers, to call together some of the most godly, learned, moderate, and peaceable of all four opinions, (not too many,) to agree upon a way of union and accommodation, and not to cease till they have brought it to this issue? To come as near together as they can possibly in their principles; and where they cannot, yet to unite, as far as may be, in their practice, though on different principles; and where that cannot be, yet to agree on the most loving, peaceable course in the way of carrying on our different practices; that so, as Rup. Meldenius saith, we may have unity in things necessary, liberty in things unnecessary, and charity in all. The Lord persuade those who have power to this pacificatory enterprise without delay.

For anabaptism and antinomianism, I have written against them in two other books (f and more shall do against the latter, if God will). But my guilty friends are offended with me for what I have done. I dare

[d] Which since I have dealt in with comfortable success. See my "Reformed Pastor."

[e] Clemens Alexand. saith, "In all bodies there are two ranks; those that better them by superiority and governing, and those that serve, as parents and children, magistrates and subjects, &c. And so in the church, that part which bettereth it belongeth to the presbyters, and that which serveth to the deacons." Here is no mention of any other office. Stromat. lib. vii. initio.

[f] Since done in my "Confession and Apology."

not, therefore, be silent, as being the officer and ambassador of Christ, and not of men. God spoke effectually against them by those wondrous monsters in New England. But wonders are overlooked where the heart is hardened, and God intends to get his justice a name. The fearful delusions that God hath formerly given them over to, and the horrid confusion which they have introduced where they have sprung, hath spoken fully against both these latter sects. The weeping eyes, the bleeding sides, the lacerated members, of these churches; the reproached gospel, the disappointed reformation, the hideous doctrines, and unheard-of wickedness, that hath followed them; the contemned ordinances, the reproached, slandered, and ejected ministers; the weak that are scandalized, the professors apostatized, the wicked hardened, and the open enemies of the gospel that now insult; all these do describe them more plainly to England than words can do, and cry loud in the ears of God and man. What will be the answer, time will show; but, from Rev. ii. 14—16, 20, 21, &c. we may probably conjecture.

6. Above all, see that you be followers of peace and unity, both in the church, and among yourselves. Remember what I taught you on Heb. xii. 14. He that is not a son of peace, is not a son of God. All other sins destroy the church consequentially, but division and separation demolish it directly. Building the church is but an orderly joining of the materials; and what then is disjoining, but pulling down? Many doctrinal differences must be tolerated in a church. And why, but for unity and peace? Therefore, disunion and separation is utterly intolerable. Believe not those to be the church's friends that would cure and reform her by cutting her throat. Those that say, no truth must be concealed for peace, have usually as little of the one as the other. Study Gal. vi. 2; Rom. xiv. 1, &c.; Acts xxi. 24, 26; 1 Tim. i. 4, and vi. 4; Tit. iii. 8, 9. I hope sad experience speaks this lesson to your very hearts, if I should say nothing. Do not your hearts bleed to look upon the state of England; and to think how few towns or cities there be, where is any forwardness in religion, that are not cut into shreds, and crumbled as to dust, by separations and divisions? To think what a wound we have hereby given to the very christian name; how we have hardened the ignorant, confirmed the doubting; and are ourselves become the scorn of our enemies, and the grief of our friends; and how many of our dearest, best esteemed friends are fallen to notorious pride or impiety; yea, some to be worse than open infidels; these are pillars of salt, see that you remember them. You are yet eminent for your unity, stedfastness, and godliness; hold fast that you have, that no man take your crown from you: temptations are now come near your doors, yet many of you have gone through greater, and, therefore, I hope will escape through these. Yet, lest your temptation should grow stronger, let me warn you, that though of your own selves men should arise speaking perverse things, to draw disciples after them, Acts xx. 30; yea, though an angel from heaven should draw you to division, see that you follow him not. If there be erroneous practices in the church, keep yourselves innocent with moderation and peace; do your best to reform them, and rather remove your dwellings, if you cannot live innocently, than rend the church. It must be no small error that must force a separation. Justin, a holy, learned martyr, (in Dialog. cum Triphone,) who was converted within thirty-one years of John's death, and wrote his first Apology within fifty-one, (and therefore it is like he saw John's days,) professeth, that if a Jew should keep the ceremonial law, so he did not persuade the gentiles to it as necessary, yet if he acknowledge Christ, he judgeth that he may be saved; and he would embrace him, and have communion with him, as a brother. And Paul would have him received that is weak in the faith, and not unchurch whole parishes of those that we know not, nor were ever brought to a just trial. You know I never conformed to the use of mystical, symbolical rites myself, but only to the determination of circumstantials necessary *in genere;* and yet, I ever loved a godly, peaceable conformist, better than a turbulent nonconformist. I yet differ from many in several things of considerable moment, &c.;[g] as my "Aphorisms of Justification" show (as is explained in my "Confession"). And yet if I should zealously press my judgment on others, so as to disturb the peace of the church, and separate from my brethren, that are contrary minded, I should fear lest I should prove a firebrand in hell, for being a firebrand in the church: and for all the interest I have in your judgment and affections, I here charge you, that if God should give me up to any factious, church-rending course, against which I daily pray, that you forsake me, and follow me not a step.

And for peace with one another, follow it with all your might; "If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, live peaceably with all men," Rom. xii. 18. Mark this: when you feel any sparks of discontent in your breast, take them as kindled by the devil from hell, and take heed you cherish them not. If the flame begin to break forth in censoriousness, reproaches, and hard speeches of others, be as speedy and busy in quenching it, as if it were fire in the thatch of your houses: for why should your houses be dearer to you than the church, which is the house of God? or than your souls, which are the temples of the Holy Ghost? If any heart-burnings arise, do not keep strange, but go together and lovingly debate it, or pray together that God would reconcile you; or refer the matter to your minister, or others; and let not the sun go down on your wrath: hath God spoken more against any sin than unpeaceableness? If you forgive

[g] Of which I may say, as famous Camero: Etsi non spondebam fore ut omnibus arrideret, attamen nunquam veritus sum nequis piorum eo offenderetur, quasi is causam adversariorum juvaret. Nam nullus inde quicquam potuit excusare, quod causæ quam agebam, obesset, et is sic institutus est, ut ubique sententiam adversarii non modo petat, sed feriat etiam et jugulet. Quod siquis eum parum aptum et concinnum judicet, ego quidem certe id neque indignor, neque doleo, ut qui sciam probe, quam sit æquum et rationi consentaneum, ut sint in hoc genere libera hominum judicia. Tantum id peto (quod a bonis viris impetraturum me facile confido) ne hic obruar præjudiciis, neu me quis nisi admonitum et vi veritatis victum, neque cedentem tamen existimet damnandum. Utinam me sic vobis purgarim! Quod si cui vestrum ullus adhuc hæret scrupulus, mihi rem feecrit et pergratam, et apprime utilem; si meecum volet aperte agere, mihique vel agnoseendi errorem ei, vel tuendæ atque illustrandæ veritatis copiam faeere, prolatis rationibus ac testimoniis S. Scripturæ, quibus vel cedere, si contra me faciunt, vel si minus, respondere queam. Camer. in Epist. Resp. ad Theol. Leidens. Oper. fol. p. 716, vel ut Augustin. Sicut lectorem meum nolo mihi esse deditum, ita correctorem nolo sibi. Ille me non amet amplius quam catholicam fidem; iste se non amet amplius quam catholicam veritatem. Sicut illi dico, noli meis literis quasi Scripturis Canonicis inservire; sed in illis et quod non credebas, cum invceneris, incunctanter crede, in istis autem, quod certum non habebis, nisi certum intellexeris, noli firmiter retinere. Ita illi dico; noli meas literas ex tua opinione vel contentione, sed ex divina lectione, vel incoucussa ratione corrigere. Siquid in eis veri comprehenderis, existendo non est meum: at intelligendo, et amando, et tuum sit, et meum. Siquid autem falsi convieeris errando fuerit meum. Sed jam cavendo nec tuum sit nec meum. Aug. Proem. l. 3. de Trin. This is all I desire of the readers of my writings; Hoc erga me omnes observare vellem, quod erga te ipse servavi; ut quicquid improbandum putant in scriptis meis, nec claudant subdolo pectore, nec ita reprehendant apud alios, ut taceant apud me. Aug. Epist. ad Hieron. inter opera Hieron. tom. 3. edit. (Amerbach) 1610.

not men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive you; which made Ludovicus Crocius say, that this is the measure and essential property of the least degree of true faith, Syntag. lib. iv. c. 16. If you love not each other, you are no disciples of Christ; nay, if you love not your enemies, and bless not them that curse you, and pray not for them that hurt and persecute you, you are no children of God. The wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, &c. James iii. 17. O remember that piercing example of Christ, who washed his disciples' feet, to teach us, that we must stoop as low to one another. Sure God doth not jest with you in all these plain scriptures. I charge you, in the name of Christ, if you cannot have peace otherwise, that you suffer wrongs and reproaches, that you go and beg peace of those that should beg it of you; yea, that you beg it on your knees of the poorest beggar, rather than lose it. And remember Rom. xvi. 17, 18.

7. Above all, be sure you get down the pride of your hearts. Forget not all the sermons I preached to you against this sin. No sin more natural, more common, or more deadly. A proud man is his own idol; only from pride cometh contention. There is no living in peace with a proud person; every disrespect will cast them into a fever of discontent. If once you grow wise in your own eyes, and love to be valued and preferred, and love those best that think highliest of you, and have secret heart-risings against any that disregard you or have a low esteem of you, and cannot endure to be slighted or spoke evil of; never take yourselves for christians, if this be your case. To be a true christian without humility, is as hard, as to be a man without a soul. O poor England, how low art thou brought by the pride of ignorant zealots! Dear friends, I can foretell you, without the gift of prophecy, that if any among you do fall from the truth, mark which are the proudest, that cannot endure to be contradicted, and that vilify others, and those will likely be they; and if ever you be broken in pieces, and ruined, pride will be the cause.

8. Be sure you keep the mastery over your flesh and senses. Few ever fall from God, but flesh-pleasing is the cause. Many think that by "flesh" the Scripture means our in-dwelling sin, when, alas! it is the inordinate sensitive appetite that it chargeth us to subdue. Nothing in the world damneth so many as flesh-pleasing, while men generally choose it as their happiness instead of God. O remember who hath said, "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die," and, "Make no provision for the flesh, to satisfy its desires," Rom. viii. 5—7, and xiii. 14. Think of this when you are tempted to drunkenness, and gluttony, and lustfulness, and worldliness; and when you would fain have your dwellings and states more delightful. You little think what a sin it is, even to please your flesh, further than it tends to help you in the service of God.[h]

9. Make conscience of the great duty of reproving and exhorting those about you: make not your souls guilty of the oaths, ignorance, and ungodliness of others, by your silence. Admonish them lovingly and modestly, but be sure you do it, and that seriously. That is the first step in discipline. Expect not that your minister should put any from the sacrament, whom you have not thus admonished once and again. Punish not before due process.

10. Lastly, be sure to maintain a constant delight in God, and a seriousness and spirituality in all his worship. Think it not enough to delight in duties, if you delight not in God. Judge not of your duties by the bulk and number, but by the sweetness. You are never stable christians till you reach this. Never forget all those sermons I preached to you on Psalm xxxvii. 4. Give not way to a customary dulness in duty: do every duty with all thy might: especially, be not slight in secret prayer and meditation. Lay not out the chief of your zeal upon externals, and opinions, and the smaller things of religion. Let most of your daily work be upon your hearts: be still suspicious of them; understand their moral wickedness and deceitfulness, and trust them not too far. Practise that great duty of daily watching: pray earnestly that you be not led into temptation. Fear the beginnings and appearances of sin. Beware lest conscience once lose its tenderness. Make up every breach between God and your conscience betimes. Learn how to live the life of faith, and keep fresh the sense of the love of Christ, and of your continual need of his blood, Spirit, and intercession; and how much you are beholden and engaged to him. Live in a constant readiness and expectation of death, and be sure to get acquainted with that heavenly conversation which this book is written to direct you in; which I commend to your use, hoping you will be at the pains to read it, as for your sakes I have been to write it: and I shall beg for you of the Lord, while I live on this earth, that he would persuade your souls to this blessed work, and that when death comes it may find you so employed, that I may see your faces with joy at the bar of Christ, and we may enter together into the everlasting rest. Amen.

Your most affectionate, though unworthy teacher,

Kidderminster, Jan. 15, 1649. RICHARD BAXTER.

[h] Fateor insitam esse nobis corporis nostri charitatem. Fateor nos hujus gerere tutelam. Nec nego indulgendum illi, serviendum nego. Multis enim servit, qui corpori servit, qui pro illo nimium timet, qui ad illud omnia refert; sic gerere nos debemus, non tanquam propter corpus vivere debeamus, sed tanquam non possimus sine corpore. Hujus nos nimius amor timoribus inquietat, solicitudinibus onerat, contumeliis objicit. Honestum ei vile est, cui corpus nimium charum est. Agatur ejus diligentissima cura; ita tamen ut cum exigat ratio, cum dignitas, cum fides, mittendum in ignem sit. Seneca Epist. x. p. 543. Happy were many a christian if they had learned this lesson which an infidel teacheth them.

TO THE RIGHT WORSHIPFUL

SIR THOMAS ROUS, BARONET,

WITH THE

LADY JANE ROUS, HIS WIFE.

Right Worshipful,

This first part of this treatise was written under your roof, and therefore I present it not to you as a gift, but as your own; not for your protection, but for your instruction and direction: for I never perceived you possessed with that evil spirit, which maketh men hear their teachers as their servants, to censure their doctrine, or be honoured by them, rather than to learn. Nor do I intend this epistle for the publishing of your virtues: you know to whose judgment you stand or fall. It is a small thing to be judged by man's judgment: if you be sentenced as righteous at the bar of Christ, and called by him, the blessed of his Father, it matters not much by what name or title you are here called. All saints are low in their own esteem, and therefore thirst not to be highly esteemed by others. He that knows what pride hath done in the world, and is now doing, and how close that heinous sin doth cleave to all our natures, will scarce take him for a friend who will bring fuel to the fire; nor that breath for amicable, which will blow the coal. Yet, he that took so kindly a woman's box of ointment, as to affix the history to his gospel, that wherever it was read that good work might be remembered, hath warranted me, by his example, to annex the mention of your favours to this treatise, which have many times far exceeded in cost that which Judas thought too good for his Lord. And common ingenuity commandeth me thankfully to acknowledge, that when you heard I was suddenly cast into extreme weakness, you sent into several counties to seek me in my quarters, and, missing of me, sent again to fetch me to your house, where for many months I found a hospital, a physician, a nurse, and real friends, and, which is more than all, daily and importunate prayer for my recovery: and since I went from you, your kindnesses still following me in abundance: and all this for a man that was a stranger to you, whom you had never seen before but to burden you; and for one that had no witty insinuations for the extracting your favours, nor impudence enough to return them in flatteries; yea, who had such obstructions betwixt his heart and his tongue, that he could scarcely handsomely express the least part of his thankfulness, much less able to make you a requital. The best return I can make of your love is, in commending this heavenly duty to your practice; wherein I must entreat you to be the more diligent and unwearied, because as you may take more time for it than the poor can do, so have you far stronger temptations to divert you. It being extremely difficult for those that have fulness of all things here, to place their happiness really in another life, and so set their hearts there, as the place of their rest, which yet must be done by all that will be saved. Study Luke xii. 16—22; xvi. 19, 25; and Matt. xix. 23. How little comfort do all things in this world afford to a departing soul! My constant prayer for you to God shall be, that all things below may be below in your hearts, and that you may thoroughly master and daily mortify the desires of the flesh, and may live above in the Spirit, with the Father of spirits, till you arrive among the perfected spirits of the just.

Your much obliged servant,

RICHARD BAXTER.

A PREMONITION.

Concerning the alterations and additions in this second edition, I thought meet to give you this brief account, though I could have found in my heart to have supplied divers other defects through the book, especially in the beginning of the first and second part, where the effects of my weakness were most evident; yet, because the stationer persuaded me that it would be an offence to those that had bought the first edition, I forbear. Yet, because I knew no reason why any should deny me leave to correct or amend my own work, especially for once, I have made these necessary alterations and additions following. 1. I have corrected several passages (especially in the beginning of the first and second part) which I found to be most liable to exception, or misinterpretation: and more I had done, would my friends have been entreated to have informed me of what they disliked. Also, some passages I have more cleared, that were offensive, by touching on the late public quarrels, which I could have gladly blotted out to avoid distaste, if conscience would have given me leave: but he that will cast by all books which contain any thing disagreeing from his judgment, shall read or profit by few in the world. 2. I have added one chapter, (the ninth,) in the second part; which, being promised in the beginning, in the method propounded, was forgotten. Also, I have added the eleventh chapter in the third part, containing a more exact inquiry into the nature of sincerity, and the use of marks; which I judged of necessity, as being of so great concernment both to men's comforts and their safety: and I hope none will think it needless curiosity. Also a preface I have added to the second part, both for defence and fuller explication of the doctrine therein

contained; wherein, also, I expect to be free from the censure of needless curiosity, with all those that know how much the peace and welfare of our souls depend on the right apprehension of the verity of the Scriptures. Lastly, I have added many marginal quotations, especially of the ancients; which, though some may conceive to be useless, and others, to be merely for vain ostentation, yet I conceived useful, both for the sweetness of the matter, (concerning which I refer you to the perusal, to me it seemed so in the reading,) as also to free myself from the charge of singularity.

If any say, that I should have prevented this by greater carefulness at the first, I answer, 1. That which is past cannot be recalled: it is well if it can be repented of and amended. 2. I wrote so much of it in so exceeding debility of body, that it was more wonder that my understanding was not utterly disabled. 3. And I was distant from home, where I had no book but my Bible, and therefore could not add the consent of authors. If you say, There was no such haste, but I might have stayed till I had been better able and furnished, I answer, 1. Little reason had I to expect to have survived till now, yea, or two months longer. 2. Who knows not how little we are masters of our own, that knows the interest of our friends, who are oft importunate for that which others distaste; which, though it be a poor excuse for the doing evil, yet may sometimes partly excuse the unseasonable doing of good. 3. I repent not my haste, though I do my imperfections: for God hath been pleased to give the book such unexpected acceptance, that I have reason enough to hope, that the good it hath done this one year, already, is greater than the hurt which the imperfections have done. 4. And I am so conscious of my own imperfections, that I know they will appear in all that I do, and, therefore, I doubt not but there is still that which deserves correction, and would be, if I should amend it a hundred times. If great Austin so frequently and passionately confess so much by himself, who am I, that I should hope of better? So much of this edition.

Concerning the book itself, let me advertise you, that the first and last part were all that I intended when I begun it, which I fitted merely to my own use; and, therefore, if you find some strains of self-application, you may excuse them. And for the second part, it fell from my pen besides my first intention, but was occasioned partly by assaults that I had oft suffered in that point, and partly by my apprehensions of the exceeding necessity of it, and that to the main end which I intended in this book. Who will set his heart on the goodness of a thing that is not certain of the truth? or part with all his present delights till he is sure he may have better? And, because I have only in brief given you these reasons which most prevailed with myself, having then no authors by me, I wish you would read Grotius, and the Lord Du Plessis "Of the Verity of Christian Religion," (especially chap. 25, 26, and last,) both which are translated into English.[a] The third part I last added; the four first chapters, for the use of secure and sensual sinners, if any of them should happen to read this book; the three last, for the godly, to direct and comfort them in afflictions, and especially to persuade them to the great duty of helping to save their brethren's souls; the seven middle chapters, for the use both of the godly and ungodly, as being of unspeakable concernment to all. So that all parts of this book are not fitted to the same persons.

Some, I hear, blame me for being so tedious, and say, All this might have been in a lesser room: such I would inform, that in thus doing, I have more crossed myself than them, having naturally such a style as, because of brevity, is accused of obscurity; and had much ado to bring myself to this which they blame; and did obey my reason in it, against my disposition. For, as I thought my views of this glory should not be short, nor my speeches too contracted, so I considered that I speak to plain, unlearned men, that cannot find our meaning in too narrow a room, and that use to overlook the fulness of significant words. As they must be long in thinking, so we must be long in speaking: or else our words fall short of the mark, and die before they can produce the desired effect, so great is the distance between these men's ears and their brains. Besides, I know I am to speak to men's affections, which yet lie deep, and far more remote. How guilty I am myself, let others judge; but sure I approve not tautologies, or a tedious style, or the heaping up of useless matter or words; nor can I choose but judge those Tostatuses impudently proud, who think the world should read nobody's works but theirs. Yet if the length of my discourse do but occasion the reader's longer thoughts on this so sweet and needful a subject, I shall scarce repent of my reprehended tediousness. And I confess I never loved affectation, or too much industry about words, nor like the temper of them that do. May I speak pertinently, plainly, piercingly, and somewhat properly, I have enough. I judge, as judicious Dr. Stoughton, out of Seneca, that, "He is the best preacher that feels what he speaks, and then speaks what he feels." I confess, also, that I had made the first and fourth parts of this book much longer; but that upon my return home, (to my books,) I found in Mr. Burroughs' "Moses's Choice," and others, the same things already abroad which I intended. And had I been at home when I begun this, or read so much on the like subjects as I have since done, I think I should have left out all or most that I have written; yet do I not repent it; for God, that compelled me to it, knows how to make use of it. If this apology satisfy not, I offer the plaintiff these three motions to take his choice: 1. Either let it alone, and then it will do you no harm: 2. Or if you will needs read it, blame the author, and spare him not, so you will but entertain the truth, and obey what you are convinced to be your duty: 3. Or set on the work and do it better, that God's church may yet have more help in so needful a business. But no more of this. Were not the success of my labour more desirable to me than the maintenance of my esteem, I should think three lines enough for apology.

But the chief thing which I intend, in this premonition, is, to acquaint each reader with the main design of this book, and to beseech him for his soul's sake, that he will use it accordingly. Though the right comforting of a soul in a matter of so great moment, in life, be at death, and worth much more labour than I have here bestowed, yet the ends which I intended are of far greater weight. Though I have heard many pious men say, Let us study how to come to heaven, and let others study how great the joys are; yet have I found, by reason and experience, as well as Scripture, that it is not our comfort only, but our stability, our liveliness in all our duties, our enduring tribulation, our honouring of God, the vigour of our love, thankfulness and all our graces, yea, the very being of our religion, and christianity itself, that dependeth on the believing, serious thoughts of our rest. The end directeth to, and in, the means. It is the first thing intended, to which all the actions of our lives must aim:[b] mistake in this, and you are lost for ever, except you rec-

[a] And since I have written a supplement, called "The Unreasonableness of Infidelity."

[b] Gibieuf saith that nothing is desired properly at all, but the ultimate end.

tify your mistake in time. To know what is indeed your end and happiness, and heartily to take it so to be, is the very first stone in the foundation of religion: most souls that perish in the christian world, do perish for want of being sincere in this point. Men have learned in books, that God is the chief good, and only the enjoyment of him in heaven will make us happy; but their hearts do not unfeignedly take him to be so. Most men take the present contentments of the flesh, consisting in pleasures, profits, and honours, to be their happiness indeed. This hath their very hearts, while God hath the tongue and knee; this is seriously sought after, while God is hypocritically complimented with; heaven is heartlessly commended, while the world is eagerly pursued; Christ is called Master, while this flesh bears all the sway; only because they cannot choose but know that the world will shortly leave them in the grave, and this flesh, which is so cherished, must lie rotting in the dust; therefore, they will allow God the leavings of the world, and Christ shall have all that the flesh can spare: so far they will be religious and godly, lest they should be thrust into hell; and they look for heaven as a reserve, when they can keep their worldly happiness no longer. This is the self-deluding religion of thousands.

Reader, I pray God bring this close to thy heart, that it may awake thee to a godly jealousy, to see that thy heart deceive thee not in this one point. Oh how many professors of zeal in religion, of much knowledge, and excellent tongues, and blameless conversations in other things, do yet so eagerly mind the world and the flesh, and subtlely evade every danger, and distinguish themselves out of every duty that is very dear, or inconsistent with their worldly happiness, that it is most evident they never cordially took God for their portion and happiness! When men lay not this foundation in sincerity, they may build all their lives to little purpose, and the fall will be great when this sand deceives them. When they take this first principle but as a notion into the brain, and never lay it deep and close to the heart, all their lives after are spent in hypocrisy, and all their duties increase their delusion, except God call them back again to review their souls, and lay that foundation which before they had neglected. Therefore it is said, that to be carnally-minded is death; and if ye mind or live after the flesh, ye shall die; and that the carnal mind is enmity to God; and if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him;[c] and it is so hard for rich men to enter heaven, that you can scarce find any saint in Scripture charged with covetousness, because it is as possible the devils should be saved, as the man that finally takes up his chief rest and happiness in any thing below God. And what is the cause of all this mischief, but that men do not seriously and frequently think, first, of the certain truth, and then, on the sweet, unconceivable excellences that wait for them, if they will renounce the vanities of the world, and cleave heartily to God in Jesus Christ? Besides, if men do not apprehend the excellency of this rest, they cannot value Christ, or his blood that purchased it, and therefore cannot indeed be christians: nor is it once knowing what heaven is that will serve the turn; if we have not continual or frequent tastes of it in our souls, we shall live in a continual danger of being overcome. When temptations take you up into the mountain, and show you the kingdoms and glory of the world, and say, All this will I give thee; if, then, you have not a greater and surer glory in your view, what danger are you in! Oh that the nefarious miscarriages of professors of piety in this age, did not witness it to our sorrow, and the shame of our profession. Not a day but the devil will be casting thee a bait; either sports, or mirth, or filthy lusts, or the pleasing of thy appetite in meats, or drinks, or reputation, or rising in the world, or fears of men, or some such thing; and if thou have been newly in the considerations of thy rest with God, it will make thee trample upon them all; but if that be forgotten or undervalued, all is gone. Besides, what life and vigour will it maintain in all our duties! How earnestly will that man pray, that believingly and seriously apprehends what he prayeth for! How, also, will it fill the soul with love, when men do every day view the face of love itself, and warm their hearts in these heavenly contemplations!. And if it were but to make our religion delightful to us, it would have greater use than the mere pleasure of that delight, as I have showed in the conclusion of the book: how cheerfully would men go on through labour and suffering, if once they had that delight in God which a heavenly life would afford! When life and joy, seriousness and sweetness, go together, it will make men profitable, victorious, and persevering christians. In a word, you can neither live safely, profitably, piously, conscionably, or comfortably, nor die so, without believing, serious considerations of your rest.

And now, reader, whatever thou art, young or old, rich or poor, I entreat thee, and charge thee, in the name of thy Lord, who will shortly call thee to a reckoning, and judge thee to thine everlasting, unchangeable state, that thou give not these things the reading only, and so dismiss them with a bare approval; but that thou set upon this work, and take God in Christ for thy only rest, and set thy heart upon him above all. Jest not with God: do not only talk of heaven, but mind it, and seek it with all thy might: what greater business hast thou to do? Dally no longer, when thy salvation lies at the stake. O turn off the world before it turn thee off; forsake thy fleshly pleasures before they forsake thee, and thou find that God also hath forsaken thee. Wink at these withering beauties; and shut thy mouth against these pleasant poisons. Remember what they will all be to thee, when thy friends are weeping over thee, looking for thy winding-sheet; nay, when God shall say, Give account of thy stewardship, thou shalt be no longer steward: thou fool, this night shall they require thy soul; whose then shall these things be? Lord, how do men think so carelessly of that day, which they cannot choose but know is near, and will make so great a change with them! Sure (saith noble Du Plessis[d]), if all the world were made for man, then man was made for more than the world. Hearken, you worldlings and flesh-pleasers, the God of heaven chargeth you, upon your allegiance, to change your pleasures. He offereth you delights beseeming men; yea, the joys of angels; and commandeth you to renounce the pleasures of sin, and delights that only beseem a beast. Will you not take his offer? Take it now, lest he never offer it you more. He commandeth you, as ever you will see his face in glory to your comfort, that now you turn your thoughts seriously to him, and to that glory: dare you deny, or neglect to obey? If you will not part with your merriments and vanities for that which is infinitely better, be it now known to you, you shall shortly part with them for nothing; yea, for hell fire; and you shall leave them with groans and horror ere long, if you will not leave them

[c] Rom. viii. 5—8, 13; 1 John ii. 15. Vid. Excellent. Epist. Columbani Hibern. de præsentis vitæ vanitate, miseria, &c. in Usser. Almac. Vetorum, Epist. Hibern. syllog. pag. 7, 8.

[d] Epist. before the "Verity of Christian Religion."

for God and glory now. Spit out these venomous, fleshly pleasures, man; come near, and taste of the heavenly delights. What say you? will you resolve; will you covenant with God this day, and do it? Do I speak to a post, that cannot feel; or to a beast, that is uncapable of heaven? Will you pass over my words, as if they concerned you not? The great God that put this doctrine into your Bibles, and put this message into my mouth, and bid me speak it to thee in his name, will one day speak to thee so rousingly himself, as will make thine ears to tingle, and that rocky heart of thine to tremble, in despite of all thy security and stupidity. If thou have now sinned away thy fear and feeling, that thou takest a sermon but for words of course, believe it, God will shortly bring thy fear and thy feeling again. It had need to be very precious liquor, which the drunkard shall then pay so dear for; and excellent content, which the lustful must so smart for; and great honours and riches, for which thou must lose thy hopes of heaven. If thou hadst never heard or read of these things, there were the more excuse; but if, when thou knowest it, thou wilt needs run into the fire, into the fire shalt thou go: but when thou feelest the pain, thou shalt bethink thee of thy folly; and when heaven is lost, remember thou mightest have had it, and that upon very reasonable, easy terms, if thou wouldst. Nothing but thy own wilfulness could have shut thee out. I have warned thee: let God do his will.

And for you that fear God, and have made him your portion, your end, and rest, and are the heirs of this kingdom, let me entreat you, more frequently to look homeward, and mind your inheritance. Should we not think oft of the state we must be in for ever? Do you not perceive that God tumbles you up and down the world, and crosseth your desires, to weary you out of it; that he letteth loose the winds to raise those storms, that may make you long for the harbour, and may toss you to his rest? that he makes your dearest friends afflict you, and those that you took sweet counsel with, and went up with to the house of God as companions, to be scorpions to you, that so you might not have here a resting-place for the sole of your foot? O, learn God's gracious meaning, and look upwards! When others are roving after opinions, and running from sect to sect, and, with contentions and vain janglings, are firing the church of Christ, do you then retire yourselves from these vanities to your God; humbly converse with him; and think, believingly, of your everlasting converse with him; and thus fire your souls with his rays of love. For my own part, even when I am constrained (as teachers oft are more than the people) to study controversies, though they be necessary, and in themselves about precious truths, and though I prosper in my studies, yet do I find most sensibly that they discompose my spirit, and waste my zeal, my love, and delight in God, even by the interruption and diversion of my contemplations; so that I long to have done with them, that I may be more near to God. Disputings often lead to envyings and heart-burnings, and those to hating our brethren, and that to open violence and bloodshed, even of the saints, to persecution of ministers, and setting ourselves against Christ's apparent interest for our own; but heavenly meditations calm the spirit, and, by winning our souls to the love of God, do not only cause us to love our brethren, but to love them in God, which is the only right love. And thus all men shall know that you are Christ's true disciples, by your loving one another; for he that loveth, dwelleth in God, and God in him: when they that hate their brethren are murderers; and we know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.[e] The living God, who is the portion and rest of his saints, make these, our earnal minds, so spiritual, and our earthly hearts so heavenly, that loving him and delighting in him may be the work of our lives; and that neither I that write, nor you that read this book, may ever be turned from this path of life, lest a promise being left us of entering into rest, we should come short of it through our own unbelief or negligence.[f]

May 17, 1651.

PART I.

HEBREWS IV. 9.—THERE REMAINETH THEREFORE A REST TO THE PEOPLE OF GOD.

CHAPTER I.

SECT. 1. It was not only our interest in God, and actual fruition of him, which was lost in Adam's covenant-breaking fall, but all spiritual knowledge of him, and true disposition towards such a felicity. Man hath now a heart too suitable to his estate; a low state, and a low spirit. And (as some expound that of Luke xviii. 8) when the Son of God comes with recovering grace, and discoveries and tenders of a spiritual and eternal happiness and glory, he finds not faith in man to believe it.[a] But as the poor man that would not believe that any one man had such a sum as a hundred pounds, (it was so far above what he possessed,) so man will hardly now believe that there is such a happiness as once he had, much less as Christ hath now procured. When God would give the Israelites his sabbaths of rest in a land of rest, he had more ado to make them believe it, than to overcome their enemies, and procure it for them;

[e] John xiii. 34, 35; xv. 12; 1 John iii. 15; iv. 10, 11.

[f] Heb. iv. 1.

[a] Recedentes enim ab unius et veri Dei consideratione affectuque in illum unico, in varias jam, et particulares corporis concupiscentias prolapsi sunt. Deinde ut solet fieri, cum in multa incidissent desideria, in eorum jam habitum sensim transire adeo ut deserere ipsa metuerent. Hinc jam et metus et voluptates in animam irrepsere: mortaliaque sapere incepit. Nolens enim concupiscentias relinquere, mortem metuit, ac separationem corporis horruit. Rursus eadem cupiens ut voti compos fieret, cædes exercere, atque jura violare didicit. Abutens igitur infœlix anima corporalibus particulatim actionibus, corporisque oblectata specie, ac voluptatem bonum suum esse arbitrans, falsa ac seducta honesti nomine abusa est; ipsumque vestrum bonum voluptatem esse putavit. Voluptatis igitur amore detenta, variis hæc modis operari cæpit. Athanasius, l. 1. cont. Gen. translat.

and when they had it, only as a small intimation and earnest of a more incomparably glorious rest through Christ, they stick there; and will yet believe no more than they do possess, but sit down and say, as the glutton at the feast, Sure there is no other heaven but this: or if they do expect more by the Messiah, it is only the increase of their earthly felicity. The apostle bestows most of this epistle against this distemper; and clearly and largely proves unto them, that it is the end of all ceremonies and shadows to direct them to Jesus Christ, the Substance; and that the rest of sabbaths [b] and Canaan should teach them to look for a further rest, which indeed is their happiness. My text is his conclusion, after divers arguments to that end; a conclusion so useful to a believer, as containing the ground of all his comforts, the end of all his duty and sufferings, the life and sum of all gospel promises and christian privileges, that you may easily be satisfied why I have made it the subject of my present discourse. What more welcome to men, under personal afflictions, tiring duty, successions of sufferings, than rest? What more welcome news, to men under public calamities, unpleasing employments, plundering losses, sad tidings, &c. which is the common case, than this of rest? Hearers, I pray God your attentions, intention of spirit, entertainment of it, be but half answerable to the verity, necessity, and excellency of this subject, and then you will have cause to bless God, while you live, that ever you heard it, as I have, that ever I studied it.

Sect. 2. The text is, as you may see, the apostle's assertion in an entire proposition, with the concluding illative: the subject is rest;[c] the predicate, it yet remains to the people of God. It is requisite we say somewhat briefly, 1. For explication of the terms; 2. Of the subject of them.

"Therefore," i. e. it clearly follows, from the former argument, "there remains:" 1. In order of speaking, as the consequence follows the antecedent, or the conclusion the premises; so there remains a rest, or it remains that there is another rest. 2. But rather, in order of being, as the bargain remains after the earnest, the performance after the promise, the antitype after the type, and the ultimate end after all the means; so there remains a rest "to the people of God." God hath a twofold people within the church: one his only, by a common vocation,[d] by an external acceptation of Christ, and covenanting, sanctified by the blood of the covenant so far as to be separated from the open enemies of Christ, and all without the church, therefore not to be accounted common and unclean in the sense, as Jews and pagans are; but holy, and saints, in a larger sense, as the nation of the Jews, and all proselyted gentiles, were holy before Christ's coming. These are called branches in Christ not bearing fruit, and shall be cut off, &c.;[e] for they are in the church, and in him, by the foresaid profession and external covenant, but no further. There are, in his kingdom, things that offend, and men that work iniquity, which the angels, at the last day, shall gather out and cast into the lake of fire;[f] there are fishes, good and bad, in his net; and tares, with wheat, in his field. The son of perdition is one of those given to Christ by the Father, though not as the rest:[g] these be not the people of God my text speaks of. 2. But God hath a peculiar people that are his by special vocation, cordial acceptation of Christ, internal, sincere covenanting, sanctified by the blood of the covenant and Spirit of grace, so far as not only to be separated from open infidels, but from all unregenerate christians, being branches in Christ bearing fruit; and for these remains the rest in my text.[h]

1. To be God's people by a forced subjection, i. e. under his dominion, is common to all persons, even open enemies; yea, devils: this yields not comfort.

2. To be his by a verbal covenant and profession, and external call, is common to all in, and of, the visible church, even traitors and secret enemies, of which see my "Disputations of Right to Sacraments;" yet hath this many privileges, as the external seals, means of grace, common mercies, but no interest in this rest.

3. But to be his by election, union with Christ, and special interest, as before mentioned, is the peculiar property of those that shall have this rest.

Sect. 3. *Quest.* But is it to a determinate number of persons, by name, or only to a people thus and thus qualified, viz. persevering believers, without determining by name who they are? [i]

Answ. I purpose, in this discourse, to omit controversies; only, in a word, thus: 1. It is promised only to persevering believers, and not to any particular persons by name. 2. It is purposed, with all the conditions of it, and means to it, to a determinate number, called the elect, and known by name, which evidently follows these plain propositions:

1. There is few will deny that God foreknows, from eternity, who these are, and shall be, numerically, personally, by name.

2. To purpose it only to such, and to know that only these will be such, is, in effect, to purpose it only to these.

3. Especially, if we know how little knowledge and purpose, in God, do differ.

4. However, we must not make his knowledge active, and his purpose idle, much less to contradict each other, as it must be, if, from eternity, he purposed salvation alike to all, and yet from eternity knew that only such and such should receive it.

5. To purpose all persevering believers to salvation, and not to purpose faith and perseverance absolutely to any particular persons, is to purpose salvation absolutely to none at all; yet I know much more is necessary to be said to make this plain, which I purpose not (at least here) to meddle with.

Sect. 4. *Quest.* To whom? Is it to the people of God, upon certainty, or only upon possibility? [k]

Answ. If only possible, it cannot thus be called theirs.

1. While they are only elect, not called, it is certain to them (we speak of a certainty of the object) by divine purpose; for they are ordained to eternal

[b] Lege de hoc Epistolam Hieronymi ad Dardanum, tom. 4. fol. (edit. Amerbach,) 28—30, ubi etiam de authoritate hujus Epist. ad Heb. et modum canonem discernendi.

[c] De Sabbato spirituali per Sabbatum antiquum figuratum. Vide S. Macarium in Hom. 35. p. (mihi) 434.

[d] Heb. x. 30; Micah ii. 8; 2 Pet. ii. 20; John ii. 23; Heb. vi. 4—6; x. 29, 30.

[e] John xv. 2, 6. [f] Matt. xiii. 41.

[g] John xvii. 12.

[h] Lege Zuinglii fidei Ration. ad Carol. v. p. 540. Tom. 2. de Eccl.

[i] Quid est præscientia nisi scientia futurorum? Quid autem futurum est Deo, qui omnia supergreditur tempora? Si enim res ipsas in scientia habet, non sunt ei futuræ, sed præsentes. At per hoc non jam præscientia, sed tantum scientia dici potest. August. l. 2. ad Simplic. q. 2. Cavendum est ne falsa quadam imaginatione, actum voluntatis divinæ quasi præteritum cogitemus. Scotus, l. 1. dist. 40.

[k] 1. Theirs by purpose, before conversion, Acts xiii. 48. 2. Theirs in law, title, or by promise, after conversion. Quum æquilibrium illud hoc unum præstat juxta Arminium, ut reddat salutem hominum rem contingentem et libratam in ancipiti, isne rem tantam impense affectasse dicendus est, qui vult esse collocatam in loco tam lubrico ac veluti tenui filo pendentem, adeo ut vel levissimo momento impellatur ad perniciem? Smyral. Defens. Doct. Calvini, p. 115.

life first, and therefore believe; and not first believe, and therefore elected.

2. When they are called according to his purpose, then it is certain to them by a certainty of promise also, as sure as if they were named in that promise; for the promise is, to believers, which they may, though but imperfectly, know themselves to be; and though it be yet upon condition of overcoming, and abiding in Christ, and enduring to the end, yet that condition being absolutely promised, it still remaineth absolutely certain upon promise: and, indeed, if glory be ours only upon a condition, which condition depends chiefly on our own wills, it were cold comfort to those that know what man's will is, and how certainly we should play the prodigals with this, as we did with our first stock. But I have hitherto understood, that in the behalf of the elect, Christ is resolved, and hath undertaken, for the working and finishing of their faith, and the full effecting his people's salvation; and not only given us a (feigned) sufficient grace, not effectual, leaving it to our wills to make it effectual, as some think; so that, though still the promise of justification and salvation be conditional, yet God, having manifested his purpose of enabling us to fulfil those conditions, he doth thereby show us a certainty of our salvation, both in his promise and his purpose. Though God's eternal purpose gives us no right to the benefit whatsoever, (some lately say to the contrary,) it being the proper work of God's law or covenant, to confer right or due; yet the event or futurition of it is made certain by God's unchangeable decree, his eternal willing it being the first and infallible cause, that, in time, it is accomplished or produced.

CHAPTER II.

THIS REST DEFINED.

Sect. 1. Now let us see, 1. What this rest is. 2. What these people of God, and why so called. 3. The truth of this, from other Scripture arguments. 4. Why this rest must yet remain. 5. Why only to the people of God. 6. What use to make of it.

1. And though the sense of the text includes in the word rest,[a] all that ease and safety, which a soul, wearied with the burden of sin and suffering, and pursued by law, wrath, and conscience, hath with Christ in this life, the rest of grace; yet, because it chiefly intends the rest of eternal glory, as the end and main part, I shall therefore confine my discourse to this last.

Definition. Rest is the end and perfection of motion. The saint's rest, here in question, is the most happy estate of a christian, having obtained the end of his course: or, it is the perfect, endless fruition of God, by the perfected saints, according to the measure of their capacity, to which their souls arrive at death; and both soul and body most fully, after the resurrection and final judgment.

Sect. 2. I. I call it the estate of a christian, though perfection consists in action, as the philosopher thinks, to note both the active and passive fruition, wherein a christian's blessedness lies, and the established continuance of both.[b] Our title will be perfect, and perfectly cleared; ourselves, and so our capacity, perfected; our possession and security for its perpetuity perfect; our reception from God perfect; our motion or action in and upon him perfect; and, therefore, our fruition of him, and consequently our happiness, will then be perfect. And this is the estate which we now briefly mention, and shall afterwards more fully describe and open to you, and which we hope, by Jesus Christ, very shortly to enter upon, and for ever to possess.

Sect. 3. II. I call it the most happy estate, to difference it, not only from all seeming happiness, which is to be found in the enjoyment of creatures, but also from all those beginnings, foretastes, earnests, first-fruits, and imperfect degrees, which we have here in this life, while we are but in the way. It is the chief good which the world hath so much disputed, yet mistaken or neglected, without which the greatest confluence of all other good leaves a man miserable; and with the enjoyment of which, all misery is inconsistent. The beginnings, in our present state of grace, as they are a real part of this, may also be called a state of happiness; but, if considered disjunctly by themselves, they deserve not that title, except in a comparative sense, as a christian is compared to men out of Christ.

Sect. 4. III. I call it the estate of a christian, where I mean only the sincere, regenerate, sanctified christian, whose soul, having discovered that excellency in God through Christ, which is not in the world to be found, thereupon closeth with him, and is cordially set upon him. I do not mean every one that, being born where christianity is the religion of the country, takes it up as other fashions, and is become a christian he scarce knows how, or why; nor mean I those that profess Christ in words, but in works deny him. I shall describe this christian to you more plainly afterwards. It is an estate to which many pretend, and that with much confidence; and because they know it is only the christian's, therefore they all call themselves christians. But multitudes will at last know, to their eternal sorrow, that this is only the inheritance of the saints, and only those christians shall possess it, who are not of the world: and, therefore, the world hates them who have forsaken all for Christ, and having taken up the cross, do follow him, with patient waiting, till they inherit the promised glory.[c]

Sect. 5. IV. I add, that this happiness consists in obtaining the end, where I mean the ultimate and principal end, not any end, *secundum quid*, so called subordinate, or less prineipal. Not the end of conclusion, in regard of time; for so every man hath his end; but the end of intention, which sets the soul to work, and is its prime motive in all its actions. That the chief happiness is in the enjoyment of this end, I shall fully show through the whole discourse, and, therefore, here omit. Everlasting woe to that man who makes that his end here, (to the death,) which, if he could attain, would not make him happy. Oh how much doth our everlasting state depend on our right judgment and estimation of our end!

Sect. 6. But it is great doubt with many, whether the obtainment of this glory may be our end; nay, concluded, that it is mercenary; yea, Whether to make salvation our end, be not mercenary or legal? As if the very feeling of life,

[a] I doubt not but the Holy Ghost, by this sabbatism, or rest, intends the whole estate of reconciliation, peace, and happiness purchased by Christ: but because that fulness and perfection in glory is the chiefest part, in comparison whereof the beginning in this life is very small, I may very well extend the text to that which itself intends as the principal part; but I exclude not the beginnings here, though I purpose not the handling of them.

[b] Beatis non actus proprie, sed status convenit, inquit Guil. Gibienf. quod tamen caute intelligendum est.

[c] Col. i. 12; Acts xxvi. 18; xx. 32; John xv. 19; Matt. x. 31; Luke xiv. 27; Heb. x. 38; vi. 15.

at all, were the surest way to miss of it. Clean contrary to the whole tenor of Scripture.

that to make salvation the end of duty, is to be a legalist, and act under a covenant of works, whose tenor is, Do this and live. And many that think it may be our end, yet think it may not be our ultimate end, for that should be only the glory of God. I shall answer these particularly and briefly.

1. It is properly called mercenary, when we expect it as wages for work done;[d] and so we may not make it our end; otherwise it is only such a mercenariness as Christ commandeth. For, consider what this end is; it is the fruition of God in Christ: and, if seeking Christ be mercenary, I desire to be so mercenary.

2. It is not a note of a legalist neither: it hath been the ground of a multitude of late mistakes in divinity, to think that "Do this and live," is only the language of the covenant of works.[e] It is true, in some sense it is; but in other, not. The law of works only saith, "Do this," that is, perfectly fulfil the whole law, "and live," that is, for so doing: but the law of grace saith, "Do this and live" too; that is, believe in Christ, seek him, obey him sincerely, as thy Lord and King; forsake all, suffer all things, and overcome; and by so doing, or in so doing, as the conditions which the gospel propounds for salvation, you shall live.[f] If you set up the abrogated duties of the law again, you are a legalist; if you set up the duties of the gospel in Christ's stead, in whole or in part, you err still. Christ hath his place and work; duty hath its place and work too; set it but in its own place, and expect from it but its own part, and you go right: yea, more, how unsavoury soever the phrase may seem, you may, so far as this comes to, trust to your duty and works; that is, for their own part; and many miscarry in expecting no more from them, as to pray, and to expect nothing the more, that is, from Christ, in a way of duty; for if duty have no share, why may we not trust Christ, as well in a way of disobedience as duty? In a word, you must both use and trust duty in subordination to Christ, but neither use them nor trust them in co-ordination with him. So that this derogates nothing from Christ: for he hath done and will do all his work perfectly, and enableth his people to do theirs; yet he is not properly said to do it himself;[g] he believes not, repents not, &c. but worketh these in them; that is, enableth and exciteth them to do it. No man must look for more from duty than God hath laid upon it; and so much we may and must.

Sect. 7. II. If I should quote all the Scriptures that plainly prove this, I should transcribe a great part of the Bible: I will bring none out of the Old Testament; for I know not whether their authority will here be acknowledged; but I desire the contrary-minded, whose consciences are tender of abusing Scripture, and wresting it from the plain sense, to study what tolerable interpretation can be given of these following places, which will not prove that life and salvation may be, yea, must be the end of duty. "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life," John v. 39, 40. "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force," Matt. xi. 12. "Strive to enter in at the strait gate," Matt. vii. 13; Luke xiii. 24. "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling," Phil. ii. 12. "To them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life. Glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good," &c. Rom. ii. 7, 10. "So run that ye may obtain," 1 Cor. ix. 24. "A man is not crowned, except he strive lawfully," 2 Tim. ii. 5. "If we suffer with him, we shall reign with him," 2 Tim. ii. 12. "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life," 1 Tim. vi. 12. "That they do good works, laying up a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life," 1 Tim. vi. 18, 19. "If by any means I might attain to the resurrection of the dead; I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling," &c. Phil. iii. 14. "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and enter in by the gates into the city," Rev. xxii. 14. "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit, &c. For I was hungry, and ye," &c. Matt. xxv. "Blessed are the pure in heart, &c. They that hunger and thirst, &c. Be glad and rejoice, for great is your reward in heaven," Matt. v. "Blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it," Luke xi. 28. Yea, the escaping of hell is a right end of duty to a believer, "Let us fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it," Heb. iv. 1. "Fear him that is able to destroy both soul and body in hell; yea, (whatsoever others say,) I say unto you, Fear him," Luke xii. 5. "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast away," 1 Cor. ix. 27. Multitudes of Scriptures and Scripture arguments might be brought, but these may suffice to any that believe Scripture.[h]

Sect. 8. III. For those that think this rest may be our end, but not our ultimate end, that must be God's glory only, I will not gainsay them. Only let them consider, what God hath joined, man must not separate. The glorifying himself, and the saving of his people, as I judge, are not two decrees with God,

[d] Viz. by way of merit, strictly so called.

[e] It was Simon Magus's doctrine, that men are not saved according to religious works, but according to his grace, as Irenæus repeateth it. Lib. ii. advers. Hæres. c. 20.

[f] Notandum est alium esse loquendi modum contra Judaismum et contemptum gratiæ, alium contra securitatem et abusum gratiæ. Cum disputatur contra Judaismum sive justitiam operum, ut Paulus in Rom. et alibi fecit, tum docemur sola fide hominem justificari, h. e. Nihil in nobis placere Deo nisi per abnegationem meriti et acceptationem doni evangelici. At cum disputatur contra securitatem, et docetur quid respectu amicitiæ divinæ nobis agendum sit, ut Jacobus fecit, et hodie vel maxime necesse est, D. Tossanus in disp. contra pseudo-evangelicos, et alii pie et prudenter jam pridem monuerint; tunc negatur solam fidem sufficere et præcipiuntur omnia quæ quoque modo prosunt; sine disponant ad fidem, sive in iis consummetur fides: sicut quæque res fine et effectibus suis consummatur, &c. sive præsens jam amicitia per illa firmetur ne dissiliat, vel etiam augeatur quod ad effectus aliquos et hoc modo quasi impleatur. Conrad. Berg. Prax. Cathol. Dissert. vii. r. 991. Saith Pareus: Videtur notandum quod Deus præstationem promissionum suarum videtur a nostra obedientia suspendere: non suspendit, sed illam cum ista connectit tanquam cohærentia, &c. Infidelibus promissiones factæ sunt irritæ, non Dei culpa, sed ipsorum perfidia: quoniam promissiones fœderis sunt mutuæ obligationis. Nec ideo sunt incertæ: quoniam Deus in electis obedientiam operatur per gratiam suam immutabiliter. Par. in Gen. xviii. 19, p. (mihi) 1163.

[g] Christ believed for us legally, or so far as the law required faith, but not as it is the condition or command of the new covenant.

[h] I speak the more of this, because I find that many moderate men, who think they have found the mean between the antinomian and the legalist, yet do foully err in this point. As Mr. F. in the "Marrow of Modern Divinity," a book applauded by so many eminent divines, in their commendatory epistles, before it: and because the doctrine, That we must act from life, but not for life; or in thankfulness to him that hath saved us, but not for the obtaining of salvation; is of such dangerous consequence, that I would advise all men to take heed of it, that regard their salvation, 1 Cor. xv. ult.; 2 Cor. iv. 17; v. 10, 11; 2 Pet. i. 10, 11. I here undertake to prove that this fore-mentioned doctrine, reduced to practice, will certainly be the damnation of the practiser: but I hope many antinomians do not practise their own doctrine.

but one decree, to glorify his mercy in their salvation; though we may say, that one is the end of the other; so I think they should be with us together intended. We should aim at the glory of God, not alone considered, without our salvation, but in our salvation. Therefore, I know no warrant for putting such a question to ourselves, as some do, Whether we could be content to be damned, so God were glorified? Christ hath put no such question to us, nor bid us put such to ourselves. Christ had rather that men would inquire after their true willingness to be saved, than their willingness to be damned. Sure I am, Christ himself is offered to faith in terms for the most part respecting the welfare of the sinner, more than his own abstracted glory. He would be received as a Saviour, Mediator, Redeemer, Reconciler, Intercessor, &c. And all the precepts of Scripture, being backed with so many promises and threatenings, every one intended of God as a motive to us, do imply as much. If any think they should be distinguished as two several ends, and God's glory preferred, so they separate them not asunder, I contend not. But I had rather make that high pitch, which Gibieuf and many others insist on, to be the mark at which we should all aim, than the mark by which every weak christian should try himself.

Sect. 9. IV. In the definition, I call a christian's happiness, the end of his course, thereby meaning, as Paul, 2 Tim. iv. 7, the whole scope of his life. For as salvation may, and must be, our end, so not only the end of our faith, though that principally, but of all our actions; for as whatsoever we do, must be done to the glory of God, whether eating, drinking, &c. so must they all be done to our salvation. That we may believe for salvation, some will grant, who yet deny that we may do or obey for it.[i] I would it were well understood, for the clearing of many controversies, what the Scripture usually means by faith. Doubtless, the gospel takes it not so strictly, as philosophers do; but, in a larger sense, for our accepting Christ for our King and Saviour. To believe in his name, and to receive him, are all one;[k] but we must receive him as King, as well as Saviour: therefore, believing doth not produce heart-subjection as a fruit, but contains it as an essential part; except we say, that faith receives Christ as a Saviour first, and so justifies before it take him for King, as some think: which is a maimed, unsound, and no Scripture faith.[l] I doubt not but the soul more sensibly looks at salvation from Christ, than government by him, in the first work: yet, whatever precedaneous act there may be, it never conceives of Christ, and receives him to justification, nor knows him with the knowledge which is eternal life, till it conceive of him, and know him, and receive him for Lord and King. Therefore there is not such a wide difference between faith and gospel obedience, or works, as some judge.[m] Obedience to the gospel is put for faith, and disobedience put for unbelief, ofttimes in the New Testament. But of this I have spoken more fully elsewhere.

V. Lastly: I make happiness to consist in this end obtained; for it is not the mere promise of it that immediately makes perfectly happy, nor Christ's mere purchase, nor our mere seeking, but the apprehending and obtaining, which sets the crown on the saint's head; when we can say of our work, as Christ of the price paid, "It is finished;" and as Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course: henceforth is laid up for me a crown of salvation," 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. Oh that we did all heartily and strongly believe, that we shall never be truly happy till then! Then should we not so dote upon a seeming happiness here.

CHAPTER III.

WHAT THIS REST PRESUPPOSETH.

Sect. I. For the clearer understanding yet of the nature of this rest, you must know:

1. There are some things necessarily presupposed to it.
2. Some things really contained in it.

1. All these things are presupposed to this rest.

1. A person in motion, seeking rest. This is man here in the way; angels and glorified spirits have it already; and the devils and damned are past hope.

Sect. II. 2. An end toward which he moveth for rest: which end must be sufficient for his rest; else, when it is obtained, it deceiveth him. This can be only God, the chief good. He that taketh any thing else for his happiness, is out of the way the first step. The principal damning sin, is to make any thing besides God our end or rest. And the first true saving act, is to choose God only for our end and happiness.

Sect. III. 3. A distance is presupposed from this end; else there can be no motion towards it. This sad distance is the woeful case of all mankind since the fall: it was our God that we principally lost, and were shut out of his gracious presence.[a] Though some talk of losing only a temporal, earthly felicity; sure I am, it was God that we fell from, and him we lost, and since are said to be without him in the world; and there would have been no death, but for sin; and to enjoy God without death, is neither an earthly nor temporal enjoyment: nay, in all men at age, here is supposed, not only a distance from God, but also a contrary motion: for sin hath not overthrown our being, nor taken away our motion; but our well-being, and the rectitude of our motion. When Christ comes with regenerating, saving grace, he finds no man sitting still, but all posting to eternal ruin, and making haste towards hell; till by conviction, he first bring them to a stand; and by conversion, turn first their hearts, and then their lives, sincerely to himself. Even those that are sanctified and justified from the womb, are yet first the children of Adam, and so of wrath; at least, in order of nature, if not in time.

Sect. IV. 4. Here is presupposed knowledge of the true ultimate end, and its excellency, and a serious intending it.[b] For so the motion of the rational creature proceedeth: an unknown end is no end; it is a contradiction. We cannot make that our end, which we know not; nor that our chief end, which we

[i] The scriptures before cited do prove both.

[k] John i. 12.

[l] See more of this hereafter.

[m] In this point of works concurring in justification, I am wholly of Davenant's judgment, "De Justicia Actuali." I will not speak so harshly for works, nor in describing faith, as Mr. Mead's sermon doth: yet I believe he meant orthodoxly. See Diodate's notes on James ii. and abundance more cited in my "Confession."

[a] The only cause of this evil, is aversion from God. As a coachman, if he let the horses run headlong over banks, or which way they will, &c. Athanas. lib. i. cont. Gent.

[b] Bonum illud quod est finis hominis, operantis malum, bonum est particulare, non universale et summum. Ut Augustin. Peccare est deficere ab eo quod summum est, ad id quod minus est.—Prolabitur et propria imbecilitate et depravatione deturbatur ac dejicitur ad bonum particulare, et inferius, frustra ibi quærens rationem summi boni. Gibieuf. l. 2. de Liber. c. 20. sect. 2. p. 424. Nemo fœlices dixerit, quibus non est fœlicitatis intellectus; ut Sen. De Vit. Beat. c. 5.

know not, or judge not, to be the chief good. An unknown good moves not to desire or endeavour: therefore where it is not truly known that God is this end, and containeth all good in him; there is no obtaining rest in an ordinary, known way, whatsoever may be in ways that by God are kept secret.[c]

Sect. V. 5. Here is presupposed, not only a distance from this rest, but also the true knowledge of this distance. If a man have lost his way, and know it not, he seeks not to return; if he lose his gold, and know it not, he seeks it not: therefore, they that never knew they were without God, never yet enjoyed him; and they that never knew they were naturally and actually in the way to hell, did never yet know the way to heaven.[d] Nay, there will not only be a knowledge of this distance, and lost estate, but also affections answerable. Can a man be brought to find himself hard by the brink of hell, and not tremble? or, to find he hath lost his God and his soul, and not cry out, I am undone? or can such a stupid soul be so recovered? This is the sad case of many thousands, and the reason why so few obtain this rest: they will not be convinced, or made sensible, that they are, in point of title, distant from it; and in point of practice, contrary to it. They have lost their God, their souls, their rest, and do not know it, nor will believe him that tells them so. Who ever travelleth towards a place which he thought he was at already, or sought for that which he knew not he had lost? "The whole need not the physician, but they that are sick," Matt. ix. 12.

Sect. VI. 6. Here is also presupposed, a superior, moving cause, and an influence therefrom, else should we all stand still, and not move a step forward towards our rest; any more than the inferior wheels in the watch would stir, if you take away the spring, or the first mover. This *primum movens* is God. What hand God hath in evil actions, or whether he afford the like influence to their produetion, I will not here trouble this discourse and the reader to dispute.[e] The case is clear in good actions. If God move us not, we cannot move: therefore, it is a most necessary part of our christian wisdom, to keep our subordination to God, and dependence on him; to be still in the path where he walks, and in that way where his Spirit doth most usually move. Take heed of being estranged or separated from God, or of slacking your daily expectations of renewed help, or of growing insensible of the necessity of the continual influence and assistance of the Spirit. When you once begin to trust your stock of habitual grace, and to depend on your own understanding or resolution for duty and holy walking, you are then in a dangerous, declining state. In every duty remember Christ's words, "Without me ye can do nothing," John xv. 5, and, "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves, to do any thing as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God," 2 Cor. iii. 5.

Sect. VII. 7. Here is presupposed an internal principle of life in the person. God moves not man like a stone, but by enduing him first with life, not to enable him to move without God, but thereby to qualify him to move himself, in subordination to God the first Mover. What the nature of this spiritual life is, is a question exceeding difficult.[f] Whether, as some think, (but, as I judge, erroneously,) it be Christ himself in person or essence, or the Holy Ghost personally; or as some will distinguish, with what sense I know not, it is the person of the Holy Ghost, but not personally. Whether it be an accident or quality; or whether it be a spiritual substance, as the soul itself; whether it be only an act, or a disposition, or a habit, as it is generally taken; whether a habit infused, or acquired by frequent acts, to which the soul hath been morally persuaded; or whether it be somewhat distinct from a habit; i. e. a power; viz. *potentia proxima intelligendi, credendi, volendi, &c. in spiritualibus;* which some think the most probable.[g] A multitude of such difficulties occur, which will be difficulties while the doctrine of spirits and spirituals is so dark to us, and that will be while the dust of mortality and corruption is in our eyes. This is my comfort, that death will shortly blow out this dust, and then I shall be resolved of these and many more. In the mean time, I am a sceptic, and know little in this whole doctrine of spirits and spiritual workings, further than Scripture clearly revealeth, and think we might do well to keep closer to its language.

Sect. VIII. 8. Here is presupposed before rest, an actual motion: rest is the end of motion: no motion, no rest. Christianity is not a sedentary profession and employment, nor doth it consist in mere negatives. It is not for feeding, or clothing, &c. that Christ condemns. Not doing good, is not the least evil: sitting still will lose you heaven, as well as if you run from it. I know, when we have done all we are unprofitable servants; and he cannot be a christian, that relies upon the supposed merit of his works, in proper sense; but yet he that hides his talent, shall receive the wages of a slothful servant.

Sect. IX. 9. Here is presupposed, also, as motion, so such motion as is rightly ordered and directed toward the end; not all motion, labour, seeking, that brings to rest.[h] Every way leads not to this end; but he whose goodness hath appointed the end, hath

[c] I speak all this of men of age, converted by the word, not of those sanctified in infancy.

[d] I mean those that were converted at years of discretion, and received not holiness insensibly in their infancy, as I doubt not but many thousands do.

[e] Qui rixas et disputationes inanes de hac re sapienter pensabit, et simul rei altitudinem et humani ingenii imbecillitatem, mirabitur procul dubio hominum pervicaciam, et audacem ignorantiam, qui nec adhuc hanc litem et animorum acerbitatem deponere volunt. Quid tandem produxit inter pontificiorum doctissimos protracta hac contentio? viz. inter Jesuitas et Dominicanos, quos prædeterminantes vocant! Frustra tandem conciliante Aribal (ut ex D. Petavii et Richardi scriptis contra August. et Vincent. Lirinensem, et aliorum patet). Quid tandem profecerunt nostrorum de hisce dissidia? et tamen nec unanimes sumus qui videmur unanimes. O quando cognoscent Theologi quam minimum de inscrutabilibus hisce norint præcipue de actibus Dei immanentibus, qui sunt ipsius essentia!

[f] I speak not here *de gratia operante*, but *de gratia operata;* not of the cause, but of the effect; for (so far as these obscure things are known to us, on the ordinary grounds) we must say, that it is the very essence of God which worketh grace on the soul; for it is his *velle effectivum*, his will, God needs do no more to produce the creature, or any quality in it, but only to will it, as Dr. Twisse saith, and Bradwardine more fully and peremptorily: and God's will is his essence. I speak on supposition of God's immediate operation; for if God work grace by angels, or any second causes, then it cannot be thus said of the act of the second cause, but of God's act it is still true. So Clem. Alex. As God's will is his work, and that is called the world; so his will is man's salvation, and that is called the church. Cl. Al. Pædagog. l. i. c. 6.

[g] Nos enim qui totam fidem in carne administrandum credimus, immo et per carnem cujus est, et os, ad proferendum optimum quemque sermonem, et lingua ad non blasphemandum, et cor ad non indignandum, et manus ad operandum et largiendum, tam vetustatem hominis quam novitatem ad moralem, non ad substantialem differentiam pertinere defendimus. Tertul. l. de Anima, c. xlv. p. (mihi) 412.

[h] Cum enim homo sit per naturam mobilis, et si honesta sponte sua refugit, non tamen a motu quievit. Movetur itaque non jam quidem ad virtutem, nec ad vivendum Deum, sed quæ non sunt, versans vires suas, pervertit abutens his ad eas, quas excogitavit concupiscentias carnis; est quippe condita libera; potest bona ut eligere, ita et aversari, &c. Athanas. l. 1. cont. Gen. Trans.

in his wisdom, and by his sovereign authority, appointed the way. Our own invented ways may seem to us more wise, comely, equal, pleasant; but that is the best key that will open the lock, which none but that of God's appointing will do. Oh the pains that sinners take, and worldlings take, but not for this rest! Oh the pains and cost that many an ignorant and superstitious soul is at for this rest, but all in vain! How many have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge! who, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God; nor known "that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth," Rom. x. 2—4. Christ is the door; the only way to this rest. Some will allow nothing else to be called the way, lest it derogate from Christ. The truth is, Christ is the only way to the Father; yet faith is the way to Christ; and gospel obedience, or faith and works, the way for those to walk in, that are in Christ.[i] There be, as before, many ways requisite in subordination to Christ, but none in coordination with him; so then it is only God's way that will lead to this end and rest.

Sect. X. 10. There is supposed, also, as motion rightly ordered, so strong and constant motion, which may reach the end. If there be not strength put to the bow, the arrow will not reach the mark: the lazy world, that think all too much, will find this to their cost one day. They that think less ado might have served, do but reproach Christ for making us so much to do: they that have been most holy, watchful, painful, to get faith and assurance, do find, when they come to die, all little enough. We see, daily, the best christians, when dying, repent their negligence: I never knew any, then, repent his holiness and diligence. It would grieve a man's soul to see a multitude of mistaken sinners lay out their wit, and care, and pains, for a thing of nought, and think to have eternal salvation with a wish. If the way to heaven be not far harder than the world imagines, then Christ and his apostles knew not the way, or else have deceived us; for they have told us, "that the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence; that the gate is strait, and the way narrow; and we must strive, if we will enter; for many shall seek to enter, and not be able,"[k] which implies the faintness of their seeking, and that they put not strength to the work; and, "that the righteous themselves are scarcely saved." If ever souls obtain salvation in the world's common, careless, easy way, then I will say there is a nearer way found out than ever God, in Scripture, hath revealed to the sons of men. But when they have obtained life and rest in this way, let them boast of it; till then, let them give us leave, who would fain go upon sure grounds, in point of eternal salvation, to believe that God knows the way better than they, and that his word is a true and infallible discovery thereof.

I have seen this doctrine also thrown by with contempt by others, who say, What! do you set us a-working for heaven? Doth our duty do any thing? Hath not Christ done all? Is not this to make him a half Saviour, and to preach law?

Answ. It is to preach the law of Christ: his subjects are not lawless.[l] It is to preach duty to Christ: none a more exact requirer of duty, or hater of sin, than Christ. Christ hath done and will do all his work, and therefore is a perfect Saviour; but yet leaves for us a work too. He hath paid all the price, and left us none to pay; yet he never intended his purchase should put us into absolute, immediate, personal title to glory, in point of law, much less into immediate possession. What title, improperly so called, we may have from his own and his Father's secret counsel, is nothing to the question: he hath purchased the crown to bestow only on condition of believing, denying all for him, suffering with him, persevering, and overcoming.[m] He hath purchased justification, to bestow only on condition of our believing; yea, repenting and believing.[n] That the first grace hath any such condition, I will not affirm; but following mercies have; though it is Christ that enableth also to perform the condition. It is not a Saviour offered, but received also, that must save: it is not the blood of Christ shed only, but applied also, that must fully deliver; nor is it applied to the justification or salvation of a sleepy soul; nor doth Christ carry us to heaven in a chair of security. Where he will pardon, he will make you pray, "Forgive us our trespasses;" and where he will give righteousness, he will give hungering and thirsting. It is not through any imperfection in Christ, that the righteous are scarcely saved; no, nor that the wicked perish, as they shall be convinced one day. In the same sense as the prayer of the faithful, if fervent, availeth for outward mercies, in the same sense it prevaileth for salvation also; for Christ hath purchased both. And as baptism is said to save us, so other duties too. Our righteousness, which the law of works requireth, and by which it is satisfied, is wholly in Christ, and not one grain in ourselves; nor must we dare to think of patching up a legal righteousness of Christ's and our own together: that is, that our doings can be the least part of satisfaction for our sins, or proper merit. But yet ourselves must personally fulfil the conditions of the new covenant, and so have a personal, evangelical righteousness, or never be saved by Christ's righteousness; therefore, say not it is not duty, but Christ; for it is Christ in a way of duty. As duty cannot do it without Christ, so Christ

[i] *Object.* If many conditions are required in those that are to be justified, then we are not justified of mere grace. *Answ.* I distinguish of conditions. If many conditions are required in the justified which bear proportion with God's justice, I grant all. But if the conditions which are required in those that must be justified do bear no proportion with God's justice, I deny that it thence follows that justification is not of mere grace. For it is not all conditions that are excluded by grace, but those which may bear the nature of merit. Camero in Op. Fol. impres. p. 365: Cum igitur operibus justificatio negatur, vis justificandi meritoria negatur. John Crocius De Justif. disput. 12. p. 666. So Rivius Tractat. de Redemp.; Dr. Fownds, of Christ's three Offices; Rivet. on Genes.; and generally our divines, against the papists, do oppose the merit of works, as the point wherein our difference lieth. They make it all one to say, that works do not justify, and they do not merit; meaning by works, as Paul doth, such as make the reward to be not of grace, but of debt, Rom. iv. 3, 4.

[k] Matt. xi. 12; vii. 13; Luke xiii. 24, 25; 1 Pet. iv. 18.

[l] Age Marcion, omnesque jam commiserones et credibiles ejus hæretici, quid audebitis dicere? Reseciditne Christus priora præcepta, non occidendi, non adulterandi, non furandi, non falsum testandi, diligendi patrem et matrem? An et illa servavit, et quod deerat, adjecit? Tertul. adv. Marcion, l. 4. c. 36, p. 524. Christus interrogatus a quodam, præceptor optime, quid faciens vitam æternam possidebo? De Præceptis Creatoris, an ea sciret, id est faceret, expostulavit: ad contestandum præceptis creatoris vitam acquiri sempiternam. Tertul. ubi supra.

[m] Actus justificandi sic ejus modus et ratio, tota dependet a Dei voluntate. Joh. Crocius de Justif. Disp. xii. p. 656.

[n] Adjunxit plane et addidit legem, certa nos conditione et sponsione constringens, ut si nobis dimitti debita postulemus, ipsi debitoribus nostris dimittimus; scientes impetrari non posse, quod pro peccatis petimus nisi et ipsi, &c. Cyprian. in Orat. Dom. sect. xvii. p. 311. Lege Clem. Alex. Stromat. l. 2. paulo post init. against those that cry down law and fear, Gal. iii. 3.

will not do it without duty: but of this, enough before.

And as the motion must be strong, so must it be constant; or it will fall short of rest. To begin in the Spirit, and end in the flesh, will not bring to the end of the saints. The certainty of the saints' perseverance doth not make admonition to constancy unuseful: men, as seemingly holy as the best of us, have fallen off. He that knew it impossible, in the foundation, to deceive the elect, yet saw it necessary to warn us, that he only that endureth to the end shall be saved.[o] Read but the promises, (Rev. ii. and iii.) "To him that overcometh." Christ's own disciples must be commanded to continue in his love, and that by keeping his commandments; and to abide in him, and his word in them, and he in them. It will seem strange to some, that Christ should command us, that "he abide in us." See John xv. 4—10; viii. 31; 1 John i. 22; iv. 28.

Sect. XI. 11. There is presupposed, also, to the obtaining of this rest, a strong desire after it. The soul's motion is not that which we call violent or constrained, (none can force it,) but free. As every thing inclines to its proper centre, so the rational creature is carried on in all its motion, with desires after its end. This end is the first thing intended, and chiefest desired, though last obtained. Observe it, and believe it, whoever thou art; there was never a soul that made Christ and glory the principal end, nor that obtained rest with God, whose desire was not set upon him, and that above all things else in the world whatsoever. Christ brings the heart to heaven first, and then the person. His own mouth spoke it, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also," Matt. vi. 21. A sad conclusion to thousands of professed christians. He that had truly rather have the enjoyment of God in Christ, than any thing in the world, shall have it; and he that had rather have any thing else, shall not have this, except God change him. It is true, the remainder of our old nature will much weaken and interrupt these desires, but never overcome them. The passionate motion of them is oft strongest towards inferior, sensible things; but the serious, deliberate will or choice, which is the rational desire, is most for God.

Sect. XII. 12. Lastly: here is presupposed painfulness and weariness in our motion. This ariseth not from any evil in the work or way, for Christ's yoke is easy, his burden light, and his commands not grievous:[p] but, 1. From the opposition we meet with. 2. The contrary principles still remaining in our nature, which will make us cry out, "O wretched men!" Rom. vii. 24. 3. From the weakness of our graces, and so of our motion. Great labour, where there is a suitable strength, is a pleasure; but to the weak, how painful! With what panting and weariness doth a feeble man ascend that hill which the sound man runs up with ease. We are all, even the best, but feeble. An easy, dull profession of religion, that never encountereth with these difficulties and pains, is a sad sign of an unsound heart. Christ, indeed, hath freed us from the impossibilities of the covenant of works, and from the burden and yoke of legal ceremonies, but not from the difficulties and pains of gospel duties. 4. Our continued distance from the end, will raise some grief also; for desire and hope, implying the absence of the thing desired and hoped for, do ever imply also some grief for that absence; which all vanish when we come to possession. All these twelve things are implied in a christian's motion, and so presupposed to this rest. And he only that hath the prerequisite qualifications, shall have the crown. Here, therefore, should christians lay out their utmost care and industry. See to your part, and God will certainly see to his part. Look you to your hearts and duties, in which God is ready with assisting grace, and he will see that you lose not the reward. Oh how most christians wrong God and themselves, with being more solicitous about God's part of the work than their own, as if God's faithfulness were more to be suspected than their unfaithful, treacherous hearts! The rest is glorious, and God is faithful: Christ's death is sufficient, and the promise is universal, free, and true. You need not fear missing of heaven through the deficiency or fault of any of these. But yet for all these, the falseness of your own hearts, if you look not to them, may undo you. If you doubt of this, believe the Holy Ghost. "Having a promise left us of entering into his rest, let us fear lest any of you should seem to come short of it," Heb. iv. 1. The promise is true, but conditional. Never fear whether God will break promise, but fear lest you should not truly perform the condition; for nothing else can bereave you of the benefit.

[o] Matt. xxiv. 13; Mark xiii. 13, 22; Acts xiii. 43; xiv. 22; Rom. xi. 22; Col. i. 23; Heb. viii. 9; James i. 25.
[p] Prov. iv. 6; Matt. xi. 30; 1 John v. 3.

CHAPTER IV.

WHAT THIS REST CONTAINETH.

Sect. I. But all this is only the outward court, or at least not the holiest of all. Now we have ascended the steps, may we look within the veil? May we show what this rest containeth, as well as what it presupposeth? But, alas! how little know I of that whereof I am about to speak. Shall I speak before I know? But if I stay till I clearly know, I shall not come again to speak. That glimpse which Paul saw, containeth that which could not, or must not, be uttered, or both.[a] And if Paul had had a tongue to have uttered it, it would have done no good, except his hearers had ears to hear it. If Paul had spoke the things of heaven in the language of heaven, and none understood that language, what the better? Therefore, I will speak, while I may, that little, very little, which I do know of it, rather than be wholly silent. The Lord reveal it to me, that I may reveal it to you; and the Lord open some light, and show both you and me his inheritance: not, as to Balaam only, whose eyes the vision of God opened, to see the goodliness of Jacob's tents and Israel's tabernacles, where he had no portion, but from whence must come his own destruction;[b] nor as to Moses, who had only a discovery, instead of possession, and saw the land which he never entered;[c] but as the pearl was revealed to the merchant in the gospel, who rested not till he had sold all he had, and bought it;[d] and as heaven was opened to blessed Stephen, which he was shortly to enter, and the glory showed him, which should be his own possession.[e]

Sect. II. 1. There is contained in this rest, 1. A cessation from motion or action; not of all action, but of that which hath the nature of a means, and implies the absence of the end. When we have obtained the haven, we have done sailing.

1. Cessation from all that action which hath the nature of means. 1. Knowledge. 2. Faith (how far). 3. Prayer. 4. So fasting, weeping, watching, preach-

[a] 2 Cor. xii. 4.
[b] Numb. xxiv. 15; xvi. 5.
[c] Deut. xxxiv. 1—4.
[d] Matt. xiii. 44—46.
[e] Acts vii. 55, 56.

ing, and sacraments. When the workman hath his wages, it is implied he hath done his work. When we are at our journey's end, we have done with the way. All motion ends at the centre, and all means cease when we have the end. Therefore, prophesying ceaseth, tongues fail, and knowledge shall be done away; that is, so far as it had the nature of a means, and was imperfect.[f] And so faith may be said to cease: not all faith, for how shall we know all things past, which we saw not but by believing? How shall we know the last judgment, the resurrection of the body beforehand, but by believing? How shall we know the life everlasting, the eternity of the joys we possess, but by believing? But all that faith, which, as a means referred to the chief end, shall cease. There shall be no more prayer, because no more necessity, but the full enjoyment of what we prayed for. Whether the soul pray for the body's resurrection, for the last judgment, &c. or whether soul and body pray for the eternal continuance of their joys, is to me unknown; otherwise, we shall not need to pray for what we have, and we shall have all that is desirable. Neither shall we need to fast, and weep, and watch any more, being out of the reach of sin and temptations. Nor will there be use for instructions and exhortations: preaching is done, the ministry of man ceaseth, sacraments useless, the labourers called in because the harvest is gathered, the tares burned, and the work done, the unregenerate past hope, the saints past fear for ever: much less shall there be any need of labouring for inferior ends, as here we do, seeing they will all devolve themselves into the ocean of the ultimate end, and the lesser good be wholly swallowed up of the greatest.

2. Perfect freedom from evil. Sect. III. 2. This rest containeth a perfect freedom from all the evils that accompanied us through our course, and which necessarily follow our absence from the chief good; besides our freedom from those eternal flames and restless miseries, which the neglecters of Christ and grace must remedilessly endure; an inheritance which, both by birth and actual merit, was due to us as well as to them. As

1. Sin. God will not know the wicked so as to own them; so neither will heaven know iniquity to receive it: for there entereth nothing that defileth, or is unclean; all that remains without.[g] And, doubtless, there is not such a thing

2. Sorrow and suffering. as grief and sorrow known there: nor is there such a thing as a pale face, a languid body, feeble joints, unable infancy, decrepit age, peccant humours, dolorous sickness, griping fears, consuming care, nor whatsoever deserves the name of evil. Indeed, a gale of groans and sighs, a stream of tears, accompanied us to the very gates, and there bid us farewell for ever. We did weep and lament, when the world did rejoice; but our sorrow is turned into joy, and our joy shall no man take from us.[h] God were not the chief and perfect good, if the full fruition of him did not free us from all evil. But we shall have occasion to speak more fully of this in that which follows.

3. Personal perfection in the highest degree both of soul and body. Sect. IV. 3. This rest containeth the highest degree of the saints' personal perfection, both of soul and body.[i] This necessarily qualifies them to enjoy the glory, and thoroughly to partake the sweetness of it. Were the glory never so great, and themselves not made capable by a personal perfection suitable thereto, it would be little to them. There is necessary a right disposition of the recipient, to a right enjoying, and affecting. This is one thing that makes the saints' joys there so great. Here, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor heart conceived, what God hath laid up for them that wait for him." For this eye of flesh is not capable of seeing it, nor this ear of hearing it, nor this heart of understanding it; but there the eye, and ear, and heart, are made capable; else how do they enjoy it? The more perfect the sight is, the more delightful the beautiful object. The more perfect the appetite, the sweeter the food. The more musical the ear, the more pleasant the melody. The more perfect the soul, the more joyous those joys, and the more glorious to us is that glory. Nor is it only our sinful imperfection that is here to be removed; nor only that which is the fruit of sin, but that which adhered to us in our pure naturals. Adam's dressing the garden, was neither sin nor the fruit of sin: nor is either to be less glorious than the stars or the sun in the firmament of our Father: yet is this the dignity to which the righteous shall be advanced.[k] There is far more procured by Christ, than was lost by Adam. It is the misery of wicked men here, that all without them is mercy, excellent mercies, but within them a heart full of sin shuts the door against all, and makes them but the more miserable. When all is well within, then all is well indeed. The near good is the best, and the near evil and enemy the worst. Therefore will God, as a special part of his saints' happiness, perfect themselves, as well as their condition.

4. Chiefly the nearest fruition of God the chief good. Sect. V. 4. This rest containeth, as the principal part, our nearest fruition of God, the chiefest good. And here, reader, wonder not if I be at a loss, and in my apprehensions receive but little of that which is in my expressions. If, to the beloved disciple that durst speak and inquire into Christ's secrets, and was filled with his revelations, and saw the new Jerusalem in her glory, and had seen Christ, Moses, and Elias, in part of theirs; if it did not appear to him what we shall be, but only in general, that when Christ appears we shall be like him,[l] no wonder if I know little. When I know so little of God, I cannot know much what it is to enjoy him. When it is so little I know of mine own soul, either its quiddity or quality, while it is here in this tabernacle, how little must I needs know of the infinite Majesty, or the state of this soul when it is advanced to that enjoyment! If I know so little of spirits and spirituals, how little of the Father of spirits! Nay, if I never saw that creature which contains not somcthing unsearchable; nor the worm so small, which affordeth not matter for questions to puzzle the greatest philosopher that ever I met with; no wonder, then, if mine eyes fail, when I would look at God, my tongue fail me in speaking of him, and my heart in conceiving.[m] As long as the Athenian superscrip-

[f] 1 Cor. xiii. 8. There are two excellent parts of our glory, which I have here omitted, and only put them among the adjuncts, which should not have been done. 1. That we shall be members of the heavenly Jerusalem; and so glorify God in that blessed society. 2. That we shall see the face of our glorified Redeemer; and his Person shall everlastingly be glorified in us. Were it again to do, I should largelier treat of both these, as principal parts of our glory and felicity.

[g] Rev. xxi. 27.

[h] John xvi. 20—22.

[i] Beata vita est conveniens naturæ suæ: quæ non aliter contingere potest, quam si primum sana mens est, et in perpetua possessione sanitatis suæ. Seneca, de Vit. Beat. c. 3.

[k] Gen. ii. 15; Dan. xii. 3.

[l] 1 John iii. 2.

[m] O qui perpetua mundum ratione gubernas,
Terrarum cœlique sator, qui tempus ad ævum.
Ire jubes, stabilisque manens das cuncta moveri!
Principium, rector, dux, semita, terminus idem;
Tu requies tranquilla piis, tu cernere finis! &c. Boetius.

tion doth so too well suit with my saerifices, " To the unknown God," and while I eannot contain the smallest rivulet, it is little I ean contain of this immense ocean. We shall never be capable of clearly knowing, till we are capable of fully enjoying; nay, nor till we do actually enjoy him. What strange conceivings hath a man, born blind, of the sun, and its light; or a man born deaf, of the nature of sounds and music! so do we yet want that sense by whieh God must be clearly known. I stand and look upon a heap of ants, and see them all, with one view, very busy to little purpose. They know not me, my being, nature, or thoughts, though I am their fellow-creature; how little, then, must we know of the great Creator, though he with one view eontinually beholds us all. Yet a knowledge we have, though imperfect, and such as must be done away. A glimpse the saints behold, though but in a glass, which makes us capable of some poor, general, dark apprehensions of what we shall behold in glory. If I should tell a worldling but what the holiness and spiritual joys of the saints on earth are, he cannot know it; for grace eannot be clearly known without grace: how much less could he conceive it, should I tell him of this glory! But to the saints I may be somewhat more eneouraged to speak; for grace giveth them a dark knowledge and slight taste of glory.

As all good whatsoever is comprised in God,[n] and all in the ereature are but drops of this ocean; so all the glory of the blessed is comprised in their enjoyment of God: and if there be any mediate joys there, they are but drops from this. If men and angels should study to speak the blessedness of that estate in one word, what can they say beyond this, That it is the nearest enjoyment of God? Say, They have God; and you say, They have all that is worth the having. Oh the full joys offered to a believer in that one sentence of Christ's! I would not, for all the world, that one verse had been left out of the Bible: " Father, I will, that those whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory whieh thou hast given me," John xvii. 24. Every word is full of life and joy. If the queen of Sheba had cause to say of Solomon's glory, " Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants that stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom;"[o] then, sure, they that stand continually before God, and see his glory, and the glory of the Lamb, are somewhat more than happy: to them will Christ " give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God;" and " to eat of the hidden manna," Rev. ii. 7, 17. Yea, " He will make them pillars in the temple of God, and they shall go no more out: and he will write upon them the name of his God, and the name of the eity of his God, new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from God, and his own new name," Rev. iii. 12. Yea, more, if more may be, " He will grant them to sit with him in his throne," Rev. iii. 21. " Thcse are they who come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them: and the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and lead them unto living fountains of water; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, Rev. vii. 14, 15, 17. And may we not now boast with the spouse, " This is my beloved, O daughters of Jerusalem!" And this is the glory of the saints! O blind, deceived world, can you show us such a glory? " This is the city of our God, where the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God." " The glory of God shall lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof," Rev. xxi. 3, 23. " And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall serve him, and they shall see his face, and his name shall be in their foreheads. These sayings are faithful and true, and these are the things that must shortly be done," Rev. xxii. 3, 4, 6. And now we say, as Mephibosheth, Let the world take all besides, if we may but see the face of our Lord in peaee. If the Lord lift up the light of his countenance on us here, it puts more gladness in our hearts than the world's increase can do, Psal. iv. 6, 7. How much more, when in his light we shall have light without darkness; and he shall make us full of joy with his countenance![p] " Rejoice, therefore, in the Lord, O ye righteous; and shout for joy, all ye that are upright of heart;" and say with his servant David, " The Lord is the portion of mine inheritanee; the lines are fallen to me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage. I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth; my flesh also shall rest in hope: for he will not leave me in the grave, nor suffer me (for ever) to see corruption. He will show me the path of life, and bring me into his presenee, where is fulness of joy; and at his right hand, where are pleasures for evermore," Psal. xvi. 5, 6, 8—11. " Whom, therefore, have I in heaven but him, or in earth that I desire besides him? My flesh and my heart have failed, and will fail me; but God is the strength of my heart, and will be my portion for ever. He shall guide me with his counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory. And as they that are far from him shall perish, so is it good, the chief good, for us to be near to God," Psal. lxxiii. 24—28.

The advancement is exeeeding high:[q] what unreverent, damnable presumption would it have been, once to have thought or spoken of such a thing, if God had not spoken it before us! I durst not have thought of the saints' preferment in this life, as Scripture sets it forth, had it not been the express truth of God. What vile unmannerlincss, to talk of " being sons of God," " speaking to him," " having fellowship and communion with him," " dwelling in

Vide Gerson. part. iii. Alphabet. Divini Amoris, cap. 14. Egregie de attributis et excellentiis divinis expatiantem. Beatitudo sumitur objective et formaliter; quod beatos facit ipso fruentes, hoc est, divina bonitas, quæ est summum bonum. Beatitudo autem formalis est ipsa fruitio, &c. Stella in Luc. 10. tom. ii. p. 45.

[n] God is defined to be one that wanteth nothing, and is sufficient for himself, and full of himself, in whom all things do consist, and who himself giveth being to all, saith Athanasius, lib. i. cont. Gentil. God is by nature incorporeal, neither subject to sight nor touch. He is most powerful, and nothing holdeth him; but he holdeth or containeth all things, and ruleth over all. Idem ibid.

[o] 1 Kings x. 8. Some interpret most of those scriptures in the Revelation, of the church's glory on earth: and then it would hold *a minore*. Tu es recreator omnium qui dixisti. Venite ad me omnes qui laboratis, &c. Anima enim quæ est in te, radicata in centro suo et recreata, et quieta est; quæ vero in te non est, multis vanis phantasmatibus fatigatur. Tu sufficientissimus es; qui te habet, totum habet; qui non, mendicus est, et pauper, quia quicquid præter te est, non reficit, non sufficit. Gerson. part. iii. Alphabet. Amoris. Divini, cap. 14.

[p] Psal. xxxvi. 9; Acts ii. 28; Psal. xxxiii. 1.

[q] Admodum caute legenda existimo quæ post alios D. Gibieuf scribit de nostri deificatione in l. 2. de Lib. c. xxvii. sect. 8—10, &c. ut et quæ Aug. in Psal. xlii. et Serm. lxi. de verb. Evang. ab ipso citata. John i. 12; 1 John i. 3; 1 John iv. 15, 16.

him and he in us;" if this had not been God's own language! How much less durst we have once thought of "being brighter than the sun in glory;" of "being coheirs with Christ; of judging the world; of sitting on Christ's throne; of being one with him;" if we had not all this from the mouth and under the hand of God! But hath he said it, and shall it not come to pass? Hath he spoken it, and will he not do it? Yes, as true as the Lord God is true, thus shall it be done to the man whom Christ delights to honour. "The eternal God is their refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and the beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him, and the Lord shall cover them all the day long, and he shall dwell between their shoulders," Deut. xxxiii. 27, 28. "Surely, goodness and mercy shall follow them all the days of their lives, and then they shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever," Psal. xxiii. 6. O christians! believe and consider this. Is sun, and moon, and stars, and all creatures, called upon to praise the Lord?[r] What then should his people do? Surely they are nearer him, and enjoy more of him, than the brutes shall do. All his works praise him, but, above all, let his saints bless him, Psal. cv. 10. O let them speak of the glory of his kingdom, and talk of his power: to make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom, ver. 11, 12. "Let his praise be in the congregation of his saints. Let Israel rejoice in him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their King. Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth; for the Lord taketh pleasure in his people, and will beautify the meek with salvation," Psal. cxlix. 1, 2, 4—6. This is the "light that is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart," Psal. xcvii. 11. Yea, "this honour have all his saints," Psal. cxlix. 9. If the estate of the devils, before their fall, were not much meaner than this, and perhaps lower than some of their fellow-angels, surely their sin was most accursed and detestable. Could they aspire higher? And was there yet room for discontent? What is it, then, that would satisfy them? Indeed, the distance that we sinners and mortals are at from our God, leave us some excuse for discontent with our estate. The poor soul out of the depth cries, and cries aloud, as if his Father were out of hearing: sometimes he chides the interposing clouds; sometimes he is angry at the vast gulf that is set between; sometimes he would have the veil of mortality drawn aside, and thinks death hath forgot his business; he ever quarrels with his sin that separates, and longs till it be separated from the soul, that it may separate God and him no more. Why, poor christian, be of good cheer; the time is near, when God and thou shalt be near, and as near as thou canst well desire: thou shalt dwell in his family; is that enough? It is better to be a doorkeeper in his house, than enjoy the portion of the wicked. Thou shalt ever stand before him, about his throne, in the room with him, in his presence chamber. Wouldst thou yet be nearer? Thou shalt be his child, and he thy Father; thou shalt be an heir of his kingdom; yea, more, the spouse of his Son: and what more canst thou desire? Thou shalt be a member of the body of his Son, he shall be thy Head; thou shalt be one with him, who is one with the Father. Read what he hath desired for thee of his Father. "That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; and the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me," John xvii. 21—23. What can you desire yet more? Except you will, as some do, abuse Christ's expression of oneness, to conceive of such a union, as shall deify us; which were a sin one step beyond the aspiring arrogancy of Adam; and, I think, beyond that of the devils. A real conjunction, improperly called union, we may expect; and a true union of affections. A moral union, improperly still called union, and a true relative union, such as is between the members of the same politic body and the head; yea, such as is between the husband and the wife, who are called one flesh. And a real communion, and communication of real favours, flowing from that relative union. If there be any more, it is acknowledged unconceivable, and consequently unexpressible, and so not to be spoken of. If any can conceive of a proper real[s] union and identity, which shall neither be a unity of essence, nor of person with Christ, I shall not oppose it: but to think of such a union were high blasphemy. Nor must you think of a union, as some do, upon natural grounds, following the dark, mistaken principles of Plato and Plotinus. If your thoughts be not guided and limited by Scripture in this, you are lost.[t]

Quest. But how is it we shall enjoy God?

Q. How do we enjoy God?

Answ. That is the fifth and last we come to.

Sect. VI. 5. This rest containeth a sweet and constant action of all the powers of the soul and body in this fruition of God. It is not the rest of a stone, which ceaseth from all motion when it attains the centre. The senses themselves, as I judge, are not only passive in receiving their object, but partly passive and partly active. Whether the external senses, such as now we have, shall be continued and employed in this work, is a great doubt. For some of them, it is usually acknowledged they shall cease, because their being importeth their use, and their use implieth our estate of imperfection: as there is no use for eating and drinking, so neither for the taste. But for other senses the question will be harder; for Job saith, "I shall see him with these eyes."

A A sweet and constant action of all the powers of the soul in the fruition of God.

1. Of the senses.

But do not all senses imply our imperfection? If Job did speak of more than a redemption from this present distress, as it is like he did, yet certainly these eyes will be made so spiritual, that whether the name of sense, in the same sense as now, shall befit them, is a question. This body shall be so changed, that it shall be no more flesh and blood,[u] for "that cannot inherit the kingdom of God," 1 Cor. xv. 50, but "a spiritual body," ver. 44. "That which we sow, we sow not that body that shall be; but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body," 1 Cor. xv. 37, 38. As the ore is cast into the fire a stone, but comes

[r] Psal. cxlviii.

[s] I take not the word real, as opposite to feigned, but to relative. See Mr. Wallis's Answer to the Lord Brooks fully on this.

[t] De hoc lege Car. Causan. vol. ii. Exercit. l. iv. fol. 66, 67.

[u] I think the apostle speaks of flesh and blood in a proper sense, and not of sin. For them that say, the flesh is but the soul's instrument, and therefore should no more suffer, than a cup, because poison was put in it, or a sword for killing a man, &c. they may find this very objection fully answered by Tertullian, lib. de Resurrect. Carnis, cap. 16. pag. 410. Where he both shows, That the instruments may suffer according to their capacity, and that the flesh is more than a mere instrument to the soul, even a servant and an associate.

forth so pure a metal, that it deserves another name, and so the difference betwixt it and the gold exceeding great: so far greater will the change of our bodies and senses be; even so great, as now we cannot conceive. If grace make a christian differ so much from what he was, that the christian could say to his companion, *Ego non sum ego*, I am not the man I was; how much more will glory make us differ! We may then say much more, This is not the body I had, and these are not the senses I had. But because we have no other name for them, let us call them senses, call them eyes and ears, seeing and hearing: but thus conceive of the difference; that as much as a body spiritual, above the sun in glory, exceedeth these frail, noisome, diseased lumps of flesh or dirt that now we carry about us; so far shall our senses of seeing and hearing exceed these we now possess: for the change of the senses must be conceived proportionable to the change of the body. And, doubtless, as God advanceth our sense, and enlargeth our capacity; so will he advance the happiness of those senses, and fill up with himself all that capacity.[x] And certainly the body should not be raised up and continued, if it should not share of the glory: for as it hath shared in the obedience and sufferings, so shall it also do in the blessedness; and as Christ bought the whole man, so shall the whole partake of the everlasting benefits of the purchase. The same difference is to be allowed for the tongue. For though, perhaps, that which we now call the tongue, the voice, the language, shall not then be; yet, with the forementioned, unconceivable change, it may continue. Certain it is, it shall be the everlasting work of those blessed saints, to stand before the throne of God and the Lamb, and to praise him for ever and ever. As their eyes and hearts shall be filled with his knowledge, with his glory, and with his love; so shall their mouths be filled with his praises. Go on, therefore, O ye saints, while you are on earth, in that divine duty. Learn, O learn, that saint-beseeming work; for in the mouths of his saints his praise is comely. Pray, but still praise: hear and read, but still praise:[y] praise him in the presence of his people; for it shall be your eternal work: praise him, while his enemies deride and abuse you: you shall praise him, while they shall bewail it, and admire you. O blessed employment, to sound forth for ever, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive honour, glory, and power," Rev. iv. 11. And, "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing; for he hath redeemed us to God by his blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hath made us unto your God kings and priests," Rev. v. 9, 10, 12. "Allelujah, salvation, and honour, and glory, and power, unto the Lord our God: praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, small and great. Allelujah: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth," Rev. xix. 1, 5, 6. O christians! this is the blessed rest; a rest without rest: for, "they rest not day nor night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come," Rev. iv. 8. Sing forth his praises now, ye saints; it is a work our Master Christ hath taught us. And you shall for ever sing before him the song of Moses, and the song of the Lamb: "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints," Rev. xv. 3.

2. Of the soul.

Sect. VII. And if the body shall be thus employed, oh how shall the soul be taken up! As its powers and capacities are greatest, so its actions strongest, and its enjoyments sweetest; as the bodily senses have their proper aptitude and action, whereby they receive and enjoy their objects, so doth the soul in its own action enjoy its own object, by knowing, by thinking and remembering, by loving, and by delightful joying: this is the soul's enjoying.[z] By these eyes it sees, and by these arms it embraceth. If it might be said of the disciples with Christ on earth, much more that behold him in his glory, "Blessed are the eyes that see the things that ye see, and the ears that hear the things that ye hear; for many princes and great ones have desired, and hoped, to see the things that ye see, and have not seen them," &c. Matt. xiii. 16, 17.

Knowledge of itself is very desirable, even the knowledge of some evil, though not the evil itself. As far as the rational soul exceeds the sensitive, so far the delights of a philosopher, in discovering[a] the secrets of nature, and knowing the mystery of sciences, exceed the delights of the glutton, the drunkard, the unclean, and of all voluptuous sensualists whatsoever; so excellent is all truth. What then is their delight, who know the God of truth! What would I not give, so that all the uncertain, questionable principles in logic, natural philosophy, metaphysics, and medicine, were but certain in themselves, and to me; and that my dull, obscure notions of them were but quick and clear! Oh, what then should I not either perform or part with to enjoy a clear and true apprehension of the most true God! How noble a[b] faculty of the soul is the understanding! It can compass the earth; it can measure the sun, moon, stars, and heaven; it can foreknow each eclipse to a minute, many years before: yea, but this is the top of all its excellency, it can know God, who is infinite, who made all these; a little here, and more, and much more hereafter. Oh the wisdom and goodness of our blessed Lord! He hath created the understanding with a natural bias and inclination to truth and its object; and to the prime truth, as its prime object: and lest we should turn aside to any creature,

[x] Nos vero etiam virtutes carnis opponimus; ergo et bene operator tenebitur præmio. Etsi anima est quæ agit, et impellit in omnia; carnis obsequium est: dum non licet aut injustum judicem credi aut inertem; injustum, si sociam bonorum operum a præmiis arceat; inertem, si sociam malorum a suppliciis secernat. Quum humana censura eo perfectior habeatur, quo etiam ministros facti cujusque deposcit, nec parcens, nec invidens illis, quo minus cum autoribus, aut pœnæ aut gratiæ communicent fructum. Tertullian, lib. de Resurrect. Carnis, cap. xvi. p. (mihi) 410.

[y] Psal. xxxiii. 1, 2; cxlvii.

[z] It is only by thy soul, and implanted understanding, that God can be beheld and understood. Athanas. l. 1. cont. Gentil. When we speak of seeing God, we must take heed of expecting a proper immediate sight of his essence, more than the creature is capable of. See what great Camero saith: Scholastici homines acuti quidem, sed in hoc argumento nimis acuti: invisibilis est Deus vel angelis, quibus ad Dei conspectum nulla peccati labes sola naturæ imbecillitas (creaturæ enim sunt) aditum interclusit. Camero, Prælect. de Verbo Dei, cap. 7. p. (operum in fol.) 455. Neque pugnant ista cum eorum sententia qui beatitudinem humanam in Dei fruitione collocant. Neque enim frui Deo aliud quicquam est quam potentiæ, sapientiæ, bonitatis divinæ fructum pereipere quem creaturæ modus et ratio ferre potest. Id vero sanctitas ea animæ est quam diximus, et corporis illa gloriosa immortalitas. Neque diversum est quod Scripturæ docent, in Dei visione nostram fœlicitatem esse sitam: nam videtur Deus, experiundo quis sit, et qualem se erga nos præstat, &c. Camero, ibidem. Hæc autem adhuc mysteria existimo.

[a] Jam vero Nosse quantum ametur, quamque falli nolit humana natura, vel hinc intelligi potest, quod lamentari quisque sana mente mavult, quam lætari in amentia. Aug. de Civit. l. 11. c. 37.

[b] Scalig. Exercit. 17. Sect. 3. dicit voluntatem nihil aliud esse quam intellectum extensum, ad habendum et faciendum id quod cognoscit. Vide D. Makowski Colleg. in disp. 18. vit. Pibonis de Just. Passiva.

he hath kept this as his own divine prerogative, not communicable to any creature, viz. to be the prime truth. And though I think not, as [c] some do, that there is so near a close between the understanding and truth, as may produce a proper union or identity; yet, doubtless, it is no such cold touch or disdainful embrace, as is between these gross, earthly heterogeneals. The true, studious, contemplative man knows this to be true; who feels as sweet embraces between his intellect and truth, and far more than ever the quickest sense did in possessing its desired object. But the true, studious, contemplative christian knows it much more; who sometimes hath felt more sweet embraces between his soul and Jesus Christ than all inferior truth can afford. I know some christians are kept short this way, especially the careless in their watch and walking; and those that are ignorant or negligent in the daily actings of faith, who look when God casts in joys, while they lie idle, and labour not to fetch them in by believing: but for others, I appeal to the most of them. Christian, dost thou not sometimes, when after long gazing heavenward thou hast got a glimpse of Christ, dost thou not seem to have been with Paul in the third heaven, whether in the body or out, and to have seen what is unutterable? art thou not, with Peter, almost beyond thyself, ready to say, "Master, it is good to be here?" Oh that I might ever see what I now see! Didst thou never look so long upon the Son of God, till thine eyes were dazzled with his astonishing glory? and did not the splendour of it make all things below seem black and dark to thee when thou lookedst down again, especially in thy day of suffering for Christ, when he usually appears most manifestly to his people? Didst thou never see one walking in the midst of the fiery furnace with thee, like to the Son of God? If thou do know him, value him as thy life, and follow on to know him,[d] and thou shalt know incomparably more than this; or, if I do but renew thy grief to tell thee what thou once didst feel, but now hast lost, I counsel thee to remember whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works, and be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain;[e] and I dare promise thee, because God hath promised, thou shalt see and know that which here thine eye could not see, nor thy understanding conceive. Believe me, christians, yea, believe God, you that have known most of God in Christ here, it is as nothing to that you shall know; it scarce, in comparison of that, deserves to be called knowledge. The difference betwixt our knowledge now and our knowledge then, will be as great as that between our fleshly bodies now and our spiritual, glorified bodies then; for as these bodies, so that knowledge, must cease, that a more perfect may succeed. Our silly, childish thoughts of God, which now is the highest we can reach to, must give place to a more manly knowledge. All this saith the apostle, "Knowledge shall vanish away; for we know in part, &c. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I thought as a child, I understood as a child, but when I became a man, I put away childish things; for now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face: now I know in part, but then I shall know even as also I am known," 1 Cor. xiii. 8—12.

Marvel not, therefore, christian, at the sense of that place of John xvii. 3,[f] how it can be life eternal to know God and his Son Jesus Christ; you must needs know, that to enjoy God and his Christ is eternal life, and the soul's enjoying is in knowing. They that savour only of earth, and consult with flesh, and have no way to try and judge but by sense, and never were acquainted with this knowledge of God, nor tasted how gracious he is, these think it is a poor happiness to know God; let them have health and wealth, and worldly delights, and take you the other. Alas, poor men, they that have made trial of both do not grudge you your delights, nor envy your happiness, but pity your undoing folly, and wish, Oh that you could come near, and taste and try as they have done, and then judge; then continue in your former mind if you can! For our parts, we say with that knowing apostle, though the speech may seem presumptuous, "We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness; and we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, in his Son Jesus Christ: this is the true God, and eternal Life," 1 John v. 19, 20. Here one verse contains the sum of most that I have said. The Son of God is come to be our Head and Fountain of life, and so hath given us an understanding, that the soul may be personally qualified and made capable to know him (God) that is true, the prime Truth; and we are brought so near in this enjoyment that we are in him that is true, not properly by an essential or personal union, but we are in him by being in his Son Jesus Christ. This, that we have mentioned, is the only true God, and so the fittest object for our understanding, which chooseth truth; and this knowing of him, and being in him, in Christ, is eternal life.

2. Memory.

Sect. VIII. And, doubtless, the memory will not be idle or useless in this blessed work, if it be but by looking back to help the soul to value its enjoyment. Our knowledge will be enlarged, not diminished; therefore, the knowledge of things past shall not be taken away; and what is that knowledge, but remembrance? Doubtless, from that height, the saint can look behind him and before him; and to compare past with present things, must needs raise, in the blessed soul, an inconceivable esteem and sense of its condition. To stand on that mount, whence we can see the wilderness and Canaan both at once; to stand in heaven, and look back on earth, and weigh them together in the balance of a comparing sense and judgment; how must it needs transport the soul, and make it cry

[c] L. Brook's Union of the Soul and Truth. In vita æterna præcipuum et omnis hominis bonum summum est suavissima contemplatio, seu visio Dei, ut nobis paterne faventis. Suave est intelligere favorem Dei paternum; suavius eum amatum gustare; et hoc suavius, gustato acquieseere, et contentum esse: omnium vero suavissimum, Seire nos intellecto Dei favore perfrui, et semper fruituros esse. Mat. Martinius Cathol. Fid. l. 3. p. 9. Beatorum fœlicitas hæc erit, quod visuri sunt Deum, h. e. intellectus ipsorum quantum in creatum et finitum intelleetum cadere potest, divinitatem plene et perfeete cognoscet et contemplabitur. Voluntas autem ad Deum cognitum inelinabitur, in eoque tanquam summo bono tranquillissime; fœlicissimoque amore acquiescet. Corpora quoque beatorum suas gloriosas quasdam dotes accipient, &c. Geor. Calixtus in Epitom. Theo. p. 66.

[d] Hos. vi. 2, 3.

[e] Rev. ii. 5; iii. 2.

[f] Scoti glossa est vera, viz. ut eognoseant te amando et fruendo. Vid. Scotum in 4. senten. distinet. 48. q. 1. p. 256. Vita æterna est cognoseere: vivere est motus deleetabilissimus, qui non est sine amore. Deleetatio enim est opus amoris, unde in vita æterna est eognitio quæ amor. Intelleetus enim quodam naturalissimo amore scire desiderat. Et hoc desiderium est quod in se gestat veritatem. Et qui seire desiderat, veritatem seire desiderat. Scire igitur hoc desiderium, est apprehendere desideratum in desiderio. Unde qui concipit Deum esse charitatem, et finem desiderii, scilieet bonitatem, ille videt quomodo in apprehensione charitatis satiatur desiderium animæ. Card. Causanus Exercitat. l. 10. fol. (mihi) 184.

out, Is this the purchase that cost so dear as the blood of God? No wonder: O blessed price, and thrice blessed love, that invented and condescended! Is this the end of believing? is this the end of the Spirit's workings? Have the gales of grace blown me into such a harbour? is it hither that Christ hath enticed my soul? O blessed way, and thrice blessed end! Is this the glory which the Scriptures spoke of, and ministers preached of so much? Why, now I see the gospel indeed is good tidings, even tidings of peace and good things; tidings of great joy to all nations.[g] Is my mourning, my fasting, my sad humblings, my heavy walking, groanings, complainings, come to this? are all my afflictions, sickness, languishing, troublesome physic, fears of death, come to this? are all Satan's temptations, the world's scorns and jeers, come to this? And, now, if there be such a thing as indignation left, how will it here let fly! O vile nature, that resisted so much and so long such a blessing! Unworthy soul! is this the place thou camest so unwillingly towards? was duty wearisome? was the world too good to lose? Didst thou stick at leaving all, denying all, and suffering any thing for this? wast thou loth to die to come to this? O false heart, that had almost betrayed me to eternal flames, and lost me this glory! O base flesh, that would needs have been pleased, though to the loss of this felicity! Didst thou make me to question the truth of this glory? didst thou show me improbabilities, and draw me to distrust the Lord? didst thou question the truth of that Scripture which promised this? Why, my soul, art thou not now ashamed that ever thou didst question that love that hath brought thee hither; that thou wast jealous of the faithfulness of thy Lord; that thou suspectedst his love when thou shouldest only have suspected thyself; that thou didst not live continually transported with thy Saviour's love; and that ever thou quenchedst a motion of his Spirit? Art thou not ashamed of all thy hard thoughts of such a God; of all thy misinterpreting of, and grudging at, those providences, and repining at those ways, that have such an end? Now, thou art sufficiently convinced that the ways thou calledst hard, and the cup thou calledst bitter, were necessary; that thy Lord hath sweeter ends, and meant thee better, than thou wouldst believe; and that thy Redeemer was saving thee, as well when he crossed thy desires as when he granted them, and as well when he broke thy heart as when he bound it up. O, no thanks to thee, unworthy self, but shame, for this received crown; but to Jehovah and the Lamb be glory for ever.

Thus, as the memory of the wicked will eternally promote their torment, to look back on the pleasures enjoyed, the sin committed, the grace refused, Christ neglected, and time lost; so will the memory of the saints for ever promote their joys. And as it is said to the wicked, "Remember that thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things;" so will it be said to the christian, "Remember that thou in thy life-time receivedst thine evils; but now thou art comforted, and they are tormented."[h] And as here the remembrance of former good is the occasion of increasing our grief, "I remembered God, and was troubled; I called to remembrance my songs in the night," Psal. lxxvii. 3, 6; so there the remembrance of our former sorrows adds life to our joys.

3. Affections. 1. Love.

Sect. IX. But oh the full, the near, the sweet enjoyment is that of the affections, love, and joy! It is near; for love is of the essence of the soul, and love is the essence of God: "for God is love." How near, therefore, is this blessed closure! The Spirit's phrase is, "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him," 1 John iv. 8, 16. The acting of this affection, wheresoever, carrieth much delight along with it, especially when the object appears deserving, and the affection is strong; but oh, what will it be when perfect affections shall have the strongest, perfect, incessant acting upon the most perfect object, the ever-blessed God! Now the poor soul complains, Oh that I could love Christ more! but I cannot; alas! I cannot: yea, but then thou canst not choose but love him: I had almost said, forbear if thou canst. Now, thou knowest little of his amiableness, and therefore lovest little; then thine eye will affect thy heart, and the continual viewing of that perfect beauty will keep thee in continual ravishments of love. Now thy salvation is not perfected, nor all the mercies purchased yet given in; but when the top-stone is set on, thou shalt, with shouting, cry, Grace, grace! Now thy sanctification is imperfect, and thy pardon and[i] justification not so complete as then it[k] shall be; now thou knowest not what thou enjoyest, and therefore lovest the less: but when thou knowest much is forgiven, and much bestowed, thou wilt love more. Doth David, after an imperfect deliverance, sing forth his love, "I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and supplications?" Psal. cxvi. 1. What think you will he do eternally; and how will he love the Lord, who hath lifted him up to that glory? Doth he cry out, "Oh how I love thy law!" Psal. cxix. 97. "My delight is in the saints on earth, and the excellent," Psal. xvi. 3. How will he say then, Oh how I love the Lord, and the King of saints, in whom is all my delight! Christians, doth it now stir up your love, to remember all the experiences of his love; to look back upon a life of mercies? doth not kindness melt you, and the sunshine of divine goodness warm your frozen hearts? What will it do, then, when you shall live in love, and have all in him, who is All? Oh the high delights of love, of this love; the content that the heart findeth in it; the satisfaction it brings along with it! Surely love is both work and wages.

And if this were all, what a high favour, that God will give us leave to love him; that he will vouchsafe to be embraced by such arms, that have embraced lust and sin before him! But this is not all.[l] He returneth love for love; nay, a thousand times more: as perfect as we shall be, we cannot reach his measure of love. Christian, thou wilt be then brimful of love; yet love as much as thou canst, thou

[g] Luke i. 19; ii. 10; Acts xiii. 32.

[h] Luke xvi. 25.

[i] I know it is commonly said, that justification hath no degrees; but yet it is taken for several acts, whereof that of Christ absolving and acquitting us at the last judgment, is the most complete justification; as Mr. Burgess, in his last lectures of justification, affirmeth.

[k] Creaturæ rationalis alia beatitudo nec potuit, nec potest esse, nec poterit; nisi ut agnoscens a quo non solum facta, sed etiam a quo rationalis facta, majorem dilectionem exhibeat bono creatori, quam sibi. Neque ei esse possit, ullatenus ratio, nisi ei possit creatoris inesse dilectio. Quia, nec est alia quæ vera sit sapientia, vel intelligentia creaturæ rationalis, nisi dilectio Creatoris; in qua tanto magis minusve est dilectio sui, quanto magis minusve dilectionem exhibet Creatori. Fulg. l. 1. ad Monim. c. 18.

[l] Dum Deum sibi sufficere cogitas, quid aliud cogitas nisi Deum amare in se quicquid amat aliud a se? et rationem amandi res, non esse earum sed sui ipsius bonitatem. Amabit aliquid extra se; et peregrinabitur longius a se si amorem ejus excitari concesseris ab eo quod externum illi est. Amat ea quæ sunt extra se, sed amat ea in se: qui seipso contentus nunquam commoratur, nunquam peregrinatur extra se. Gibieuf. l. 2. c. xxvii. p. 483. sect. 7.

shalt be ten thousand times more beloved.[m] Dost thou think thou canst overlove him? What! love more than love itself? Were the arms of the Son of God open upon the cross, and an open passage made to his heart by the spear, and will not arms and heart be open to thee in glory? did he begin to love before thou lovedst, and will not he continue now? did he love thee, an enemy; thee, a sinner; thee, who even loathedst thyself; and own thee when thou didst disclaim thyself; and will he not now immeasurably love thee, a son; thee, a perfect saint; thee, who returnest some love for love? Thou wast wont injuriously to question his love; doubt of it now if thou canst. As the pains of hell will convince the rebellious sinner of God's wrath, who would never before believe it; so the joys of heaven will convince thee thoroughly of that love which thou wouldst so hardly be persuaded of. He that in love wept over the old Jerusalem near her ruins, with what love will he rejoice over the new Jerusalem in her glory! O, methinks I see him groaning and weeping over dead Lazarus, till he forced the Jews that stood by to say, "Behold how he loved him!" Will he not then much more, by rejoicing over us, make all (even the damned, if they see it) to say, Behold how he loveth them? Is his spouse, while black, yet comely? is she his love, his dove, his undefiled; doth she ravish his heart with one of her eyes; is her love better than wine? O believing soul, study a little, and tell me, what is the harvest which these first-fruits foretell; and the love which these are but the earnest of? Here! O, here is the heaven of heaven! this is the saint's fruition of God; in these sweet, mutual, constant actings and embracements of love, doth it consist. To love, and be beloved: "These are the everlasting arms that are underneath," Deut. xxxiii. 27. "His left hand is under their heads, and with his right hand doth he embrace them," Cant. ii. 6. Reader, stop here, and think awhile what a state this is. Is it a small thing in thine eyes to be beloved of God; to be the son, the spouse, the love, the delight of the King of glory? Christian, believe this, and think on it; thou shalt be eternally embraced in the arms of that love, which was from everlasting, and will extend to everlasting: of that love, which brought the Son of God's love from heaven to earth, from earth to the cross, from the cross to the grave, from the grave to glory: that love, which was weary, hungry, tempted, scorned, scourged, buffeted, spit upon, crucified, pierced; which did fast, pray, teach, heal, weep, sweat, bleed, die: that love will eternally embrace them. When perfect, created love, and most perfect, uncreated love meet together, oh the blessed meeting! It will not be like Joseph and his brethren, who lay upon one another's necks weeping; it will break forth into a pure joy, and not such a mixture of joy and sorrow as their weeping argued; it will be loving and rejoicing, not loving and sorrowing: yet will it make Pharaoh's (Satan's) court to ring with the news, that Joseph's brethren are come; that the saints are arrived safe at the bosom of Christ, out of the reach of hell for ever. Neither is there any such love as David's and Jonathan's; shutting up in sorrows, and breathing out its last into sad lamentations for a forced separation: no, Christ is the powerful attractive, the effectual Loadstone, who draws to it all like itself. "All that the Father hath given him, shall come unto him;" even the lover, as well as the love, doth he draw; "and they that come unto him, he will in no-wise cast out," John vi. 37—39. For know this, believer, to thy everlasting comfort, that if these arms have once embraced thee, neither sin nor hell can get thee thence for ever:[n] the sanctuary is inviolable, and the rock impregnable, whither thou art fled, and thou art safe locked up to all eternity. Thou hast not now to deal with an unconstant creature, but with him with whom is no varying nor shadow of change, even the immutable God. If thy happiness were in thine own hand, as Adam's, there were yet fear; but it is in the keeping of a faithful Creator. Christ hath not bought thee so dear, to trust thee with thyself any more. His love to thee will not be as thine was on earth to him, seldom and cold, up and down, mixed (as agueish bodies) with burning and quaking, with a good day and a bad: no, christian, he that would not be discouraged by thine enmity, by thy loathsome, hateful nature, by all thy unwillingness, unkind neglects, and churlish resistances; he that would neither cease nor abate his love for all these, can he cease to love thee, when he hath made thee truly lovely? He that keepeth thee so constant in thy love to him, that thou canst challenge "tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, or sword," to separate thy love from Christ if they can, Rom. viii. 35, how much more will himself be constant! Indeed, he that produced these mutual, embracing affections, will also produce such a mutual constancy in both, that thou mayst confidently be persuaded, as Paul was before thee, "that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord," ver. 38, 39. And now are we not left in the apostles' admiration? What shall we say to these things? Infinite love must needs be a mystery to a finite capacity. No wonder if angels desire to pry into this mystery;[o] and if it be the study of the saints here, to know the height, and breadth, and length, and depth, of this love, though it passeth knowledge: this is the saints' rest in the fruition of God by love.

2. By joy.

Sect. X. Lastly: The affection of joy hath not the least share in this fruition. It is that which all the rest lead to, and conclude in; even the unconceivable complacency which the blessed feel in their seeing, knowing, loving, and being beloved of God. The delight of the senses here, cannot be known by expressions, as they are felt; how much less this joy! This is the "white stone, which none knoweth but he that receiveth;"[p] and if there be any "joy which the stranger meddleth not with," then surely this, above all, is it. All Christ's ways of mercy tend to and end in the saints' joys. He wept, sorrowed, suffered, that they might rejoice; he sendeth the Spirit to be their comforter; he multiplieth promises, he discovers their future happiness, that their "joy may be full:" he aboundeth to them in the mercies of all sorts; he maketh them lie down in green pastures, and leadeth them by the still waters; yea, openeth to them the fountain of living waters; that their joy

[m] John xi. 33, 35, 36; Cant. i. 5; v. 2; vi. 9; iv. 9, 10, &c. Ibi nec minor erit laudatione nostra, dilectio, nec inferior dilectione laudatio; erit enim plena nostra laudatio qui tum in nobis erit Dei proximique perfecta dilectio. Tunc laudabimus et habebimus, tunc habebimus et amabimus; tunc satiabimur cum delectatione, et delectabimur cum satietate. Fulgent. Epist. 4. ad Prob. c. 7, 8.

[n] Prima erat perseverantiæ potestas, bonum posse non deserere. Novissima erit felicitas perseverantiæ, Bonum non posse deserere. Aug. de Corr. et Grat. cap. 9.

[o] 1 Pet. i. 12; Eph. iii. 18.

[p] Rev. ii. 17; Prov. xiv. 10.

may be full; that they may thirst no more; and that it may spring up in them to everlasting life.[q] Yea, he causeth them to suffer, that he may cause them to rejoice; and chasteneth them, that he may give them rest; and maketh them, as he did himself, "to drink of the brook in the way, that they may lift up the head," Psal. cx. 7. And lest, after all this, they should neglect their own comforts, he maketh it their duty, and presseth it on them, commanding them to "rejoice in him alway, and again to rejoice." And he never brings them into so low a condition, wherein he leaves them not more cause of joy than of sorrow. And hath the Lord such a care of our comfort here; where, the Bridegroom being from us, we must mourn?[r] Oh! what will that joy be, where the soul being perfectly prepared for joy, and joy prepared by Christ for the soul, it shall be our work, our business, eternally to rejoice! And it seems the saints' joy shall be greater than the damned's torment: for their torment is the torment of creatures, prepared for the devil and his angels;[s] but our joy is the joy of our Lord; even our Lord's own joy shall we enter: "and the same glory which the Father giveth him, doth the Son give to them," John xvii. 22; "and to sit with him in his throne, even as he is set down in his Father's throne," Rev. iii. 21. What sayest thou to all this, O thou sad and drooping soul? Thou that now spendest thy days in sorrow, and thy breath in sighings, and turnest all thy voice into groanings; who knowest no garments but sackcloth, no food but the bread and water of affliction; who minglest thy bread with tears, and drinkest the tears which thou weepest; what sayest thou to this great change, from all sorrow to more than all joy? Thou poor soul, who prayest for joy, waitest for joy, complainest for want of joy, longest for joy; why, then, thou shalt have full joy, as much as thou canst hold, and more than ever thou thoughtest on, or thy heart desired. And, in the mean time, walk carefully, watch constantly, and then let God measure out thy times and degrees of joy. It may be he keeps them till thou have more need: thou mayst better lose thy comfort than thy safety: if thou shouldst die full of fears and sorrows, it will be but a moment, and they are all gone, and conclude in joy unconceivable. As the joy of the hypocrite, so the fears of the upright are but for a moment. And as their hopes are but golden dreams, which, when death awakes, do then all perish, and their hopes die with them; so the saints' doubts and fears are but terrible dreams, which, when they die, do all vanish; and they awake in joyful glory. For "God's anger endureth but a moment, but in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, (darkness and sadness go together,) but joy cometh in the morning," Psal. xxx. 5. O blessed morning, thrice blessed morning! poor, humble, drooping soul, how would it fill thee with joy now, if a voice from heaven should tell thee of the love of God; of the pardon of thy sins; and should assure thee of thy part in these joys! Oh what then will thy joys be, when thy actual possession shall convince thee of thy title, and thou shalt be in heaven before thou art well aware! when the angels shall bring thee to Christ, and when Christ shall, as it were, take thee by the hand, and lead thee into thy purchased possession, and bid thee welcome to his rest, and present thee unspotted before his Father, and give thee thy place about his throne! Poor sinner, what sayest thou to such a day as this? wilt thou not be almost ready to draw back, and to say, What I, Lord, I, the unworthy neglecter of thy grace! I, the unworthy disesteemer of thy blood, and slighter of thy love! must I have this glory? "Make me a hired servant, I am no more worthy to be called a son." But love will have it so; therefore must thou enter into his joy.

God will joy in us as well as we in him.

Sect. XI. And it is not thy joy only; it is a mutual joy as well as a mutual love. Is there such joy in heaven at thy conversion, and will there be none at thy glorification? will not the angels welcome thee thither, and congratulate thy safe arrival? Yea, it is the joy of Jesus Christ: for now he hath the end of his undertaking, labour, suffering, dying, when we have our joys; when he is "glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe."[t] We are his seed, and the fruit of his soul's travail, which, when he seeth, he will be satisfied, Isa. liii. 10, 11. This is Christ's harvest, when he shall reap the fruit of his labours; and when he seeth it was not in vain, it will not repent him concerning his sufferings; but he will rejoice over his purchased inheritance, and his people shall rejoice in him.

Yea, the Father himself puts on joy, too, in our joy: as we grieve his Spirit, and weary him with our iniquities, so he is rejoiced in our good.[u] Oh how quickly here he doth espy a returning prodigal, even afar off! how doth he run and meet him; and with what compassion falls he on his neck, and kisseth him; and puts on him the best robe, and a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet, and spares not to kill the fatted calf, that they may eat and be merry! This is indeed a happy meeting; but nothing to the embracements and the joy of that last and great meeting.

Yea, more yet; as God doth mutually love and joy, so he makes this his rest, as it is our rest. Did he appoint a sabbath, because he rested from six days' work, and saw all good, and very good? What an eternal sabbatism, then, when the work of redemption, sanctification, preservation, glorification, are all finished, and his work more perfect than ever, and very good indeed! So the Lord is said to rejoice, and to take pleasure in his people, Psalm cxlvii. 11, and cxlix. 4. O christians, write these words in letters of gold; "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee, is mighty: he will save: he will rejoice over thee with joy: he will rest in his love: he will joy over thee with singing," Zeph. iii. 17. Oh, well may we then rejoice in our God with joy, and rest in our love, and joy in him with singing. See Isa. lxv. 18, 19.

And now look back upon all this: I say to thee as the angel to John, "What hast thou seen?" or if yet thou perceive not, draw nearer, come up higher, come and see. Dost thou fear thou hast been all this while in a dream? Why, these are the true sayings of God. Dost thou fear, as the disciples, that thou hast seen but a ghost, instead of Christ;[x] a shadow instead of rest? Why, come near and feel: a shadow contains not those substantial blessings, nor rests upon the basis of such a foundation truth, and sure word of promise, as you have seen these do. Go thy way now, and tell the disciples, and tell the humble, drooping souls thou meetest with, that thou hast in this glass seen heaven; that the Lord indeed is risen, and hath there appeared to thee; and behold

[q] John xv. 11; xvi. 24; xvii. 13; Psal. xciv. 12, 13; 1 Thess. v. 16; Psal. xxxii. 11; xxxiii. 1, &c.
[r] Matt. ix. 15. [s] Matt. xxv. [t] 2 Thess i. 10.
[u] Quomodo passiones non esse in Deo, et tamen delectationem, quadium et amorem esse in Deo scholastici asserunt. Vide in Aquin. cont. Gentil. l. 1. qu. 90—92. et sum. 1, &c. Sed hæc nobis incomprehensibilia et incognita existimo. Nam ut Aristot. in 2 Metaph. asserit, Intellectus noster sic se habet ad prima entium quæ sunt manifestissima in natura sicut oculus vespertilionis ad solem. Referente Thoma. cont. Gentil. l. 1. c. 3. ubi plura de hac re videre est
[x] Luke xxiv. 37—39; Mark xvi. 7.

he is gone before us into rest; and that he is now preparing a place for them, and will come again, and take them to himself, that where he is, there they may be also, John xiv. 3. Yea, go thy ways, and tell the unbelieving world, and tell thy unbelieving heart, if they ask what is the hope thou boastest of, and what will be thy rest, Why, this is my Beloved, and my Friend, and this is my hope and my rest. Call them forth, and say, "Behold what love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be the sons of God," 1 John iii. 1; and that we should enter into our Lord's own rest.

Sect. XII. But, alas! my fearful heart dare scarce proceed: methinks I hear the Almighty's voice saying to me, as to Elihu, "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?" Job xxxviii. 2.

But pardon, O Lord, thy servant's sin: I have not pried into unrevealed things, nor, with audacious wits, curiously searched into thy counsels; but, indeed, I have dishonoured thy holiness, wronged thine excellency, disgraced thy saints' glory, by my own exceeding disproportionable portraying. I will bewail, from my heart, that my conceivings fall so short, my apprehensions are so dull, my thoughts so mean, my affections so stupid, and my expressions so low and unbeseeming such a glory. But I have only heard by the hearing of the ear: O let thy servant see thee, and possess these joys; and then I shall have more suitable conceivings, and shall give thee fuller glory, and abhor my present self, and disclaim and renounce all these imperfections. "I have now uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. Yet I believed, and therefore spake," Job xlii. 3. Remember with whom thou hast to do: what canst thou expect from dust but levity; or from corruption, but defilement? Our foul hands will leave, where they touch, the marks of their uncleanness; and most on those things that are most pure. "I know thou wilt be sanctified in them that come nigh thee, and before all the people thou wilt be glorified," Lev. x. 2, 3; Numb. xx. 12; Deut. xxxii. 51. And if thy jealousy excluded from that land of rest thy servants, Moses and Aaron, because they sanctified thee not in the midst of Israel, what then may I expect? But though the weakness and irreverence be the fruit of my own corruption, yet the fire is from thine altar, and the work of thy commanding. I looked not into thine ark, nor put forth my hand unto it without thee. O, therefore, wash away these stains also in the blood of the Lamb: and let not jealousy burn us up; lest thou affright the people away from thee, and make them, in their discouragement, to cry out, "How shall the ark of God come to us? Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God? Who shall approach and dwell with the consuming fire?" 2 Sam. vi. 9; 1 Sam. vi. 20; Matt. xxvi. 14. Imperfect, or none, must be thy service here. O, take thy Son's excuse, "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

CHAPTER V.

THE FOUR GREAT PREPARATIVES TO OUR REST.

Sect. I. Having thus opened you a window toward the temple, and showed you a small glimpse of the back parts of that resemblance of the saints' rest which I had seen in the gospel-glass, it follows, that we proceed to view a little the adjuncts and blessed properties of this rest; but, alas! this little which I have seen makes me cry out, with the prophet Isaiah, chap. vi. 5—7, "Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!" Yet if he will send and touch my lips with a coal from the altar of his Son, and say, Thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged, I shall then speak boldly; and if he ask, Whom shall I send, I shall gladly answer, "Here am I, send me," ver. 8. And why doth my trembling heart draw back? Surely the Lord is not now so terrible and inaccessible, nor the passage of paradise so blocked up, as when the law and curse reigned. Wherefore, finding, beloved christians, "that the new and living way is consecrated for us, through the veil, the flesh of Christ, by which we may with boldness enter into the holiest, by the blood of Jesus, I shall draw near with the fuller assurance," Heb. x. 20—22. And finding the flaming sword removed, shall look again into the paradise of our God: and because I know that this is no forbidden fruit, and, withal, that it is good for food, and pleasant to the spiritual eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one truly wise and happy, Gen. iii. 6; I shall take, through the assistance of the Spirit, and eat thereof myself, and give to you, according to my power, that you may eat. For you, christians, is this food prepared, this wine broached, this fountain opened; and the message my Master sends you is this hearty welcome, which you shall have in his own words, "Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved," Cant. v. 1. And, surely, it is neither manners nor wisdom for you or me, to draw back or to demur upon such an invitation.

The antecedents of our rest.

And first, Let us consider of the eminent antecedents, the great preparations; that notable introduction to this rest; for the porch of this temple is exceeding glorious, and the gate of it is called Beautiful: and here offer themselves to our distinct observation, these four things, as the four corners of this porch.

1. The most glorious coming and appearing of the Son of God.

2. His powerful and wonderful raising of our bodies from the dust, and uniting them again with the soul.

3. His public and solemn proceedings in their judgment, where they shall be justified and acquitted before all the world.

4. His solemn celebration of their coronation, and his enthronizing of them in their glory. Follow but this fourfold stream unto the head, and it will bring you just to the garden of Eden.

1. The coming of Christ.

Sect. I. And well may the coming of Christ be reckoned into his people's glory, and enumerated with those ingredients that compound this precious antidote of rest: for to this end it is intended; and to this end it is of apparent necessity. For his people's sake he sanctified himself to his office; for their sake he came into the world, suffered, died, rose, ascended; and for their sake it is that he will return. Whether his own exaltation, or theirs, were his[a] primary intention, is a question, though of seeming usefulness, yet so unresolved, for aught I have found, in Scripture, that I dare not scan it, for fear of pressing into the divine secrets, and approaching too near the inaccessible light. I find Scripture mentioning both ends distinctly and conjunctly, but not comparatively. This is most clear, that to this end will Christ come again to receive his people to himself, "that where

[a] Viz. of the man Christ, next the glory of the Godhead, Rom. xiv. 9; 2 Thess. i. 10; Tit. ii. 14.

he is, there they may be also," John xiv. 3. The Bridegroom's departure was not upon divorce; he did not leave us with a purpose to return no more: he hath left pledges enough to assure us; we have his word in pawn, his many promises, his sacraments, which show forth his death till he come, and his Spirit to direct, sanctify, and comfort, till he return. We have frequent tokens of love from him, to show us he forgets not his purpose, nor us. We behold the forerunners of his coming, foretold by himself, daily come to pass. We see the fig tree put forth her branches, and therefore know the summer is nigh. We see the fields white unto harvest: and though the riotous world say, Our Lord will be long a coming, yet let the saints lift up their heads, for their redemption draweth nigh. Alas! fellow-christians, what should we do, if our Lord should not return?[b] What a case are we here left in! What! leave us among wolves, and in the lion's den, among a generation of serpents, and here forget us! Did he buy us so dear, and then cast us off so? to leave us sinning, suffering, groaning, dying daily, and come no more at us? It cannot be; never fear it: it cannot be. This is like our unkind dealing with Christ, who, when we feel ourselves warm in the world, care not for coming at him; but this is not like Christ's dealing with us. He that would come to suffer, will surely come to triumph; and he that would come to purchase, will surely come to possess. Alas! where else were all our hopes? What were become of our faith, our prayers, our tears, and our waiting? What were all the patience of the saints worth to them? Were we not left of all men most miserable? Christians, hath Christ made us forsake all the world, and be forsaken of all the world; to hate all, and to be hated of all; and all this for him, that we might have him instead of all? and will he, think you, after all this, forget us and forsake us himself? Far be such a thought from our hearts! But why stayed he not with his people, while he was here? Why must not the Comforter be sent? Was not the work on earth done? Must he not receive the recompence of reward, and enter into his glory? Must he not take possession in our behalf? Must he not go to prepare a place for us? Must he not intercede with the Father; and plead his sufferings, and be filled with the Spirit, to send it forth; and receive authority, to subdue his enemies? Our abode here is short; if he had stayed on earth, what would it have been to enjoy him for a few days, and then die? But he hath more in heaven to dwell among; even the spirits of the just of many generations, there made perfect. Besides, he will have us live by faith, and not by sight. Oh, fellow-christians, what a day will that be, when we, who have been kept prisoners by sin, by sinners, by the grave, shall be fetched out by the Lord himself; when Christ shall come from heaven to plead with his enemies, and set his captives free! It will not be such a coming as his first was, in meanness, and poverty, and contempt: he will not come to be spit upon, and buffeted, and scorned, and crucified again: he will not come, O careless world, to be slighted and neglected by you any more. And yet that coming, which was necessarily in infirmity and reproach for our sakes, wanted not its glory. If the angels of heaven must be the messengers of that coming, as being "tidings of joy to all people;"[c] and the heavenly host must go before or accompany the celebration of his nativity, and must praise God with that solemnity, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men;" oh, then, with what shoutings will angels and saints at that day proclaim, Glory to God, and peace and good will towards men! If the stars of heaven must lead men from remote parts of the world to come to worship a child in a manger; how will the glory of his next appearing constrain all the world to acknowledge his sovereignty! If the King of Israel, riding on an ass, made his entry into Jerusalem with hosannahs, "Blessed be the King that comes in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest!"[d] Oh with what proclamations of blessings, peace, and glory, will he come toward the new Jerusalem! If, when he was in the form of a servant, they cry out, "What manner of man is this, that both wind and sea obey him?"[e] what will they say when they shall see him coming in his glory, and the heavens and the earth obey him! "Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven, and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory."[f] O christians, it was comfortable to you to hear from him, to believe in him, and hope for him. What will it be to see him? The promise of his coming and our deliverance was comfortable. What will it be thus to see him, with all the glorious attendance of angels, come in person to deliver us?[g] "The mighty God, the Lord, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence; a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he might judge his people. Gather my saints together to me, those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice; and the heavens shall declare his righteousness; for God is Judge himself, Selah," Psalm l. 1—6. This coming of Christ is frequently mentioned in the prophets, as the great support of his people's spirits till then. And whenever the apostles would quicken to duty, or comfort, and encourage to patient waiting, they usually do it by mentioning Christ's coming. Why, then, do we not use more this cordial consideration, whenever we want support and comfort? To think and speak of that day with horror, doth well beseem the impenitent sinner, but ill the believing saint. Such may be the voice of a believer, but it is not the voice of faith. Christians, what do we believe, and hope, and wait for, but to see that day? This is Paul's encouragement to moderation, to "rejoicing in the Lord alway; The Lord is at hand," Phil. iv. 4, 5. It is "to all them that love his appearing, that the

[b] Matt. xxiv. 32, 48; x. 16; Psal. lvii. 4; Matt. iii. 7. The ancient christians still worshipped in the churches with their faces eastward, to signify their continual expectation of Christ's coming, who they thought should appear in the east; from that of Matt. xxiv. 27; John xvi. 7; xvii. 4; Heb. xii. 2; Luke xxiv. 26; John xiv. 3; Heb. vii. 25, 26; Gal. iii. 14; Eph. iv. 8, 9.

[c] Luke ii. 22.

[d] Luke xix. 38. [e] Matt. viii. 27.

[f] Mark iv. 41; xxiv. 30

[g] Stoicis constans opinio est quod consumpto humore, mundus hic omnis ignescet. Et Epicureis de elementorum conflagratione, et mundi ruina, eadem ipsa sententia est. Loquitur Plato partes orbis nunc inundare, nunc alternis vicibus ardescere. Et cum ipsum mundum perpetuum et insolubilem diceret esse fabricatum; addit tamen ipsi artifici Deo soli et solubilem esse et mortalem. Ita nihil mirum est, si ista moles ab eo quo extructa est destruatur. Minut. Felix. Octa. p. (mihi) 394. Cum tempus advenerit quo se mundus renovaturus, &c. omni flagrante materia uno igne, quicquid nunc ex disposito lucet ardebit. Nos quoque fœlices animæ et æterna sortitæ, cum Deo visum erit iterum ista moliri, &c. Fœlicem filium tuum, Marcia, qui ista (mortuus) jam novit. Senec. Consol. ad Marciam.

Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give the crown of righteousness at that day," 2 Tim. iv. 8. Dost thou so long to have him come into thy soul with comfort and life, and takest thyself but for a forlorn orphan, while he seemeth absent? And dost thou not much more long for that coming which shall perfect thy life, and joy, and glory? Dost thou so rejoice after some short and slender enjoyment of him in thy heart? Oh! how wilt thou then rejoice! How full of joy was that blessed martyr, Mr. Glover, with the discovery of Christ to his soul, after long doubting and waiting in sorrows! So that he cries out, He is come! he is come! If thou have but a dear friend returned, that hath been far and long absent; how do all run out to meet him with joy! Oh! saith the child, My father is come! saith the wife, My husband is come! And shall not we, when we behold our Lord in his majesty returning, cry out, He is come! He is come! Shall the wicked, with inconceivable horror, behold him, and[h] cry out, Oh! yonder is he whose blood we neglected, whose grace we resisted, whose counsels we refused, whose government we cast off! And shall not then the saints, with inconceivable gladness, cry out, Oh! yonder is he whose blood redeemed us, whose Spirit cleansed us, whose law did govern us! Yonder comes he in whom we trusted, and now we see he hath not deceived our trust; he for whom we long waited, and now we see we have not waited in vain! O cursed corruption, that would have had us turn to the world and present things, and give up our hopes, and say, Why should we wait for the Lord any longer? Now we see, that "blessed are all they that wait for him." Believe it, fellow-christians, this day is not far off. "For yet a little while, and he that comes will come, and will not tarry." And though the unbelieving world, and the unbelief of thy heart, may say, as those atheistical scoffers, "Where is the promise of his coming? Do not all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation?" Yet, let us know, "the Lord is not slack of his promise, as some men count slackness: one day with him is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day," 2 Pet. iii. 3, 4, 8, 9. I have thought on it many a time, as a small emblem of that day, when I have seen a prevailing army drawing towards the towns and castles of the enemy. Oh! with what glad hearts do all the poor prisoners within hear the news, and behold their approach! How do they run up to their prison windows, and thence behold their friends with joy! How glad are they at the roaring report of that cannon, which is the enemy's terror! How do they clap each other on the back, and cry, Deliverance, deliverance! While, in the mean time, the late insulting, scorning, cruel enemies begin to speak them fair, and beg their favour; but all in vain, for they are not at the disposal of prisoners, but of the general. Their fair usage may make their conditions somewhat the more easy, but yet they are used as enemies still, Matt. xxiv. 27. Oh! when the conquering Lion of the tribe of Judah shall appear with all the hosts of heaven; when he shall surprise the careless world, as a thief in the night; when as the lightning, which appeareth in the east, and shineth even to the west, so they shall behold him coming; what a change will the sight of this appearance work, both with the world and with the saints! Now, poor deluded world, where is your mirth and your jollity? Now, where is your wealth and your glory? where is that profane and careless heart, that slighted Christ and his Spirit, and withstood all the offers of grace? Now, where is that tongue that mocked the saints, and jeered the holy ways of God, and made merry with his people's imperfections, and their own slanders? What! was it not you? Deny it if you can. Your heart condemns you, and "God is greater than your heart, and will condemn you much more," 1 John iii. 20, 21. Even when you say, "Peace and safety, then destruction cometh upon you, as travail upon a woman with child; and you shall not escape," 1 Thess. v. 3. Perhaps, if you had known just the day and hour when the Son of man would have come, then you would have been found praying, or the like; but you should have watched, and been ready, because you know not the hour. But for that faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord when he comes shall find so doing; "O, blessed is that servant: verily I say unto you, (for Christ hath said it,) he shall make him ruler over all his goods," Matt. xxiv. 42—47. "And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, he shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away," 1 Pet. v. 4. Oh how should it then be the character of a christian, "to wait for the Son of God from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come," 1 Thess. i. 10. And with all faithful diligence, to prepare to meet our Lord with joy. And seeing his coming is on purpose "to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe," 2 Thess. i. 10; O, what thought should glad our hearts more than the thought of that day! A little while, indeed, we have not "seen him, but yet a little while, and we shall see him," John xiv. 18. For he hath said, "I will not leave you comfortless, but will come unto you." We were comfortless, should he not come. And while we daily gaze and look up to heaven after him, let us remember what the angel said, "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come, in like manner, as ye have seen him go into heaven," Acts i. 10. While he is now out of sight, it is a sword to our souls, while they daily ask us, "Where is your God?" Psal. xlii. But then we shall be able to answer our enemies; See, O proud sinners, yonder is our Lord. O now, christians, should we not put up that petition heartily, "Let thy kingdom come; for the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let every christian that heareth and readeth, say, Come." And our Lord himself saith, "Surely I come quickly; Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus," Rev. xxii. 17, 20.

2. Our resurrection.

Sect. II. The second stream that leadeth to paradise, is that great work of Jesus Christ, in raising our bodies from the dust, uniting them again unto the soul.[i] A wonderful effect of infinite power and love. Yea, wonderful

[h] That the sight of Christ in glory will be no blessedness to the damned, vide Scotum in 4 Senten. Dist. 48. qu. 1, p. 256. contra Thom.

[i] Many heathens believed a resurrection, as Zoroaster, and Theopompus, and Plato. And the stoics' opinion was, that the world would be dissolved by fire or water, and all things brought to a better state, or to the first golden age again. Read Seneca, Natural. Quæst. l. iii. c. 26—30. Utrumque (diluvium et conflagratio) cum Deo visum est ordiri meliora, vetera finiri: cap. 27. Omne ex integro animal generabitur; dabiturque terris homo inscius scelerum et melioribus auspiciis natus: cap. 30. Optima et noxa carentia expectant nos, si ex hac aliquando fœce in illud evademus sublime et excelsum; tranquillitas animi et expulsis erroribus absoluta libertas. Senec. Epist. l. ii. Ep. 75. Aspice nunc ad ipsa quoque exempla divinæ potestatis: lux moritur in noctem et tenebris usque quaque sepelitur. Funestatur mundi honor: omnis substantia denigratur; sordent, silent, stupent cuncta; ubique justitium est, quies rerum; ita lux amissa lugetur. Et tamen rursus cum suo cultu, cum dote, cum sole, eadem et integra, et tota universo orbi reviviscet, interficiens mortem suam noctem; rescindens sepulturam suam, tenebras; hæres sibimet existens, donec nox reviviscat cum suo et illa suggestu; redaccenduntur enim et stellarum radii, quos matutina suc-

indeed, saith unbelief, if it be true. What! saith the atheist and Sadducee, shall all these scattered bones and dust become a man? A man drowned in the sea is eaten by fishes, and they by men again, and these men by worms; what is become of the body of that first man; shall it rise again? Thou fool, (for so Paul calls thee,) dost thou dispute against the power of the Almighty? wilt thou pose him with thy sophistry? dost thou object difficulties to the infinite strength? Thou blind mole; thou silly worm; thou little piece of creeping, breathing clay; thou dust; thou nothing; knowest thou who it is, whose power thou dost question? If thou shouldst see him, thou wouldst presently die. If he should come and dispute his cause with thee, couldst thou bear it? or if thou shouldst hear his voice, couldst thou endure? But come thy way, let me take thee by the hand, and do thou a little follow me; and let me, with reverence, as Elihu, plead for God, and for that power whereby I hope to arise. Seest thou this great, massy body of the earth: what beareth it, and upon what foundation doth it stand? Seest thou this vast ocean of waters: what limits them, and why do they not overflow and drown the earth? whence is that constant ebbing and flowing of her tides? wilt thou say from the moon, or other planets? and whence have they that power of effective influence? must thou not come to a cause of causes, that can do all things? And doth not reason require thee, to conceive of that cause as a perfect intelligence, and voluntary agent, and not such a blind worker and empty notion as that nothing is, which thou callest nature? Look upward; seest thou that glorious body of light, the sun: how many times bigger it is than all the earth; and yet how many thousand miles doth it run in one minute of an hour, and that without wearinesse, or failing a moment! What thinkest thou; is not that power able to effect thy resurrection, which doth all this? dost thou not see as great works as a resurrection every day before thine eyes, but that the commonness makes thee not admire them? Read but Job xxxvii. to xli. and take heed of disputing against God again, for ever. Knowest thou not, that with him all things are possible? can he make a camel go through the eye of a needle; can he make such a blind sinner as thou to see, and such a proud heart as thine to stoop, and such an earthly mind as thine heavenly; and subdue all that thy fleshly, foolish wisdom; and is not this as great a work, as to raise thee from the dust? Wast thou any unlikelier to be, when thou wast nothing, than thou shalt be when thou art dust? Is it not as easy to raise the dead, as to make heaven and earth, and all of nothing? But if thou be unpersuadable, all I say to thee more is, as the prophet to the prince of Samaria, (2 Kings vii. 20,) "Thou shalt see that day with thine eyes," but little to thy comfort; for that which is the day of relief to the saints, shall be a day of revenge on thee; there is a rest prepared, but thou canst not "enter in because of unbelief," Heb. iii. 19. But for thee, O believing soul, never think to comprehend, in the narrow capacity of thy shallow brain, the counsels and ways of thy Maker; any more than thou canst contain in thy fist the vast ocean. He never intended thee such a capacity, when he made thee, and gave thee that measure thou hast, any more than he intended to enable that worm, or this post, or stone, fully to know thee. Therefore, when he speaks, dispute not, but believe, as Abraham, who considered not his own body now dead, when he was about a hundred years old, nor yet the deadness of Sarah's womb; he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded, that what he had promised he was also able to perform; and so, "against hope, believed in hope," Rom. iv. 18—21. So look thou not on the dead bones, and dust, and difficulties, but at the promise, Isa. xxvi. 20, 21. Martha knew her brother should rise again at the resurrection; but if Christ say, he shall rise before, it must be believed. Come, then, fellow-christians, let us contentedly commit these carcasses to the dust: that prison shall not long contain them. Let us lie down in peace, and take our rest, it will not be an everlasting night, or endless sleep.[k] What if we go out of the troubles and stirs of the world, and enter into those chambers of dust, and the doors be shut upon us, and we hide ourselves, as it were, for a little moment, until the indignation be over-past? Yet, behold the Lord cometh out of his place, to punish the inhabitants of

censio extinxerat. Reducuntur et siderum absentia, quas temporalis distinctio exemerat. Redornantur et specula lunæ, quæ menstruus numerus adtriverat. Revolvuntur hyemes, et æstates, et verna, et autumna, cum suis viribus, moribus, fructibus. Tertul. l. de Resur. c. xii. p. 409. Dic mihi, philosophe, quid plene cognoscis? puto non auderet te dicere quod parvulam vel minimam creaturam. Scio quod non perfecte cognoscis minimum atomum in sole; nec minimum pulverem terræ; nec minimam guttam aquæ. In omni namque corpusculo, infinitæ figuræ lineares, superficiales et corporales, diversæ numero, quantitate, et qualitate, et specie continentur. Quare etiam correspondentur conclusiones geometricæ infinitæ etiam sese ordinabiliter consequentes, ita quod posterior sciri non potest nisi per priorem. In omni quoque corpusculo infinitæ species numerorum, et infinitæ conclusiones. Arithmeticæ continentur, &c. Harum autem conclusionum infinitarum demonstrative scibilium quid scis? &c. Bradwardin. de Causa Dei, l. 1. c. i. corol. 32. Mira ratio! de fraudatrice, servatrix: ut reddat, intercipit: ut custodiat, perdit: ut integret, vitiat; ut etiam ampliet, prius decoquit. Siquidem uberiora et cultiora restituit quam exterminavit. Re vera fœnore, interitu, et injuria, usura, et lucro damno, semel dixerim universa conditio recidiva est. Quodcunque conveneris, fuit; quodcunque amiseris, nihil non iterum est; omnia in statum redeunt, quem abscesserint; omnia incipiunt, cum desierint: Ideo finiuntur, ut fiant; Nihil deperit nisi ad salutem. Totus igitur hic ordo revolubilis rerum, testatio est resurrectionis mortuorum. Operibus eam præscripsit Deus, antequam literis. Præmisit tibi naturam magistram, submissurus et prophetiam, quo facilius credas prophetiæ, discipulus naturæ; quo statim admittas cum audieris, quod ubique jam videris; nec dubites Deum carnis etiam resuscitatorem, quem omnium noris restitutorem. Tertul. ubi supra. Read on further much on these excellent sayings there in him, which are so savoury to me, that I could not but take some of them.

[k] Lactant. l. vii. c. 25. Some lately came near the Jews' belief in this: Judæi enim dicunt futurum esse ut Israelitæ soli ex morte in vitam revocentur; christiani vero populique alii omnes non resurgant. Buxtorf. Syn. Judaic. c. 1. p. 25. Itaque hi christianos solos resurrecturos asserunt. But, on the contrary, saith Tertullian: Cæterum demutationem etiam post resurrectionem consequuturus est inferos jam expertus: Adhinc enim definimus carnem quidem omni modo resurrecturam, atque illam ex demutatione superventura habitum angelicum suscepturam, &c. Vide plura. Tertul. l. de Anima. 42. Cum enim utrumque proponitur, corpus atque animam occidi in gehennam, distinguitur corpus ab anima; et relinquitur intelligi corpus, id quod in promptu sit; caro scilicet, quæ sicut occidetur in gehennam si non magis a Deo timuerit occidi, ita et vivificabitur in vitam æternam si maluerit ab hominibus potius interfici: proinde siquis occisionem carnis atque animæ in gehennam ad interitum et finem utriusque substantiæ arripiet, non ad supplicium (quasi consumendarum non quasi puniendarum) recordetur ignem gehennæ æternum prædicari in pœnam æternam, et inde æternitatem occisionis agnoscat, propterea humanæ ut temporali prætimendam. Tunc et æternas substantias credet, quarum æterna fit occisio in pœnam. Certe cum post resurrectionem, corpus et anima occidi habeant a Deo in gehennam, satis de utroque constabit, et de carnali resurrectione, et de æterna occisione. Absurdissimum alioquin, si idcirco resuscitata caro occidatur in gehennam, uti finiatur: quod et non resuscitata pateretur. In hoc enim reficietur ne sit, cui non esse jam evenit. Tertul. lib. de Resur. Carnis, c. 35. p. (mihi) 416. Acts xvi. 25—27; 2 Cor. v. 1—4.

the earth for their iniquity: and then the earth shall disclose us, and the dust shall hide us no more. As sure as we awake in the morning, when we have slept out the night, so sure shall we then awake. And what if, in the mean time, we must be loathsome lumps, cast out of the sight of men, as not fit to be endured among the living; what, if our carcasses become as vile as those of the beasts that perish; what, if our bones be dug up, and scattered about the pit brink, and worms consume our flesh? yet we know our Redeemer liveth, and shall stand at last on earth, and we shall see him with these eyes. And withal it is but this flesh that suffers all this, which has been a clog to our souls so long. And what is this comely piece of flesh, which thou art loth should come to so base a state? It is not a hundred years since it was either nothing, or an invisible something. And is it not most of it for the present, if not an appearing nothing, seeming something to an imperfect sense; yet, at best, a condensation of invisibles, which, that they may become sensible, are become more gross, and so more vile. Where is all that fair mass of flesh and blood which thou hadst, before sickness consumed thee? annihilated it is not; only resolved into its principles: show it me if thou canst. Into how small a handful of dust or ashes will that whole mass, if buried or burnt, return! and into how much smaller can a chemist reduce that little, and leave all the rest invisible! What if God prick the bladder, and let out the wind that puffs thee up to such a substance, and resolve thee into thy principles? Doth not the seed thou sowest die before it spring? And what cause have we to be tender of this body? Oh what care, what labour, what grief and sorrow hath it cost us; how many a weary, painful, tedious hour! O my soul, grudge not that God should disburden thee of all this: fear not, lest he should free thee from thy fetters: be not so loth that he should break down thy prison, and let thee go: what though some terrible earthquake go before; it is but that the foundations of the prison may be shaken, and so the doors fly open; the terror will be to thy jailor, but to thee deliverance. O, therefore, at what hour of the night soever thy Lord come, let him find thee, though with thy feet in these stocks, yet singing praises to him, and not fearing the time of thy deliverance. If unclothing be the thing thou fearest, why it is that thou mayst have better clothing put on. If to be turned out of doors be the thing thou fearest, why remember, then, when this earthly house of thy tabernacle is dissolved, thou hast "a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." How willingly do our soldiers burn their huts, when the siege is ended, being glad their work is done, that they may go home and dwell in houses! Lay down, then, cheerfully this bag of loathsome filth, this lump of corruption; thou shalt undoubtedly receive it again in incorruption. Lay down freely this terrestrial, this natural body; believe it, thou shalt receive it again a celestial, a spiritual body. And though thou lay it down into the dirt with great dishonour, thou shalt receive it into glory with honour: and though thou art separated from it through weakness, it shall be raised again, and joined to thee in mighty power. When the trumpet of God shall sound the call, "Come away, arise, ye dead," 1 Cor. xv. 42—45; who shall then stay behind? Who can resist the powerful command of our Lord, when he shall call to the earth and sea, "O earth, give up thy dead! O sea, give up thy dead?" Then shall our Samson break for us the bonds of death. And as the ungodly shall, like toads from their holes, be drawn forth whether they will or no; so shall the godly, as prisoners of hope, awake out of sleep, and come with joy to meet their Lord. The first that shall be called, are the saints that sleep; and then the saints that are then alive shall be changed. For Paul hath told us, by the word of the Lord, "That they which are alive, and remain till the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then they which are alive, and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore, O christians, comfort one another with these words."[l] This is one of the gospel mysteries: "That we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption; and this mortal, immortality. Then is death swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ," 1 Cor. xv. 51—57. Triumph now, O christian, in these promises; thou shalt shortly triumph in their performance. For this is the day that the Lord will make; "we shall be glad and rejoice therein," Psalm cxviii. The grave that could not keep our Lord, cannot keep us: he arose for us, and by the same power will cause us to arise. "For if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again; even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him," 1 Thess. iv. 14. Can the head live, and the body and members remain dead? O, write those sweet words upon thy heart, christian, "Because I live, ye shall live also," John xiv. 19. As sure as Christ lives, ye shall live; and as sure as he is risen, we shall rise. Else the dead perish. Else what is our hope; what advantageth all our duty or suffering? Else the sensual epicure were one of the wisest men; and what better are we than our beasts? Surely our knowledge, more than theirs, would but increase our sorrows; and our dominion over them is no great felicity. The servant hath ofttimes a better life than his master, because he hath few of his master's cares. And our dead carcasses are no more comely, nor yield a sweeter savour, than theirs. But we have a sure ground of hope. And besides this life, we have "a life that is hid with Christ in God; and when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory," Col. iii. 3, 4. O let us not be as the purblind world, that cannot see afar off; let us never look at the grave, but let us see the resurrection beyond it. Faith is quick-sighted, and can see as far as that is; yea, as far as eternity. Therefore let our hearts be glad, and our glory rejoice, and our flesh also shall rest in hope; for he will not leave us in the grave, nor suffer us still to see corruption. Yea, "Therefore, let us be stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as we know our labour is not in vain in the Lord," 1 Cor. xv. 58.[m]

[l] 1 Thess. iv. 15—18. That it is the same body that shall rise, and how far changed, See Chr. Beckman in Exercit. xxiv. p. 475.

[m] 1.Cor. xv. 13, 14, 17—19, 30—32. Read Athanasius de Incarn. Verbi throughout, who fully proveth, that there should have been no resurrection, had not Christ died; and that he died for all, so far as to raise them. It is more large than to be here transcribed, only a touch of it I will give you. And that he might recover man into the excellences of incorruption, who was turned into corruption; and might recover them

God made not death, but Christ overcame it, when sin had introduced it. Death is from ourselves, but life from the Author and Lord of life. The devil had the power of death till he was overcome by death, Heb. ii. 14, 15; but he that liveth and was dead, and is alive for evermore, hath now the keys of death and hell, Rev. i. 18. That the very damned live, is to be ascribed to him; that they live in misery, is long of themselves. Not that it is more desirable to them to live miserably, as there they must do, than not to live; but as God's glory is his chief, if not only, end, in all his works, so was it the Mediator's chief end in the world's reparation. They shall, therefore, live, whether they will or no, for God's glory, though they live not to their own comfort, because they would not.

But whatsoever is the cause of the wicked's resurrection, this sufficeth to the saints' comfort, that resurrection to glory is only the fruit of Christ's death:[n] and this fruit they shall certainly partake of. The promise is sure: "All that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and come forth," John v. 28. And this is the Father's will which hath sent Christ, that of all which he hath given him he should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day," John vi. 39; "and that every one that believeth on the Son may have everlasting life, and he will raise him up at the last day," ver. 40. If the prayers of the prophet could raise the Shunammite's dead child, and if the dead soldier revived at the touch of the prophet's bones, how certainly shall the will of Christ, and the power of his death, raise us. The voice that said to Jairus' daughter, "Arise;" and to Lazarus, "Arise, and come forth," can do the like for us. If his death immediately raised the dead bodies of many saints in Jerusalem; if he gave power to his apostles to raise the dead; then what doubt of our resurrection? And thus, christian, thou seest that, Christ having sanctified the grave by his burial, and conquered death, and broke the ice for us, a dead body and a grave is not now so horrid a spectacle to a believing eye;[o] but as our Lord was nearest his resurrection and glory when he was in the grave, even so are we; and he that hath promised to make our bed in sickness, will make the dust as a bed of roses. Death shall not dissolve the union betwixt him and us, nor turn away his affections from us; but in the morning of eternity he will send his angels, yea, come himself, and roll away the stone, and unseal our grave, and reach us his hand, and deliver us alive to our Father. Why, then, doth the approach of death so cast thee down, O my soul; and why art thou thus disquieted within me? The grave is not hell: if it were, yet there is thy Lord present; and thence should his merit and mercy fetch thee out. Thy sickness is not unto death, though I die, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby. Say not, then, he lifted me up to cast me down, and hath raised me high that my fall may be the lower; but he casts me down that he may lift me up, and layeth me low that I may rise the higher. A hundred experiences have sealed this truth unto thee, that the greatest dejections are intended but for advantages to thy greatest dignity and the Redeemer's glory.

3. Our justification at judgment.

Sect. III. The third part of this prologue to the saints' rest, is the public and solemn process at their judgment, where they shall first, themselves, be acquitted and justified; and then, with Christ, judge the world. Public I may well call it, for all the world must there appear; young and old, of all estates and nations, that ever were from the creation to that day, must here come and receive their doom. The judgment shall be set, and the books opened, and the book of life produced; "and the dead shall be judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works; and whosoever is not found written in the book of life, is cast into the lake of fire," Rom. ii. 16; xiv. 10; Rev. xx. 12—15. O, terrible! O, joyful day! Terrible to those that have let their lamps go out, and have not watched, but forgot the coming of their Lord; joyful to the saints, whose waiting and hope was to see this day. Then shall the world behold the goodness and severity of the Lord: on them who perish, severity; but to his chosen, goodness: when every one must give account of his stewardship, and every talent of time, health, wit, mercies, afflictions, means, warnings, must be reckoned for, Matt. xxiv.; xxv. 5—7; Rom. i. 22; when the sins of youth, and those which they had forgotten, and their secret sins, shall all be laid open before angels and men; when they shall see all their friends, wealth, old delights, all their confidence and false hopes of heaven, to forsake them;[p] when they shall see the Lord Jesus Christ, whom they neglected, whose word they disobeyed, whose ministers they abused, whose servants they hated, now sitting to judge them; when their own consciences shall cry out against them, and call to their remembrance all their misdoings: Remember at such a time, such or such a sin; at such a time Christ sued hard for thy conversion; the minister pressed it home to thy heart, thou wast touched to the quick with the word; thou didst purpose and promise returning, and yet thou cast off all. When a hundred sermons, sabbaths, mercies, shall each step up and say, I am witness against the prisoner; Lord, I was abused, and I was neglected;

from death, by the subjecting of his own body; and by the grace of resurrection he took them from death, even as a brand out of the fire. For when the Word knew that the death of man was no way else to be dissolved, unless he himself did die for all men, and that it was impossible that the Word himself could die, as being the immortal Son of God; he took to himself a body which could die, that the Word, which is over all, being partaker thereof, might become fit to die for all; and that by the inhabiting Word, it might remain incorruptible, and now corruption might be banished from all by the excellent glory of a resurrection. And so offering the body which he had assumed to death, as a sacrifice free from all spot, he expelled death from all, who were shortly to be like him, (that is, dead,) by the offering of the like. For the Word being over all, he offering to God the animated temple and instrument of his body, fulfilled that for all which in death was due. And in that commerce, in which he was made like to all, the incorruptible Son of God did meritoriously clothe all men with incorruption. Athanas. de Incarn. Verbi.

[n] Fiducia christianorum, resurrectio mortuorum; illam credentes sumus, hoc credere veritas cogit. Veritatem Deus aperit, sed vulgus irridet, existimans nihil superesse post mortem. Tertul. de Resur. Carnis in initio, pag. 406. If you would see more of the resurrection, and its enemies confuted, read Cyprian. de Resur.; Athenag. Ser. de Resur.; Ambros. de fide Resur.; August. Steuchus Eugubin. de Perenni Philosophia; Joh. Baptista Aurelius de Mortuorum Resur.; Mar. Ficin. de Immort. Animæ.; Petr. Opinersensis de Resur. et Immortal. Anim.; Leonn. Lessius l. de Provid. et l. de Immort. Animæ; Caspar Contarenus cont. Pet. Pomponatium; besides every common-place book; and Zanch. de Oper. Dei. pag. 3. l. iii. c. 8; Calvin. adv. Libertin. xxii.; and in Psychopannichia, &c.

[o] Mors et vita duello conflixere mirando: rex mortuus, regnat vivus. In hoc duello mors et vita in arenam descenderunt: sed tandem vicit vita, et gloriose exiit, de sepulchro, de morte ipsa triumphans. Irrideamus ergo mortem et cum apostolo dicamus, ubi mors victoria tua? Stella in Luc. xxiv. p. 378. tom. ii. Psal. xlii.; John xi. 4; Psal. cii. 10.

[p] Quæ tunc erit fidei gloria? quæ pœna perfidiæ, cum judicii dies venerit. Quæ lætitia credentium? quæ mœstitia perfidorum? noluisse istic prius credere et ut credant jam redire non posse? Cyp. ad Demetrian, sect. xxi. p. 330.

oh, which way will the wretched sinner look! oh, who can conceive the terrible thoughts of his heart! Now the world cannot help him; his old companions cannot help him; the saints neither can nor will: only the Lord Jesus can; but, oh! there is the soul-killing misery, he will not; nay, without violating the truth of his word, he cannot; though otherwise, in regard of his absolute power, he might. The time was, sinner, when Christ would, and you would not; and now, oh! fain would you, and he will not. Then he followed thee, in vain, with entreaties: O poor sinner, what doest thou; wilt thou sell thy soul and Saviour for a lust? look to me, and be saved; return, why wilt thou die? But thy ear and heart were shut up against all. Why, now thou shalt cry, Lord, Lord, open to us; and he shall say, "Depart, I know you not, ye workers of iniquity," Matt. vii. 22, 23. Now, Mercy, mercy, Lord! O, but it was mercy you so long set light by, and now your day of mercy is over. What then remains, but to cry out to the mountains, Fall upon us; and the hills, O cover us from the presence of him that sits upon the throne! But all in vain; for thou hast the Lord of mountains and hills for thine enemy, whose voice they will obey, and not thine. Sinner, make not light of this; for, as thou livest, except a thorough change and coming in to Christ prevent it, which God grant, thou shalt shortly, to thy unconceivable horror, see that day. O wretch, will thy cups then be wine or gall; will they be sweet or bitter; will it comfort thee to think of thy merry days, and how pleasantly thy time slipped away; will it do thee good to think how rich thou wast, and how honourable thou wast? or will it not rather wound thy very soul to remember thy folly, and make thee, with anguish of heart, and rage against thyself, to cry out, O wretch, where was mine understanding? Didst thou make so light of that sin that now makes thee tremble? how couldst thou hear so lightly of the redeeming blood of the Son of God; how couldst thou quench so many motions of his Spirit, and stifle so many quickening thoughts as were cast into thy soul? What took up all that life's time which thou hadst given thee to make sure work against this day; what took up all thy heart, thy love, and delight, which should have been laid out on the Lord Jesus? Hadst thou room in thy heart for the world, thy friend, thy flesh, thy lusts, and none for Christ? O wretch, whom hadst thou to love, but him; what hadst thou to do, but to seek him, and cleave to him, and enjoy him? Oh! wast thou not told of this dreadful day a thousand times, till the commonness of that doctrine made thee weary? how couldst thou slight such warnings, and rage against the minister, and say he preached damnation? had it not been better to have heard and prevented it, than now to endure it? Oh, now, for one offer of Christ, for one sermon, for one day of grace more; but too late; alas! too late. Poor, careless sinner, I did not think here to have said so much to thee; for my business is to refresh the saints; but if these lines do fall into thy hands, and thou vouchsafe the reading of them, I here charge thee, before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom, 2 Tim. iv. 1, that thou make haste and get alone, and set thyself sadly to ponder on these things. Ask thy heart,[q] Is this true, or is it not; is there such a day, and must I see it? Oh what do I then; why trifle I; is it not time, full time, that I had made sure of Christ and comfort long ago; should I sit still another day, who have lost so many? had I not rather be found one of the holy, faithful, watchful christians, than a worldling, a good fellow, or a man of honour; why should I not, then, choose it now; will it be best then, and is it not best now? O, think of these things! A few sad hours spent in serious fore-thoughts is a cheap prevention; it is worth this, or it is worth nothing. Friend, I profess to thee, from the word of the Lord, that of all thy sweet sins, there will then be nothing left, but the sting in thy conscience, which will never out through all eternity; except the blood of Christ, believed in, and valued above all the world, do now, in this day of grace, get it out. Thy sin is like a beautiful harlot: while she is young and fresh, she hath many followers; but when old and withered, every one would shut their hands of her: she is only their shame; none would know her. So will it be with thee: now thou wilt venture on it, whatever it cost thee; but then, when men's rebellious ways are charged on their souls to death,[r] oh that thou couldest rid thy hands of it; oh that thou couldst say, Lord, it was not I. Then, Lord, when saw we thee hungry, naked, imprisoned: how fain would they put it off! Then sin will be sin indeed, and grace will be grace indeed; then, say the foolish virgins, Give us of your oil, for our lamps are out. Oh for some of your faith and holiness, which we were wont to mock at! But what is the answer, Go buy for yourselves; we have little enough; would we had rather much more. Then they will be glad of any thing like grace; and if they can but produce any external familiarity with Christ, or common gifts, how glad are they! Lord, we have eat and drunk in thy presence, prophesied in thy name, cast out devils, done many wonderful works; we have been baptized, heard sermons, professed christianity: but, alas! this will not serve the turn. He will profess to them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye workers of iniquity. O dead-hearted sinner, is all this nothing to thee? As sure as Christ is true, this is true; take it in his own words: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, and the goats on the left," Matt. xxv. 31. And so on, as you may read in the text.

But why tremblest thou, O humble, gracious soul? Cannot the enemies and slighters of Christ be foretold their doom, but thou must quake? do I make sad the soul that God would not have sad? Ezek. xiii. 22. Doth not thy Lord know his own sheep, "who have heard his voice, and followed him?" John x. 27. He that would not lose the family of one Noah in a common deluge, when him only he had found faithful in all the earth, Gen. vii. 1—3; xix. 22; he that would not overlook one Lot in Sodom, nay, that could do nothing till he went forth; will he forget thee at that day? "Thy Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to reserve the unjust to the day of judgment to be punished," 2 Pet. ii. 9; he knoweth how to make

[q] Nec ignoro plerosque conscientia meritorum nihil se esse post mortem magis optare quam credere: malunt enim extingui penitus, quam ad supplicia reparari. Quorum error augetur in seculo et libertate remissa, et Dei patientia maxima: cujus quanto judicium tardum, tanto magis justum est. Minut. Fœlix. Octav. p. 396.

[r] Hear a heathen: Sic certe vivendum est, tanquam in conspectu vivamus. Sic cogitandum tanquam aliquis in pectus intimum inspicere possit, et potest. Quid enim prodest ab homine aliquid esse secretum? Nihil Deo clausum interest animis nostris, et cogitationibus mediis intervenit. Sen. Epist. ad Luc. 83. p. 711. tom. ii. Which words Zuinglius repeating, calls him "virum sanctissimum." Tom. oper. ii. p. 118. Declar. de Pec. Orig.

the same day the greatest for terror to his foes, and yet the greatest for joy to his people. He ever intended it for the great distinguishing and separating day; wherein both love and fury should be manifested to the highest, Matt. xiii. O, then, "Let the heavens rejoice, the sea, the earth, the floods, the hills; for the Lord cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity," Psal. xcvi. 11—13. But, especially, "Let Sion hear, and be glad, and her children rejoice," Psal. xcviii. 7—9; for, "when God ariseth to judgment, it is to save the meek of the earth," Psal. xcvii. 8. They have judged and condemned themselves many a day in heart-breaking confessions, and therefore shall not be judged to condemnation by the Lord; "for there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," 1 Cor. xi. 31. And, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?" Rom. viii. 1, 33. Shall the law? Why, "Whatsoever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law; but we are not under the law, but under grace: for the law of the Spirit of life, which is in Christ Jesus, hath made us free from the law of sin and death," Rom. iii. 19; v. 1; vi. 14; viii. 2. Or shall conscience? Why, we were, long ago, "justified by faith, and so have peace with God, and have our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience; and the Spirit bearing witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God," Heb. x. 22. "It is God that justifieth; who shall condemn?" Rom. viii. 16. If our Judge condemn us not, who shall? He that said to the adulterous woman, "Hath no man condemned thee? neither do I condemn thee," John viii. 11; he will say to us, more faithfully than Peter to him, "Though all men deny thee, or condemn thee, I will not," Mark xiv. 31. "Thou hast confessed me before men, and I will confess thee before my Father, and the angels of heaven," Matt. x. 32. He, whose first coming was not "to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved," John iii. 17; I am sure, intends not his second coming to condemn his people, but that they, through him, might be saved. He hath given us eternal life in charter and title already, yea, and partly in possession; and will he after that condemn us? When he gave us the knowledge of his Father and himself, he gave us eternal life; and he hath verily told us, "that he that heareth his word, and believeth on him that sent him, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death to life," John v. 24; xvii. 8. Indeed, if our Judge were our enemy, as he is to the world, then we might well fear. If the devil were our judge, or the ungodly were our judge, then we should be condemned as hypocrites, as heretics, as schismatics, as proud, or covetous, or what not? But our Judge is Christ, who died; yea, rather, who is risen again, and maketh request for us: for, "all power is given him in heaven and in earth, and all things delivered into his hands; and the Father hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man."[s] For, though God judge the world, yet the Father, immediately, without his Vicegerent, Christ, judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son, that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. Oh what unexpressible joy may this afford to a believer, that our dear Lord, who loveth our souls, and whom our souls love, shall be our Judge! Will a man fear to be judged by his dearest friend, by a brother, by a father, or a wife by her own husband? Christian, did he come down, and suffer, and weep, and bleed, and die for thee, and will he now condemn thee? was he judged, and condemned, and executed in thy stead, and now will he condemn thee himself? did he make a bath of his blood for thy sins, and a garment of his own righteousness for thy nakedness, and will he now open them to thy shame? is he the undertaker for thy salvation, and will he be against thee? hath it cost him so dear to save thee, and will he now himself destroy thee? hath he done the most of the work already, in redeeming, regenerating, and sanctifying, justifying, preserving, and perfecting thee, and will he now undo all again? nay, hath he begun, and will he not finish; hath he interceded so long for thee to the Father, and will he cast thee away himself? If all these be likely, then fear, and then rejoice not. Oh what an unreasonable sin is unbelief, that will charge our Lord with such unmercifulness and absurdities! Well, then, fellow-christians, let the terror of that day be never so great, surely our Lord can mean no ill to us in all: let it make the devils tremble, and the wicked tremble; but it shall make us to leap for joy: let Satan accuse us, we have our answer at hand; our Surety hath discharged the debt. If he have not fulfilled the law, then let us be charged as breakers of it: if he have not suffered, then let us suffer; but if he have, we are free: nay, our Lord will make answer for us himself. "These are mine, and shall be made up with my jewels: for their transgressions was I stricken, and cut off from the earth; for them was I bruised and put to grief: my soul was made an offering for their sin, and I bore their transgressions. They are my seed, and the travail of my soul: I have healed them by my stripes; I have justified them by my knowledge," Isa. liii. 5, 8, 10, 11. "They are my sheep: who shall take them out of my hands?" John x. 28. Yea, though the humble soul be ready to speak against itself, "Lord, when did we see thee hungry, and fed thee," &c. yet will not Christ do so. This is the day of the believer's full justification. They were, before, made just, and esteemed just, and by faith justified in law; and this, to some, evidenced to their consciences. But now they shall both, by apology, be maintained just; and, by sentence, pronounced just actually, by the lively voice of the Judge himself;[t] which is the most perfect justification. Their justification by faith, is a giving them title in law, to that apology and absolving sentence which at that day they shall actually receive from the mouth of Christ; by which sentence, their sin, which before was pardoned in the sense of the law, is now perfectly pardoned, or blotted out by this ultimate judgment, Acts iii. 19. Therefore, well may it be called the time of refreshing, as being to the saints the perfecting of all their former refreshments. He who was vexed with a quarrelling conscience, an accusing world, a cursing law, is solemnly pronounced righteous by the Lord, the Judge.[u] Though he cannot plead Not guilty, in regard of

[s] Rom. viii. 34, 35; Matt. xxviii. 18; John xiii. 3; ix. 22, 23, 27. That Christ's judging power according to his human nature, is not the principal, primitive, supreme; but only the supreme delegate derived power, is certain; sicut Scotus, in l. iv. Sent. Dist. 48. qu. 1. p. 256 (mihi).

[t] Observ. That a complete and full absolution from all sin, is not enjoyed till the day of judgment. Mr. A. Burgess, of Justification, lect. xxix. p. 258. The Scripture, not only in this privilege of remission of sin, but in others also, makes the complement and fulness of them, to be at the day of judgment, Ephes. i. 7; iv. 30; Rom. viii. 23; 1 John iii. 2; Matt. xix. 23. Mr. A. Burgess ubi supra.

[u] The sins before faith are forgiven; not so as that they are not committed, but so as if they had not been committed. Clem. Alexand. Stromat. l. iv.

fact, yet, being pardoned, he shall be acquitted by the proclamation of Christ: and that is not all; but he that was accused as deserving hell, is pronounced a member of Christ, a son of God, and so adjudged to eternal glory. The sentence of pardon, passed by the Spirit and conscience within us, was wont to be exceeding sweet; but this will fully and finally resolve the question, and leave no room for doubting again for ever. We shall more rejoice that our names are found written in the book of life, than if men or devils were subjected to us; and it must needs affect us deeply with the sense of our mercy and happiness, to behold the contrary condition of others; to see most of the world tremble with terror, while we triumph with joy; to hear them doomed to everlasting flames, and see them thrust into hell, when we are proclaimed heirs of the kingdom; to see our neighbours, that lived in the same towns, came to the same congregations, sat in the same seats, dwelt in the same houses, and were esteemed more honourable in the world than ourselves; to see them now so differenced from us, and by the Searcher of hearts, eternally separated. This, with the great magnificence and dreadfulness of the day, doth the apostle pathetically express: "It is righteous with God, to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled, rest with us; when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power," &c. 2 Thess. i. 6—10. And now, is not here enough to make that day a welcome day, and the thoughts of it delightful to us? but yet there is more. We shall be so far from the dread of that judgment, that ourselves shall beeome the judges. Christ will take his people, as it were, into commission with him; and they shall sit and approve his righteous judgment. O fear not now the reproaches, scorns, and censures, of those that must then be judged by us. Did you think, O wretched worldlings, that those poor, despised men, whom you made your daily derision, should be your judges; did you believe this, when you made them stand as offenders before the bar of your judgment? No more than Pilate, when he was judging Christ, did believe that he was condemning his Judge; or the Jews, when they were whipping, imprisoning, killing the apostles, did think to see them sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. "Do you not know," saith Paul, "that the saints shall judge the world? nay, know you not that we shall judge angels?" 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3. Surely, were it not the word of Christ that speaks it, this advancement would seem incredible, and the language arrogant; yet even Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of this, saying, "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed; and of all their hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him," Jude 14. Thus shall the saints be honoured, and the "righteous have dominion in the morning," Psal. ix. 14. Oh that the careless world were "but wise to consider this, and that they would remember their latter end!" Deut. xxxii. 29. That they would be now of the same mind as they will be when they shall see the "heavens pass away with a noise, and the elements melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, to be burnt up," 2 Pet. iii. 10. When all shall be on fire about their ears, and all earthly glory consumed; "for the heavens and the earth, which are now, are reserved unto fire against the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men," 2 Pet. iii. 7. But, alas! when all is said, "the wicked will do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand," Dan. xii. 10. Rejoice, therefore, O ye saints, yet watch; and what you have, hold fast till your Lord come, Rev. ii. 25. And study that use of this doctrine which the apostle propounds: "Seeing, then, that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be, in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting to the coming of the day of God; wherein the heavens being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements melt with fervent heat?" 2 Pet. iii. 11, 12. But go your way, keep close with God, and wait till your change come, and till this end be; "for you shall rest, and stand in the lot at the end of the days," Dan. xii. 13.

Sect. IV. The fourth antecedent, and highest step to the saints' advancement, is their solemn coronation, enthronizing, and receiving into the kingdom. For, as Christ, their Head, is anointed both King and Priest, so under him are his people made unto God both kings and priests, Rev. i. 5, (for prophecy, that ceaseth,) "to reign and to offer praises for ever," Rev. v. 10. "The crown of righteousness, which was laid up for them, shall by the Lord the righteous Judge be given them at that day," 2 Tim. iv. 8. "They have been faithful to the death, and therefore shall receive the crown of life," Rev. ii. 10. And according to the improvement of their talents here, so shall their rule and dignity be enlarged, Matt. xxv. 21, 23; so that they are not dignified with empty titles, but real dominions: for Christ "will take them and set them down with himself on his own throne," Rev. iii. 21; and will give them power over the nations, even as he received of his Father, Rev. ii. 26—28; and will give them the morning star. The Lord himself will give them possession with these applauding expressions: "Well done, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord," Matt. xxv. 21, 23. And with this solemn and blessed proclamation shall he enthrone them: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Every word full of life and joy. "Come;" this is the holding forth of the golden sceptre, to warrant our approach unto this glory. Come now as near as you will: fear not the Bethshemite's judgment, for the enmity is utterly taken away. This is not such a "come" as we were wont to hear; "Come, take up your cross and follow me:" though that was sweet, yet this much more. "Ye blessed;" blessed indeed, when that mouth shall so pronounce us. For though the world hath accounted us accursed, and we have been ready to account ourselves so, yet certainly those that he blesseth are blessed, and those whom he curseth only are cursed: and his blessing shall not be revoked; but he hath blessed us, and we shall be blessed. "Of my Father;" blessed in the Father's love as well as the Son's, for they are one. The Father hath testified his love in their election, donation to Christ, sending of Christ, accepting his ransom, &c. as the Son hath also testified his. "Inherit;" no longer bondmen, nor servants only, nor children under age, who differ not in possession, but only in title, from servants, Gal. iv. 1, 5—7; but now we are heirs of the kingdom, James ii. 5, coheirs with Christ. "The kingdom;" no less than the kingdom. Indeed, to be a King of kings, and Lord

4. Our solemn coronation.

of lords, is our Lord's own proper title; but to be kings and reign with him, is ours. The fruition of this kingdom, is as the fruition of the light of the sun, each have the whole, and the rest nevertheless. "Prepared for you;" God is the *alpha* as well as the *omega* of our blessedness. Eternal love hath laid the foundation. He prepared the kingdom for us, and then prepared us for the kingdom. This is the preparation of his counsel and decree, for the execution whereof Christ was yet to make a further preparation. "For you;" not for believers only in general, who without individual persons are nobody; nor only for you, upon condition of your believing, but for you personally and determinately, for all the conditions were also prepared for you. "From the foundation of the world;" not only from the promise after Adam's fall, as some, but, as the phrase usually signifieth, though not always, from eternity. These were the eternal thoughts of God's love towards us, and this is it he purposed for us, Matt. xxv. 20, 21, 34, 35; Rev. ii.; iii.

But a greater difficulty ariseth in our way.[x] In what sense is our improvement of our talent, our well-doing, our overcoming, our harbouring, visiting, feeding, &c. Christ, in his little ones, alleged as a reason of our coronation and glory? Is not it the purchased possession and mere fruit of Christ's blood? If every man must be judged according to his works, and receive according to what they have done in the flesh, whether good or evil; and God "will render to every man according to his deeds," Rom. ii. 6, 7, and give eternal life to all men, if they patiently continue in well-doing, and give right to the tree of life, Rev. xxii. 14, and entrance into the city, to the doers of his commandments; and if this last absolving sentence be the completing of our justification, and so "the doers of the law be justified," Rom. ii. 13; why, then, what is become of free grace, or justification by faith only, of the sole righteousness of Christ to make us accepted? Then, the papists say rightly, That we are righteous by our personal righteousness; and good works concur to justification.

Answ. I did not think to have said so much upon controversy; but because the difficulty is very great, and the matter very weighty, as being near the foundation, I have in another book added to what is said before, certain brief positions, containing my thoughts on this subject; which may tend to the clearing of these and many other difficulties hereabouts, to which I refer you.

But that the plain, constant language of Scripture may not be perverted or disregarded, I only premise these advertisements by way of caution, till thou come to read the fuller answer.

1. Let not the names of men draw thee one way or other, nor make thee partial in searching for truth: dislike the men for their unsound doctrine; but call not doctrine unsound, because it is theirs; nor sound, because of the repute of the writer.

2. Know this, that as an unhumbled soul is far apter to give too much to duty and personal righteousness, than to Christ; so a humble, self-denying christian is as likely to err on the other hand, in giving less to duty than Christ hath given, and laying all the work from himself on Christ, for fear of robbing Christ of the honour; and so much to look at Christ without him, and think he should look at nothing in himself, that he forgets Christ within him. As Luther said of Melancthon's self-denying humility, *Soli Deo omnia deberi tam obstinate asserit, ut mihi plane videatur saltem in hoc errare, quod Christum ipse fingat longius abesse cordi suo quam sit revera —Certe nimis nullus in hoc est Philippus.* He so constantly ascribes all to God, that to me he seems directly to err, at least in this, that he feigneth or imagineth Christ to be further off from his own heart than indeed he is. Certainly he is too much nothing in this.[y]

3. Our giving to Christ more of the work than Scripture doth, or rather our ascribing it to him out of the Scripture way and sense, doth but dishonour, and not honour him;[z] and depress, but not exalt his free grace: while we deny the inward, sanctifying work of his Spirit, and extol his free justification, which are equal fruits of his merit, we make him an imperfect Saviour.

4. But to arrogate to ourselves any part of Christ's prerogative, is most desperate of all, and no doctrine more directly overthrows the gospel, almost, than that of justification by the merits of our own, or by works of the law.

And thus we have, by the line and plummet of Scripture, fathomed this fourfold stream, and seen the christian safely landed in paradise; and, in this four-wheeled fiery chariot, conveyed honourably to his rest. Now, let us a little further view those mansions, consider his privileges, and see whether there be any glory like unto this glory; read and judge, but not by outward appearance, but judge righteous judgment.

CHAPTER VI.

THIS REST MOST EXCELLENT, DISCOVERED BY REASON.

The next thing to be handled is, the excellent properties of this rest, and admirable attributes, which, as so many jewels, shall adorn the crown of the saints. And first, before we speak of them particularly, let us try this happiness by the rules of the philosophers, and see whether they will not approve it the most transcendently good: not as if they were a sufficient touchstone, but that both the worldling and the saint may see, when any thing stands up in competition with this glory for the pre-eminence, reason itself will conclude against it. Now, in order of good, the philosopher will tell you, that by these rules you may know which is best.

[x] See what is after cited in cap. vii. sect. 2. In die judicii quoniam fœdus gratiæ vim legis seu juris obtinet (promulgatum est enim in toto orbe terrarum per præcones idoneos) id unum probandum erit: nimirum, nos habuisse conditionem fœderis gratiæ, scilicet fidem. Itaque proferenda erunt in medio opera; presertim charitatis tanquam illius conditionis, hoc est, fidei, effecta atque argumenta demonstrativa, ut vulgo loquuntur a posteriori. D. Jo. Placeus, in Thes. Salmur. vol. 1. p. 34; Lege et Thesin. 43—45, of that most solid dispute of Justification.

[y] Read Mr. Rich. Hooker's Discourse of Justification, how far works concur: and Mr. Mede's sermon on Luke ii. 13, 14; and on Matt. vii. 21; and on Acts x. 4; and on Neh. xiii. 14, 22; and Matt. x. 41. And Davenant de Justitia Habituali et Actuali, most fully and solidly. Agnitionem accepit homo boni et mali; bonum est autem obedire Deo et credere ei, et custodire ejus præceptum, et hoc est vita hominis. Quemadmodum non obedire Deo malum, et hoc est mors ejus. Iræneus adv. Hæreses, l. iv. c. 76.

[z] Take heed lest thou love the gospel, because it hath always glad tidings, and thou canst not abide the precepts or threatenings, because they speak hard things to thee. There may be a carnal gospeller, as well as a popish legalist. Mr. Burgess, of Justification, lect. xxviii. p. 256. Dicimus Deum judicare secundum opera, quia prout illa fuerint vel bona vel mala, aut æternam vitam consequemur, aut æternam damnationem. Sed non inde sequitur, opera causas esse nostræ salutis. Pet. Mart. in Rom. ii. p. (mihi) 88.

Sect. I. 1. That which is desired and sought for itself, is better than that which is desired for something else; or the end, as such, is better than all the means. This concludeth for heaven's pre-eminence. All things are but means to that end. If any thing here be excellent, it is because it is a step to that; and the more conducible thereto, the more excellent. The salvation of our souls is the end of our faith, our hope, our diligence, of all mercies, of all ordinances, as before is proved. It is not for themselves, but for this rest, that all these are desired and used, 1 Pet. v. 9; 1 Thess. v. 8; 2 Tim. ii. 10. Praying is not the end of praying, nor preaching the end of preaching, nor believing the end of believing. These are but the way to him, who is the way to this rest. Indeed, Christ himself is both the way and the rest, the means and the end, singularly desirable as the way, but yet more as the end, John xiv. 6. If any thing that ever you saw or enjoyed, appear lovely and desirable, then must its end be so much more.

Sect. II. 2. In order of good, the last is still the best; for all good tends to perfection. The end is still the last enjoyed, though first intended. Now, this rest is the saints' last estate. Their beginning was as a grain of mustard-seed, but their perfection will be an estate high and flourishing. They were taken with David from the sheep-fold, to reign as kings for ever. Their first day was a day of small things, but their last will be an everlasting perfection. They sowed in tears, but they reap in joy. If their prosperity here, their *res secundæ*, were desirable, much more their *res ultimæ*, their final blessedness, Psal. cxxvi. 5. Rondeletius saw a priest at Rome, who would fall down in an ecstasy whenever he heard those words of Christ, *Consummatum est*, "It is finished;" but observing him careful in his fall ever to lay his head in a soft place, he, suspecting the dissimulation, by the threats of a cudgel quickly recovered him.[a] But, methinks, the forethought of that consummation and last estate we spake of, should bring a considering christian into such an unfeigned ecstasy, that he should even forget the things of the flesh, and no care or fear should raise him out it. Surely that is well which ends well, and that is good which is good at last; and, therefore, heaven must needs be good.

Sect. III. 3. Another rule is this: That whose absence or loss is the worst or the greatest evil, must needs itself be best, or the greatest good: and is there a greater loss than to lose this rest? If you could ask the restless souls that are shut out of it, they would tell you more sensibly than I can; for as none know the sweetness like those who enjoy it, so none know the loss like those who are deprived of it. Wicked men are here senseless of the loss, because they know not what they lose, and have the delights of flesh and sense to make them up, and make them forget it: but when they shall know it to their torment, as the saints do to their joy; and when they shall see men, from the east and west, sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God, and themselves shut out, Luke xiii. 29; when they shall know both what they have lost, and for what, and why they lost it, surely there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. He that loses riches may have more, and he that loseth honour may repair it; or if not, yet he is not undone. He that loseth life may save it; but what becomes of him that loseth God; and who, or what, shall repair his loss? Mark viii. 35. We can bear the loss of any thing below: if we have it not, we can either live without it, or die, and live eternally without it: but can we do so without God in Christ? Matt. vi. 33. As God gives us outward things as auctaries, as overplus, or above measure, into our bargain, so when he takes them from us he takes away our superfluities, rather than our necessaries, and pareth but our nails, and toucheth not the quick. But can we so spare our part in glory? You know whose question it is, "What shall it profit a man to win all the world, and lose his own soul?" Will it prove a saving match? Or, "What shall a man give for the ransom of his soul?" Matt. xvi. 26. Christians, compare but all your losses with that loss, and all your sufferings with that suffering; and I hope you will lay your hand upon your mouth, and cease your repining thoughts for ever.

Sect. IV. 4. Another rule is this: That which cannot be given by man, or taken away by man, is ever better than that which can; and then I hope heaven will carry it; for, who hath the key of the everlasting treasures, and who is the disposer of the dignities of the saints? Who saith, "Come, ye blessed, and go, ye cursed?" Is it the voice of God, or of mere man? If "every good and perfect gift cometh from above, from the Father of lights," James i. 17, whence, then, cometh the gift of eternal light with the Father? Whose privilege soever it is to be key-keepers of the visible churches here below; sure no mere man, but the man of sin, will challenge the keys of that kingdom, and undertake to shut out, or take in, or to dispose of that treasure of the church. We may be beholden to men, as God's instruments, for our faith, but no further; for "who is Paul, or who is Apollos, but ministers by whom we believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?" 1 Cor. iii. 4. Surely every step to that glory, every gracious gift and act, every deliverance and mercy to the church, shall be so clearly from God, that his very name shall be written in the forehead of it, and his excellent attributes stamped upon it, that he who runs may read it was the work of God; and the question may easily be answered, whether it be from heaven or of men; much more evidently that glory is the gift of the God of glory. What! can man give God, or earth and dust give heaven? Surely no: and as much is it beyond them to deprive us of it. Tyrants and persecutors may take away our goods, but not our chief good; our liberties here, but not that state of freedom; our heads, but not our crown.[b] You can shut us up in prisons, and shut us out of your church and kingdom, but shut us out of heaven if you can. Try in lower attempts. Can you deny us the light of the sun, and cause it to forbear its shining? Can you stop the influences of the planets, or deny us the dew of heaven, or command the clouds to shut up their womb, or stay the course of the flowing streams, or seal up the passages of the deep? How much less can you deprive us of our God, or deny us the light of his countenance, or stop the influences of his Spirit, or forbid the dew of his grace to fall, or stay the streams of his love, and shut up his overflowing, everflowing springs, or seal up the bottomless depth of his bounty? You can kill our bodies, if he permit you; but try whether you can reach our souls. Nay, it is not in the saints' own power to give to, or take away from, themselves this glory: so that, according to this rule, there is no state like the saints' rest; for no man can give this rest to us, and none can take our joy from us, John xvi. 22.

Sect. V. 5. Another rule is this: That is ever bet-

[a] Rondeletius, in Method. Curan. c. de Catalep. pag. 98.

[b] Decrescere summum bonum non potest. Senec. Epist. lxvi. p. 644. Mortalia eminent, cadunt; deteruntur, crescunt; exhauriuntur, implentur: divinorum una natura est. Ibid. p. 645.

ter or best, which maketh the owner or possessor himself better or best. And sure, according to this rule, there is no state like heaven. Riches, honour, and pleasure, make a man neither better nor best: grace here makes us better, but not best: that is reserved as the prerogative of glory.[c] That is our good that doth us good, and that doth us good which makes us good; else it may be good in itself, but not good to us. External good is at too great a distance to be our happiness. It is not bread on our tables, but in our stomachs, that must nourish; nor blood on our clothes or skin, but in the liver, heart, and veins, which is our life.[d] Nay, the things of the world are so far from making the owners good, that they prove not the least impediments thereto, and snares to the best of men. Riches and honour do seldom help to humility; but of pride they occasionally become most frequent fomenters. The difficulty is so great of conjoining graciousness with greatness, that it is next to an impossibility; and their conjunctions so rare, that they are next to inconsistent. To have a heart taken up with Christ and heaven, when we have health and abundance in the world, is neither easy nor ordinary. Though soul and body compose but one man, yet they seldom prosper both together. Therefore, that is our chief good which will do us good at the heart; and that is our true glory which makes us all glorious within; and that the blessed day which will make us holy and blessed men; which will not only beautify our house, but cleanse our hearts; not only give us new habitations, and new relations, but also new souls and new bodies. The true knowing, living christian complains more frequently and more bitterly of the wants and woes within him, than without him. If you overhear his prayers, or see him in his tears, and ask him what aileth him, he will cry out more, Oh! my dark understanding! oh! my hard, my unbelieving heart! rather than, Oh! my dishonour! or, Oh! my poverty! Therefore, it is his desired place and state, which affords a relief suitable to his necessities and complaints. And surely that is only this rest.

Sect. VI. 6. Another rule is, that the difficulty of obtaining shows the excellency: and, surely, if you consider but what it cost Christ to purchase it; what it costs the Spirit to bring men's hearts to it; what it costs ministers to persuade to it; what it costs christians, after all this, to obtain it; and what it costs many a half-christian, that, after all, goes without it; you will say, that here is difficulty, and therefore excellency. Trifles may be had at a trivial rate, and men may have damnation far more easily. It is but lie still, and sleep out our days in careless laziness.[e] It is but take our pleasure, and mind the world, and cast away the thoughts of sin, and grace, and Christ, and heaven, and hell, out of our minds; and do as the most do, and never trouble ourselves about these high things, but venture our souls upon our presumptuous conceits and hopes, and let the vessel swim which way it will; and then stream, and wind, and tide, will all help us apace to the gulf of perdition. You may burn a hundred houses easier than build one; and kill a thousand men, than make one alive. The descent is easy, the ascent not so. To bring diseases is but to cherish sloth, please the appetite, and take what most delights us; but to cure them, will cost bitter pills, loathsome potions, tedious gripings, abstemious, accurate living; and perhaps all fall short too. He that made the way, and knows the way better than we, hath told us "it is narrow and strait," and requires striving; and they that have placed it more truly and observantly than we, do tell us it lies through many tribulations, and is with much ado passed through. Conclude, then, it is sure somewhat worth that must cost all this.

Sect. VII. 7. Another rule is this: That is best, which not only supplieth necessity, but affordeth abundance.[f] By necessity is meant here, that which we cannot live without; and by abundance is meant a more perfect supply, a comfortable, not a useless abundance. Indeed, it is suitable to a christian state and use, to be scanted here, and to have only from hand to mouth; and that, not only in his corporeal, but in his spiritual comforts. Here we must not be filled full, that so our emptiness may cause hungering, and our hungering cause seeking and craving, and our craving testify our dependence, and occasion receiving, and our receiving occasion thanks returning, and all advance the glory of the Giver. But when we shall be brought to the well-head, and united close to the overflowing fountain, we shall then thirst no more, because we shall be empty no more. Surely if those blessed souls did not abound in their blessedness, they would never so abound in praises. Such blessing, and honour, and glory, and praise to God, would never accompany common mercies. All those allelujahs are not, sure, the language of needy men. Now, we are poor, we speak supplications, and our beggar's tone discovers our low condition; all our language almost is complaining and craving, our breath sighing, and our life a labouring, Prov. xviii. 23. But, sure, where all this is turned into eternal praising and rejoicing, the case must needs be altered, and all wants supplied and forgotten. I think their hearts full of joy, and their mouths full of thanks, proves their state abounding full of blessedness.

Sect. VIII. 8. Reason concludes that for the best, which is so in the judgment of the best and wisest men. Though it is true the judgment of imperfect man can be no perfect rule of truth or goodness; yet God revealeth this good to all on whom he will bestow it, and hides not from his people the end they should aim at and attain. If the holiest men are the best and wisest, then their lives tell you their judgments; and their unwearied labour and sufferings for this rest, show you they take it for the perfection of their happiness. If men of the greatest experience be the wisest men, and they that have tried both estates, then surely it is vanity and vexation that is found below, and solid happiness and rest above. If dying men are wiser than others, who, by the world's forsaking them, and by the approach of eternity, begin to be undeceived; then surely happiness is hereafter, and not here: for though the deluded world, in their flourishing prosperity, can bless themselves in their fool's paradise, and merrily jest at the simplicity of the saints, yet scarce one of many, even of the worst of them, but are ready at last to cry out with Balaam, "Oh that I might die the death of the righteous, and my last end might be like his!" Never take heed, therefore, what

[c] Ut Seneca de vita beata abunde contra Epicureos probavit.

[d] Quomodo non summa fælicitate et vera tranquillitate fruerentur, quibus nihil est quod divinæ voluntati reluctetur, nihil quod turbet et a mente Dei alienet, nihil quod desideretur extra voluntatem Dei? Muscul. in Matt. vi. tom. i. p. 127.

[e] Bion dicere solebat, facilem esse ad inferos viam, nam illic homines adire clausis oculis. Laert. l. iv. c. 7. Quod ille dixit quia morientibus claudiuntur oculi; nos dicere possumus de mentis cœcitate et socordia. Facilis descensus Averni, &c.

[f] Quicquid præter te est, non reficit, non sufficit; si ad tempus sufficit, non tamen perpetuo satiat quin adhuc amplius quæratur; qui autem te habet, satiatus est; finem suum habet; non habet ultra quod quærat; quia tu es super omne visibile, audible, odorabile, gustabile, tangibile, sensibile. Gers. par. Alphabet. Divini Amoris, cap. xiv.

they think or say now; for as sure as they shall die, they will one of these days think and say clean contrary. As we regard not what a drunken man says, because it is not he, but the drink, and when he hath slept he will awake in another mind; so why should we regard what wicked men say now, who are drunk with security and fleshly delights, when we know beforehand, for certain, that when they have slept the sleep of death, at the furthest, they will awake in another mind. Only pity the perverted understandings of these poor men, who are beside themselves; knowing that one of these days, when too late experience brings them to their right minds, they will be of a far different judgment. They ask us, What are you wiser than your forefathers; than all the town besides; than such and such great men and learned men? And do you think, in good sadness, we may not, with better reason, ask you, What, are you wiser than Enoch and Noah; than Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Samuel; than David and Solomon; than Moses and the prophets; than Peter, Paul, all the apostles, and all the sons of God, in all ages and nations, that ever went to heaven; yea, than Jesus Christ himself? Men may be deceived; but we appeal to the unerring judgment of wisdom itself, even the wise, all-knowing God, whether "a day in his courts be not better than a thousand elsewhere;" and whether "it be not better to be doorkeepers there, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness?" Psal. lxxxiv. 10. Nay, whether the very "reproaches of Christ (even the scorns we have from you, for Christ's sake and the gospel's) be not greater riches than all the treasures of the world?" Heb. xi. 25, 26. If wisdom, then, may pass the sentence, you see which way the cause will go; and "wisdom is justified of all her children," Matt. xi. 19.

Sect. IX. Lastly, another rule in reason is this: That good which containeth all other good in it, must needs itself be best. And where do you think, in reason, that all the streams of goodness do finally empty themselves? Is it not in God, from whom, by secret springs, they finally proceed? Where, else, do all the lines of goodness concentre? Are not all the sparks contained in this fire; and all the drops in this ocean? Surely the time was when there was nothing besides God, and then all good was only in him.[g] And even now the creature's essence and existence are secondary, derived, contingent, improper, in comparison of his, "who is, and was, and is to come;" whose name alone is called, "I am." What do thine eyes see, or thine heart conceive desirable, which is not there to be had? Sin, indeed, there is none; but durst thou call that good? Worldly delights there is none; for they are good but for the present necessity, and please but the brutish senses. Brethren, do you fear losing or parting with any thing you now enjoy? What! do you fear you shall want when you come to heaven? Shall you want the drops when you have the ocean; or the light of the candle, when you have the sun; or the shallow creature, when you have the perfect Creator? "Cast thy bread upon the waters, and after many days thou shalt find it," Eccles. xi. 1. Lay abroad thy tears, thy prayers, pains, boldly and unweariedly: as God is true, thou dost but set them to usury, and shalt receive a hundredfold, Matt. xix. 29. Spare not, man, for state, for honour, for labour. If heaven do not make amends for all, God hath deceived us; which who dare once imagine? Cast away friends, houses, lands, life, if he bid thee: leap into the sea, as Peter, (Mark viii. 35,) if he command thee: lose thy life, and thou shalt save it everlastingly; when those that saved theirs, shall lose them everlastingly. Venture all, man, upon God's word and promise. There is a day of rest coming will fully pay for all. All the pence and the farthings thou expendest for him, are contained, with infinite advantage, in the massy gold and jewels of thy crown. When Alexander had given away his treasure, and they asked him where it was, he pointed to the poor, and said, *In scriniis*, In my chests. And when he went upon a hopeful expedition, he gave away his gold; and when he was asked what he kept for himself, he answers, *Spem majorum et meliorum*, The hope of greater and better things. How much more boldly may we lay out all, and point to heaven, and say, it is *in scriniis*, in our everlasting treasure; and take that hope of greater and better things, instead of all. Nay, lose thyself for God, and renounce thyself, and thou shalt at that day find thyself again in him. Give him thyself, and he will receive thee upon the same terms as Socrates did his scholar, Æschines; who gave himself to his master, because he had nothing else, *Accipio, sea ea lege ut te tibi meliorem reddam quam accepi:* that he may return thee to thyself better than he received thee.[h] So, then, this rest is the good which containeth all other good in it. And thus you see, according to the rules of reason, the transcendent excellency of the saints' glory in the general. We shall next mention the particular excellences.

CHAPTER VII.

THE EXCELLENCES OF OUR REST.

YET let us draw a little nearer, and see more immediately from the pure fountain of the Scriptures, what further excellences this rest affordeth. And the Lord hide us in the clefts of the rock, and cover us with the hands of indulgent grace, while we approach to take this view. And the Lord grant we may put off from our feet the shoes of irreverence and fleshly conceivings, while we stand upon this holy ground.

1. It is the fruit of the love and blood of Christ whom we shall there also behold and enjoy.

Sect. I. And first, it is a most singular honour and ornament, in the style of the saints' rest, to be called the purchased possession; that it is the fruit of the blood of the Son of God; yea, the chief fruit; yea, the end and perfection of all the fruits and efficacy of that blood. Surely love is the most precious ingredient in the whole composition; and of all the flowers that

[g] Quærendum est (ut summum bonum) quod not fiat indies deterius; cui non possit obstari; quo nil melius possit optari. Quid hoc est? Animus: sed hic rectus, bonus, magnus. Quid aliud voces hunc quam Deum in humano corpore hospitantem? Hic animus tam in equitem Romanum, quam in servum potest cadere. Quid est eques Romanus? aut libertinus? aut servus? Nomina ex ambitione aut ex injuria nata. Subsilire in cœlum ex angulo licet; exsurge modo, et te quoque dignum finge Deo? finges autem non auro, non argento. Non potest ex hac materia imago Deo exprimi similis. Senec. Epist. xxxi. ad Luc. tom. ii. p. 583. Who would think these were a heathen's words?

[h] Æschines pauper Socratis auditor: Nihil, inquit, dignum te inveni quod dare tibi possim: et hoc modo pauperem me esse sentio. Itaque dono tibi, quod unum habeo, meipsum. Hoc munus rogo, qualecunque est boni consulas cogitesque alios cum multum tibi dederint, plus sibi reliquisse. Cui Socrates; Quid ni tu, inquit, mihi magnum munus dederis, nisi fore parvo te æstimas? Habeo itaque curæ, ut te meliorem tibi reddam quam accepi. Senec. de Benef. l. 1. c. viii. p. 385.

grow in the garden of love, can there be brought one more sweet and beautiful to the garland, than this blood? Greater love than this there is not; to lay down the life of the lover, John xv. 13. And to have this our Redeemer ever before our eyes, and the liveliest sense and freshest remembrance of that dying, bleeding love still upon our souls! Oh, how will it fill our souls with perpetual ravishments, to think, that in the streams of this blood we have swam through the violence of the world, the snares of Satan, the seducements of the flesh, the curse of the law, the wrath of an offended God, the accusations of a guilty conscience, and the vexing doubts and fears of an unbelieving heart, and are passed through all, and are arrived safely at the breast of God! Now we are stupified with vile and senseless hearts, that can hear all the story of this bloody love, and read all the dolours and sufferings of love, and hear all his sad complaints, and all with dulness, and unaffected. He cries to us, "Behold and see; is it nothing to you, O all ye that pass by? Is there any sorrow like unto my sorrow?" Lam. i. 12. And we will scarce hear or regard the dolorous voice, nor scarce turn aside to view the wounds of him, who turned aside and took us up to heal our wounds at this so dear a rate.[a] But, oh! then our perfected souls will feel as well as hear, and, with feeling apprehensions, flame again in love for love. Now we set his picture, wounded and dying, before our eyes, but can get it no nearer our hearts than if we believed nothing of what we read; but then, when the obstructions between the eye and the understanding are taken away, and the passage opened between the head and the heart, surely our eyes will everlastingly affect our heart. And while we view, with one eye, our slain, revived Lord, and with the other eye, our lost, recovered souls, and transcendent glory, these views will eternally pierce us, and warm our very souls. And those eyes, through which folly and lust have so often stolen into our hearts, shall now be the casements to let in the love of our dearest Lord for ever. Now, though we should, as some do, travel to Jerusalem, and view the mount of Olives, where he prayed and wept, and see that dolorous way by which he bare his cross, and entered the temple of the holy grave; yea, if we should, with Peter, have stooped down and seen the place where he lay, and beheld his relicts; yet these bolted doors of sin and flesh would have kept out the feeling of all that love. But, oh! that is the joy! We shall then leave these hearts of stone and rock behind us, and the sin that here so close besets us; and the sottish unkindness that followed us so long, shall not be able to follow us into that glory. But we shall behold, as it were, the wounds of love with eyes and hearts of love for ever. Suppose, a little to help our apprehensions, that a saint, who had partaken of the joys of heaven, hath been translated from as long an abode in hell, and after the experience of such a change, should have stood with Mary and the rest, by the cross of Christ, and have seen the blood and heard the groans of his Redeemer. What think you, would love have stirred in his breast or no? Would the voice of his dying Lord have melted his heart or no? Oh that I were sensible of what I speak! With what astonishing apprehensions, then, will redeemed saints everlastingly behold their blessed Redeemer! I will not meddle with their vain, audacious question, who must needs know, whether the glorified body of Christ do yet retain either the wounds or scars. But this is most certain, that the memory of it will be as fresh, and the impressions of love as deep, and its working as strong, as if his wounds were still in our eyes, and his complaints still in our ears, and his blood still streaming afresh. Now his heart is open to us, and ours shut to him: but when his heart shall be open, and our hearts open, oh the blessed congress that there will then be! What a passionate meeting was there between our new-risen Lord and the first sinful, silly woman that he appears to! How doth love struggle for expressions, and the straitened fire, shut up in the breast, strive to break forth! John xx. 16; Matt. xxviii. 9. "Mary!" saith Christ: "Master!" saith Mary; and presently she clasps about his feet, having her heart as near to his heart as her hands were to his feet. What a meeting of love, then, will there be, between the new-glorified saint and the glorious Redeemer! But I am here at a loss, my apprehensions fail me, and fall too short; only this I know, it will be the singular praise of our inheritance, that it was bought with the price of that blood; and the singular joy of the saints, to behold the purchaser and the price together with the possession. Neither will the views of the wounds of love renew our wounds of sorrow; he whose first words, after his resurrection, were to a great sinner, "Woman, why weepest thou?" (John xx. 13,) knows how to raise love and joy by all those views, without raising any cloud of sorrow or storm of tears at all, 2 Sam. xxiii. 16, 17. He that made the sacramental commemoration of his death to be his church's feast, will sure make the real enjoyment of its blessed purchase to be marrow and fatness. And if it afforded joy to hear from his mouth, "This is my body which is given for you," and "This is my blood which was shed for you;" what joy will it afford to

[a] If Christ came to bear the curse which was against us, how should he be made a curse but by taking that death which the curse lay in? And if the death of our Lord was the redemption of all men, and by his death the middle wall of partition was broken down, and the gentiles called, how should he invite us to himself if he were not crucified? for it is only on the cross that men die with their arms stretched out. Athanas. lib. de Incarn. Verbi. Hæc enim cum sit principalis et summa hominis fælicitas secundum animam, non poterat conferri nisi per principale et summum humanæ redemptionis, et pro peccatis nostris satisfactionis principium sacrificium, viz. Messiæ. Jos. De Voisin de Lege Divina, c. 8. p. 97. Lege et eundem Voisin Theolog. Judæor. l. 2. c. 5. p. 293, 294. Quid mirum si caput pro membris accepit curationem, quam tamen in scipso non habuit necessariam? Nonne et in membris nostris sæpe pro unius infirmitate alteri adhibetur curatio? Dolet caput, et in brachio fit coctura; dolent renes, et fit in tibia; ita hodie pro totius corporis putredine, cauterium quoddam infixum est in capite Christi. Bern. Serm. 30. de Tempore. Facescat ergo mæror, tristitia fugiat; eliminetur dolor; rancor abscedat ut liceat vacare et videre cum Moysi visionem hanc grandem; qualiter Deus in ventre virginis concipiatur, decipiatur diabolus, recipiatur perditum, indebitum accipiatur! Totum me trahit affectio, sed oratio deficit; dives cogitatio vocis paupertate confunditur. Bern. Serm. 24. in Die Natal. Quid æque mentem cogitantis impinguat? Nomen Jesu mel in ore, in aure melos, in corde jubilæus. Omnis cibus qui non conditur hoc sale, infatuatus est. Scriptura quæ non fuerit interlita oleo tantæ devotionis, est insipida. Bern. Serm. 23. Non capio me præ lætitia, quia illa majestas naturam suam naturæ meæ carnis et sanguinis sublevat; et me miserum in divitias gloriæ suæ, non ad horam, sed in sempiternum includit; fit frater meus dominus meus; et timorem domini fratris vincit affectus. Domine Jesu Christe, libentur audio te regnantem in cœlis; libentius nascentem in terris; libentissime crucem, clavos et lanceam sustinentem. Hæc siquidem effusio rapit affectum meum; et istorum memoria incalescit cor meum. Bern. Serm. 23. in Die Natal. For all the great seeming difference among us about the grace of Christ, it is fully agreed between the Calvinists and Lutherans, (saith Hottonus,) Ne guttulam quidem salutis extra Dei gratiam in solo Christo Mediatore quærendam esse, &c. Quod in ipso, per et propter ipsum solum, non propter merita sua, pondus æternæ gloriæ fit recepturi, cum Deus in ipsis non eorum merita, sed sua dona coronaturus sit. Hottonus de Toler. Christian. p. 59, 60.

hear, "This glory is the fruit of my body and my blood!" And what a merry feast will it be, when we shall drink of the fruit of the vine new with him in the kingdom of his Father, as the fruit of his own blood! David would not drink of the waters which he longed for, because they were the blood of those men who jeoparded their lives for them, and thought them fitter to offer to God, than to please him.[b] But we shall value these waters more highly, and yet drink them the more sweetly, because they are the blood of Christ, not jeoparded only, but shed for them. They will be the more sweet and dear to us, because they were so bitter and dear to him. If the buyer be judicious, we estimate things by the price they cost. If any thing we enjoy were purchased with the life of our dearest friend, how highly should we value it! nay, if a dying friend deliver but a token of his love, how carefully do we preserve it, and still remember him when we behold it, as if his own name were written on it! And will not then the death and blood of our Lord everlastingly sweeten our possessed glory? Methinks they should value the plenty of the gospel, with their peace and freedom, at a higher rate, who may remember what it hath cost; how much precious blood; how many of the lives of God's worthies and witnesses, besides all other costs! Methinks, when I am preaching, or hearing, or reading, I see them as before mine eyes, whose blood was shed to seal the truth, and look the more respectively on them yet living, who suffered to assert it. Oh, then, when we are rejoicing in glory, how shall we think of the blood that revived our souls, and how shall we look upon him whose sufferings did put that joy into our heart! How carefully preserve we those prizes which with greatest hazard we gained from the enemy! Goliath's sword must be kept as a trophy, and laid up behind the ephod: and in a time of need, David says, "There is none to that," 1 Sam. xxi. 9. Surely, when we do divide the spoil, and partake of the prize which our Lord so dearly won, we shall say indeed, "There is none like that." How dear was Jonathan's love to David, which was testified by stripping himself of the robe that was upon him, and giving it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle; and also by saving him from his father's wrath! How dear for ever will the love of Christ be then to us, who stripped himself, as it were, of his majesty and glory, and put our mean garment of flesh upon him, that he might put the robes of his own righteousness and glory upon us; and saved us, not from cruel injustice, but from his Father's deserved wrath! Well then, christians, as you use to do in your books, and on your goods, to write down the price they cost; so do you on your righteousness and on your glory, write down the price, "The precious blood of Christ."[c]

Yet understand this rightly: not that this highest glory was in strictest proper sense purchased, so as that it was the most immediate effect of Christ's death. We must take heed that we conceive not of God as a tyrant, who so delighteth in cruelty, as to exchange mercies for stripes, or to give a crown on condition he may torment men.[d] God was never so pleased with the sufferings of the innocent, much less of his Son, as to sell his mercy properly for their sufferings; fury dwelleth not in him, nor doth he willingly correct the sons of men, nor take pleasure in the death of him that dieth. But the sufferings of Christ were primarily and immediately to satisfy justice that required blood, and to bear what was due to the sinner, and to receive the blow that should have fallen upon him, and so to restore him to the life he lost, and the happiness he fell from; but this dignity, which surpasseth the first, is, as it were, from the redundancy of his merit, or a secondary fruit of his death. The work of his redemption so well pleased the Father, that he gave him power to advance his chosen to a higher dignity than they fell from, and to give them the glory which was given to himself; and all this according to his counsel, and the good pleasure of his own will.

Sect. II. The second pearl in the saints' diadem, is, that it is free. It is freely given us. This seemeth, as Pharaoh's second kine, to devour the former; and, as the angel to Balaam, to meet it with a drawn sword of a full opposition. But the seeming discord is but a pleasing diversity, composed into that harmony which constitutes the melody. These two attributes, purchased and free, are the two chains of gold, which by their pleasant twisting, do make up the wreath for the heads of the pillars in the temple of God, 1 Kings vii. 17. It was dear to Christ, but free to us. When Christ was to buy, silver and gold were nothing worth, prayers and tears could not suffice, nor any thing below his blood; but when we come to buy, the price is fallen to just nothing: our buying is but receiving, we have it freely, without money, and without price.[e] Nor do the gospel conditions make it

[b] Hane gratiam Christus impertit pretio sanguinis, &c. Hane sequamur omnes: hujus sacramento et signo censeamur. Hic nobis vitæ viam aperit: hic ad paradisum reducens facit: hic ad cœlorum regna perducit: eum ipso semper vivimus, facti per ipsum filii Dei: eum ipso exultabimus semper ipsius cruore reparati. Erimus christiani eum Christo simul gloriosi; de Deo Patre beati, de perpetua voluptate lætantes semper in conspectu Dei, et agentes Deo gratias semper. Neque enim poterit nisi lætus esse semper, et gratus, qui eum morti fuisset obnoxius, factus est de immortalitate securus. Cypr. ad Demetrian. verbis ultimis.

[c] By the redundancy of which merit, after satisfaction thereby made unto his Father's justice for our debt, there is a further purchase made of grace and glory, and of all good things, in our behalf. Dr Reynolds' Life of Christ, p. 402. Isa. xxvii. 4; Lam. iii. 33; Ezek. xviii. 23, 32.

[d] Q. Nonne bona effecta est mors Christi per modum objecti? Nonne summe amabilis tanquam instrumentum præcipuum salutis nostræ? *R.* Quod dicitur mortem Christi esse instrumentum nostræ salutis non excedere rationem medii: quod autem additur illam esse nobis summe amabilem, verum est; sed supposito Dei ordine, qui eam et sibi in sacrificium, et nobis in redemptionem constituit. Non sic porro intelligitur aliquid esse bonum per modum objecti: sensus enim est, illud esse tale, ut secundum se sit amabile: cujusmodi nequaquam est mors Christi, nec cujusvis alterius. Gibieuf, l. 2. de Libert. c. 22. sect. 11. p. 441.

[e] Yet our crown may truly be said to be our due; for God giveth it as a righteous Judge: but it is not due as a debt upon our merit, but a gift upon a testament, or upon promise, 2 Tim. iv. 7. So Polycarp. Epist. ad Philip. (edit. Usserii, p. 22,) saith, that "Ignatius, Zosimus, Rufus, and Paul, did not run in vain, but in faith and righteousness." Et ad debitum sibi locum a Domino cui et compassi sunt, abierunt: quia non hoc seculum dilexerunt, sed eum qui pro ipsis et pro nobis mortuus, est, &c.; because they loved not this world, but him that died and rose for us and them, they went to the place which was due to them, (ὀφειλόμενον αὐτοῖς,) from the Lord, with whom also they suffered: and Ignatius, another of John's disciples, doth most frequently use the phrase of "worthy" and "deserving," as in the title to his epistle to the Romans, he calls them "worthy of God, worthy of eminency, worthy of blessedness, worthy of praise, worthy of faith, worthy of chastity, grounded in love and faith," &c.: and in the epistle itself he oft useth the same phrase of himself, "That I may be worthy to see your face, as I much desire to deserve;" and so oft he speaks of deserving his martyrdom, even through the whole epistle. This was the language of this apostolical man: yet, no doubt, he spoke of deserving and merit only in an evangelical, and not a legal sense. So Tertullian: Non enim carnis restitutionem negavit si compensationem mercedis opposuit; cum ipsi compensatio debeatur, cui dissolutio deputatur, scilicet carni. Tertul. lib. de Anima, c. iv. p. (edit. Pamel.) 418; sic idem Tertul.

the less free, or the covenant tenor before mentioned contradict any of this. If the gospel conditions had been such as are the laws, or payment of the debt required at our hands, the freeness then were more questionable: yea, if God had said to us, Sinners, if you will satisfy my justice but for one of your sins, I will forgive you all the rest; it would have been a hard condition on our part, and the grace of the covenant not so free, as our disability doth necessarily require. But if all the condition be our cordial acceptation, surely we deserve not the name of purchasers: thankful accepting of a free acquittance is no paying of the debt. If life be offered to a condemned man, upon condition that he shall not refuse the offer, I think the favour is nevertheless free; nay, though the condition were, that he should beg and wait before he have his pardon, and take him for his Lord who hath thus redeemed him: and this is no satisfying of the justice of the law; especially when the condition is also given, as it is by God to all his chosen. Surely, then, here is all free. If the Father freely forgive the Son, and the Son freely pay the debt; and if God do freely accept that way of payment, when he might have required it of the principal; and if both Father and Son do freely offer us the purchased life upon those fair conditions, and if they also freely send the Spirit to enable us to perform those conditions; then what is here that is not free? Is not every stone that builds this temple free stone? Oh the everlasting admiration that must needs surprise the saints to think of this freeness! What did the Lord see in me that he should judge me meet for such a state? That I, who was but a poor, diseased, despised wretch, should be clad in the brightness of this glory! That I, a silly, creeping, breathing worm, should be advanced to this high dignity! That I, who was but lately groaning, weeping, dying, should now be as full of joy as my heart can hold; yea, should be taken from the grave, where I was rotting and stinking, and from the dust and darkness, where I seemed forgotten, and here set before his throne! That I should be taken with Mordecai from captivity, to be set next unto the king; and with Daniel from the den, to be made ruler of princes and provinces; and with Saul from seeking asses, to be advanced to a kingdom! Oh who can fathom unmeasurable love? Indeed, if the proud-hearted, self-ignorant, self-admiring sinners should be thus advanced, who think none so fit for preferment as themselves, perhaps instead of admiring free love, they would, with those unhappy angels, be discontented yet with their estate. But when the self-denying, self-accusing, humble soul, who thought himself unworthy the ground he trod on, and the air he breathed in, unworthy to eat, drink, or live, when he shall be taken up into this glory; he who durst scarce come among or speak to the imperfect saints on earth, because he was unworthy; he who durst scarce hear, or scarce read the Scripture, or scarce pray and call God Father, or scarce receive the sacraments of his covenant, and all because he was unworthy; for this soul to find itself wrapt up into heaven, and closed in the arms of Christ even in a moment! do but think with yourselves, what the transporting, astonishing admiration of such a soul will be! He that durst not lift up his eyes to heaven, but stood afar off, smiting on his breast, and crying, "Lord, be merciful to me a sinner;" now to be lift up to heaven himself! He who was wont to write his name in Bradford's style, "The unthankful, the hard-hearted, the unworthy sinner," and was wont to admire that patience could bear so long, and justice suffer him to live; sure he will admire at this alteration, when he shall find by experience, that unworthiness could not hinder his salvation, which he thought would have bereaved him of every mercy! Ah, christian, there is no talk of our worthiness or unworthiness; if worthiness were our condition for admittance, we might sit down with St. John and weep, "because none in heaven or earth is found worthy; but the Lion of the tribe of Judah is worthy and hath prevailed:" and by that title must we hold the inheritance: we shall offer there the offering that David refused, even praise for that which cost us nothing. Here our commission runs, "Freely ye have received, freely give:" but Christ hath dearly received, yet freely gives.[f] The Master heals us of our leprosy freely; but Gehazi, who had no finger in the cure, will surely run after us, and take something of us, and falsely pretend, it is his Master's pleasure. The pope, and his servants, will be paid for their pardons and indulgences, but Christ will take nothing for his. The fees of their prelates' courts are large, and commutation of penance must cost men's purses dear, or else they must be cast out of the synagogue, and soul and body delivered up to the devil: but none are shut out of that church for want of money, nor is poverty any eyesore to Christ. An empty heart may bar them out, but an empty purse cannot: his kingdom of grace hath ever been more consistent with despised poverty than wealth and honour; and riches occasion the difficulty of entrance far more than want can do, "for that which is highly esteemed among men, is despised with God:" and so it is, also, "the poor of the world, rich in faith, whom God hath chosen to be heirs of that kingdom, which he hath prepared for them that love him." I know the true "labourer is worthy of his hire;" and, "they that serve at the altar, should live upon the altar;" and, "it is not fit to muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn," James ii. 5; 1 Cor. vi. 4—13: and I know, it is either hellish malice, or penurious baseness, or ignorance of the weight of their work and burden, that makes their maintenance so generally incompetent, and their very livelihood and subsistence so envied and grudged at; and that it is a mere plot of the prince of darkness, for the diversion of their thoughts, that they must be studying how to get bread for their own and children's mouths, when they should be preparing the bread of life for their people's souls: but yet let me desire the right-aiming ministers of Christ, to consider what is expedient as well as what is lawful,[g] and that the saving of one soul is better than a thousand pounds a year, and our gain, though due, is a cursed gain, which is a stumblingblock to our people's souls: let us make the free gospel as little burdensome and chargeable as is possible. I had rather never take their tithes while I live, than by them to destroy the souls for whom Christ died, 1 Cor. ix. 18, 19; and though God hath ordained, that "they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel," yet I had rather suffer all things than hinder the gospel, Rom. xiv. 13, 15, 20, 21; and it were better for me to die than that any man should make this my glorying

lib de Resur. Carnis, c. xvi. p. 410. inquit: Beneficiis Deus (liberare) debet. But all this is meant of a *debitum ex promisso gratuito* only. This is evident in the following sentence: Quicquid omnino homini a Deo prospectum atque promissum est, non solum animæ, verum et carni scias debitum. Tertul. l. de Resur. Carn. cap. v. p. 408.

[f] Ad cœlestis Hierusalem non ascendunt consortium, nisi qui toto corde profitentur, non proprii operis sed divini esse muneris quod ascendunt. Prosp. Sen. 31. Lege et ejus Carm. de Ingrat. c. xlv.

[g] Lege Zuingl. de hac re contra catabapt. optime disserentem. Tom. ii. in Eccl. p. 47. et passim.

void, Rom. xv. 1, 2; 1 Cor. ix. 12—15. Though the well-leading elders be worthy of double honour, especially the laborious in the word and doctrine, yet if the necessity of souls and the promoting of the gospel should require it, I had rather preach the gospel in hunger and rags, than rigidly contend for what is my due; and if I should do so, yet have I not whereof to glory, for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe be to me if I preach not the gospel, though I never received any thing from men, 1 Tim. v. 17; 1 Cor. iv. 10—12; ix. 16. How unbeseeming the messengers of his free grace and kingdom is it, rather to lose the hearts and souls of their people, than to lose a groat of their due; and rather to exasperate them against the message of God, than to forbear somewhat of their right; and to contend with them at law for the wages of the gospel, and to make the glad tidings to their yet carnal hearts seem to be sad tidings because of this burden! This is not the way of Christ and his apostles, nor according to the self-denying, yielding, suffering doctrine which they taught. Away with all those actions that are against the main end of our studies and calling, which is to win souls; and woe be upon that gain which hinders the gaining of men to Christ! I know, flesh will here object necessities, and distrust will not want arguments; but we who have enough to answer to the diffidence of our people, let us take home some of our answers to ourselves, and teach ourselves first before we teach them. How many have you known that God suffered to starve in his vineyard?

But this is our exceeding consolation, that though we may pay for our Bibles, and books, and sermons, and, it may be, pay for our freedom too, to enjoy and use them; yet as we paid nothing for God's eternal love, and nothing for the Son of his love, and nothing for his Spirit, and our grace and faith, and nothing for our pardon, so shall we pay nothing for our eternal rest.[h] We may pay for the bread and wine, but we shall not pay for the body and blood, nor for the great things of the covenant which it seals unto us; and, indeed, we have a valuable price to give for those, but for these we have none at all: yet this is not all: if it were only for nothing, and without our merit, the wonder were great; but it is, moreover, against our merit, and against our long endeavouring of our own ruin. Oh, the broken heart that hath known the desert of sin, doth both understand and feel what I say! What an astonishing thought it will be to think of the unmeasurable difference between our deservings and our receivings; between the state we should have been in, and the state we are in; to look down upon hell, and see the vast difference that free grace hath made betwixt us and them; to see the inheritance there, which we were born to, so different from that which we are adopted to! Oh what pangs of love will it cause within us, to think, Yonder was my native right, my deserved portion; those should have been my hideous cries, my doleful groans, my easeless pains, my endless torment; those unquenchable flames I should have lain in; that never-dying worm should have fed upon me; yonder was the place that sin would have brought me to, but this is it that Christ hath brought me to; yonder death was the wages of my sin, but this eternal life is the gift of God through Jesus Christ my Lord. Did not I neglect grace, and make light of the offers of life, and slight my Redeemer's blood a long time, as well as yonder suffering souls? Did I not let pass my time, and forget my God and soul, as well as they; and was not I born in sin and wrath as well as they? O, who made me to differ?[i] Was my heart naturally any readier for Christ than theirs, or any whit better affected to the Spirit's persuasions? Should I ever have begun to love, if God had not begun to me; or ever be willing, if he had not made me willing; or ever differed, if he had not made me to differ? Had I not now been in those flames, if I had had mine own way, and been let alone to mine own will? Did I not resist as powerful means, and lose as fair advantages, as they? And should I not have lingered in Sodom till the flames had seized on me, if God had not in mercy carried me out? Oh how free was all this love; and how free is this enjoyed glory! Doubtless this will be our everlasting admiration, that so rich a crown should fit the head of so vile a sinner; that such high advancement, and such long unfruitfulness and unkindness, can be the state of the same persons; and that such vile rebellions can conclude in such most precious joys. But no thanks to us, nor to any of our duties and labours, much less to our neglects and laziness: we know to whom the praise is due, and must be given for ever; and, indeed, to this very end it was, that infinite wisdom did cast the whole design of man's salvation into the mould of purchase and freeness,[k] that the love and joy of man might be perfected, and the honour

[h] Antequam gratia justificetur ut justus efficiatur impius, quid est nisi impius? Quem si debitum sequeretur, quid ejus merito nisi supplicium redderetur? August. Epist. 106. De me omnino nihil præsumam. Quid enim attuli boni ut mei misereris, et me justificares? Quid in me invenisti nisi sola peccata; tuum nihil aliud nisi natura quam ereasti; cætera mala mea quæ delevisti. Non ego prior ad te exsurrexi, sed tu ad me excitandum venisti. August. Enar. 1. in Psal. lviii.

[i] Sed nos eam gratiam volumus Pelagiani aliquando fateantur, qua futuræ gloriæ magnitudo, non solum promittitur, verum etiam creditur et speratur; nec solum revelatur sapientia, verum etiam amatur; nec suadetur solum omne quod bonum est, verum et persuadetur. Non enim omnium est fides, &c. August. de Grat. Christi, cap. 10. Unde cognoscimus Dei esse, et ut bonum facere velimus, et ut bonum facere valeamus. Fulgent. l. 1. ad Monim. cap. ix. Multa Deus facit in homine bona, quæ non faeit homo; nulla vero facit homo, quæ non facit Deus ut facit homo. August. l. ii. ad Bonif. cap. 8.

[k] It is a fond conceit of the antinomians, to think that justification and salvation are not free, if given on condition; as long as the condition is but acceptance, and the freeness excludeth all our merit of satisfaction. The like may be said of the conditionality of sincere evangelical obedience to the continuance and consummation of our justification, and to our salvation. In both which points, I desire those men that will not receive the truth from me, to receive it from learned Placeus in Thes. Salmuriens, vol. i. p. 32, 34. I will recite but two theses, which contain most that is misliked in my aphorisms. Thes. xxxvii.: Fide justificamur: non tanquam parte aliqua justitiæ, aut opere quod suo quodam pretio et merito justificationem nobis impetret, aut dispositione animæ ad introductionem justitiæ inhærentis; sed tanquam conditione fœderis gratiæ quam Deus a nobis idcirco exigit, loco conditionis fœderis legalis (quæ nobis carnis vitio facta est impossibilis) quod ea nihil aliud sit, quam doni justitiæ in Christo Jesu per evangelium nobis oblati acceptatio, qua fit ex Dei pacto gratuito ut illa justitia nostra sit. Mark, he saith, in Christo, for Christ is first accepted, and so righteousness in and with him; not the gift without the person. Thes. xli. about justification by works: Id ipsum fortasse hoc ratione commodius explicabitur, opponitur justificatio accusationi: a duabus autem accusationibus premimur in foro divino. (In reference to the threatening and the righteousness of the two covenants.) Primum objicitur, nos esse peccatores; hoc est, reos violatæ conditionis, quæ fœdere legali lata est. Deinde objicitur, nos esse infideles; hoc est, non præstitisse conditionem fœderis gratiæ: videlicet fidem. Ab accusatione priore, sola fide justificamur, qua Christi gratiam et justitiam amplectimur A posteriore, justificamur etiam operibus, quatenus iis fides ostenditur. A posteriore, justificationem respiciens Jacobus affirmavit merito, ex operibus justificari hominem et non ex fide tantum. Paulus vero respiciens ad priorem, sola fide hominem sine operibus justificari, multis rebus necessariis addixit. This is plain truth. So also Diodate in his Annotation on Jam. ii.; Ludovicus De Dieu, Phil. Codurcus, and our Mead, say more for works, though I believe they meant orthodoxly.

of grace most highly advanced, that the thought of merit might neither cloud the one nor obstruct the other, and that on these two hinges the gates of heaven might turn. So then, let "Deserved" be written on the door of hell, but on the door of heaven and life, "The free gift."

3. It is the saints' possession.

Sect. III. Thirdly, The third comfortable attribute of this rest is, that it is the saints' proper and peculiar possession. It belongs to no other of all the sons of men; not that it would have detracted from the greatness or freeness of the gift, if God had so pleased, that all the world should have enjoyed it: but when God hath resolved otherwise, that it must be enjoyed but by few, to find our names among that number must needs make us the more to value our enjoyment. If all Egypt had been light, the Israelites should not have had the less; but yet to enjoy that light alone, while their neighbours live in thick darkness, must make them more sensible of their privilege. Distinguishing, separating mercy affecteth more than any mercy. If it should rain on our grounds alone, or the sun shine alone upon our habitations, or the blessing of heaven divide between our flocks and other men's, as between Jacob's and Laban's, we should more feelingly acknowledge mercy than now, while we possess the same in common. Ordinariness dulleth our sense; and if miracles were common they would be slighted. If Pharaoh had passed as safely as Israel, the Red sea would have been less remembered; if the first-born of Egypt had not been slain, the first-born of Israel had not been the Lord's peculiar; if the rest of the world had not been drowned, and the rest of Sodom and Gomorrah burned, the saving of Noah had been no wonder, nor Lot's deliverance so much talked of. The lower the weighty end of the balance deseends, the higher is the other lifted up; and the falling of one of the sails of the windmill is the occasion of the rising of the other. It would be no extenuation of the mercies of the saints here, if all the world were as holy as they; and the communication of their happiness is their greatest desire; yet it might perhaps dull their thankfulness, and differencing grace would not be known. But when one should be enlightened, and another left in darkness; one reformed, and another by his lusts enslaved; it makes them cry out, with the disciples, "Lord, how is it that thou wilt reveal thyself to us, and not unto the world?" John xiv. 22. When the prophet shall be sent to one widow only of all that were in Samaria, and to cleanse one Naaman of all the lepers, the mercy is more observable, Luke iv. 24—27. Oh! that will surely be a day of passionate sense on both sides, when two shall be in a bed, and two in the field, the one taken, and the other forsaken. For a christian, who is conscious of his own undeserving and ill-deserving, to see his companion in sin perish, his neighbour, kinsman, father, mother, wife, child, for ever in hell, while he is preferred among the blessed; to see other men's sins eternally plagued, while his are all pardoned;[1] to see those that were wont to sit with us in the same seat, and eat with us at the table, and join with us in the same duties, now to lie tormented in those flames, while we are triumphing in divine praises; that Lot must leave his sons-in-law in the flames of Sodom, and the wife of his bosom as a monument of divine vengeance, and escape with his two daughters alone; here is choosing, distinguishing mercy! Therefore, the Scripture seems to affirm, that as the damned souls shall, from hell, see the saints' happiness, to increase their own torments, so shall the blessed, from heaven, behold the wicked's misery to the increase of their own joy: and as they looked on the dead bodies of Christ's two witnesses, slain in their streets, and they that dwelt on the earth rejoiced over them and made merry, (Rev. xi. 10,) and as the wicked here behold the calamities of God's people with gladness; so shall the saints look down upon them in the burning lake, and in the sense of their own happiness, and in the approbation of God's just proceedings, they shall rejoice and sing, "Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast thus judged; for they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink, for they are worthy. Allelujah, salvation, and glory, and honour, and power to our God; for true and righteous are his judgments," Rev. xvi. 5, 6. And as the command is over Babylon, so will it be over all the condemned souls, "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her," Rev. xviii. 20; xix. 7, 8. By this time the impenitent world will see a reason for the saints' singularity while they were on earth, and will be able to answer their own demands, Why must you be more holy than your neighbours? even because they would fain be more happy than their neighbours: and why cannot you do as others, and live as the world about you? even because they are full loth to speed as those others, or to be damned with the world about them. Sincere singularity in holiness is, by this time, known to be neither hypocrisy nor folly. If to be singular in that glory be so desirable, surely to be singular in godly living is not contemptible. As every one of them now knows his own sore, and his own grief, so shall every one of them feel his own joy: and if they can now call Christ their own, and call God their own God, how much more then upon their full possession of him! for as he takes his people for his inheritance, so will he himself be the inheritance of his people for ever, 2 Chron. vi. 29; Psal. xvi. 5; xxxiii. 12; lxvii. 6; lxxviii. 71.

4. It is a rest with angels and perfect saints.

Sect. IV. A fourth comfortable adjunct of this rest is, that it is the fellowship of the blessed saints and angels of God. Not so singular will the christian be, as to be solitary. Though it be proper to the saints only, yet is it common to all the saints; for what is it but an association of blessed spirits in God; a corporation of perfected saints, whereof Christ is the head; the communion of saints completed? Nor doth this make those joys to be therefore mediate, derived by creatures to us, as here: for all the lines may be drawn from the centre, and not from each other, and yet their collocation make them more comely than one alone could be. Though the strings receive not their sound and sweetness from each other, yet their concurrence causeth that harmony which could not be by one alone. For those that have prayed, and fasted, and wept, and watched, and waited together, now to joy, and enjoy, and praise together, methinks should much advance their pleasure.[m] Whatsoever it will be upon the great change that will be in our natures perfected,

[1] We shall there look upon them for ever who here gazed on us for a time; and the short fruit of cruel eyes beholding us in persecution shall be then recompensed with our everlasting beholding them in their sufferings. Cyp. ad Demetri. sect. xxi. p. 330.

[m] Verissimum certe est, Deum qui sufficit sibi, sufficere quoque sanctis suis; qui hoc verum arbitratur, eam sententiam ampleetetur oportet, sanctos nihil amare extra Deum; amare quidem alia a Deo, amare illa quæ sunt extra Deum; sed ita ut amoris illius Divina Bonitas, non ea quæ creaturarum propria, principium sit. Qui secus de sanctis existimant, et satis esse censent eos amare quæcunque amant,

sure I am, according to the present temperature of the most sanctified human affections, it would affect exceedingly: and he who mentioneth the qualifications of our happiness, of purpose that our joy may be full, and maketh so oft mention of our consociation and conjunction in his praises, sure doth hereby intimate to us, that this will be some advantage to our joys. Certain I am of this, fellow-christians, that as we have been together in the labour, duty, danger, and distress, so shall we be in the great recompence and deliverance; and as we have been scorned and despised, so shall we be crowned and honoured together; and we who have gone through the day of sadness, shall enjoy together that day of gladness. And those who have been with us in persecution and prison, shall be with us also in that palace of consolation. Can the wilful world say, If our forefathers and friends be all in hell, we will venture there too?[n] And may not the christian say on better grounds, Seeing my faithful friends are gone before me to heaven, I am much the more willing to be there too? Oh! the blessed day, dear friends, when we that were wont to inquire together, and hear of heaven and talk of heaven together, shall then live in heaven together; when we who were wont to complain to one another, and open our doubts to one another, and our fears, whether ever we should come there or no, shall then rejoice with one another, and triumph over those doubts and fears; when we who were wont formerly, in private, to meet together for mutual edification, shall now, most publicly, be conjoined in the same consolation. Those same disciples, who were wont to meet in a private house for fear of the Jews, are now met in the celestial habitation without fear; and as their fear then did cause them to shut the door against their enemies, so will God's justice shut it now. Oh! when I look in the faces of the precious people of God, and believingly think of this day, what a refreshing thought is it! Shall we not there remember, think you, the pikes which we passed through here; our fellowship in duty and in sufferings; how oft our groans made, as it were, one sound, our conjunct tears but one stream, and our conjunct desires but one prayer? and now all our praises shall make up one melody, and all our churches one church, and all ourselves but one body; for we shall be one in Christ, even as he and the Father are one. It is true we must be very careful in this case, that, in our thoughts, we look not for that in the saints which is alone in Christ, and that we give them not his own prerogative, nor expect too great a part of our comfort in the fruition of them: we are prone enough to this kind of idolatry. But, yet, he who commands us so to love them now, will give us leave, in the same subordination to himself, to love them then, when himself hath made them much more lovely: and if we may love them, we shall surely rejoice in them; for love and enjoyment cannot stand without an answerable joy. If the forethought of sitting down with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, may be our lawful joy, then how much more that real sight and actual possession! It cannot choose but be comfortable to me to think of that day, when I shall join with Moses in his song, with David in his psalms of praise, and with all the redeemed in the song of the Lamb for ever; when we shall see Enoch walking with God, Noah enjoying the end of his singularity, Joseph of his integrity, Job of his patience, Hezekiah of his uprightness, and all the saints the end of their faith. Will it be nothing conducible to the completing of our comforts, to live eternally with Peter, Paul, Austin, Chrysostom, Jerome, Wickliffe, Luther, Zuinglius, Calvin, Beza, Bullinger, Zanchius, Paræus, Piscator, Camero; with Hooper, Bradford, Latimer, Glover, Saunders, Philpot; with Reighnolds, Whitaker, Cartwright, Brightman, Bayne, Bradshaw, Bolton, Ball, Hildersham, Pemble, Twisse, Ames, Preston, Sibbs? *O fœlicem diem* (said holy Grynæus) *quam ad illud animarum concilium proficiscar, et ex hac turba colluvione discedam!*"[o] O happy day, when I shall depart out of this crowd and sink, and go to that same council of souls! I know that Christ is all in all; and that it is the presence of God that maketh heaven to be heaven. But, yet, it much sweeteneth the thoughts of that place to me, to remember that there are such a multitude of my most dear and precious friends in Christ; with whom I took sweet counsel, and with whom I went up to the house of God; who walked with me in the fear of God, and integrity of their hearts; in the face of whose conversations there was written the name of Christ; whose sweet and sensible mention of his excellences hath made my heart to burn within me. To think such a friend, that died at such a time, and such a one at another time; oh what a number of them could I name! and that all these are entered into rest; and we shall surely go to them, but they shall not return to us. It is a question with some, whether we shall know each other in heaven or no. Surely there shall no knowledge cease which now we have, but only that which implieth our imperfection; and what imperfection can this imply? Nay, our present knowledge shall be increased beyond belief, 2 Cor. v. 16. It shall indeed be done away, but as the light of candles and stars is done away, by the rising of the sun; which is more properly a doing away of our ignorance than of our knowledge: indeed, we shall not know each other after the flesh; nor by stature, voice, colour, complexion, visage, or outward shape; if we had so known Christ, we should know him no more; nor by parts and gifts of learning, nor titles of honour and worldly dignity; nor by terms of affinity and consanguinity, nor benefits, nor such relations; nor by youth or age; nor, I think, by sex: but by the image of Christ, and spiritual relation, and former faithfulness in improving our talents, beyond doubt, we shall know and be known. Nor is it only our old acquaintance, but all the saints of all ages, whose faces in the flesh we never saw, whom we shall there both know and comfortably enjoy. Luther, in his last sickness, being asked his judgment,[p] whether we shall know one another in heaven, answered thus, *Quid accidit Adamo? Nunquam ille viderat Evam*, &c. i. e. How was it with Adam? He had never seen Eve: yet he asked not, who she was, or whence she came; but saith, She is flesh of my flesh, and bone of my

propter Deum, etsi præter et extra Deum, irrogant illis non mediocrem injuriam: non enim patiuntur beatorum mentes totas in Deo quiescere et abscondi: sed partem inde abstrahunt; aliquid earum extra Deum versari contendentes. Gibieuf, l. ii. c. 27. sect. vii. p. 484.

[n] Socrates Critoni vehementer suadenti ut si vitam ipse suam negligeret, certe liberis etiam tum parvulis et amicis ab ipso pendentibus servaret incolumem: Liberi, inquit, Deo qui mihi eos dedit, curæ erunt: amicos hinc discedens inveniam, vobis aut similes aut etiam meliores, ne vestra quidem consuetudine diu carituras quandoquidem vos brevi eodem estis commigraturi. Erasm. Apoth. l. iii. ex Platon. Zenophon.

[o] Junius writeth in his life, of a man that so esteemed him, that he digged up a turf of the ground where he stood, and carried it home; how, then, should we love the habitation of the saints in light! By this example you may see how worshipping of saints, relics, shrines, images, was brought in by honest zeal (misguided).

[p] Melch. Adam in vita Luth.

bone. And how knew he that? Why, being full of the Holy Ghost, and endued with the true knowledge, of God he so pronounced. After the same sort shall we be renewed by Christ in another life, and we shall know our parents, wives, children, &c. much more perfectly than Adam did then know Eve; yea, and angels as well as saints, will be our blessed acquaintance and sweet associates. We have every one now our own angels, then beholding our Father's face; and those who now are willingly ministering spirits for our good, will willingly then be our companions in joy for the perfecting of our good; and they who had such joy in heaven for our conversion, will gladly rejoice with us in our glorification. I think, christian, this will be a more honourable assembly than ever you have beheld; and a more happy society than you were ever of before. Then we shall truly say, as David, "I am a companion of all them that fear thee: when we are come to mount Sion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels; to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling," Acts xii. 15; Matt. xviii. 10; Luke xv. 10, and xvi. 22; Heb. i. 7, &c. and xii. 22—24; Psal. cxix. 16. We are come thither already in respect of title, and of earnest and first-fruits; but we shall then come into the full possession. O beloved, if it be a happiness to live with the saints in their imperfection, when they have sin to imbitter, as well as holiness to sweeten, their society, what will it be to live with them in their perfection, where saints are wholly and only saints? if it be a delight to hear them pray or preach, what will it be to hear them praise? if we thought ourselves in the suburbs of heaven when we heard them set forth the beauty of our Lord, and speak of the excellences of his kingdom, what a day will it be when we shall join with them in praises to our Lord in and for that kingdom! Now we have corruption, and they have corruption; and we are apter to set awork each other's corruption than our graces; and so lose the benefit of their company while we do enjoy it, because we know not how to make use of a saint: but then it will not be so. Now we spend many an hour which might be profitable, in a dull, silent looking on each other, or else in vain and common conference; but then it will not be so. Now the best do know but in part, and therefore can instruct and help us but in part; but then we shall, with them, make up one perfect man. So then, I conclude, this is one singular excellency of the rest of heaven, that we are "fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God," Eph. ii. 19.

5. It is immediate from God, and in him.

Sect. V. Fifthly, Another excellent property of our rest will be, that the joys of it are immediately from God. Nor doth this contradict the former, as I have before made plain. Whether Christ, who is God as well as man, shall be the conveyer of all from the divine nature to us; and whether the giving up the kingdom to the Father do imply the ceasing of the Mediator's office; or whether he shall be Mediator *fruitionis*, as well as *acquisitionis*; are questions which I will not now attempt to handle. But this is sure: we shall see God face to face, and stand continually in his presence, and consequently derive our life and comfort immediately from him. Whether God will make use of any creatures for our service then, or, if any, of what creatures, and what use, is more than I yet know. It seems that the creature shall have a day of deliverance, and that into the glorious liberty of the sons of God, Rom. viii. 21: but whether this before, or at the great and full deliverance; or whether to endure to eternity; or to what particular employment they shall be continued; are questions yet too hard for me. When God speaks them plainer, and mine understanding is made clearer, then I may know these; but it is certain that at least our most and great joys will be immediate, if not all. Now, we have nothing at all immediately, but at the second, or third, or fourth, or fifth hand, or how many, who knows? From the earth, from man, from sun and moon, from the influence of the planets, from the ministration of angels, and from the Spirit and Christ; and, doubtless, the further the stream runs from the fountain, the more impure it is. It gathers some defilement from every unclean channel it passeth through. Though it savours not, in the hand of angels, of the imperfection of sinners, yet it doth of the imperfection of creatures; and as it comes from man it savours of both. How quick and piercing is the word in itself! yet many times it never enters, being managed by a feeble arm. Oh! what weight and worth is there in every passage of the blessed gospel! enough, one would think, to enter and force the dullest soul, and wholly possess its thoughts and affections: and yet how oft doth it fall as water upon a stone! and how easily can our hearts sleep out a sermon time; and much because these words of life do die in the delivery, and the fruit of conception is almost still-born![q] Our people's spirits remain congealed, while we who are intrusted with the word that should melt them, do suffer it to freeze between our lips. We speak, indeed, of soul-concerning truths, and set before them life and death; but it is with such self-seeking affectation, and in such a lazy, formal, customary strain, like the pace the Spaniard rides, that the people little think we are in good sadness, or that our hearts do mean as our tongues do speak. I have heard of some tongues that can lick a coal of fire till it be cold. I fear these tongues are in most of our mouths, and that the breath that is given us to blow up this fire, till it flame in our people's souls, is rather used to blow it out. Such preaching is it that hath brought the most to hear sermons, as they say their creed and *pater-nosters*, even as a few good words of course. How many a cold and mean sermon that yet contains most precious truths! The things of God which we handle are divine; but our manner of handling too human: and there is little or none that ever we touch, but we leave the print of our fingers behind us; but if God should speak this word himself, it would be a piercing, melting word indeed. How full of comfort are the gospel promises! yet do we oft so heartlessly declare them, that the broken, bleeding-hearted saints, are much debarred of their joys. Christ is indeed a precious pearl, but oft held forth in leprous hands; and thus do we disgrace the riches of the gospel, when it is the work of our calling to make it honourable in the eyes of

[q] Quanquam enim sistendo in gradu naturæ; creatura rationalis præsertim, habeat ordinem ad Deum; possitque illum et nosse, et amare; non nisi tamen in creaturis id potest. Amat Deum; sed quem cognoscit, et ut illi per lumen naturæ proponitur; cognoscit autem illum duntaxat in creaturis; tum in seipso tum in aliis. At in ordine gratiæ, novit Deum ut in se est, et illi immediate et non per creaturas unitur; unde procedit ejus immobilitas sive immutabilitas, et beata æternitas quam perfectam et integram habet in statu gloriæ: cum alioqui creaturæ omnes in propria specie proprioque ordine sint mobiles possuntque deficere, &c. Gibieuf. lib. 2. de Libert. Dei, cap. 27. sect. xi. p. 487.

men; and we dim the glory of that jewel by our dull and low expressions, and dunghill conversations, whose lustre we do pretend to discover, while the hearers judge of it by our expressions, and not its proper, genuine worth. The truth is, the best of men do apprehend but little of what God, in his word, expresseth, and what they do apprehend they are unable to utter. Human language is not so copious as the heart's conceivings are; and what we possibly might declare, yet, through our own unbelief, stupidity, laziness, and other corruptions, we usually fail in; and what we do declare, yet the darkness of our people's understandings, and the sad senselessness of their hearts, do usually shut out and make void. So that as all the works of God are perfect in their season, as he is perfect; so are all the works of man, as himself, imperfect; and those which God performeth by the hand of man, will too much savour of the instrument. If an angel from heaven should preach the gospel, yet could he not deliver it according to its glory; much less we, who never saw what they have seen, and keep this treasure in earthen vessels. The comforts that flow through sermons, through sacraments, through reading, and company, and conference, and creatures, are but half comforts; and the life that comes by these is but a half life, in comparison of those which the Almighty shall speak with his own mouth, and reach forth to us with his own hand. The christian knows by experience, now, that his most immediate joys are his sweetest joys; those which have least of man, and are most directly from the Spirit. That is one reason, as I conceive, why christians who are much in secret prayer, and in meditation and contemplation, rather than they who are more in hearing, reading, and conference, are men of greatest life and joy, because they are nearer the well-head, and have all more immediately from God himself; and that I conceive the reason, also, why we are more indisposed to those secret duties, and can easilier bring our hearts to hear, and read, and confer, than to secret prayer, self-examination, and meditation, because in the former is more of man; and in these we approach the Lord alone, and our natures draw back from the most spiritual and fruitful duties: not that we should therefore cast off the other, and neglect any ordinance of God. To live above them, while we use them, is the way of a christian; but to live above ordinances, as to live without them, is to live without the compass of the gospel lines, and so without the government of Christ. Let such beware, lest while they would be higher than christians, they prove in the end lower than men. We are not yet come to the time and state where we shall have all from God's immediate hand. As God hath made all creatures, and instituted all ordinances, for us, so will he continue our need of all. We must yet be contented with love-tokens from him, till we come to receive our all in him. We must be thankful if Joseph sustain our lives by relieving us in our famine with his provisions, till we come to see his own face. There is joy in these remote receivings, but the fulness is in his own presence. O christians! you will then know the difference betwixt the creature and the Creator, and the content that each of them affords. We shall then have light without a candle, and a perpetual day without the sun; "for the city hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof," Rev. xxi. 23: nay, "there shall be no night there, and they need no candle, nor light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light, and they shall reign for ever and ever," Rev. xxii. 5. We shall then have rest without sleep, and be kept from cold without our clothing, and need no fig-leaves to hide our shame; for God will be our rest, and Christ our clothing, and shame and sin will cease together. We shall then have health without physic, and strength without the use of food; for the Lord God will be our strength, and the light of his countenance will be health to our souls, and marrow to our bones. We shall then, and never till then, have enlightened understandings without Scripture, and be governed without a written law; for the Lord will perfect his law in our hearts, and we shall be all perfectly taught of God. His own will shall be our law, and his own face shall be our light for ever. Then shall we have joy, which we drew not from the promises, nor was fetched us home by faith or hope. Beholding and possessing will exclude the most of these. We shall then have communion without sacraments, when Christ shall drink with us of the fruit of the vine new, that is, refresh us with the comforting wine of immediate fruition, in the kingdom of his Father. To have necessities and no supply, is the case of them in hell; to have necessity supplied by the means of creatures, is the case of us on earth; to have necessity supplied immediately from God, is the case of the saints in heaven; to have no necessity at all, is the prerogative of God himself. The more of God is seen and received with and by the means and creature here, the nearer is our state like that in glory. In a word, we have now our mercies, as Benjamin had Joseph's cup, Gen. xliv. 12; we find them at a distance from God, and scarcely know from whence they come, and understand not the good-will intended in them, but are oft ready to fear they come in wrath, and think they will but work our ruin. But when we shall feed at Joseph's own house, yea, receive our portion from his own hand; when he shall fully unbowel his love unto us, and take us to dwell in Goshen by him; when we shall live in our Father's house and presence, and "God shall be all and in all;" then we are, indeed, at home in rest.

6. It will be a seasonable rest.

Sect. VI. Sixthly, Again, a further excellency is this; it will be unto us a seasonable rest. He that expecteth the fruit of this vineyard in season, and maketh his people as trees planted by the waters, fruitful in their season, he will also give them the crown in season. He that will have the words of joy spoken to the weary in season, will sure cause that time of joy to appear in the meetest season. And they who knew the season of grace, and did repent and believe in season, shall also, if they faint not, reap in season, Mark xii. 1; Luke xx. 10; Psal. i. 3; Isa. l. 4; Gal. vi. 9. If God will not miss the season of common mercies, even to his enemies, but "will give both the former and latter rain in their season, and the appointed weeks of the harvest in its season," Jer. v. 24; xxxiii. 20; and by an inviolable covenant hath established day and night in their seasons; then, sure, the harvest of the saints and their day of gladness shall not miss its season. Doubtless, he that would not stay a day longer than his promise, but brought Israel out of Egypt that self-same day that the four hundred and thirty years were expired; neither will he fail of one day or hour of the fittest season for his people's glory, Exod. xii. 40, 41; Jer. viii. 7. And as Christ failed not to come in the fulness of time, even then when Daniel and others had foretold his coming; so in the fulness and fitness of time will his second coming be. He that hath given the stork, the crane, the swallow, to know their appointed time, will surely keep his time appointed. When we have had in

this world a long night of sad darkness, will not the day breaking and the rising of the Sun of righteousness be then seasonable? When we have endured a hard winter in this cold climate, will not the reviving spring be then seasonable? When we have (as St. Paul, Acts xxvii. 7, 9) sailed slowly many days, and much time spent, and sailing now grown more dangerous; and when neither sun, nor stars, in many days appear, and no small tempest lieth on us, and all hope that we shall be saved is almost taken away; do you think that the haven of rest is not then seasonable? When we have passed a long and tedious journey, and that through no small dangers, is not home then seasonable? When we have had a long and perilous war, and have lived in the midst of furious enemies, and have been forced to stand on a perpetual watch, and received from them many a wound, would not a peace, with victory, be now seasonable? When we have been captivated in many years' imprisonment, and insulted over by scornful foes, and suffered many pinching wants, and hardly enjoyed bare necessaries, would not a full deliverance to a most plentiful state, even from this prison to a throne, be now seasonable? Surely a man would think, who looks upon the face of the world, that rest should to all men seem seasonable. Some of us are languishing under continual weakness, and groaning under most grievous pains, crying, in the morning, Would God it were evening! and, in the evening, Would God it were morning! weary of going, weary of sitting, weary of standing, weary of lying, weary of eating, of speaking, of walking, weary of our very friends, weary of ourselves; oh how oft hath this been mine own case! and is not rest yet seasonable? Some are complaining under the pressure of the times; weary of their taxes, weary of their quartering, weary of plunderings, weary of their fears and dangers, weary of their poverty and wants; and is not rest yet seasonable? Whither can you go, or into what company can you come, where the voice of complaining doth not show, that men live in a continual weariness, but especially the saints, who are most weary of that which the world cannot feel? What godly society almost can you fall into, but you shall hear by their moans that somewhat aileth them? some weary of a blind mind, doubting concerning the way they walk in, unsettled in almost all their thoughts; some weary of a hard heart, some of a proud, some of a passionate, and some of all these, and much more: some weary of their daily doubtings, and fear concerning their spiritual estate; and some of the want of spiritual joys, and some of the sense of God's wrath: and is not rest now seasonable? When a poor christian hath desired, and prayed, and waited for deliverance many a year, is it not then seasonable? When he is ready almost to give up, and saith, I am afraid I shall not reach the end, and that my faith and patience will scarce hold out; is not this a fit season for rest? If it were to Joseph a seasonable message, which called him from the prison to Pharaoh's court; or if the return of his Benjamin, the tidings that Joseph was yet alive, and the sight of the chariots which should convey him to Egypt, were seasonable for the reviving of Jacob's spirits; then, methinks, the message for a release from the flesh, and our convoy to Christ, should be a seasonable and welcome message. If the voice of the king were seasonable to Daniel, Dan. vi. 19, &c. early in the morning calling him from his den, that he might advance him to more than former dignity, then methinks that morning voice of Christ our King, calling us from our terrors among lions, to possess his rest among his saints, should be to us a very seasonable voice. Will not Canaan be seasonable after so many years' travel, and that through a hazardous and grievous wilderness? Indeed, to the world it is never in season. They are already at their own home, and have what they most desire. They are not weary of their present state. The saints' sorrow is their joy, and the saints' weariness is their rest: their weary day is coming, where there is no more expectation of rest, but for the thirsty soul to enjoy the fountain, and the hungry to be filled with the bread of life, and the naked to be clothed from above, for the children to come to their Father's house, and the disjoined member to be conjoined with their Head. Methinks this should be seldom unseasonable. When the atheistical world began to insult, and question the truth of Scripture promises, and ask us, Where is now your God? Where is your long-looked-for glory? Where is the promise of your Lord's coming? oh how seasonable, then, to convince these unbelievers, to silence these scoffers, to comfort the dejected, waiting believer, will the appearing of our Lord be! We are oft grudging now that we have not a greater share of comforts; that our deliverances are not more speedy and eminent; that the world prospers more than we; that our prayers are not presently answered: not considering that our portion is kept to a fitter season; that these are not always winter fruits, but when summer comes we shall have our harvest. We grudge that we do not find a Canaan in the wilderness, or cities of rest in Noah's ark, and the songs of Sion in a strange land; that we have not a harbour in the main ocean, or find not our home in the middle way, and are not crowned in the midst of the fight, and have not our rest in the heat of the day, and have not our inheritance before we are at age, and have not heaven before we leave the earth: and would not all this be very unseasonable?

I confess, in regard of the church's service, the removing of the saints may sometimes appear to us unseasonable; therefore doth God use it as a judgment, and therefore the church had ever prayed hard before they would part with them, and greatly laid to heart their loss; therefore are the great mournings at the saints' departures, and the sad hearts that accompany them to their graves; but this is not especially for the departed, but for themselves and their children, as Christ bid the weeping woman. Therefore, also, it is, that the saints, in danger of death, have oft begged for their lives, with that argument, "What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit?" Psal. xxx. 9. "Wilt thou show wonders to the dead? Shall the dead arise and praise thee? Shall thy loving-kindness be declared in the grave; or thy faithfulness in destruction? Shall thy wonders be known in the dark, and thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?" Psal. lxxxviii. 10. "For in death there is no remembrance of thee; in the grave who shall give thee thanks?" Psal. vi. 5. And this it was that brought Paul to a strait, because he knew it was better for the church that he should remain here. I must confess, it is one of my saddest thoughts, to reckon up the useful instruments, whom God hath lately called out of his vineyard, when the loiterers are many, and the harvest great, and very many congregations desolate, and the people as sheep without shepherds; and yet the labourers called from their work, especially when a door of liberty and opportunity is open; we cannot but lament so sore a judgment, and think the removal, in regard of the church, unseasonable. I know I speak but your own thoughts; and you are too ready to overrun me in application. I fear you are too sensible of what

I speak,[r] and, therefore, am loth to stir you in your sore. I perceive you in the posture of the Ephesian elders, and had rather abate the violence of your passions: our applications are quicker about our sufferings, than our sins; and we will quicklier say, this loss is mine, than, this fault is mine. But, O consider, my dear friends, hath God any need of such a worm as I? Cannot he a thousand ways supply your wants? You know when your case was worse, and yet he provided: hath he work to do, and will he not find instruments? And though you see not for the present where they should be had, they are never the further off for that. Where was the world before the creation; and where was the promised seed when Isaac lay on the altar? Where was the land of promise, when Israel's burden was increased; or, when all the old stock, save two, were consumed in the wilderness? Where was David's kingdom when he was hunted in the wilderness? or the glory of Christ's kingdom when he was in the grave, or when he first sent his twelve apostles? How suddenly did the number of labourers increase immediately upon the reformation by Luther; and how soon were the rooms of those filled up, whom the rage of the papists had sacrificed in the flames! Have you not lately seen so many difficulties overcome, and so many improbable works accomplished, that might silence unbelief, one would think, for ever? But if all this do not quiet you, for sorrow and discontent are unruly passions, yet at least remember this: suppose the worse you fear should happen, yet shall it be well with all the saints; your own turns will shortly come; and we shall be housed with Christ together, where you will want your ministers and friends no more. And for the poor world, which is left behind, whose unregenerate state causeth your grief; why, consider, shall man pretend to be more merciful than God? Hath not he more interest than we, both in the church and in the world; and more bowels of compassion to commiserate their distress? There is a season for judgment as well as for mercy; and if he will have the most of men to perish for their sins, and to suffer the eternal tormenting flames, must we question his goodness, or manifest our dislike of the severity of his judgment? I confess we cannot but bleed over our desolate congregations; and that it ill beseems us to make light of God's indignation; but yet we should, as Aaron when his sons were slain, (Lev. x. 3,) hold our peace, and be silent, because it is the Lord's doing; and say, as David, "If I (and his people) shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and show me them, and his habitations; but if he thus say, I have no delight in thee; behold, here am I, let him do with me as seemeth good unto him," Psal. xxxix. 9; 2 Sam. xv. 25, 26. I conclude, then, that whatsoever it is to those that are left behind, yet the saints' departure to themselves is usually seasonable. I say usually, because I know a very saint may have a death[s] in some respect unseasonable, though it do translate him into this rest. He may die in judgment, as good Josiah, 2 Chron. xxxv. 24; he may die for his sin. For the abuse of the sacrament many were weak and sickly, and many fallen asleep, even of those who were thus judged and chastened by God, that they might not be condemned with the world. He may die by the hand of public justice; or die in a way of public scandal. He may die in a weak degree of grace, and consequently have less degree of glory, Luke xix. 17—19. He may die in smaller improvements of his talents, and so be ruler but of few cities. The best wheat may be cut down before it is ripe; therefore it is promised to the righteous, as a blessing, "that they shall be brought as a shock of corn into the barn in season," Job v. 26. Nay, it is possible he may die by his own hands; though some divines think such doctrine not fit to be taught, lest it encourage the tempted to commit the same sin;[t] but God hath left preservatives enough against sin, without our devising more of our own; neither hath he need of our lie to his glory. He hath fixed that principle so deep in nature, that all should endeavour their own preservation, that I never knew any whose understanding was not crazed or lost, much subject to that sin; even most of the melancholy are more fearful to die than other men. And this terror is preservative enough of that kind; that such committing of a heinous known sin, is a sad sign, where there is the free use of reason; that, therefore, they make their salvation more questionable; that they die most woeful scandals to the church; that, however, the sin itself should make the godly to abhor it, were there no such danger or scandal attending it, &c. But to exclude from salvation all those poor creatures, who in fevers, frenzies, madness, melancholy, &c. shall commit this sin, is a way of prevention, which Scripture teacheth not, and too uncomfortable to the friends of the deceased. The common argument which they urge, drawn from the necessity of a particular repentance, for every particular known sin; as it is not universally true, so were it granted, it would exclude from salvation all men breathing; for there was never any man, save Christ, who died not in some particular sin, either of commission or omission, great or small, which he hath no more time to repent of, than the sinner in question: but yet, this may well be ealled untimely death:[u] but in the ordinary course of God's dealing, you may easily observe, that he purposely maketh his people's last hour in this life, to be of all other to the flesh most bitter, and to the spirit most sweet; and that they who feared death through the most of their lives, yet at last are more willing of it than ever, and all to make their rest more seasonable. Bread and drink are always good; but at such a time as Samaria's siege, to have plenty of food instead of doves' dung, in one night's space; or in such a thirst, as Ishmael's or Samson's, to have a supply of water by miracle in a moment, these are seasonable. So this rest is always good to the saints, and usually also is most seasonable rest.

Sect. VII. Seventhly, A further excellency of this rest is this; as it will be seasonable, so a suitable rest: suited, 1. To the natures. 2. To the desires. 3. To the necessity of the saints. 7. It will be a rest suitable,

1. To their natures. If suitableness concur not with excellency, the best things may be bad to us; for it is not that which makes things good in themselves, to be good to us. In our choice of friends, we oft pass by the more excellent, to choose the more suitable. 1. To our natures.

[r] These words were written by the author to his friends and congregation, who could then discern no probability of his much longer surviving, and upon the late death of some very useful ministers. Postquam enim affectione hypochondriaca innumerabilibus fere stipata symptomatibus per annos 14. laborasset, cum in longam tandem et inexpugnabilem inciderat debilitatem et contabescentiam, et demum in narium hæmorrhagiam, ad lib. 8. et inde in atrophiam, pro deplorato à medicis peritissimis relictus est. In qua tamen atrophia immensa Dei bonitate debilis adhuc supervivit; modis etiam postea mirabilibus ex orci faucibus sæpius creptus.

[s] Secundum quid.

[t] Mr. Capel, of Tempt.

[u] Secundum quid.

Every good agrees not with every nature. To live in a free and open air, under the warming rays of the sun, is excellent to man, because suitable: but the fish, which is of another nature, doth rather choose another element; and that which is to us so excellent, would quickly be to it destructive. The choicest dainties which we feed upon ourselves, would be to our beasts, as an unpleasing, so an insufficient sustenance. The iron which the ostrich well digests, would be but hard food for man: even among men, contrary appetites delight in contrary objects. You know the proverb, "One man's meat is another man's poison." Now, here is suitableness and excellency conjoined. The new nature of saints doth suit their spirits to this rest; and indeed their holiness is nothing else but a spark taken from this element, and by the Spirit of Christ kindled in their hearts, the flame whereof, as mindful of his own divine original, doth ever mount the soul aloft, and tend to the place from whence it comes. It worketh towards its own centre, and makes us restless, till there we rest. Gold and earthly glory, temporal crowns and kingdoms, could not make a rest for saints. As they were not redeemed with so low a price, so neither are they endued with so low a nature. These might be a portion for lower spirits, and fit those whose nature they suit with; but so they cannot a saint-like nature, 1 Pet. i. 18, 23. As God will have from them a spiritual worship, suitable to his own spiritual being, so will he provide them a spiritual rest, suitable to his people's spiritual nature. As spirits have not fleshly substances, so neither delight they in fleshly pleasures: these are too gross and vile for them. When carnal persons think of heaven, their conceivings of it are also carnal; and their notions answerable to their own natures. And were it possible for such to enjoy it, it would sure be their trouble, and not their rest, because so contrary to their dispositions. A heaven of good fellowship, of wine and wantonness, of gluttony and all voluptuousness, would far better please them, as being most agreeing to their natures. But a heaven of the knowledge of God and his Christ; and a delightful complacency in that mutual love, and everlasting rejoicing in the fruition of our God, a perpetual singing of his high praises; this is a heaven for a saint, a spiritual rest, suitable to a spiritual nature. Then, dear friends, we shall live in our element. We are now as the fish in some small vessel of water, that hath only so much as will keep him alive; but what is that to the full ocean? We have a little air let in to us, to afford us breathing; but what is that to the sweet and fresh gales upon mount Sion? We have a beam of the sun to lighten our darkness, and a warm ray to keep us from freezing; but then we shall live in its light, and be revived by its heat for ever. Oh! blessed be that hand which fetched a coal, and kindled a fire in our dead hearts, from that same altar where we must offer our sacrifice everlastingly! To be locked up in gold and in pearl, would be but a wealthy starving; to have our tables with plate and ornaments richly furnished without meat, is but to be richly famished; to be lifted up with human applause, is but a very airy felicity; to be advanced to the sovereignty of all the earth, would be but to wear a crown of thorns; to be filled with the knowledge of arts and sciences, would be but to further the conviction of our unhappiness; but to have a nature like God's very image, holy as he is holy, and to have God himself to be our happiness, how well do these agree! Whether that in 2 Pet. i. 4, be meant, as is commonly understood, of our own inherent renewed nature, figuratively called divine, or rather of Christ's divine nature without us, properly so called, whereof we are also relatively made partakers, I know not; but certainly were not our own in some sort divine, the enjoyment of the true divine nature could not be to us a suitable rest.

2. It is suitable also to the desires of the saints: for, such as their nature, such be their desires; and such as their desires, such will be their rest. Indeed, we have now a mixed nature; and from contrary principles, do arise contrary desires: as they are flesh, they have desires of flesh; and as they are sinful, so they have sinful desires. Perhaps they could be too willing, whilst these are stirring, to have delights, and riches, and honour, and sin itself. But these are not prevailing desires, nor such as in their deliberate choice they will stand to; therefore is it not they, but sin and flesh. These are not the desires that this rest is suited to, for they will not accompany them to their rest. To provide contents to satisfy these, were to provide food for them that are dead. "For they that are in Christ, have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts thereof," Gal. v. 26. But it is the desires of our renewed natures, and those which the christian will ordinarily own, which this rest is suited to. Whilst our desires remain corrupted and misguided, it is a far greater mercy to deny them, yea, to destroy them, than to satisfy them; but those which are spiritual, are of his own planting, and he will surely water them, and give the increase. Is it so great a work to raise them in us; and shall they after all this vanish and fail? To send the word and Spirit, mercies and judgments, to raise the sinner's desires from the creature to God, and then to suffer them so raised, all to perish without success; this were to multiply the creature's misery; and then were the work of sanctification a designed preparative to our torment and tantalizing, but no way conducible to our happy rest. He quickened our hungering and thirst for righteousness, that he might make us happy in a full satisfaction. Christian this is a rest after thy own heart; it containeth all that thy heart can wish; that which thou longest for, prayest for, labourest for, there thou shall find it all. Thou hadst rather have God in Christ, than all the world; why there thou shalt have him. Oh! what wouldst thou not give for assurance of his love? Why, there thou shalt have assurance beyond suspicion: nay, thy desires cannot now extend to the height of what thou shalt there obtain. Was it not a high favour of God to Solomon, to promise to give him whatsoever he would ask? Why, every christian hath such a promise. Desire what thou canst, and ask what thou wilt, as a christian, and it shall be given thee; not only to half of the kingdom, but to the enjoyment both of kingdom and King. This is a life of desire and prayer; but that is a life of satisfaction and enjoyment. Oh! therefore, that we were but so wise, as to limit those which we know should not be satisfied; and those which we know not whether or no they will be satisfied; and especially those which we know should not be satisfied; and to keep up continually in heart and life, those desires which we are sure shall have full satisfaction. And, oh! that sinners would also consider, that seeing God will not give them a felicity suitable to their sensual desires, it is, therefore, their wisdom to endeavour for desires suitable to the true felicity, and to direct their ship to the right harbour, seeing they cannot bring the harbour to their ship.

2. To our desires.

3. This rest is very suitable to the saints' necessities also, as well as to their natures and desires. It contains whatsoever they truly wanted; not supplying

3. To our necessities.

them with the gross created comforts which now they are forced to make use of, which, like Saul's armour on David, are more burden than benefit. But they shall there have the benefit without the burden: and the pure spirits extracted, as it were, shall make up their cordial, without the mixture of any drossy or earthly substance. It was Christ, and perfected holiness, which they most needed, and with these shall they here be principally supplied: their other necessities are far better removed than supplied in the present carnal way. It is better to have no need of meat, and drink, and clothing, and creatures, than to have both the need and the creature continued: their plaster will be fitted to the quality of the sore. The rain which Elias's prayer procured was not more seasonable, after the three years' drought, than this rest will be to his thirsty soul. It will be with us as with the diseased man, who had lain at the waters, and continued diseased thirty-eight years, when Christ did fully cure him in a moment; or with the woman, who, having had the issue of blood, and spent all she had upon physicians, and suffered the space of twelve years, was healed by one touch of Christ, Luke viii. 43; Mark v. 25. So, when we have lain at ordinances, and duties, and creatures, all our life-time, and spent all, and suffered much, we shall have all done by Christ in a moment: but we shall see more of this under the next head.

8. It will be a perfect rest.

1. In the sincerity of it.

Sect. VIII. Eighthly: Another excellency of our rest will be this, that it will be absolutely perfect and complete; and this both in the sincerity and universality of it. We shall then have joy without sorrow, and rest without weariness: as there is no mixture of our corruption with our graces, so no mixture of sufferings with our solace. There are none of those waves in that harbour, which now so toss us up and down: we are now sometimes at the gates of heaven, and presently almost as low as hell; we wonder at those changes of Providence towards us, being scarcely two days together in a like condition. To-day we are well, and conclude the bitterness of death is past; to-morrow sick, and conclude we shall shortly perish by our distempers; to-day in esteem, to-morrow in disgrace; to-day we have friends, to-morrow none; to-day in gladness, to-morrow in sadness: nay, we have wine and vinegar in the same cup, and our pleasantest food hath a taste of the gall. If revelation should raise us to the third heaven, (1 Cor. xii. 7,) the messenger of Satan must presently buffet us, and the prick in the flesh will fetch us down; but there is none of this unconstancy, nor mixtures, in heaven. If perfect love cast out fear, then perfect joy must needs cast out sorrow, (1 John iv. 18,) and perfect happiness exclude all the relics of misery. There will be a universal perfecting of all our parts and powers, and a universal removal of all our evils: and

2. In the universality of it.

though the positive part be the sweetest, and that which draws the other after it, even as the rising of the sun excludes the darkness; yet is not the negative part to be slighted, even our freedom from so many and great calamities. Let us, therefore, look over these more punctually, and see what it is that we shall there rest from. In general, it is from all evil. Particularly, first, from the evil of sin; secondly, and of suffering.

1. In regard of good enjoyed.
2. In regard of the evil we shall be freed from.

First: It excludeth nothing more directly than sin; whether original, and of nature; or actual, and of conversation: for there entereth nothing that defileth, nor that worketh abomination, nor that maketh a lie, Rev. xxi. 27. When they are there, the saints are saints indeed. He that will wash them with his heart-blood, rather than suffer them to enter unclean, will now perfectly see to that; he who hath undertaken to present them to his Father, "not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but perfectly holy, and without blemish, will now most certainly perform his undertaking," Ephes. v. 27. What need Christ at all to have died, if heaven could have contained imperfect souls? "For to this end came he into the world, that he might put away the works of the devil," 1 John iii. 8. His blood and Spirit have not done all this, to leave us, after all, defiled. "For what communion hath light with darkness; and what fellowship hath Christ with Belial?" 2 Cor. vi. 14. He that hath prepared for sin the torments of hell, will never admit it into the blessedness of heaven; therefore, christian, never fear this: if thou be once in heaven, thou shalt sin no more. Is not this glad news to thee, who hast prayed, and watched, and laboured against it so long. I know if it were offered to thy choice, thou wouldst rather choose to be freed from sin than to be made heir of all the world. Why, wait till then, and thou shalt have thy desire; that hard heart, those vile thoughts, which did lie down and rise with thee, which did accompany thee to every duty, which thou couldst no more leave behind thee than leave thyself behind thee, shall be now left behind for ever. They might accompany thee to death, but they cannot proceed a step further.

We shall rest from sin.

Thy understanding shall never more be troubled with darkness: ignorance and error are inconsistent with this light. Now thou walkest like a man in the twilight, ever afraid of being out of the way; thou seest so many religions in the world, that thou fearest thy own cannot be only the right among all these;[x] thou seest the Scripture so exceeding difficult, and every one pleading for his own cause, and bringing such specious arguments for so contrary opinions, that it entangleth thee in a labyrinth of perplexities; thou seest so many godly men on this side, and so many on that, and each zealous for his own way, that thou art amazed, not knowing which

1. From sin in the understanding.

[x] "If a man should defer his study of any art or science till the writers thereof did fully and unitedly consent, it would be as vain a thing, as if a man did purpose his journey from London to York, but should make a vow not to set forward till all the clocks in London strike together," Fulbeck's Directions to study the Law, p. 2, 6. The writers in all sciences differ, not from the uncertainty of the sciences, but their own imperfection; yea, in history, which reporteth matter of fact, Livy against Polybius, Plutarch against Livy, Sigonius against Plutarch, Zamphilius against Dio, whom he interpreteth and abridgeth. Non est litigiosi juris scientia sed ignorantia. Cic. de Finibus, lib. 2. "The best and most grave man will confess, that he is ignorant of many things," saith Cic. Tuscul 3. Solon was not ashamed to say, "that in his old age he was a learner;" and Julianus the lawyer said, "that when he had one foot in the grave, yet he would have the other in the school." Arrogantius loquor quam verius, si vel nunc dico me ad perfectionem sine ullo errore scribendi jam in ista ætate venisse. August. de Bono Persever. c. 21. Vide plurima talia, c. 20, 21, &c. 24, et Prolog. Retr. et contr. Priscil. c. 11. Epist. 7. ad Marcel. et Præm. lib. 3. de Trin. Tullius inquit, (nullum unquam verbum quod revocare vellet emisi,) Quæ laus etsi præclarissima videatur, tamen credibilior est de nimium fatuo quam de sapiente perfecto: nam et illi quos vulgo moriones vocant, quanto magis a sensu communi dissonant, magisque absurdi et insulsi sunt, tanto magis nullum verbum emittunt quod revocare volint: quia dicti mali, vel stulti, vel incommodi pœnitere, utique cordatorum est. De hominibus Dei, qui Spiritu Sancto acti locuti sunt, dici potest. Ab hac ego excellentia tam longe absum, ut si nullum verbum quod revocare vellem protulero, fatuo sim quam sapienti similior. Vide ultra, August. Epist. 7. ad Marcellinum.

way to take: and thus do doubtings and fears accompany darkness, and we are ready to stumble at every thing in our way; but then will all this darkness be dispelled, and our blind understandings fully opened, and we shall have no more doubts of our way. We shall know which was the right side, and which the wrong; which was the truth, and which the error. Oh! what would we give to know, clearly, all the profound mysteries in the doctrine of decree, of redemption, of justification, of the nature of grace, of the covenants, of the divine attributes, &c.; what would we not give to see all dark scriptures made plain, to see all seeming contradictions reconciled! Why, when glory hath taken the veil from our eyes, all this will be known in a moment; we shall then see clearly into all the controversies about doctrine or discipline that now perplex us. The poorest christian is presently there a more perfect divine than any is here. We are now, through our ignorance, subject to such mutability, that, in points not fundamental, we change as the moon: that is cast as a just reproach upon us, that we possess our religion with reserves, and resolvedly settle upon almost nothing; that we are to-day of one opinion, and within this week, or month, or year, of another; and yet, alas! we cannot help it. The reproach may fall upon all mankind, as long as we have need of daily growth. Would they have us believe before we understand; or say, We believe, when indeed we do not? Shall we profess ourselves resolved before we ever thoroughly studied; or say, We are certain, when we are conscious that we are not? But when once our ignorance is perfectly healed, then shall we be settled, resolved men; then shall our reproach be taken from us, and we shall never change our judgments more; then shall we be clear and certain in all, and cease to be scepties any more.[y] Our ignorance now doth lead us into error, to the grief of our more knowing brethren, to the disturbing of the church's quiet, and interrupting her desirable, harmonious consent; to the scandalizing of others, and weakening ourselves. How many a humble and faithful soul is seduced into error, and little knows it! Loth they are to err, God knows, and therefore read, and pray, and confer, and yet err still, and confirmed in it more and more: and in lesser and more difficult points how should it be otherwise? He that is acquainted amongst men, and knows the quality of professors in England, must needs know the generality of them are no great scholars, nor have much read or studied controversies, nor are men of the profoundest natural parts; nor have the ministers of England much preached controversies to them, but were glad if their hearers were brought to Christ, and got so much knowledge as might help to salvation, as knowing that to be their great work. And can it be expected that men, void of learning and strength of parts, unstudied and untaught, should, at the first onset, know those truths, which they are almost uncapable of knowing at all;[z] when the greatest divines, of clearest judgment, acknowledge so much difficulty that they could almost find in their hearts sometimes to profess them quite beyond their reach? Except we will allow them to lay aside their divine faith, and take up a human, and see with other men's eyes the weight and weakness of arguments, and not with their own,[a] it cannot be thought that the most of christians, no, nor the most of divines, should be free from erring in those difficult points, where we know they have not headpieces able to reach. Indeed, if it were the way of the Spirit to teach us miraculously, as the apostles were taught the knowledge of tongues, without the intervening use of reason; or if the Spirit infused the acts of knowledge, as he doth the immediate knowing power; then he that had most of the Spirit would not only know best, but also know most: but we have enough to convince us of the contrary to this. But, oh! that happy, approaching day, when error shall vanish away for ever; when our understanding shall be filled with God himself, whose light will leave no darkness in us! His face shall be the Scripture, where we shall read the truth; and himself, instead of teachers and counsels, to perfect our understandings, and acquaint us with himself, who is the perfect truth. No more error, no more scandal to others, no more disquiet to our own spirits, no more mistaking zeal for falsehood; because our understandings have no more sin. Many a godly man hath here, in his mistaking zeal, been a means to deceive and pervert his brethren, and when he sees his own error, cannot again tell how to undeceive them; but there we shall all conspire in one truth, as being one in him who is that truth.

2 From sin of will, affection, and conversation.

And as we shall rest from all the sin of our understandings, so of our wills, affection, and conversation.[b] We shall no more retain this rebelling principle, which is still withdrawing us from God, and addicting us to backsliding. Doubtless, we shall no more be oppressed with the power of our corruptions, nor vexed with their presence; no pride, passion, slothfulness, senselessness, shall enter with us; no strangeness to God, and the things of God; no coldness of affections, nor imperfection in our love; no uneven walking, nor grieving of the Spirit; no scandalous action, or unholy conversation: we shall rest from all these for ever: then shall our understandings receive their light from the face of God, as the full moon from the open sun, where there is no earth to interpose betwixt them; then shall our wills correspond to the divine will, as face answers to face in a glass; and the same, his will, shall be our law and rule, from which we shall never swerve again. Now our corruptions, as the Anakims, dismay us; and, as the Canaanites, in Israel, they are left for pricks in our sides, and thorns in our eyes, Josh. xxiii. 13; and as the bondwoman and her son in Abraham's house, Gen. xxi. 9, they do but abuse us, and make our lives a burden to us; but then shall the bond-

[y] Nam incaute creduli circumveniuntur ab his quos bonos putaverunt. Mox errore consimili jam suspectis omnibus ut improbos metuunt, etiam quos optimos sentire potuerunt. Nos proinde soliciti quod utrinque in omni negotio disseratur; et ex altera parte plerunque obscura sit veritas, ex altera lateat mira subtilitas, quæ nonnunquam ubertate dicendi, fidem confessæ probationis imitetur: diligenter quantum potest singula ponderemus, ut argutias quidem laudare, ea vero quæ recta sunt eligere, probare, suscipere possimus. Minut. Fælix. Octav. p. (mihi) 366.

[z] In toto genere disputandi, plerumque pro disserentium viribus et eloquentiæ potestate, etiam perspicuæ veritatis conditio mutetur. Id accidere pernotum est auditorum facilitate, qui dum verborum lenocinio a rerum intentionibus avocantur, sine delectu assentiuntur dictis omnibus, nec a rectis falsa secernunt, nescientes inesse et incredibili verum, et in verisimili mendacium. Minut. Fælix. ubi sup.

[a] Didicimus singulas quasque hæreses intulisse ecclesiæ proprias questiones, contra quas diligentius defenderetur scriptura divina, quam si nulla talis necessitas cogeret. Aug. de Bono Persev. c. 20. Multa ad fidem catholicam pertinentia, dum hæreticorum callida inquietudine exagitantur, ut adversus eas defendi possint, et considerantur diligentius, et intelliguntur clarius, et instantius prædicantur; et ab adversario mota quæstio, discendi existit occasio. Aug. de Civ. lib. 16. c. 2.

[b] Prima libertas voluntatis erat, posse non peccare; novissima erit, multo major, non posse peccare. Prima immortalitas erat posse non mori: novissima erit, multo major, non posse mori. Aug. de Corrupt. et Grat. c. 9, 11.

woman and her son be cast out, and shall not be heirs with us in our rest. As Moses said to Israel, "Ye shall not do after all the things that we do here this day, every one whatsoever is right in his own eyes, for ye are not as yet come to the rest and to the inheritance which the Lord your God giveth you," Deut. xii. 8, 9. I conclude, therefore, with the words next to my text; "For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his," Heb. iv. 10. So that there is a perfect rest from sin.

2. From suffering.

Sect. IX. 2. It is a perfect rest from suffering: when the cause is gone the effect ceaseth. Our sufferings were but the consequents of our sinning, and here they both shall cease together. I will show particularly ten kinds of suffering, which we shall there rest from.

1. From doubts of God's love.

1. We shall rest from all our perplexing doubts and fears: it shall no more be said that doubts are like the thistle, a bad weed, but growing in good ground; they shall now be weeded out, and trouble the gracious soul no more.[c] No more need of so many sermons, books, and marks, and signs, to resolve the poor doubting soul: the full fruition of love itself hath now resolved his doubts for ever. We shall hear that kind of language no more: What shall I do to know my state? How shall I know that God is my Father, that my heart is upright, that conversion is true, that faith is sincere? Oh! I am afraid my sins are unpardoned; oh! I fear that all is but in hypocrisy; I fear that God will reject me from his presence; I doubt he doth not hear my prayers; how can he accept so vile a wretch, so hard-hearted, unkind a sinner, such an undervaluer of Christ, as I am! All this kind of language is there turned into another tune; even into the praises of him who hath forgiven, who hath converted, who hath accepted, yea, who hath glorified a wretch so unworthy; so that it will now be as impossible to doubt and fear, as to doubt of the food which is in our bellies, or to fear it is night when we see the sun shine. If Thomas could doubt with his finger in the wounds of Christ, yet in heaven I am sure he cannot; if we could doubt of what we see, or hear, or taste, or feel, yet I am sure we cannot of what we there possess. Sure this will be comfort to the sad and drooping souls, whose life was nothing but a doubting distress, and their language nothing but a constant complaining. If God would speak peace, it would ease them; but when he shall possess them of this peace, they shall rest from all their doubts and fears for ever.

2. From all sense of God's displeasure.

Sect. X. 2. We shall rest from all that sense of God's displeasure, which was our greatest torment, whether manifested mediately or immediately; "for he will cause his fury towards us to rest, and his jealousy to cease, and he will be angry with us no more," Ezek. xvi. 42. Surely hell shall not be mixed with heaven. There is the place for the glorifying of justice, prepared of purpose to manifest wrath, but heaven is only for mercy and love. Job doth not now use his own language, "Thou writest bitter things against me, and takest me for thine enemy, and settest me up as a mark to shoot at," &c. Job iii.; xiii. 26; xvi. 12—14; vii. 10. Oh how contrary now to all this! David doth not now complain, "that the arrows of the Almighty stick in him; that his wounds stink and are corrupt; that his sore runs and ceaseth not; that his moisture is as the drought of summer; that there is no soundness in his flesh because of God's displeasure, nor rest in his bones because of sin; that he is weary of crying, his throat is dried, his eyes fail in waiting for God," Psal. xxxviii.; "that he remembers God, and is troubled; that in complaining his spirit is overwhelmed; that his soul refuseth to be comforted; that God's wrath lieth hard upon him, and that he afflicteth him with all his waves, Psal. lxvi. 3. Oh how contrary now are David's songs! Now he saith: "I spake in my haste, and this was my infirmity," Psal. lxxvii. 2, 3. Here the christian is oft complaining, Oh, if it were the wrath of man, I could bear it; (Psal. lxxxviii. 7;) but the wrath of the Almighty, who can bear? Oh! that all the world were mine enemies, so that I were assured that he were my friend! If it were a stranger, it were nothing; but that my dearest Friend, my own Father, should be so provoked against me, this wounds my very soul! If it were a creature, I would contemn it, but if God be angry, who may endure? if he be against me, who can be for me? and if he will cast me down, who can raise me up? But, oh! that blessed day when all these dolorous complaints will be turned into admiring thankfulness; and all sense of God's displeasure swallowed up in that ocean of infinite love: when sense shall convince us that fury dwelleth not in God; and though for a little moment he hide his face, yet with everlasting compassion will he receive and embrace us; when he shall say to Sion, "Arise and shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee," Isa. lx. 2.

3. From Satan's temptations.

Sect. XI. 3. We shall rest from all the temptations of Satan whereby he continually disturbs our peace. What a grief is it to a christian, though he yield not to the temptation, yet to be still solicited to deny his Lord; that such a thought should be cast into his heart; that he can set about nothing that is good, but Satan is still dissuading him from it, distracting him in it, or discouraging him after it! What a torment, as well as a temptation, is it, to have such horrid motions made to his soul, such blasphemous ideas presented to his fantasy! Sometimes cruel thoughts of God, sometimes undervaluing thoughts of Christ, sometimes unbelieving thoughts of Scripture, sometimes injurious thoughts of Providence; to be tempted sometimes to turn to present things, sometimes to play with the baits of sin, sometimes to venture on the delights of the flesh, and sometimes to flat atheism itself; especially when we know the treachery of our own hearts, that they are as tinder or gunpowder, ready to take fire as soon as one of these sparks shall fall upon them.[d] Oh! how the poor christian lives in continual disquietness, to feel these motions! but more, that his heart should be the soil for this seed, and the too-fruitful mother of such an offspring; and most of all, through fear lest they will at last prevail, and these cursed motions should procure his consent. But here is our comfort; as we now stand not by our own strength, and shall not be charged with any of this; so when the day of our

[c] Dr. Preston Of Effectual Faith, p. 24.

[d] Non nobis certandum est cum umbra asini, sed veris militibus qui eo magis metuendi sunt quo minus videri a nobis possunt. Possunt enim nos omni ex parte incautos et quasi cæcos adoriri. Et quales sunt hostes? Audacia promptissimi, viribus robustissimi, artibus callidissimi, diligentia accelleritate infatigabiles: machinis et armis omnibus munitissimi, pugnandi scientia expeditissimi; denique tales sunt quibus nihil ad veram militiam deest. Zanchius, tom. iii. l. 4. de Pugnat. Dæmon. cap. 21. p. 213. 1 Tim. iii. 7; 2 Tim. ii. 26; Ephes. vi. 11. Ratio est, quia Satan et omnes dæmones sunt captivi Christi: victoria igitur certa est electis Dei contra diabolum: non ex ipsis, ipsorumque viribus: sed ex Christo Christique gratia. Zanch. tom. iii. l. 4. c. 21. pag. 214, 216.

deliverance comes, we shall fully rest from these temptations: Satan is then bound up, the time of tempting is then done; the time of torment to himself, and his conquered captives, those deluded souls, is then come, and the victorious saints shall have triumph for temptation. Now we do walk among his snares, and are in danger to be circumvented with his methods and wiles; but then we are quite above his snares, and out of the hearing of his enticing charms. He hath power here to tempt us in the wilderness, but he entereth not the holy city. He may set us on the pinnacle of the temple in the earthly Jerusalem; but the new Jerusalem he may not approach. Perhaps he may bring us to an exceeding high mountain, but the mount Sion and city of the living God he cannot aseend: or if he should, yet all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, will be but a poor despised bait to the soul which is possessed with the kingdom of our Lord and the glory of it. No, no, here is no more work for Satan now. Hopes he might have of deceiving poor creatures on earth, who lived out of sight, and only heard and read of a kingdom which they never beheld, and had only faith to live upon, and were encompassed with flesh, and drawn aside by sense. But when once they see the glory they read of, and taste the joys they heard of, and possess that kingdom which they then believed and hoped for, and have laid aside their fleshly sense, it is time, then, for Satan to have done; it is in vain to offer a temptation more. What! draw them from that glory; draw them from the arms of Jesus Christ; draw them from the sweet praises of God; draw them from the blessed society of saints and angels; draw them from the bosom of the Father's love, and that to a place of torment among the damned, which their eyes behold? Why, what charms, what persuasions, can do it? To entice them from an unknown joy, and unknown God, were somewhat hopeful; but now they have both seen and enjoyed, there is no hope. Surely it must be a very strong temptation that must draw a blessed saint from that rest. We shall have no more need to pray, "Lead us not into temptation," nor "to watch and pray that we enter not into temptation," Matt. vi. 13; xxvi. 41; nor shall we serve the Lord as Paul did, in "many tears and temptations," Acts xx. 19: no; but now they who continued with Christ in temptation, shall by him be appointed to a kingdom, even as his Father appointed to him, Rev. iii. 10, that they may eat and drink at his table in his kingdom, Luke xxii. 28—30. "Blessed, therefore, are they that endure temptation; for when they are tried, they shall receive the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to them that love him," James i. 12: and then they shall be saved from the hour of temptation. Then the malignant planet Saturn shall be below us, and lose all its influence, which is now above us exercising its enmity: and Satan must be suffering, who would have drawn us into suffering, as Bucholtzer wittily, *Ubi Saturnus non supra nos, sed infra nos conspicietur luens pœnas, pro sua in nos sœvitia et malitia.*

4. From temptations of the world and flesh.

Sect. XII. 4. We shall rest also from all our temptations which we now undergo from the world and the flesh, as well as Satan; and that is a number unexpressible, and a weight, were it not that we are beholden to supporting grace, utterly intolerable. Oh! the hourly dangers that we poor sinners here below walk in! Every sense is a snare; every member a snare; every creature a snare; every mercy a snare; and every duty a snare to us. We can scarce open our eyes, but we are in danger. If we behold them above us, we are in danger of envy. If we see sumptuous buildings, pleasant habitations, honour and riches, we are in danger to be drawn away with covetous desires: if the rags and beggary of others, we are in danger of self-applauding thoughts and unmercifulness. If we see beauty, it is a bait to lust; if deformity, loathing and disdain. We can scarcely hear a word spoken, but contains to us matter of temptation. How soon do slanderous reports, vain jests, wanton speeches, by that passage, creep into the heart! How strong and prevalent a temptation is our appetite, and how constant and strong a watch doth it require![e] Have we comeliness and beauty? what fuel for pride! Are we deformed? what an occasion of repining! Have we strength of reason, and gifts of learning? oh! how hard is it not to be puffed up! 2 Cor. xi. 3; i. 12, &c.: to seek ourselves; to hunt after applause; to despise our brethren; to mislike the simplicity that is in Christ, both in the matter and manner of Scripture, in doctrine, in discipline, in worship, and in the saints; to affect a pompous, specious, fleshly service of God, and to exalt reason above faith. Are we unlearned, and of shallow heads and slender parts? how apt, then, to despise what we have not, and to undervalue that which we do not know; and to err with confidence, because of our ignorance; and if conceitedness and pride do but strike in, to become a zealous enemy to truth, and a leading troubler of the church's peace, under pretences of truth and holiness! Are we men of eminency, and in place of authority? how strong is our temptation to slight our brethren, to abuse our trust, to seek ourselves, to stand upon our honour and privileges; to forget ourselves, our poor brethren, and the public good! how hard to devote our power to his glory from whom we have received it! how prone to make our wills our law, and to cut out all the enjoyments of others, both religious and civil, by the cursed rules and model of our own interest and policy! Are we inferiors and subject? how prone to grudge at others' pre-eminence, and to take liberty to bring all their actions to the bar of our incompetent judgment; and to censure and slander them, and murmur at their proceedings! Are we rich, and not too much exalted? Are we poor, and not discontented, and make our worldly necessities a pretence for the robbing God of all his service? If we be sick, oh! how impatient! if in health, how few and stupid are our thoughts of eternity! If death be near, we are distracted with the fears of it: if we think it far off, how careless is our preparation! Do we set upon duty? why there are snares too: either we are stupid and lazy, or rest on them, and turn from Christ; or we are customary and notional only. In a word, not one word that falls from the mouth of a minister and christian, but is a snare; nor a place we come into; not a word that our own tongue speaks; not any mercy we possess; nor a bit

[e] Of meats and drinks, read Clemens Alexand. Pædagog. lib. 2. c. 1. excellently; as also c. 2—4. ejusd. Some men live to eat, as the beasts do, whose belly is all their life; but our Master commandeth us to eat that we may live; for nourishment is not our business, nor is flesh-pleasing our aim and purpose: but our nourishment is for our mansion here, which reason ordereth for incorruptibility hereafter; and therefore we must make choice of food, and it must be plain or simple, and not such as must have too much stir or labour to prepare it, or is too curious, &c.; it being for life, and not for delights and full provision. And our life consisteth of health and strength; for both which, nothing is better than a light and easy diet, as being most helpful to digestion and agility of the body. Clem. Alex. Pædagog. lib. 2. c. 1. Take heed of those meats that entice us to eat them when we are not hungry, beguiling our appetites by their deceits. Clem. Alex. ubi sup.

we put into our mouths; but they are snares: not that God hath made them so, but through our own corruption they become so to us: so that what a sad case are we poor christians in, and especially they that discern them not! for it is almost impossible they should escape them. It was not for nothing that our Lord cries out, "What I say to one, I say to all, Watch." We are like the lepers at Samaria; if we go into the city, there is nothing but famine; if we sit still, we perish, Deut. xii. 30; vii. 25; Hos. ix. 8; Psal. lxix. 22; Prov. xx. 25; xxii. 25; xxix. 6, 25; 1 Tim. vi. 9; Job viii. 8, 10.

But for ever blessed be Omnipotent love, which saves us out of all these, and makes our straits but the advantages of the glory of his saving grace. And "blessed be the Lord, who hath not given our souls for a prey; our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowler; the snare is broken and we are escaped," Psal. cxxiv. 6, 7. No, our houses, our clothes, our sleep, our food, our physic, our father, mother, wife, children, friends, goods, lands, are all so many temptations; and ourselves, the greatest snares to ourselves. But in heaven, the danger and trouble are over; there is nothing but what will advance our joy. Now every old companion, and every loose fellow, is putting up the finger, and beckoning us to sin, and we can scarce tell how to say them nay. What, say they, will not you take a cup? Will you not do as your neighbours? Must you be so precise? Do you think none shall be saved but puritans? What needs all this strictness, this reading, and praying, and preaching? Will you make yourself the scorn of all men? Come, do as we do, take your cups, and drink away sorrow. Oh! how many a poor christian hath been haunted and vexed with these temptations! and it may be father, or mother, or nearest friends will strike in, and give a poor christian no rest: and, alas! how many, to their eternal undoing, have hearkened to their seducements! But this is our comfort, dear friends, our rest will free us from all these. As Satan hath no entrance there, so neither any thing to serve his malice; but all things shall there, with us, conspire the praises of our great Deliverer.

5. From abuses and persecutions of the world.

Sect. XIII. 5. And as we rest from the temptations, so also from all abuses and persecutions which we suffer at the hands of wicked men. We shall be scorned, derided, imprisoned, banished, butchered by them no more; the prayers of the souls under the altar will then be answered, and "God will avenge their blood on these that dwell on the earth," Rev. vi. 2, 10; 2 Tim. iii. 12. This is the time for crowning with thorns, buffeting, spitting on; that is the time for crowning with glory, Rom. viii. 17. Now the law is decreed on, That whosoever will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution; then they that suffered with him shall be glorified with him.[f] Now we must be hated of all men for Christ's name's sake, and the gospel; then will Christ be admired in his saints that were thus hated. Now, because we are not of the world, but Christ hath taken us out of the world, therefore doth the world hate us; then, because we are not of the world, but taken out of their calamity, therefore will the world admire us. Now, as they hated Christ, they will also hate us; then, as they will honour Christ, so will they also honour us. We are here as the scorn and offscouring of all things; as men set up for a gazing-stock to angels and men, even for signs and wonders amongst professing christians; they put us out of their synagogues, and cast out our name as evil, and separate us from their company: but we shall then be as much gazed at for our glory, and they will be shut out of the church of the saints, and separated from us, whether they will or no. They now think it strange that we run not with them "to all excess of riot, speaking evil of us," 1 Pet. iv. 4; they will then think it more strange, that they ran not with us in the despised ways of God, and speak evil of themselves; and more vehemently befool themselves for their carelessness, than ever they did us for our heavenliness. A poor christian can scarce go along the streets now, but every one is pointing the finger in scorn, but then they would be glad of the crumbs of his happiness. The rich man would scarcely have believed him that would have told him, that he should beg for water from the tip of Lazarus's finger. Here is a great change! We can scarce now pray in our families, or sing praises to God, but our voice is a vexation to them. How must it needs torment them then, to see us praising and rejoicing, while they are howling and lamenting! How full have their prisons oft been, and how bitter their rage! How have they scattered their carcasses on the earth, and delighted themselves in the blood of saints! How glad would they have been, if they could have brought them to ruin, and blotted out their name from under heaven![g] How have they prepared, like Haman, their gallows! And if God had not gainsaid it, the execution would have been answerable; "But he that sitteth in heaven did laugh them to scorn, the Lord had them in derision." Oh! how full were their hearts of blood, and their hands of cruelty; so that the next generations, that knew them not, will scarcely believe the fury of their predecessors' rage. Blessed be the Guardian of the saints, who hath not suffered the prevalency of that wrath, which would have overdone the gunpowder treason, the Turkish slavery, the Spanish inquisition, and the French massacres. But the Lord of hosts hath oft brought them down, and his power and justice have abated their fury, and raised to his name everlasting trophies, and set up many a monument for remembrance, which God forbid should ever be forgotten. "So let all thine incurable enemies perish, O Lord," Judg. v. 23. "When the Lord maketh inquisition for blood, he will remember the precious blood which they have shed; and the earth shall not cover it any more," Psal. ix. 12. They shall pursue, but as Pharaoh,

[f] Matt. x. 22, and xxiv. 9; 2 Thess. i. 9, 10; John xv. 18—20; xvii. 14; vii. 7; v. 23, and xvii. 22; 1 Cor. iv. 9, 13; Lam. iii. 45; Heb. x. 33; Isa. viii. 18; Luke vi. 22. Ignatius, Epist. ad Roman. calls his condemnation to martyrdom the punishment of the devil, because his judges were but the devil's mouth and instruments: fire, the cross, the cruelty of wild beasts, cutting off, separating, breaking of my bones, renting of my members, destruction of my whole body, and the punishment of the devil (κόλασις τοῦ διαβόλου); let them all come upon me, so I but deserve to obtain Christ. Ignat. Edit. Usser. p. 86. Agesilaus dicere solitus est, se vehementer admirari eos non haberi in sacrilegorum numero, qui læderent eos qui Deo supplicarent vel Deum venerarentur. Quo innuit, eos non tantum sacrilegos esse qui Deos ipsos aut templorum ornatum spoliarent; sed eos maxime qui Deorum ministros et præcones contumeliis afficiunt. Æmyl. Prob.

[g] In memorial of the Irish massacre, where the number of the murdered in one province doubled all that the French massacre slew. Vide Clark's Martyrology. Luke xxvi. 44; Psal. lxxxiii. 4, and ii. 4. God taketh the reproaching and injuring of believers as done to himself: and what other way can reproach and dishonour touch God, but as they that trouble his possessions to injure the owner? And as to wrong the soldiers is a wrong to the commander, so is it a contempt of the Lord to vex those that are dedicated to him. Clem. Alex. Stromat. lib. 7.

to their own destruction:[h] and where they fall, there we shall pass over safely, and escape them for ever. For our Lord hath told them, "that whither he goes they cannot come," John vii. 34, 36, and viii. 21, 22; Rev. xii. 16; Heb. xi.; Matt. xxvii. 29, 30. When their flood of persecution is dried up, and the church called out of the wilderness, and the new Jerusalem come down from heaven, and mercy and justice are fully glorified, then shall we feel their fury no more. There is no cruel mockings and scourgings; no bonds, or imprisonments; no stoning, or sawing asunder; tempting, or slaying with the sword; wandering in sheep-skins, or goat-skins, in deserts and mountains, dens or caves of the earth; no more being destitute, afflicted, tormented. We leave all this behind us, when once we enter the city of our rest: the names of Lollards, Hugonots, &c. are not there used; the inquisition of Spain is there condemned; the statute of the six articles is there repealed; and the law *de hæreticis comburendis* more justly executed; the date of the *interim* is there expired; no censures to loss of members, perpetual imprisonment, or banishment. Christ is not there clothed in a gorgeous robe, and blindfolded; nor do they smite him, and say, Read who struck thee: nor is truth clothed in the robes of error, and smitten for that which it most directly contradicteth; nor a schismatic wounded, and a saint found bleeding; nor our friends smite us, whilst they mistake us for their enemies: there is none of this blind, mad work there. Dear brethren, you that now can attempt no work of God without resistance, and find you must either lose the love of the world and your outward comforts, or else the love of God and your eternal salvation; consider, you shall in heaven have no discouraging company, nor any but who will further your work, and gladly join heart and voice with you in your everlasting joy and praises. Till then, possess your souls in patience; bind all reproaches as a crown to your heads; esteem them greater riches than the world's treasures; account it matter of joy, when you fall into tribulation. You have seen that our God is able to deliver us; but this is nothing to our final deliverance; he will recompense tribulation to them that trouble you, and to you that are troubled rest with Christ. Only see to this, brethren, that none of you suffer as an evil-doer, as a busy-body in other men's matters, as a resister of the commands of lawful authority, as ungrateful to those that have been instruments of our good, as evil-speakers against dignities, as opposers of the discipline and ordinances of Christ, as scornful revilers of your christian brethren, as reproachers of a laborious, judicious, conscientious ministry, &c. "But if any of you suffer for the name of Christ, happy are ye, for the Spirit of God and of glory resteth upon you." And if any of you begin to shrink and draw back because of opposition, and are ashamed either of your work or your Master, let such a one know to his face, that he is but a base-spirited, cowardly wretch, and cursedly undervalueth the saints' rest, and most foolishly overvalueth the things below; and he must learn to forsake all these, or else he can never be Christ's disciple; and that Christ will renounce him, and be ashamed of him, before his Father and the angels of heaven. But for those that have held fast their integrity, and gone through good report and evil report, and undergone the violence of unreasonable men, "let them hear the word of the Lord; Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified; (they had good words and goodly pretences;) but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be shamed," Isa. lxvi. 5. "Your Redeemer is strong, the Lord of hosts is his name. He shall throughly plead your cause, that he may give rest to his people, and disquietness to their enemies," Jer. l. 34.[i]

Sect. XIV. 6. We shall then also rest from all our sad divisions, and[k] unchristian-like quarrels with one another. As he said, who saw the carcasses lie together, as if they had embraced each other, who had been slain by each other in a duel, *Quanta se invicem amplectuntur amicitia, qui mutua implacabili inimicitia periere!* How lovingly do they embrace one another, being dead, who perished through their mutual, implacable enmity! So how lovingly do thousands live together in heaven, who lived in divisions and quarrels on earth. Or, as he said, who beheld how quietly and peaceably the bones and dust of mortal enemies did lie together, *Non tanta vivi pace essetis conjuncti;* You did not live together so peaceably: so we may say of multitudes in heaven now all of one mind, one heart, and one employment; You lived not on earth in so sweet familiarity. There is no contention, because none of this pride, ignorance, or other corruption; Paul and Barnabas are now fully reconciled. There they are, not every man conceited of his own understanding, and in love with the issue of his own brain, but all admiring the divine perfection, and in love with God and one another. As old Gryneus wrote to his friend, *Si te non amplius in his terris videam, ibi tamen conveniemus ubi Lutherus cum Zuinglio optime jam convenit;*[l] If I see you no more on earth, yet we shall there meet, where Luther and Zuinglius are now well agreed. There is a full reconciliation between sacramentarians and ubiquitarians, Calvinists and Lutherans; remonstrants and contra-remonstrants, nonconformists and anti-disciplinarians, conformists and nonconformists, are terms there not known. There is no discipline erected by state policy, nor any disordered popular rule; no government but that of Christ: no bitter invectives, nor voluminous reproaches; the language of Martin[m] is there a stranger; and the sound of his

6. From our divisions and dissensions.

[h] Pictos agnos adorant, vivos devorant, inquit Claud. Thaurinens.

[i] De qua iniquitate sævitiæ, non modo cœcum hoc vulgus exsultat, sed et quidam vestrum, &c. Quasi non totum quod in nos potestis, nostrum sit arbitrium. Certe si velim, christianus sum, tunc ergo me damnabis, si damnari velim. Quum vero quod in me potes, nisi velim non potes, jam meæ voluntatis est quod potes, non tuæ potestatis. Proinde et vulgus vane de nostra vexatione gaudet; proinde et nostrum est gaudium quod sibi vendicant qui malumus damnari quam a Deo exeidere. Contra, illi qui nos oderunt, dolere, non gaudere debebant, conseeutis nobis quod eligimus. Tert. Apo. c. 49. Luke xxi. 19; Job xxxi. 36; Heb. xi. 25; Jam. i. 2; Dan. iii. 17; 1 Thess. i. 7; 1 Pet. iii. 17; iv. 14, 15; Jude 8; 2 Pet. ii. 10. Dicturus es me Manichæum; sed ut maledicus, non ut veridieus. August. Oper. Imperf. n. 55. Luke xiv. 26, 27, 30; 2 Thess. iii. 2. Inde est quod ibidem sententiis vestris gratias agimus, ut est æmulatio rei divinæ et humanæ, cum damnamur a vobis, a Deo absolvimur. Tertul. verbis ultimis.

[k] Absit ut talis sit illa vita, ubi est animæ nostræ ipsa veritas vita! Ubi nemo fallit, fallitur nemo; hic autem homines fallunt et falluntur; miserioresque sunt cum mentiendo fallunt, quam cum mentientibus eredendo falluntur. Usque adeo tamen rationalis natura refugit falsitatem, et quantum potest vitat errorem, ut falli nolint etiam quicunque amant fallere. Aug. Enchirid. cap. 17. Lege Præfat. D. Hemmingii ante Postil. de Dissidiis et Scandalis.

[l] Melch. Adam in vita Grynæi.

[m] Two books full of the language of hell, in bitterest scorns at the ministry and discipline, thought to be written by one Overton. Non oportet nos mirari super hæreses istas, sive quia sunt; futura enim prænunciabantur; sive quia fidem quorundam subvertunt; ad hoc enim sunt, ut fides habendo tentationem, habeat etiam probationem. Vane ergo et inconsiderate plerique hoc ipso scandalizantur, quod tan-

echo is not heard: no recording our brethren's infirmities; nor raking into the sores which Christ died to heal. How many sermons zealously preached, how many books studiously compiled, will then by the authors be all disclaimed![n] How many backbiting, slanderous speeches, how many secret dividing contrivances,[o] must then be laid upon the score of Christ, against whom and his saints they were committed! The zealous authors dare not own them; they would then, with the Ephesians, burn their books, Acts xix. 19, and rather lose their labour than stand to it. There is no plotting to strengthen our party, nor deep designing against our brethren. And is it not shame and pity, that our course is now so contrary? Surely, if there be sorrow or shame in heaven, we shall then be both sorry and ashamed to look one another there in the face, and to remember all this carriage on earth; even as the brethren of Joseph were to behold him, when they remembered their former unkind usage. Is it not enough that all the world is against us, but we must also be against one another? Did I ever think to have heard christians so to[p] reproach and scorn christians; and men professing the fear of God, to make so little conscience of censuring, vilifying, slandering, and disgracing one another? Alas! if the judgment be once perverted, and error hath possessed the supreme faculty, whither will men go, and what will they do? nay, what will they not do? Oh! what a potent instrument for Satan[q] is a misguided conscience! It will make a man kill his dearest friend, yea, father, or mother, yea, the holiest saints, and think he doth God service by it; and to facilitate the work, it will first blot out the reputation of their holiness, and make them take a saint for a devil, that so they may vilify or destroy him without remorse. Oh! what hellish things are ignorance and pride,[r] that can bring men's souls to such a case as this! Paul knew what he said, when he commanded that a novice should not be a teacher, lest, being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil, 1 Tim. iii. 6. He discerned that such young christians that have got but a little smattering knowledge in religion, do lie in greatest danger of this pride and condemnation. Who but a Paul could have foreseen, that among the very teachers and governors of so choice a church as Ephesus, that came to see and hear him, that pray and weep with him, there were some that afterwards should be notorious sect-masters?[s] "that of their own selves men should arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them?" Acts xx. 30. Who then can expect better from any society now, how knowing and holy soever? To-day they may be orthodox, unanimous, and joined in love; and perhaps within a few weeks be divided, and at bitter enmity, through their doting about questions that tend not to edify.[t] Who that had seen how lovingly the godly of England did live together, would have believed that ever they would have been so bitter against one another; that we should fall upon one another for the very same duties; and that professors of religion should oppose and deride almost all that worship God out of conscience, which others did before them through profaneness? Did I not think, that of all other, the scorning at the worshippers of Christ had been a sure sign of a wicked wretch? But I see now we must distinguish between scorners and scorners, or else I fear we shall exclude almost all. I read, in-

tum hæreses valeant quantum sint. Tertul. de Præscript. initio.

[n] Quemadmodum vero in multas et varias sectas scissa est catabaptistarum hæresis, ita in hoc omnes unanimiter consentiunt, ut prædicatoribus veritatis negotium exhibeant, et eos erga auditores tanquam seductores suspectos reddant. Epist. Leo Judæ ante Bullingerum contra Catab.

[o] Horret animus cogitanti immania illa judicia, conatus, facta, quibus hic mundus, et ipse christianus orbis plus satis circumfluit; impietatem specie pietatis, inhumanitatem specie charitatis, injustitiam prætextu juris, intus spirantia et foris contestantia. Junius Irenic. in Psal. cxxii. tom. 1. p. 690.

[p] Si Calvinus, quam a natura insitam habebat, vehementia ea ipse adversus perditos sophistas usus est, ut interdum etiam modum non tenuisse videri possit; rogo moderatissimos istos homines, quibus nimium incalescere videntur quicunque ipsorum more non frigent, ut pro quo, et in quem dicatur, paulo attentius expendant; neque hæreticos illos spiritus ex ingenio suo metiantur. Beza in Epist. Præfat. ante Calvini Tractatus Theologicos.

[q] Me quoque non latet, turbulentos homines movendis seditionibus, Satanæ esse flabella, ut in evangelii odium placidos aliosque homines inflamment. Ita nostro sæculo, sub evangelii nascentis initia, barbaros homines armavit, qui legibus, judiciis, et omni politiæ bellum ex professo indicerent. Sed ab evangelio recedere, ut seditionibus obviam eatur, nimis perversum est. Calvin. de Scandalis. Read Bishop Hall's twenty-ninth soliloquy, called "The Spiritual Bedlam," p. 109. Religion is torn into divisions and fragments; the swarm is up, and settles into so many places, as without great mercy they will never be got into one hive. Mr. Vine's Sermon on Numb. xiv. 24. p. 23.

[r] Quod multos videmus hoc vel illo errore captos a recta via abduci, nunquam nisi justa Dei vindicta accidit; vere August. superbiam nominat hereseum omnium matrem; nullus enim unquam extitit erroris magister, quem non prava ambitio in suum præcipitium extulerit. Scimus Deum parvulis fidum esse doctorem; proinde qui arrogantia turgent, eos non mirum est ab hac schola pulsos vagis suis speculationibus sursum et deorsum raptari. Quotquot hac nostra ætate a pura evangelii doctrina prolapsi falsorum dogmatum cœperunt esse authores, reperiemus omnes superbiæ morbo correptos, ingenii tormenta sibi et aliis fabricasse. Calv. de Scandalis.

[s] Are not the errors which are rife among us, either by infecting persons of place and quality, grown into that boldness; or by carrying away Barnabas also, crept into that credit; or by spreading far and wide, risen to that strength; that they do face, if not seem able to put into danger of routing, our common faith, public worship, authorized ministry, long, and much-expected, and promised reformation. Mr. Vine on 2 Pet. ii. 1, p. 2.

[t] Altera pestis est opinionum varietas et dissentio in ecclesia: quæ ut his temporibus Jesuitarum impulsu valde increbuit, ita tamen neque nova vobis, neque mira videri debet. Ut enim palatorum, sic judiciorum magna est varietas; et ut multæ facies hominum, sic et corda diversa; ut Hier. advers. Pelag. lib. 3. Dr. Humfredus Jesuitis. part 2. in Epistola Dedicatoria. Multos subvertunt, abducentes ipsos prætextu cognitionis, ab eo qui universa creavit, &c. Velut qui altius quid ac majus habeant quod ostendant Deo, &c. Probabiliter quidem inducentes per verborum artificium simplices ad quærendi modum; verum improbe perdentes ipsos, in eo quod maledicam et impiam ipsorum mentem efficiunt, &c. Nam error per seipsum non ostenditur, ne ut denudatus deprehendatur, sed amiculo splendido callide ornatus, ut etiam ipsa veritate veriorem seipsum exhibere videatur imperitioribus, per externam apparentiam. Irenæus advers. Hæres. p. 1. Procem. Diligenter insistendum, ne quid ex peste quæ grassatur ex vicinia, fidelibus curæ nostræ commissis, convictu, colloquiis, et quotidianis, quæ vitari non possunt, disceptationibus affletur. Serpit enim facile contagio, et nisi malo obviam iretur, falsorum doctorum actus, et hæreticorum consortium infirmorum fidem proculdubio vitiarent. Evangelii ergo præcones sese exerceant in refutatione pontificiorum, anabaptistarum et Socinianorum, &c. ab illis enim magnopere metuendum, tum quia illis permixti vivimus, tum quia eorum plerique miro quodam studio ardent doctrinæ suæ disseminandæ. Amiraldus de Pace inter Evangelicos Constituend. p. 216. Yet Cyprian saith, They that live in discord and difference, and have not peace with their brethren, though they were slain for the name of Christ, yet cannot escape the crime of dissension with brethren: because it is written, "He that hateth his brother is a murderer, and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." He cannot live with Christ, that had rather imitate Judas than Christ. What a sin is this which cannot be washed away with the baptism of blood! What a crime, that cannot be expiated by martyrdom! Cyprian de Orat. Dom. sect. 18. p. 315. What martyrs, then, are they that lose their lives in war against their brethren, confessed to be godly!

deed, in pagan writers, that the christians were as cruel as bears and tigers against one another: Ammianus Marcellinus[u] gives it as the reason of Julian's policy, in proclaiming liberty for every party to profess and preach their own opinions, because he knew that cruel christians would then most fiercely fall upon one another; and so by liberty of conscience,[x] and by keeping their children from the schools of learning, he thought to have rooted out christianity from the earth. But I had hoped this accusation had come from the malice of the pagan writer; little did I think to have seen it so far verified! Lord, what devils are we unsanctified, when there is yet such a nature remaining in the sanctified! Such a nature hath God in these days suffered to discover itself in the very godly, that if he did not graciously and powerfully restrain, they would shed the blood of one another; and no thanks to us, if it be not done. But I hope his design is but to humble and shame us by the discovery, and then to prevent the breaking forth.[y]

Object. But, is it possible such should be truly godly? Then, what sin will denominate a man ungodly?

Answ. Or else I must believe the doctrine of the saints' apostasy, or believe there are scarce any godly in the world. Oh! what a wound of dishonour hath this given not only to the stricter profession of holiness, but even to the very christian name! were there a possibility of hiding it, I durst not thus mention it. O christian, if thou who readest this be guilty, I charge thee before the living God, that thou sadly consider how far is this unlike the copy! Suppose thou hadst seen the Lord Jesus, girded to the service, stooping on the earth, washing his disciples' dirty feet, and wiping them, and saying to them, "This I have done to give you an example, that if your Lord and Master have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's;" would not this make thee ashamed, and tremble? Shall the Lord wipe the feet, and the fellow-servant be ready to cut the throat? Would not thy proud heart scorn to stoop to thy Master's work? Look to thyself; it is not the name of a professor, nor the zeal for thy opinions, that will prove thee a christian, or secure thee from the heat of the consuming fire. If thou love not thine enemy, much more thy christian friend, thou canst not be Christ's disciple. It is the common mark, whereby his disciples are known to all men, "that they love one another." Is it not his last great legacy, "My peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you," Matt. v. 44; John xiii. 35; xiv. 17. Mark the expressions of that command, "If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, live peaceably with all men," Rom. xii. 8. "Follow peace with all men, and holiness," Heb. xii. 14.[z] Oh the deceitfulness of the heart of man! that those same men, who lately in their self-examination could find nothing of Christ so clear within them as their love to their brethren, and were confident of this, when they could scarce discover any other grace, should now look so strangely upon them, and be filled with so much bitterness against them! That the same men, who would have travelled through reproaches many miles, to hear an able, faithful minister, and not think the labour ill bestowed, should now become their bitterest enemies, and the most powerful hinderers of the success of their labours, and travel as far to cry them down! It makes me almost ready to say, O sweet, O happy days of persecution, which drove us together in a closure of love! who being now dried at the fire of liberty and prosperity, are crumbled all into dust by our contentions. But it makes me seriously both to say and to think, O sweet, O happy day of the rest of the saints in glory! when as there is one God, one Christ, one Spirit, so we shall have one judgment, one heart, one church, one employment for ever! when there shall be no more circumcision and uncircumcision, Jew and gentile, anabaptist, pædobaptist, Brownist, separatist, independent, presbyterian, episcopal; but Christ is all in all. We shall not there scruple our communion, nor any of the ordinances of divine worship; there will not be one for singing, and another against it; but even those who here jarred in discord, shall all conjoin in blessed concord, and make up one melodious quire. I could wish they were of the martyr's mind, who rejoiced that she might have her foot in the same hole of the stocks in which Master Philpot's had been before her. [a]But, however, I am sure they will joyfully live in the same heaven, and gladly participate in the same rest. Those whom one house could not hold, nor one church hold them, no

[u] Ammian. Marcel. in vita Juliani.

[x] Oh quam beati erunt in illo die judicii magistratus illi qui subditos non modo honestis legibus, judiciis, et disciplina præclare rexerunt: sed etiam omnium maxime in hoc studium incubuerunt ut incorrupta religio apud suos exculta sit; doctrina cœlestis per fidos, eruditos, et constantes ministros sit tradita, et ingens hominum multitudo per spiritum et verbum renata in conspectum Christi prodeant, quæ tali magistratui æternas gratias agant! Et contra quam infœlices qui, &c. Religionem per varias corruptelas passi sunt adulterari! Wigandus in Epist. ante Com. in Proph. John xxiii. 8—12, 14. Væ mundo a scandalis. Ecce fit, ecce prorsus impletur quod veritas ait; quoniam abundavit iniquitas, refrigescet charitas multorum. Quæ sibi jam fida pectora tuto refundantur? In cujus sensus tota se projiciat secura dilectio? Quis denique amicus non formidetur, quasi futurus inimicus, si potuit inter Hieronymum et Ruffinum, hoc quod plangimus, exoriri? O misera, et miseranda conditio! O infida in voluntatibus amicorum scientia præsertim ubi nulla est præscientia futurorum! Sed quid hoc alteri de altero gemendum putem, quando ne ipse quidem sibi homo est notus in posterum? Novit enim utrumque vix forte nunc qualis sit; qualis autem postea sit futurus ignorant. Augustine, in that excellent christian, pacificatory epistle, Ad Hieron. inter opera. Hier. tom. iii. fol. 159. Leonum feritas inter se non dimicat. Serpentum morsus non petit serpentes, &c. et tu homo a feris ratione præditus, ab expertibus vincaris? Tu operam des ut feritate et abalienatione vincas cætera? et in tuo ipsius naturæ funere triumphator tibi videaris? Junius in Irenic. Excellentis. in Psal. cxxii. tom. 1. (operum) p. 687

[y] This was written upon the war in Scotland, the death of Mr. Love, the imprisonment of many more, and an ordinance for the sequestering of all ministers that would not go to God on their errands, in fasting and prayer, or in thanksgivings for their successes. And an order made to put out all ministers from all the cities, market towns, and garrisons, that subscribed not their engagement.

[z] In Tertullian's time it was otherwise with christians. He saith the heathens did specially mark out the christians by the work of love and their great liberality; See (say they) how they love one another; (for they themselves, saith he, hate one another;) and how ready are they to die for one another! for they themselves are more ready to kill one another. Tertul. Apol. cap. xxxix. Alas! how is the case altered now, when the mark of heathens is so common upon christians, and those that think themselves the best of christians! And Justin Martyr, before him, saith, We christians, who before preferred the gains of money and farms before all, now do bring forth our private estates for common use, and bestow them on all that need: we who hated one another, and killed one another, and, through morosity, never feasted with any but our familiars; now, since the coming of Christ, we are all of one table: we pray for our enemies, and labour to persuade those that unjustly hate us, that living after the honest precepts of Christ, they might have hope of the reward from the Lord God, as well as we. Justin Martyr, Apol. ii.

[a] Christ that would not have us to be contentious, nor envy at wicked men, but that by bearing and gentleness we should lead others from their reproachings and lusts. Just. Mart. Apol ii.

nor one kingdom neither; yet one heaven and one God may hold.[b] One house, one kingdom could not hold Joseph and his brethren; but they must together again, whether they will or not: and then how is the case altered! then every man must straight withdraw, while they weep over and kiss each other. Oh how canst thou now find in thy heart, if thou bear the heart or face of a christian, to be bitter or injurious against thy brethren, when thou dost but once think of that time and place, where thou hopest in the nearest and sweetest familiarity to live and rejoice with them for ever? I confess their infirmities are not to be loved, nor sin to be tolerated, because it is theirs. But be sure it be sin which thou opposest in them; and do it with a spirit of meekness and compassion, that the world may see thy love to the person, while thou opposest the offence. Alas! that Turks and pagans can agree in wickedness, better than christians in the truth! That bears and lions, wolves and tigers, can agree together, but christians cannot! That a legion[c] of devils can accord in one body, and not the tenth part of so many christians in one church! Matt. v. 9; Luke viii. 30. Well, the fault may be mine, and it may be theirs; or more likely both mine and theirs: but this rejoiceth me, that my old friends who now look strangely at me, will joyfully triumph with me in our common rest.

7. From our participation of the sufferings of our brethren.

Sect. XV. 7. We shall then rest from all our dolorous hours and sad thoughts, which we now undergo, by participating with our brethren in their calamities. Alas, if we had nothing upon ourselves to trouble us, yet what heart could lay aside sorrows, that lives in the sound of the church's sufferings? If Job had nothing upon his body to disquiet him, yet the message of his children's overthrow must needs grieve the most patient soul. Except we are turned into steel or stone, and have lost both christian and human affections, there needs no more than the miseries of our brethren, to fill our hearts with successions of sorrows, and make our lives a continued lamentation. The church on earth is a mere hospital; which way ever we go, we hear complaining; and into what corner soever we cast our eyes, we behold objects of pity and grief: some groaning under a dark understanding, some under a senseless heart, some languishing under unfruitful weakness, and some bleeding for miscarriages and wilfulness; and some in such a lethargy that they are past complaining: some crying out of their pining poverty; some groaning under pains and infirmities; and some bewailing a whole catalogue of calamities, especially in days of common sufferings, when nothing appears to our sight but ruin;[d] families ruined; congregations ruined; sumptuous structures ruined; cities ruined; country ruined; court ruined; kingdoms ruined. Who weeps not, when all these bleed? As now our friends' distresses are our distresses, so then our friends' deliverance will be part of our own deliverance. How much more joyous now to join with them in their days of thanksgiving and gladness, than in the days of humiliation in sackcloth and ashes! How much then more joyous will it be to join with them in their perpetual praises and triumphs, than to hear them now bewailing their wretchedness, their want of light, their want of life, of joy, of assurance, of grace, of Christ, of all things! How much more comfortable to see them perfected, than now to see them wounded, weak, sick, and afflicted! to stand by the bed of their languishing as silly comforters, being overwhelmed and silenced with the greatness of their griefs, conscious of our own disability to relieve them, scarce having a word of comfort to refresh them; or if we have, alas, they be but words, which are a poor relief, when their sufferings are real: fain we would ease or help them, but cannot: all we can do, is to sorrow with them, which, alas, doth rather increase their sorrows. Our day of rest will free both us and them from all this. Now we may enter many a poor christian's cottage, and there see their children ragged, their purse empty, their cupboard empty, their belly empty, and poverty possessing and filling all. How much better is that day, when we shall see them filled with Christ, clothed with glory, and equalized with the richest and greatest princes! Oh the sad and heart-piercing spectacles that our eyes have seen in four years' space! In this fight a dear friend is slain; scarce a month, scarce a week, without the sight or noise of blood: surely there is none of this in heaven. Our eyes shall then be filled no more, nor our hearts piereed, with such dreadful sights, &c. Our eyes shall never more behold the earth covered with the carcasses of the slain. Our mourning attire will then be turned into the white robes and garments of gladness. Oh! how hardly can our hearts now hold, when we think of such, and such, and such a dear christian friend slain or departed! Oh how glad must the same hearts be when we see them all alive and glorified! But a far greater grief it is to our spirits, to see the spiritual miseries of our brethren; to see such a one with whom we took sweet counsel, and who zealously joined with us in God's worship, to be now fallen off to sensuality, turned drunkard, worldling, or a persecutor of the saints! and these trying times have given us too large occasion for such sorrows. To see our dearest and most intimate friends to be turned aside from the truth of Christ, and that either in or near the foundation, and to be raging confident in the grossest errors; to see many near us in the flesh, continue their neglect of Christ and their souls, and nothing will waken them out of their security; to look an ungodly father or mother, brother or sister, in the face; to look on a carnal wife, or husband, or child, or friend, and to think how certainly they shall be in hell for ever, if they die in their present unregenerate estate! Oh! what continual dolors do all these sad sights and thoughts fill our hearts with from day to day; and will it not be a blessed day when we shall rest from all these? What christian now is not in Paul's case, and cannot speak in his language? "Besides those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not?" 2 Cor. xi. 28, 29. What heart is not wounded to think on

[b] The cause of all our mischief lieth in making dark points to be articles of our creed, as if salvation lay on them. Nihil pestilentius in ecclesia doceri potest, quam si ea quæ necessaria non sunt necessaria fiant: hac enim tyrannide conscientiæ illaqueantur, et libertas fidei extinguitur; mendacium pro veritate, idolum pro Deo, abominatio pro sanctitate colitur. Luther referente Hen. Hoffnero Saxon. Evangel. p. 110. Mark these words of Luther.

[c] Quibus est communis amor, his idem dolor est commune malum. Nazianz.

[d] When Christ's doctrine came first into the world, it was the fruit of it, for some ages, to make people lay by war, and turn to peace; and is it not sad that now it should work so contrary, as an occasion? Athan. De Incarn. Verb. saith of men of war, as soon as ever they entertained the doctrine of Christ, presently they lay by their desire of war, and betake themselves to husbandry; and the hands which they were wont to warm with iron, they delight now to stretch forth in innocency, in earnest prayer; and instead of war, which they waged against one another, they now join in arms against the devil and evil spirits, and so conquer them by the chastity and virtue of the mind.

Germany's long desolations! Oh! the learned universities, the flourishing churches there, that now are left desolate! Look on England's four years' blood, a flourishing land almost made ruinate; hear but the common voice in most cities, towns, and countries through the land, and judge whether here be no cause of sorrow: especially, look but to the sad effects, and men's spirits grown more out of order, and is this not cause of astonishing sorrows? Look to Scotland, look to Ireland; look almost every where, and tell me what you see. Blessed be that approaching day, when our eyes shall behold no more such sights, nor our ears hear any more such tidings! How many hundred pamphlets are printed, full of almost nothing but the common calamities! so that it is become a gainful trade to divulge the news of our brethren's sufferings; and the fears for the future that possessed our hearts, were worse than all that we saw and suffered; nay, have not many died with the fears of that which, if they had lived, they had neither suffered nor seen! It is said of Melancthon,[e] that the miseries of the church made him almost neglect the death of his most beloved children. To think of the gospel departing, the glory taken from Israel, our sun setting at noon-day, poor souls left willingly dark and destitute, and with great pains and hazard blowing out the light that should guide them to salvation; what sad thoughts must these be![f] To think of Christ removing his family; taking away both worship and worshippers, and to leave the land to the rage of the merciless: these were sad thoughts. Who could then have the harp in hand, or sing the pleasant songs of Sion? Isa. lx. 11—14. But blessed be the Lord, who hath frustrated our fears, and who will hasten that rejoicing day, when Sion shall be exalted above the mountains, and her gates shall be open day and night, and the glory of the gentiles be brought into it, and the nation and kingdom that will not serve her shall perish: when the sons of them that afflicted her shall come bending unto her, and all they that despised her "shall bow themselves at the soles of her feet; and they shall call her the city of the Lord, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel," Isa. lx. 21, 22: when her people also shall be all righteous, even the work of God's hands, the branch of his planting, who shall inherit the land for ever, that he may be glorified: when that voice shall sound forth, "Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that love her; that ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolation; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory," Isa. lxvi. 10, 12. Thus shall we rest from our participation of our brethren's sufferings.

8. From all our own personal sufferings.

Sect. XVI. 8. We shall rest also from all our own personal sufferings, whether natural and ordinary, or extraordinary, from the afflicting hand of God. And though this may seem a small thing to those that live in continual ease, and abound in all kind of prosperity, yet, methinks, to the daily afflicted soul, it should make the forethoughts of heaven delightful; and I think I shall meet with few of the saints but will say, that this is their own case.[g] Oh the dying life that we now live! as full of sufferings as of days and hours! We are the carcasses that all calamities prey upon: as various as they are, each one will have a snatch at us, and be sure to devour a morsel of our comfort. When we bait our bulls and bears, we do but represent our own condition; whose lives are consumed under such assaults, and spent in succession of fresh encounters. All creatures have an enmity against us, ever since we made the Lord of all our enemy; and though we are reconciled by the blood of the covenant, and the price is paid for our full deliverance, yet our Redeemer sees it fit to leave this measure of misery upon us, to make us know for what we are beholden, to mind us of what we would else forget, to be serviceable to his wise and gracious designs, and advantageous to our full and final recovery. He hath sent us as lambs among wolves; and sure there is little rest to be expected. As all our senses are the inlets of sin, so they are become the inlets of sorrow. Grief creeps in at our eyes, at our ears, and almost every where; it seizeth upon our heads, our hearts, our flesh, our spirits; and what part doth escape it? Fears do devour us, and darken our delights, as the frosts do nip the tender buds; cares do consume us, and feed upon our spirits, as the scorching sun doth wither the delicate flowers: or, if any saint or stoic have fortified his inwards against these, yet he is naked still without; and if he be wiser than to create his own sorrows, yet shall he be sure to feel his share; he shall produce them as the meritorious, if not as the efficient cause. What tender pieces are these dusty bodies! What brittle glasses do we bear about us; and how many thousand dangers are they hurried through; and how hardly cured if once cracked! Oh the multitudes of slender veins, of tender membranes, nerves, fibres, muscles, arteries, and all subject to obstructions, exhesions, tensions, contractions, resolutions, ruptures, or one thing or other, to cause their grief; every one a fit subject for pain, and fit to communicate that pain to the whole! What nobler part is there that suffereth its pain or ruin alone? Whatever it is to the sound and healthful, methinks to such as myself this rest should be acceptable, who in ten or twelve years' time, have scarce had a whole day free from some dolour. Oh! the weary nights and days; oh! the unserviceable, languishing weakness; oh! the restless, working vapours; oh! the tedious, nauseous medicines, besides the daily expectations of worse! And will it not be desirable to rest from all these? There will be then no crying out, Oh! my head, oh! my stomach, oh! my sides, or oh! my bowels: no, no, sin, and flesh, and dust, and pain, will all be left behind together. Oh! what would we not give now for a little ease, much more for a perfect cure! How, then, should we value that perfect freedom! If we have some mixed comforts here, they are scarce enough to sweeten our crosses; or if we have some short and smiling intermissions, it is scarce time enough to breathe us in, and to prepare our tacklings for the next storm. If one wave pass by, another succeeds; and if the night be over, and the day come, yet will it soon be night again. Some men's fevers are continual, and some intermittent; some have tertians, and some quartans; but, more or less, all have their fits. Oh the blessed tranquillity of that region, where there is nothing but sweet continued peace! No succession of joy there, be-

[e] Camerar. in vit. Melanct.

[f] See Neh. i. 4; ii. 3; Psal. cxxxvii.

[g] Maxima quæquæ bona solicita sunt; nec ulli fortunæ minus bene quam optimæ creditur. Alia fœlicitate ad tuendam fœlicitatem opus est, et pro ipsis qua successerunt votis, vota facienda sunt. Quo altius aliquid surrexit, vergit protinus in occasum. Neminem porro casura delectant; miserrimam ergo necesse est, non tantum brevissimam vitam eorum esse qui magno paraut labore quod majore possideant; operose assequuntur quæ volunt; anxie tenent quæ assecuti sunt. Novæ occupationes veteribus substituuntur; spes spem excitat; ambitionem ambitio, miseriarum non finis quæritur, sed materia mutatur. Sen. de Brev. Vit.

cause no intermission. Our lives will be but one joy, as our time will be changed into one eternity. O healthful place, where none are sick! O fortunate land, where all are kings! O place most holy, where all are priests! How free a state, where none are servants, save to their supreme Monarch! For it shall come to pass, that in that day the Lord shall give us rest from our sorrow, and our fear, and from the hard bondage wherein we served, Isa. xiv. 3. The poor man shall no more be tired with his incessant labours; no more use of plough, or flail, or scythe, or sickle; no stooping of the servant to the master, or the tenant to the landlord; no hunger, or thirst, or cold, or nakedness; no pinching frosts, nor scorching heats. Our very beasts who suffered with us, shall also be freed from their bondage; ourselves, therefore, much more: our faces shall no more be pale or sad; our groans and sighs will be done away; and God will wipe away all tears from our eyes, Rom. viii. 19—22; Rev. vii. 15—17; xxi. 3, 4. No more parting of friends asunder, nor voice of lamentation heard in our dwellings. No more breaches, nor disproportion, will be in our friendship, nor any trouble accompanying our relations; no more care of master for servants, or parents for children, or magistrates over subjects, or ministers over people; no more sadness for our study lost, our preaching lost, our entreaties lost, the tenders of Christ's blood lost, and our dear people's souls lost; no marrying, nor giving in marriage, but we shall be as the angels of God.[h] Oh what room can there be for any evil, where the whole is perfectly filled with God? Then shall the "ransomed of the Lord return and come to Sion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away," Isa. xxxv. 10. Hold out then a little longer, O my soul; bear with the infirmities of thine earthly tabernacle; endure that share of sorrows that the love of thy Father shall impose; submit to his indignation also, because thou hast sinned against him: it will be thus but a little while; the sound of thy Redeemer's feet are even at the door; and thine own deliverance nearer than many others. And thou who hast often cried, in the language of the divine poet, Herbert,

> "Sorrow was all my soul; I scarce believed,
> Till grief did tell me roundly, that I lived,"

shalt then feel, that God and joy is all thy soul; the fruition of whom, with thy freedom from all these sorrows, will, more sweetly, and more feelingly, make thee know, and to his eternal praise acknowledge, that thou livest.

And thus we shall rest from all afflictions.

From all the labour and trouble of duties.

Sect. XVII. 9. We shall rest also from all the trouble and pain of duty. The conscientious magistrate now cries out, Oh! the burden that lieth upon me! The conscientious parents, that know the preciousness of their children's souls, and the constant pains required to their godly education, cry out, Oh! the burden![i] The conscientious minister, above all, when he reads his charge, (2 Tim. iv. 1,) and views his pattern, (Mark iii. 20, 21, &c.; Acts xx. 18, 31;) when he hath tried awhile what it is to study, and pray, and preach, according to the weight and excellency of the work; to go from house to house, and from neighbour to neighbour, and to beseech them night and day with tears, and, after all, to be hated and persecuted for so doing, no wonder if he cry out, Oh the burden! and be ready to turn away with Jonas; and, with Jeremy, to say, "I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name; for his word is a reproach to us, and a derision daily; but that he hath made his word as a fire shut up in our bones and heart, that we are weary of forbearing, and cannot stay," Jer. xx. 8, 9. How long may we study and labour before one soul is brought clear over to Christ! and when it is done, how soon do the snares of sensuality or error entangle them! How many receive the doctrine of delusion before they have time to be built up in the truth! and when heresies must of necessity arise, how few of them do appear approved! The first new, strange apparition of light doth so amaze them, they think they are in the third heaven, when they are but newly passed from the suburbs of hell; and are presently as confident as if they knew all things, when they have not half light enough to acquaint them with their ignorance; but, after ten or twenty years' study, they become usually of the same judgment with those they despised. And seldom doth a minister live to see the ripeness of his people; but one soweth and planteth, another watereth, and a third reapeth and receiveth the increase. Yet were all this duty delightful, had we but a true proportion of strength. But, to inform the old, ignorant sinner, to convince the stubborn and worldly wise, to persuade a wilful, resolved wretch, to prick a stony heart to the quick, to make a rock to weep and tremble, to set forth Christ according to our necessity and his excellency, to comfort the soul whom God dejected, to clear up dark and difficult truths, to oppose with convincing arguments all gainsayers, to credit the gospel with exemplary conversations, when multitudes do but watch for our halting; oh! who is sufficient for these things? So that every relation, stage, age, hath variety of duty: every conscientious christian cries out, Oh the burden! or, Oh my weakness that makes it so burdensome! But our remaining rest will ease us of the burden. Then will that be sound doctrine, which now is false, that the law hath no more to do with us; that it becomes not a christian to beg for pardon, seeing all his sins are perfectly pardoned already; that we need not fast, nor mourn, nor weep, nor repent; and that a sorrowful countenance beseems not a christian: then will all these become truths.

10. From all those troublesome affections which necessarily accompany our absence from God.

Sect. XVIII. 10. And, lastly, we shall rest from all those sad affections, which necessarily accompany our absence from God: the trouble that is mixed in our desires and hopes, our longings and waitings, shall then cease. We shall no more look into our cabinet, and miss our treasure; look into our hearts, and miss our Christ; nor no more seek him from ordinance to ordinance, and inquire for our God of those we meet; our heart will not lie in our knee, nor our souls be breathed out in our requests; but all conclude in a most full and blessed fruition. But because this, with the former, are touched before, I will say no

[h] Ἰσάγγελοι, pares angelis. Hymo expoundeth this too boldly, and I think falsely. Quod viri in suo sexu resurgent, fœminæ in sexu muliebri, erunt habentes membra genitalia, non autem voluntatem cocundi. Hom. in Dom. 18. in Matt. xxii. I see no ground to conceit such a difference of sex hereafter.

[i] Tunc erit in nobis vera, perfecta, excelsa humilitas, cum et in carne, et in mente nostra, nulla remanserit prava cupiditas, nec cogitationibus fatigabitur spiritus, nec laboribus macerabitur corpus. Nulla erit solicitudo certaminis, sed perfecta erit securitas pacis. Nulla nobis erit justitiæ indigentia, sed cum delectatione securitas plena. Ibi erimus enim perfecta celsitudine beati, quia perfecta erimus Deo carnis et spiritus humilitate subjecti. Fulgent. Ep. 4. ad Prob. c. 7, 8. The Work of the Ministry. Read Lockier on Col. i. 29. p. 524, &c.

more of them now: so you have seen what we shall rest from.

11. It will be an everlasting rest.

Sect. XIX. The ninth and last jewel in our crown, and blessed attribute of this rest, is, that it is an eternal rest. This is the crown of our crown; without which, all were comparatively little or nothing. The very thought of once leaving it, would else imbitter all our joys: and the more would it pierce us, because of the singular excellences which we must forsake. It would be a hell in heaven to think of once losing heaven; as it would be a kind of heaven to the damned, had they but hopes of once escaping.[k] Mortality is the disgrace of all sublunary delights. It makes our present life of little value, (were it not for the reference it hath to God and eternity,) to think that we must shortly lay it down. How can we take delight in any thing, when we remember how short that delight would be; that the sweetness of our cups and morsels is dead as soon as they are but once past our taste! Indeed, if man were as the beast, that knows not his suffering or death till he felt it, and little thinks when the knife is whetting, that it is making ready to cut his throat, then might we be merry till death forbid us, and enjoy our delights till they shall forsake us; but, alas! we know both good and evil; and evil foreknown, is in part endured; and thus our knowledge increaseth our sorrows, Eccles. i. 18. How can it choose but spoil our pleasure, while we see it dying in our hands! How can I be as merry as the jovial world, who have mine eye fixed upon eternity! When methinks I foresee my dying hour, my friends waiting for my last gasp, and closing my eyes, while tears forbid to close their own; methinks I hear them say, He is dead. Methinks I see my coffin made, my grave in digging, and my friends there leaving me in the dust: and where, now, is that we took delight in? O but methinks I see, at the same view, that grave opening, and my dead, revived body rising; methinks I hear that blessed voice, Arise and live, and die no more. Surely, were it not for eternity, I should think man a silly piece; and all his life and honour but contemptible: I shall call him, with David, a vain shadow; and with the prophet, nothing, and less than nothing, and altogether lighter than vanity itself. It utterly disgraceth the greatest glory in mine eyes, if you can but truly call it mortal. I can value nothing that shall have an end, except as it leads to that which hath no end, or as it comes from that love which hath neither beginning nor end. I speak this of my deliberate thoughts; and if some ignorant or forgetful soul have no such sad thoughts to disturb his pleasure, I confess he may be merrier for the present; but where is his mirth when he lieth a dying? Alas! it is a poor happiness that consists only in the ignorance or forgetfulness of approaching misery; but, O blessed eternity! where our lives are perplexed with no such thoughts, nor our joys interrupted with any such fears; where we shall be "pillars in God's temple," Rev. iii. 12, and go out no more. Oh what do I say when I talk of eternity! Can my shallow thoughts conceive at all what the most high expression doth contain? To be eternally blessed, and so blessed! Why, surely this, if any thing, is the resemblance of God: eternity is a piece of infiniteness. Then, O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Days, and nights, and years, time, and end, and death, are words which there have no signification;[l] nor are used, except perhaps to extol eternity, as the mention of hell, to extol heaven. No more use of our calendars or chronology: all the years of our Lord, and the years of our lives, are swallowed up and lost in this eternity. While we were servants, we held by lease; and that but for the term of transitory life; but the son abideth in the house for ever, Gal. vi. 8. Our first and earthly paradise in Eden had a way out, but none that ever we could find in again; but this eternal paradise hath a way in, (a milky way to us, but a bloody way to Christ,) but no way out again; "for they that would pass from hence to you," saith Abraham, "cannot," Luke xvi. 24. A strange phrase! Would any pass from such a place if they might? Could they endure to be absent from God again one hour? No, but upon supposal that they would, yet they could not. O then, my soul, let go thy dreams of present pleasures; and loose thy hold of earth and flesh.[m] Fear not to enter that estate, where thou shalt ever after cease thy fears. Sit down, and sadly, once a day, bethink thyself of this eternity: among all the arithmetical numbers, study the value of this infinite cipher, which, though it stand for nothing in the vulgar account, doth yet contain all our millions, as much less than a simple unit. Lay by the perplexed and contradicting chronological tables, and fix thine eye on this eternity; and the lines which remote thou couldst not follow, thou shalt see all together here concentred. Study less those tedious volumes of history, which contain but the silent narration of dreams, and are but the pictures of the actions of shadows; and, instead of all, study frequently, study thoroughly this one word, eternity, and when thou hast learned thoroughly that one word, thou wilt never look on books again. What! live, and never die? rejoice, and ever rejoice? Oh, what sweet words are these, never and ever! O happy souls in hell, should you but escape after millions of ages! and if the Origenist doctrine were but true! O miserable saints in heaven, should you be dispossessed after the age of a million of worlds! But, oh this word, everlasting, contains the accomplished perfection of their torment and our glory. Oh that the wicked sinner would but soundly study this word, everlasting, methinks it should startle him out of his deadest sleep! Oh that the gracious soul would believingly study this word, everlasting, methinks it should revive him in the deepest agony! And must I, Lord, thus live for ever? Then will I also love

[k] Transit hora, transit et pœna; non accidunt sibi, sed cedunt potius et succedunt. Non sic gloria, non sic renumeratio; non sic merces ipsa laboris; nescit vicissitudinem, nescit finem; manet toto simul, et manet in æternum. Sufficit nunc cuique dici malitia sua; nec laborum suum poterit reservare sequenti; sed omnium merces laborum in una illa die reddetur, cui alter non succedit: guttatim pœna bibitur, aliquando summitur; per minutias transit; sed in remuneratione torrens est voluptatis, et fluminis impetus; torrens inundans lætitiæ, flumen gloriæ, et flumen pacis. Flumen plane est; sed quod affluat; non quod fluat vel effluat. Flumen vocatur, non quod transeat, vel pertranseat, sed quod abundet. Nobis non favum mellis; purissimum vero et liquidissimum mel reposuit Deus ipsum, lætitiam, gloriam, pacem, amœnitatem, felicitatem, jucunditatem et exultationem thesaurizavit nobis Deus noster; hæc omnia unum; ut sit participatio Hierusalem in id ipsum; et hoc unum et id ipsum non nisi Ipse; erit enim Deus omnia et in omnibus. Hæc merces; hæc corona nostra, hoc brævium nostrum; ad quod utique curramus ut comprehendamus. Bern. Serm. 145. de temp.

[l] Habet æternitas suum simul, in quo sunt omnia quæ simul sunt loco vel tempore, et quæ sunt diversis in locis vel temporibus; ut Anselem referente Arriba.

[m] De coexistentia rerum in Dei æternitate, lege Arribam plenissimo. Alvar. de Aux. lib. ii disp. 8. Balthaz. Navarrer. in i. part. cont. 28. Cajet. et in i. p. q. 24. a. 3. Ferrar. cont. Gent. lib. ii. c. 66, 67. Sic Nazar. &c. et e cont. vid. Twiss. De Scientia Media, p. 81. et alibi passim. Barlo. Exercit. 5. Durand. dist. lviii. q. 3. Bona, in i. sent. dist. 35 et 39, a. 2. q. 3.

for ever. Must my joys be immortal; and shall not my thanks be also immortal? Surely, if I shall never lose my glory, I will also never ceasc thy praises. Shouldst thou but renew my lease of the first-fruits, would I not renew thy fine and rent? But if thou wilt both perfeet and perpetuate me and my glory, as I shall be thine, and not mine own, so shall my glory be thy glory; and as all did take their spring from thee, so all shall devolve into thee again; and as thy glory was thine ultimate end in my glory, so shall it also be mine end, when thou hast crowned me with that glory which hath no end. And "to thee, O King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, shall be the honour and glory, for ever and ever. Amen," 2 Tim. i. 17.

Sect. XX. And thus I have endeavoured to show you a glimpse of the approaching glory: but, oh, how short are my expressions of its excellency! Reader, if thou wilt be a humble, sincere believer, and waitest with longing and labouring for this rest, thou wilt shortly see and feel the truth of all this; then wilt thou have so high an apprehension of this blessed state, that will make thee pity the ignorance and distance of mortals; and will tell thee then all that is here said is spoken but in the dark, and falls short of the truth a thousandfold. In the mean time, let this much kindle thy desires, and quicken thine endeavours. Up, and be doing; run, and strive, and fight, and hold on, for thou hast a certain, glorious prize before thee. God will not mock thee: do not mock thyself, nor betray thy soul, by delaying or dallying, and all is thine own. What kind of men dost thou think christians would be in their lives and duties, if they had still this glory fresh in their thoughts? What frame would their spirits be in, if their thoughts of heaven were lively and believing? Would their hearts be so heavy, and their countenance so sad? Or would they have need to take up their comforts from below? Would they be so loth to suffer, and afraid to die? or would they not think every day a year, till they did enjoy it? The Lord heal our carnal hearts, lest we enter not into his rest, because of our unbelief.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PEOPLE OF GOD DESCRIBED.

Sect. I. Having thus performed my first task of describing and explicating the saints' rest, it remains that now I proceed unto the seeond, and show you what these "people of God" are, and why so called, for whom this blessed rest remaineth; and I shall suit my speech unto the quality of the subject. Whilc I was in the mount, I felt it was good being there, and therefore tarried there the longer; and were there not an extreme disproportion between my conceivings and that subjeet, yet mueh longer had I been. And could my capacity have contained what was there to be seen, I eould havc been contented to have bnilt me a tabernacle there. Can a prospect of that happy land be tedious, or a discourse of eternity be too long, except it should detain us from actual possession, and our absence move us to impatience? But now I am deseended from heaven to earth, from God to man, and must discourse of a worm not six feet long, whose life is but a span, and his years as a post that hasteth by; my discourse also shall be but a span, and in a brief touch I will pass it over. Having read of such a high and unspeakable glory, a stranger would wonder for what rare ereature this mighty preparation should be, and expect some illustrious sun should now break forth; but, behold, only a shell full of dust, animated with an invisible rational soul, and that rectified with as unseen a restored power of grace; and this is the creature that must possess such glory. You would think it must needs bc some deserving piece, or one that brings a valuable price. But, behold, one that hath nothing, and can deserve nothing, and confesseth this, yet eannot, of himself, confess it neither, yea, that deserveth the eontrary misery, and would, if he might, proceed in that deserving; but being apprehended by love, he is brought to him that is all, and hath done and deserved all, and suffered for all that we deserved; and most affectionately receiving him, and resting on him, he doth, in and through him, receive all this. But let us sce more partieularly yet, what these "people of God" are.

Description. They are a small part of lost mankind, whom God hath from eternity predestinated to this rest, for the glory of his mercy, and given to his Son, to be by him in a special manner redeemed, and fully recovered from their lost estate, and advanced to this higher glory: all which Christ doth, in due time, accomplish accordingly by himself for them, and by his Spirit upon them. To open all the parts of this half-description to the full, will take up more time and room than are allowed me. Therefore briefly thus:

1. I meddle only with mankind, not with angels; nor will I euriously inquire whether there were any other world of men created and destroyed before this had being; nor whether there shall be any other when this is ended. All this is quite above us, and so nothing to us: nor say I the sons of Adam only, because Adam himself is one of them.

2. And as it is no more excellent a ereature than man that must have this possession, so is it that man, who onee was lost, and had scarcely left himself so much as man. The heirs of this kingdom were taken, even from the tree of execution, and rescued by the strong hand of love from thc power of the prince of darkness, who having taken them in his snares, did lead them captive at his will: they were once within a step of hell, who must now be advanced as high as heaven. And though I mention their lost condition before their predestination, yet I thereby intend not to signify any preeedency it hath, either in itself, or in the divine consideration.[a] That question I dare not toueh, as being very suspicious that it is high arrogancy in us to dispute of preeedency in thc divine consideration: and that we no more know what we talk of than this paper knows what I write of: when wc confess, that all these acts in God are truly one, and that there is no difference of time with him: it is dangerous to dispute of priority or posterity in nature; at least of the deeree of the means, which is but one.

3. That they are but a small part of this lost generation, is too apparent in Scripture and experience. "It is the little flock to whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom." If the sanctified are few, the saved must needs be few:

[a] Intellectum animæ nostræ oculum noctuam esse considerans, in ignorantia sola quietem illius invenio: melius est enim tam fidei catholicæ quam philosophiæ, fateri cæcitatem nostram, quam asserere tanquam evidentia quæ non quietant intellectum; evidentia namque quietativa est, inquit modeste Cajetan. in tom. i. p. q. 22. Art. 4. Etsi Arriba hoc sapienter dictum sugillat, lib. 1. cap. 13. And if so great a man as Cajetan be forced to this, after all his search and disputes of these points, then inferior wits may well ease themselves in a like modest resolution.

fewer they are than the world imagines; yet not so few as some drooping spirits deem, who are doubtful that God would cast off them, who would not reject him for all the world; and are suspicious that God is unwilling to be their God, when yet they know themselves willing to be his people.

4. It is the design of God's eternal decree to glorify his mercy and grace to the highest in this their salvation; and, therefore, needs must it be a great salvation. Every step of mercy to it was great; how much more this end of all those mercies, which stands next to God's ultimate end, his glory! God cannot make any low or mean work to be the great business of an eternal purpose.

5. God hath given all things to his Son, but not as he hath given his chosen to him:[b] the difference is clearly expressed by the apostle. He hath made him "Head over all things to his church," Eph. i. 22.[c] And though Christ is, in some sense, a ransom for all, yet not in that special manner as for his people. He hath, according to the tenor of his covenant, procured salvation for all, if they will believe; but he hath procured for his chosen even this condition of believing.[d]

6. Nor is the redeeming of them by death his whole task; but also the effecting of their full recovery: he may send his Spirit to persuade others; but he intends absolutely his prevailing only with his chosen. And as truly as he hath accomplished his part on the cross for them, so truly will he accomplish his part in heaven for them, and his part by his Spirit also on them. And of all that the Father hath thus given him, he will lose nothing.

Sect. II. But this is but a piece of their description, containing God's work for them, and on them; let us see what they are also in regard of the working of their own souls towards God, and their Redeemer, again.[e] [These people of God then, are the (1) part of the (2) externally called, (3) who being by the (4) Spirit of Christ (5) thoroughly, though (6) imperfectly, regenerate, are hereupon (7) convinced, and (8) sensible of that (9) evil in sin, (10) that misery in themselves, that (11) vanity in the creature, and that (12) necessity, (13) sufficiency, and (14) excellency of Jesus Christ, that they (15) abhor that evil, (16) bewail that misery, and (17) turn their hearts from that vanity; and (18) accepting of Christ for their (19) Saviour and (20) Lord, to bring them unto (21) God the chief good, and present them (22) perfectly just before him, do accordingly enter into a (23) cordial covenant with him, and so (24) deliver up themselves unto him, and herein (25) persevere to their lives' end.]

The first description explained.

I shall briefly explain to you the branches of this part of the description also.

1. They are externally called. What the external call is.

1. I say, they are a part of "the externally called," because the Scripture hath yet showed us no other way to the internal call, but by the external. "For how shall they believe on him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?" Rom. x. 14. All divulging of the substance of the gospel, whether by solemn sermons, by writing, printing, reading, conference, or any other means that have a rational sufficiency, for information and conviction, are this preaching; though not alike clear and excellent. The knowledge of Christ[f] is none of nature's principles:[g] the book of the creatures is no means alone, much less a sufficient means to teach the knowledge of Christ. It may discover mercy, but gives not the least hint of the way of that mercy: it speaks nothing of God incarnate, or two natures in one person; of Jesus the Son of Mary; of Christ's suretiship, and suffering for us, rising, ascending, mediating, returning; of two covenants, and their several conditions, and the reward of keeping them, and penalty of breaking them, &c. It is utterly silent in these things. And to affirm that the Spirit calls or teacheth men where the word is not, and where the creature or nature speaks not, is, I think, a groundless fiction. There is the light of the eye, and the light of the sun, or some other substitute external light, necessary to our seeing any object. The Scripture and certain revelations from heaven (when and where such are) is the sun of external light: the understanding is our eye, or internal light; this eye is become blind, and this internal light in the best is imperfect; but the external light of Scripture is now perfected: therefore the work of

What is the means of this call? Whether nature and creatures be sufficient?

[b] See John xvii. 2, a clear place. Sin ex præcedente prævaricatione naturali corruptioni mortales tenebantur obnoxii, gratiamque imaginis divinæ perdiderant; quid facto opus fuit ad hujusmodi recuperandam gratiam? Illius sane, illius hoc opus erat, qui ab initio, cum non essent, condidit omnia; divini scilicet verbi; ipsius enim intererat, corruptibile hoc ad incorruptionem revocare, ac pro omnibus rationabiliter patri satisfacere. Athanas. lib. 1. de Incarnat. Verbi. Vide note [m] p. 29 of this volume.

[c] Christ taking to himself a body of the mass, and in all things like to ours, because we were obnoxious to the death of all corruptibleness, he delivered it to death for all, and offered it to God the Father. Athan. ubi supra. Lege Paræi Irenic. cap. 24. p. 124. art. 5 and 6. For the Word, the Son of the Father, being above all, might meritoriously alone recover all things, and suffer for all men, and was alone sufficient to appease the Father for all men. Athanasius ubi supra; where he so oft repeateth Christ's dying for all, and particularly to procure them a resurrection, as if he could not inculcate it sufficiently. Vide Clem. Alexand. Stromat. lib. 7. prope initi.

[d] That faith is properly called the condition of the covenant, and justifieth as a condition, besides what I have said in my "Confession," I refer you to Master Wotton de Reconcil. part 1. lib. 2. c. 19, where you have the attestation of our chief divines. And, indeed, he must be a wiser man than I that can reach to know, how faith can directly justify under any other notion than that of a condition; that apprehensive nature which makes men call it an instrument, being only its aptitude to its office, and not the formal reason of its justifying.

[e] They that would see this work of God on the soul handled most exactly, judiciously, scholastically, and briefly, let them read Mr. Parker's excellent Theses de Traductione peccatoris ad vitam. If you cannot get the book, it is in the end of Ames. against Grevincho, but maimed of fifteen Theses left out: though I own not every controverted assertion in it.

[f] Ego dico, voluntate quidem non est homo justus; nec natura potest sed medicina poterit, quod vitio non potest. August. l. 1. de Nat. et Grat. c. 43.

[g] Quicquid illud est quod extrinsecus oculis et mentibus hominum objicitur, destitutum est illa via Spiritus quæ sola potest homines abducere a peccato, et ad vitæ spem efficaciter revocare. Amyrald. Defens. Calv. p. 154. Quomodo causa illa supernaturalis intellectum liberet a nativis quibus occupatur tenebris, mens humana non comprehendit. Effectum summo Dei beneficio persentiscimus; rationem operationis non tenemus. Amyrald. Defens. Doct. Calv. p. 200. Some confidently do, with Grotius, appeal to antiquity in the points of universal sufficient grace and free-will, concerning which, see Chamier, Bogerman's Annotations on Grot. Piet. et Usher Eccles. Brit. Prim. what the ancient church thought and did against Pelagius. So Jo. Lacius De Pelag. Comment. Nic. Bodichir. in Socin. Remonst. Videlius, &c. Yet, the truth is, most if not all the fathers of the first two or three hundred years, speak in a language seeming to lean strongly that way; and therefore Calvin and Scultetus in Medul. Pat. charge them with no less than Pelagius's error: yet perhaps their laying the blame of evil actions on man's will, and persuading men's wills, may occasion men to charge them so far, as if therefore they supposed natural sufficiency; or they speak of free-will as opposed to fate, nature, and coaction, as you may find very many of them favourably interpreted by Chamier. Panst. tom. 3. lib. 3. c. 16.

the Spirit now is, not to perfect Scripture, or to add any thing to its discovery, or to be instead of a Scripture where it is wanting, much less where the Scripture is; but to remove the darkness from our understanding, that we may see clearly what the Scripture speaks clearly. Before the Scripture was perfect, the Spirit did enlighten the prophets and penmen of Scripture both ways; but now I know no teaching of the Spirit, save only by its illuminating or sanctifying work; teaching men no new lesson, nor the old without book; but to read with understanding, what Scripture, nature, creatures, and providences, teach.[h] The asserting of any more, is proper to the enthusiasts. If the Spirit's teaching did without Scripture or tradition reveal Christ, surely some of those millions of poor blind pagans would have before this believed, and the christian faith have been propagated among them.

2. They are but part of the externally called.

2. That these people of God are but a part of those that are thus externally called, is too evident in Scripture and experience. "Many are called, but few are chosen:" but the internally, effectually called, are all chosen: "for whom he called, them he justified; and whom he justified, them he glorified," Rom. viii. 30. The bare invitation of the gospel, and men's hearing the word, is so far from giving title to, or being an evidence of, christianity and its privileges, that where it prevails not to a thorough conversion, it sinks deeper, and casts under a double damnation.

3. They are regenerate by the Spirit of Christ.

3. The first differencing work I affirm to be regeneration by the Spirit of Christ;[i] taking it for granted, that this regeneration is the same with effectual vocation, with conversion, with sanctification; understanding conversion, and sanctification, of the first infusion of the principle of spiritual life into the soul, and not for the addition of degrees, or the sanctifying of the conversation, in which last sense it is most frequently taken in Scripture.

Necessity of this regeneration.

This spiritual regeneration,[k] then, is the first and great qualification of these people of God; which, though habits are more for their acts than themselves, and are only perceived in their acts, yet by its causes and effects we should chiefly inquire after. To be the people of God without regeneration,[l] is as impossible as to be the natural children of men without generation; seeing we are born God's enemies, we must be new-born his sons, or else remain his enemies still. Oh that the unregenerate world did know or believe this! in whose ears the new birth sounds as a paradox, and the great change which God works upon the soul is a strange thing: who, because they never felt any such supernatural work upon themselves, do therefore believe that there is no such thing, but that it is the conceit and fantasy of idle brains; who make the terms of regeneration, sanctification, holiness, and conversion, a matter of common reproach and scorn, though they are the words of the Spirit of God himself; and Christ hath spoken it with his mouth, "that except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." The greatest reformation of life that can be attained to, without this new life wrought in the soul, may procure their further delusion, but never their salvation.[m]

This regeneration I call "thorough," to distinguish it from those slight tinctures, and superficial changes, which other men may partake of; and yet "imperfect," to distinguish our present from our future condition in glory; and that the christian may know, that it is sincerity, not perfection, which he must inquire after in his soul.

Sect. III. Thus far the soul is passive. Let us next see by what acts this new life doth discover itself, and this divine spark doth break forth; and how the soul, touched with this loadstone of the Spirit, doth presently move toward God. The first work I call "conviction," which comprehends knowledge, and assent. It comprehends the knowledge of what the Scripture speaks against sin, and sinners; and that this Scripture which so speaks, is the word of God himself. Whosoever knows not both these, is not yet thus convinced. It comprehends a sincere assent to the verity of the Scripture; as also some knowledge of ourselves, and our own guilt, and an acknowledgment of the verity of those consequences, which from the premises of sin in us, and threats in Scripture, do conclude us miserable. It hath been a great question, and disputed in whole volumes, which grace is the first in the soul; where faith and repentance are usually the only competitors. In regard of the principle, the power, or habit, which soever it be

1. The soul is convinced, i. e. 1. Knoweth, 2. Assenteth to the truth of Scripture threats.

And knows its own sin, and guilt, and misery.

[h] As when Christ had opened the eyes of the man born blind, he did but give him a power to see what present objects the sun or other external lights should reveal, but not the actual sight of all the objects in the world, nor of any without external light; he must yet travel to Rome, to India, &c. if he will see them: so God's illumination by the Spirit doth give men ability to see, but not without external revelation by the word; and they must travel by long, painful study, from truth to truth, before they know them. See Heb. v. 11—14, fully for this. Lutherus de Cicerone, si sermonibus convivalibus creditur, 120. dicit, Cicero vir sapiens et sedulus multa fecit, et passus est. Spero Deum ipsi et similibus ipsi propitium futurum. Dicant nobis Lutherus et Zuinglius hoc sperant peccare gravius; imo viderint ne dum culicem colant, elephantem devorent. Pareus, Irenic. 28. p. (mihi) 245, 246.

[i] See Mr. Rich. Hooker in his Discourse of Justification; and Pet. Martyr on Rom. c. 3. p. 157, showeth fully how the Spirit goeth before faith, and yet, in the increase, followeth after it. Fides est pars sanctitatis; nostra ergo fides fluit ex electione. Neque necesse est ut fides et sanctitas sit idem: sufficit si modo fides sit pars sanctitatis nostræ; et quis dubitat sanctificari nos fide perinde atque ulla alia qualitate sancta? Ut Jud. 3; Acts xv. 9. Itaque non tantum conjuncta est fides cum sanctitate in uno et eodem subjecto; sed fides est formaliter sanctitas nostra; non quidem integralis, sed partialis; quemadmodum etiam spes et charitas. Dr. Twiss. cont. Corvin. p. 222. Cum Dominus per Ezek. dicit, "Cor lapideum auferam et dabo," &c. utique par gratiæ suæ illuminationem mutat hominis voluntatem. Hæc est mutatio non humani arbitrii, sed dextræ excelsi: per quam filii hominum graves corde, qui diligunt vanitatem, et quærunt mendacium, ad diligendam et quærendam veritatem, non ipsi bonam voluntatem asserunt, sed a Domino donum bonæ voluntatis recipiunt. Fulgent. de Verit. Præd. cap. 16. Sicut in nativitate carnali omnem nascentis hominis voluntatem præcedit operis divini formatio: sic in spirituali nativitate qua veterem hominem deponere incipimus, ut novum, qui in justicia et sanctitate veritatis creatus est, induamus: nemo potest habere bonam voluntatem motu proprio, nisi mens ipsa, i. e. interior homo noster renovetur ac reformetur ex Deo. Fulgent. de Incarn. c. 19. Fulgentius saith, ubi sup. c. 23, 1 Cor. xii. 8, 9, "Alteri fides in eodem spiritu." Non ergo spiritum sanctum quia credimus, sed ut crederemus, accepimus.

[k] De necessitate regenerationis, et Christi adventu ad eam procurandam, lege Athan. de Incarn. Verbi.

[l] Sananda est itaque (Juliane) humana, Deo miserante, natura; non te inaniter declamante, tanquam sana laudanda. August. Operis Imperf. lib. 2. n. 8. John iii. 3.

[m] I mean that this is not a sufficient way to their salvation, but yet it may conduce to the good of others, to restrain their vicious actions, and somewhat more. Danæus cont. Bellar ad Tom. Cont. 4. p. 231. Mea sententia hæc est ut christianus judicetur legitimus, quisquis fuerit in ecclesia lege et jure fidei divinam gratiam consecutus. Cyprian. Epist. 76. ad Magnum. Aliter pectus credentis abluitur, aliter mens hominis per fidei merita mandatur; ut Cyprian. Epist. 76. ad Magnum.

that is infused, they are all at once; being indeed all one; and called several graces from the diversity of their objects and subjects, as residing in the several faculties of the soul; the life and rectitude of which several faculties and affections, are in the same sense several graces; as the German, French, British seas, are several seas. And for the acts, it is most apparent, that neither repentance nor faith (in the ordinary strict sense) is first, but knowledge.[n] There is no act of the rational soul about any object preceding knowledge. Their evasion is too gross, who tell us, that knowledge is no grace, or but a common act: when a dead soul is by the Spirit enlivened, its first act is to know; and why should it not exert a sincere act of knowing, as well as believing, and the sincerity of knowledge be requisite as well as of faith; especially when faith in the gospel sense is sometimes taken largely, containing many acts, whereof knowledge is one, in which large sense, indeed, faith is the first grace. This conviction implieth also the subduing and silencing in some measure of all their carnal reasonings, which were wont to prevail against the truth, and a discovery of the fallacies of all their former argumentations.

Therefore not any other, but this knowledge is the first grace, in regard of the order of their acting; though in the vital seed they are together.

2. As there must be conviction, so also sensibility: God works on the heart, as well as the head; both were corrupted, and out of order. The principle of new life doth quicken both. All true spiritual knowledge doth pass into affections. That religion which is merely traditional, doth indeed swim loose in the brain; and the devotion which is kindled but by men and means, is hot in the mouth, and cold in the stomach. The work that had no higher rise than education, example, custom, reading, or hearing, doth never kindly pass down to the affections. The understanding which did receive but mere notions, cannot deliver them to the affections, as realities. The bare help of doctrine upon an unrenewed soul, produceth in the understanding but a superficial apprehension, and half assent, and therefore can produce in the heart but small sensibility. As hypocrites may know many things, yea, as many as the best christian, but nothing with the clear apprehensions of an experienced man; so may they with as many things be slightly affected, but they give deep rooting to none. To read and hear of the worth of meat and drink, may raise some esteem of them, but not such as the hungry and thirsty feel; for by feeling they know the worth thereof. To view in the map of the gospel, the precious things of Christ and his kingdom, may slightly affect; but to thirst for, and drink of, the living waters; and to travel, to live in, to be heir of that kingdom, must needs work another kind of sensibility.[o] It is Christ's own differencing mark, and I had rather have one from him, than from any, that the good ground gives the good seed deep rooting; but some others entertain it but into the surface of the soil, and cannot afford it depth of earth. The great things of sin, of grace, and Christ, and eternity, which are of weight, one would think, to move a rock, yet shake not the heart of the carnal professor, nor pierce his soul unto the quick; though he should have them all ready in his brain, and be a constant preacher of them to others, yet do they little affect himself: when he is pressing them upon the hearts of others most earnestly, and crying out on the senselessness of his dull hearers, you would little think how insensible is his own soul, and the great difference between his tongue and his heart. His study and invention procure him zealous and moving expressions, but they cannot procure him answerable affections. It is true, some soft and passionate natures may have tears at command, when one that is truly gracious hath none; yet is this christian, with dry eyes, more solidly apprehensive and deeply affected, than the other is in the midst of his tears; and the weeping hypocrite will be drawn to his sin again with a trifle, which the groaning christian would not be hired to commit with crowns and kingdoms.

The soul is sensible of what it is convinced.

Neeessity of sensibility.

The things that the soul is thus convinced and sensible of, are especially these in the description mentioned.

What the soul is convinced and sensible of.

1. The evil of sin. The sinner is made to know and feel that the sin which was his delight, his sport, the support of his credit and estate, is indeed a more loathsome thing than toads or serpents, and a greater evil than plague or famine, or any other calamities;[p] it being a breach of the righteous law of the most high God, dishonourable to him, and destructive to the sinner. Now the sinner reads and hears no more the reproofs of sin, as words of course, as if the minister wanted something to say to fill up his sermon; but when you mention his sin, and stir in his wounds, he feels you speak at his very heart, and yet is contented you should show him the worst, and set it home, though he bear the smart. He was wont to marvel what made men keep such a stir against sin; what harm it was for a man to take a little forbidden pleasure: he saw no such heinousness in it, that Christ must needs die for it, and most of the world be eternally tormented in hell. He thought this was somewhat hard measure, and greater punishment than could possibly be deserved by a little fleshly liberty, or worldly delight, neglect of Christ, his word, or worship; yea, by a wanton thought, a vain word, a dull duty, or cold affection. But now the case is altered: God hath opened his eyes to see that unexpressible vileness in sin, which satisfies him of the reason of all this.

1. Of the evil of sin.

2. The soul in this great work is convinced and sensible, as of the evil of sin, so of its own misery by reason of sin. They who before read the threats of God's law, as men do the whole stories of foreign wars, or as they behold the wounds and the blood in a picture,

2. Of its own misery, by reason of sin.

[n] Ista gratia quam Deus vasis misericordiæ gratis donat, ab illuminatione cordis incipit: et hominis voluntatem non bonam invenit ipsa; sed facit atque ut eligatur, ipsa prius eligit: neque suscipitur, aut illigitur, nisi hoc ipsa in corde hominis operetur. Ergo ut susceptio et desiderium gratiæ, opus est ipsius gratiæ. Fulgent. de Verit. Præd. c. 15.

[o] Deus autem ne fideles obliviscantur illius mortis in qua hæserunt, facit perpetuo ut odor ipsius tam fœtidus, et tam insuavis, feriat ipsorum nares. Nam manent reliquiæ illius mortis perpetuo dum hic vivimus: ut ex his æstiment quanta in morte jacuerint antequam cœperunt vivificari cum Christo, et recentem ipsius retineant memoriam. Rolloc. in Col. 2. 12. p. (mihi) 141. Neque profecto qui extra Christum est, serio sentit se mortuum esse priusquam incipiat esse in Christo, et degustare illam quæ ex ipso solo fluit vitam tam suavem et jucundam, postquam semel degustarunt homines, non tantum sentire incipiunt mortem illam in qua jacuerunt, sed etiam ab ea totis animis abhorrent; neque ulla conditione vitam illam quam sentire incipiunt cum ea commutarint. Rolloc. ibid. p. 442.

[p] Nulla offensa Dei est venialis de se, nisi tantummodo per respectum ad divinam misericordiam, quæ non vult de facto quamlibet offensam imputare ad mortem, cum illud possit justissime. Et ita concluditur quod peccatum mortale et veniale, in esse tali non distinguuntur intrinsece et essentialiter, sed solum per respectum ad divinam gratiam, &c. Gerson. de Vita Spirit. Corol. 1. Some papists, then, confess the damning merit of every sin.

or piece of arras, which never makes them smart or fear; now they find it is their own story, and they perceive they read their own doom, as if they found their names written in the curse, or heard the law say, as Nathan, "Thou art the man." The wrath of God seemed to him but as a storm to a man in a dry house, or as the pains of the sick to the healthful stander-by, or as the torments of hell to a child that sees the story of Dives and Lazarus upon the wall; but now he finds the disease is his own, and feels the pain in his own bowels, and the smart of the wounds in his own soul. In a word, he finds himself a condemned man, and that he is dead and damned in point of law, and that nothing was wanting but mere execution to make him most absolutely and irrecoverably miserable.[q] Whether you will call this a work of the law or gospel, as in several senses it is of both; the law expressing, and the gospel intimating and implying, our former condemnation; sure I am, it is a work of the Spirit wrought, in some measure, in all the regenerate: and though some do judge it unnecessary bondage, yet it is beyond my conceiving how he should come to Christ for pardon who first found not himself guilty and condemned, or for life, who never found himself dead. "The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." Yet I deny not, but the discovery of the remedy as soon as the misery, must needs prevent a great part of the trouble, and make the distinct effect on the soul to be with much more difficulty discerned. Nay, the actings of the soul are so quick, and oft so confused, that the distinct order of these workings may not be apprehended or remembered at all; and perhaps the joyful apprehensions of mercy may make the sense of misery the sooner forgotten.

Whether this be the way of the law or gospel.

Necessity of this sense of sin and misery.

Why some gracious souls can scarce perceive, and others scarce remember, this work of humiliation.

3. Of the creature's vanity and insufficiency.

3. So doth the Spirit also convince the soul of the creature's vanity and insufficiency.[r] Every man naturally is a flat idolater; our hearts turned from God in our first fall, and ever since the creature hath been our god. This is the grand sin of nature. When we set up to ourselves a wrong end, we must needs err in all the means. The creature is to every unregenerate man his God and his Christ. He ascribeth to it the divine prerogatives, and alloweth it the highest room in his soul; or if ever he come to be convinced of misery, he fleeth to it as his saviour and supply. Indeed, God and his Christ hath usually the name, and shall be still called both Lord and Saviour; but the real expectation is from the creature, and the work of God is laid upon it. How well it will perform that work the sinner must know hereafter. It is his pleasure, his profit, and his honour, that is the natural man's trinity, and his carnal self that is these in unity. Indeed, it is that flesh that is the principal idol: the other three are deified in their relation to ourselves. It was our first sin to aspire to be as gods; and it is the greatest sin that runs in our blood, and is propagated in our nature from generation to generation. When God should guide us, we guide ourselves; when he should be our sovereign, we rule ourselves.[s] The laws which he gives us, we would correct and find fault with; and if we had the making of them, we would have made them otherwise. When he should take care of us, and must, or we perish, we will care for ourselves: when we should depend on him for daily receivings, we had rather keep our stock ourselves, and have our portion in our own hands: when we should stand at his disposal, we would be at our own; and when we should submit to his providence, we usually quarrel at it; as if we knew better what is good or fit for us than he; or how to dispose of all things more wisely: if we had the disposal of the events of wars, and the ordering of the affairs of churches and states, or the choice of our own outward condition, it would be far otherwise than now it is; and we think we could make a better disposal, order, and choice, than God hath made. This is the language of a carnal heart, though it doth not always speak out. When we should study God, we study ourselves; when we should mind God, we mind ourselves; when we should love God, we love our carnal selves; when we should trust God, we trust ourselves; when we should honour God, we honour ourselves; and when we should ascribe to God, and admire him, we ascribe to and admire ourselves; and, instead of God, we would have all men's eyes and dependence on us, and all men's thanks returned to us, and would gladly be the only men on earth extolled and admired by all. And thus we are naturally our own idols; but down falls this Dagon, when God doth once renew the soul. It is the great business of that great work, to bring the heart back to God himself. He convinceth the sinner: 1. That the creature, of himself, can neither be his god, to make him happy; 2. Nor yet his Christ, to recover him from his misery, and restore him to God, who is his happiness. This God doth, not only by preaching, but by providence also; because words seem but wind, and will hardly take off the raging senses, therefore doth God make his rod to speak, and continue speaking, till the sinner hear, and hath learned by it this great lesson. This is the great

Every natural man is an idolater, and doth not indeed take the Lord for his God.

Pride is the great sin against the first and great commandment.

Man naturally is his own idol.

Regeneration works back the heart to God again. It convinceth, 1. That the creature cannot be our God. 2. Nor our Jesus.

[q] Quisquis desolationem non novit, nec consolationem agnoscere potest. Et quisquis consolationem ignorat esse necessariam, superest ut non habeat gratiam Dei. Inde est quod homines seculi negotiis et flagitiis implicati, dum miseriam non sentiunt, non attendunt misericordiam. Bern. Serm. 31. de Temp. Humiliation, though it do not properly cleanse your hands, yet it plucks off the gloves, and makes them bare for washing. Mr. Vine's Serm. on Jam. iv. 8. p. 12.

[r] Fecit Deus hominem ad se, fecit illum sui capacem, et regno suo æterno destinavit: cumque ipse sit immortalis, infinitus, æternus, quies, &c. efficit, hos etiam capaces et appetentes immortalitatis, infinitatis, quietis, &c. Sed in se ac non in nobis; ut se nobis finem dedit, non nos ipsos; sed homo excidit, &c. non tamen ab illa capacitate et desiderio, hæc enim est ejus natura et essentia. Sed (res stupenda) illa omnia indesinentur appetit, quæritve; sed in seipso non in Deo adversus quem non minus perfidus quam miser; et ideo miser quia perfidus rebellavit. Et hæc est origo vitiorum, &c. quia conditus est capax et appetens celsitudinis, sed in Deo; etsi a Deo separatus pergit appetere celsitudinem; sed in se; et hæc est superbia; quia honoris est cupidus; sed in Deo pergit honorem sectari, sed sibi et in se; et hæc est ambitio, &c. Lege ult. Gibieuf. de lib. 1. c. 21. sect. 6. p. 136.

[s] Etsi qui primum peccat per recessum a Deo peccat, quia tamen peccando sibi ipse se affixit, quando deinceps peccat non jam per nudum recessum a Deo peccat, sed per adhæsionem ad seipsum; quæ est illi quasi secunda quædam sed adulterina inclinatio, substituta in loco germanæ illius, et sinceræ quam Creator omnipotens inseruerat, eamque paulatim debilitans et obscurans. Dixi non per nudum recessum a Deo, quia illa ipsa adhæsio inordinata ad seipsum, constat recessu a Deo, tanquam esse formali, et maligno spiritu depravationis et inordinationis suæ. Gib. lib. 2. de Libert. c. 19. sect. 22. p. 422. Hic est status hominis lapsi; quem amorem proprium communitur non culpamus; de quo affirmare licet nihil aliud esse nisi illum morem quem initio creaturæ Deus nobis inseruit; sed a Deo avulsum, et ad nos ipsos derivatum et detortum. Gibieuf. lib. 1. c. 21. sect. 7. p. 36.

Providences, and especially afflictions, do usually much further this conviction.

reason why affliction doth so ordinarily concur in the work of conversion; these real arguments, which speak to the quick, will force a hearing, when the most convincing and powerful words are slighted. When a sinner made his credit his god, and God shall cast him into lowest disgrace; or bring him that idolized his riches into a condition wherein they cannot help him, or cause them to take wing and fly away; or the rust to corrupt, and the thief to steal his adored god in a night, or an hour; what a help is here to this work of conviction! When a man that made his pleasure his god, whether ease,[t] or sports, or mirth, or company, or gluttony, or drunkenness, or clothing, or buildings, or whatsoever a ranging eye, a curious ear, a raging appetite, or a lustful heart, could desire, and God shall take these from him, or give him their sting and curse with them, and turn them all into gall and wormwood; what a help is here to this conviction! When God shall cast a man into a languishing sickness, and inflict wounds and anguish on his heart, and stir up against him his own conscience, and then, as it were, take the sinner by the hand, and lead him to credit, to riches, to pleasure, to company, to sports, or whatsoever was dearest to him, and say, Now, try if these can help you; can these heal thy wounded conscience? Can they now support thy tottering cottage? Can they keep thy departing soul in thy body, or save thee from mine everlasting wrath? Will they prove to thee eternal pleasures, or redeem thy soul from the eternal flames? Cry aloud to them, and see now whether these will be instead of God and his Christ unto thee. Oh how this works now with the sinner; when sense itself acknowledgeth the truth, and even the flesh is convinced of the creature's vanity, and our very deceiver is undeceived! Now he despiseth his former idols, and calleth them all but silly comforters, wooden, earthly, dirty gods, of a few days old, and quickly perishing; he speaketh as contemptuously of them as Baruk of the pagan idols, or our martyrs of the papists' god of bread, which was yesterday in the oven, and is to-morrow on the dunghill; he chideth himself for his former folly, and pitieth those that have no higher happiness. O poor Crœsus, Cæsar, Alexander, thinks he, how small, how short was your happiness! Ah, poor wretches! Base honours; woeful pleasures; sad mirth; ignorant learning; defiled dunghill; counterfeit righteousness! Poor stuff to make a god of; simple things to save souls! Woe to them that have no better a portion, no surer saviours, nor greater comforts, than these can yield, in their last and great distress and need! In their own place they are sweet and lovely; but in the place of God, how contemptible and abominable! They that are accounted excellent and admirable within the bounds of their own calling, should they step into the throne, and usurp sovereignty, would soon, in the eyes of all, be vile and insufferable.

4. Of the need of Christ, and his sufficiency and worth.

4. The fourth thing that the soul is convinced and sensible of, is, the absolute necessity, the full sufficiency, and perfect excellency, of Jesus Christ. It is a great question, whether all the foremention ed works are not common, and only preparations unto this? They are preparatives, and yet not common; every lesser work is a preparative to the greater; and all the first works of grace, to those that follow: so faith is a preparative to our continual living in Christ, to our justification and glory. There are, indeed, common convictions, and so there is also a common believing; but this, as in the former terms explained, is both a sanctifying and saving work; I mean a saving act of a sanctified soul, excited by the Spirit's special grace. That it precedes justification, contradicts not this; for so doth faith itself too: nor that it precedes faith, is any thing against it; for I have showed before, that it is a part of faith in the large sense: and in the strict sense taken, faith is not the first gracious act, much less that act of fiducial recumbency, which is commonly taken for the justifying act; though, indeed, it is no one single act, but many, that are the condition of justification.[u]

Q. Are not all the forementioned works common till this last? A. No.

This conviction is not by mere argumentation, as a man is convinced of the verity of some inconcerning consequence by dispute; but also by the sense of our desperate misery, as a man in famine, of the necessity of food; or a man that had read or heard his sentence of condemnation, is convinced of the absolute necessity of pardon; or as a man that lies in prison for debt, is convinced of the necessity of a surety to discharge it.[x] Now the sinner finds himself in another case than ever he was aware of; he feels an insupportable burden upon him, and sees there is none but Christ can take it off. He perceives that he is under the wrath of God, and that the laws proclaim him a rebel and an outlaw, and none but Christ alone can make his peace: he is a man pursued by a lion, that must perish, if he find not present sanctuary. He feels the curse doth lie upon him, and upon all he hath for his sake, and Christ alone can make him blessed: he is now brought to this dilemma, either he must have Christ to justify him, or be eternally condemned;[y] he must have

[t] Finis operantis malum est bonum. Bonum est principium et finis mali eo modo quo malum utroque gaudere potest; estque axioma receptissimum; nemo intendens in malum operatur, et proinde ille etiam qui facit malum, intendit bonum. Observat Dionysius. Aliud esse quod fit, aliud quod appetitur. Appetitur bonum, fit malum; dum scilicet bonum inordinate appetitur, dum appetitur bonum inferius eo, cui destinati sumus, et quod appetere tenemur. Gibieuf. lib. 2. de Libert. c. 20. sect. 2. p. 424. Sed quæstio est, utrum prius sit in peccato, vel aversio a Deo, vel conversio ad creaturam. Resp. Aversionem præcedere, conversionem autem indebitam sequi: nec ullum esse peccatum nisi præcesserit aversio a Deo; conversio namque ad creaturam, non est indebita et inordinata, nisi prout importat inhæsionem absolutam ad creaturam, et derelictionem Dei: atque adeo nisi subest aversioni a Deo tanquam formæ. Gib. lib. 2. c. 20. sect. 5. p. 425. This aversion from God is from him both as the first and last, the principium et finis, the first Ruler, and the chief Good; as Gib. ubi sup. sect. 8.

[u] Chamier saith, Fidem esse causam justificationis nego: tunc enim justificatio non esset gratuita, sed ex nobis; at est fides mea gratuita, neque ullam habet causam præter Dei misericordiam. Itaque dicitur fides justificare, non quia efficiat justificationem; sed quia efficitur in justificato, et requiritur in justificato, adeo ut nemo qui fruatur usu rationis, justificatus sit, nisi qui habeat hanc fidem; neque ullus habet hanc fidem qui non sit justificatus. Cham. tom. iii. l. 13. c. 6. And if it be no cause, it is certainly no proper instrument. It is, saith Cham. tantum ratio, seu modus agendi, c. 6. sect. 6, 7.

[x] That this was not per solutionem stricte sumptam, sed per satisfactionem, viz. non per solutionem ejusdem (neque insensu morali vel legali) sed tantidem, vide Doctis. Parkerum de Descensu Christi, p. 108; et Rivetum in Disputat. de Satisfac.; et Ball. de Fœdere; et Cameronem sæpius, ut Oper. Fol. p. 363, &c. But full on this question, though in a contracted style, is Grotius de Satisfactione.

[y] Et si in negotio justificationis magno periculo erratur, prout ea de re controversia procedit inter nos et pontificios, utrum, viz. gratia Dei justificatio vobis contingat, an meritis nostris. Mark, the question is not of the conditionality of obedience to Christ, but of merit. Attamen prout inter nos et piscatorem controversia instituitur, passivave tantum an etiam activa Christi obedientia justificemur coram Deo, nullo prorsus erratur periculo. Utrobique enim justificationis causæ Dei gratiæ et Christi meritis ascribuntur, non autem operibus nostris. Doct. Twiss. contra Corvinum. pag. 3.

Christ to save him, or burn in hell for ever; he must have Christ to bring him again to God, or be shut out of his presence everlastingly; and now no wonder if he cry as the martyr Lambert, "None but Christ, none but Christ!" It is not gold, but bread, that will satisfy the hungry; nor any thing but pardon that will comfort the condemned. "All things are now but dross and dung," Phil. iii. 7—9; and what we counted gain, is now but loss in comparison of Christ: for, as the sinner seeth his utter misery, and the disability of himself and all things to relieve him, so he doth perceive that there is no saving mercy out of Christ: the truth of the threatening, and tenor of both covenants, do put him out of all such hopes. There is none found in heaven or earth that can open the sealed book, save the Lamb: without his blood, there is no remission; and without remission, there is no salvation, Rev. v. 3—6; Heb. ix. 22; xiii. 12. Could the sinner now make any shift without Christ, or could any thing else supply his wants and save his soul, then might Christ be disregarded; but now he is convinced that there is no other name, and the necessity is absolute, Acts iv. 12.

2. Of Christ's sufficiency.

2. And as the soul is thus convinced of the necessity of Christ, so also of his full sufficiency. He sees, though the creature cannot, and himself cannot, yet Christ can. Though the fig-leaves of our own unrighteous righteousness are too short to cover our nakedness, yet the righteousness of Christ is large enough: ours is disproportionable to the justice of the law, but Christ's doth extend to every tittle. If he intercede, there is no denial; such is the dignity of his person, and the value of his merits, that the Father granteth all he desireth: he tells us himself, "that the Father heareth him always," John xi. 42. His sufferings being a perfect satisfaction to the law, and all power in heaven and earth being given to him, he is now able to supply every of our wants, and to save to the uttermost all that come to him, Heb. vii. 25.

Quest. How can I know his death is sufficient for me, if not for all; and how is it sufficient for all, if not suffered for all?

Answ. Because I will not interrupt my present discourse with controversy, I will say something to this question by itself in another tract, if God enable me.[z]

3. And of his excellency.

3. The soul is also convinced of the perfect excellency of Jesus Christ, both as he is considered in himself, and as considered in relation to us; both as he is the only way to the Father, and as he is the End, being one with the Father. Before, he knew Christ's excellency as a blind man knows the light of the sun; but now, as one that beholdeth his glory.

And thus doth the Spirit convince the soul.

Of the change of the will and affections.

Sect. IV. 3. After this sensible conviction the will discovereth also its change, and that in regard of all the four forementioned objects.

1. It turneth from sin with abhorrency.

1. The sin which the understanding pronounceth evil, the will doth accordingly turn from with abhorrency. Not that the sensitive appetite is changed, or any way made to abhor its object: but when it would prevail against the conclusions of reason, and carry us to sin against God, when Scripture should be the rule, and reason the master, and sense the servant; this disorder and evil the will abhorreth.

2. Abhorreth and lamenteth its miserable state.

2. The misery also which sin hath procured, as he discerneth, so he bewaileth. It is impossible that the soul now living, should look either on its trespass against God, or yet on its own self-procured calamity, without some compunction and contrition. He that truly discerneth that he hath killed Christ, and killed himself, will surely, in some measure, be pricked to the heart. If he cannot weep, he can heartily groan; and his heart feels what his understanding secs.

3. Renounceth all his former idols and vanities. Sin is, first, directly against God, as God. Secondly, directly only against his laws.

3. The creature he now renounceth as vain, and turneth it out of his heart with disdain. Not that he undervalueth it, or disclaimeth its use; but its idolatrous abuse, and its unjust usurpation.

There is a twofold sin: [a] one against God himself, as well as his laws, when he is cast out of the heart, and something else doth take his place. This is that I intend in this place. The other is when a man doth take the Lord for his God, but yet swerveth in some things from his commands: of this before. It is a vain distinction that some make, that the soul must be turned first from sin; secondly, from the creature to God: for the sin that is thus set up against God, is the choice of something below in his stead;[b] and no creature in itself is evil, but the abuse of it is the sin; therefore, to turn from the creature, is only to turn from that sinful abuse.

Of the first sort is only gross idolatry.

In what sense we turn from the creature.

Yet hath the creature a twofold consideration: first, as it is vain and insufficient to perform what the idolater expecteth, and so I handle it here; secondly,[c] as it is the object of such sinful abuse, and the occasion of sin; and so it falls under the former branch of our turning from sin, and in this sense their division may be granted. But this is only a various respect; for, indeed, it is still only our sinful abuse of the creature, in our vain admirations, undue estimations, too strong affections, and false expectations, which we turn from.

A twofold error in the descriptions of conversion. Our turning from sin, is as essential to true conversion, as our believing in Christ.

There is a twofold error very common in the description of the work of conversion: the one, of those who only mention the sinner's turning from sin to God, without mentioning any receiving of Christ by faith; the other, of those who, on the contrary, only mention a sinner's believing, and then think they have said all: nay, they blame them as legalists, who make any thing but the bare believing of the love of God in Christ to us, to be part of the work, and would persuade poor souls to question all their former comforts, and conclude the work to have been only legal and unsound, because they have made their changes of heart, and turning from sin and creatures, part of it, and have taken up part of their comfort from the reviewing of these as evidences of right work. Indeed, should they take up

[z] See Davenant's Dissertations, and Dallæus's Apology, and Amiraldus against Spanhemius.

[a] This sin directly against God himself, as it is in the understanding and speech, is called blasphemy: but as it is in the judgment, will, affections, and action altogether, it is called idolatry, or athcism. Great Athanasius approves of this distinction of sin, in his judicious Discourse of the Sin against the Holy Ghost. He saith, between sin in the general, and blasphemy, this is the difference—"He that sinneth, transgresseth the law; he that blasphemeth, committeth impiety against the Godhead itself."

[b] Ut enim debitus amor nostri non est, nisi prout includit ordinem ad Deum; ita amor nostri inordinatus nequit intelligi, nisi prout importat recessum a Deo. Gibieuf. lib. 12. de Libertat. Dei, cap. xix. sect. 32. p. 4, 22.

[c] Peccare est subjici creaturæ contra ordinem Dei, ut Gibieuf. lib. De Libertat. Creat. p. 4. Et qui peccat semper appetit bonum particulare; ut idem Gibieuf. et Bradwardin. et Aquin. et Twiss. et plerique scholastici.

here without[d] Christ, or take such a change instead of Christ, in whole or in part, the reprehension were just, and the danger great. But can Christ be the way, where the creature is the end? Is he not the only way to the Father? And must not a right end be intended before right means? Can we seek to Christ to reconcile us to God, while in our hearts we prefer the creature before him? Or doth God dispossess the creature, and sincerely turn the heart therefrom, when he will not bring the soul to Christ? Is it a work that is ever wrought in an unrenewed soul? You will say, that "without faith it is impossible to please God."[e] True, but what faith doth the apostle there speak of? "He that cometh to God, must believe that God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." The belief of the Godhead must needs precede the belief of the Mediatorship; and the taking of the Lord for our God, must in order precede the taking of Christ for our Saviour, though our peace with God do follow this. Therefore Paul, when he was to deal with the Athenian idolaters, teacheth them the knowledge of the Godhead first, and the Mediator afterwards. But you will say, May not an unregenerate man believe that there is a God? True, and so may he also believe that there is a Christ: but he cannot more cordially accept of the Lord for his God, than he can accept of Christ for his Saviour. In the soul of every unregenerate man, the creature possesseth both places, and is both God and Christ. Can Christ be believed in, where our own righteousness or any other thing is trusted as our Saviour? Or doth God ever thoroughly discover sin and misery, and clearly take the heart from all creatures, and self-righteousness, and yet leave the soul unrenewed? The truth is, where the work is sincere, there it is entire; and all these parts are truly wrought: and as turning from the creature to God, and not by Christ, is no true turning; so believing in Christ, while the creature hath our hearts, is no true believing. And therefore in the work of self-examination, whoever would find in himself a thorough sincere work, must find an entire work; even the one of these as well as the other. In the review of which entire work there is no doubt but his soul may take comfort. And it is not to be made so light of, as most do, nor put by with a wet finger, that Scripture doth so ordinarily put repentance before faith, and make them, jointly,[f] conditions of the gospel: which repentance contains those acts of the will's aversion from sin and creatures, before expressed. It is true, if we take faith in the largest sense of all,[g] then it contains repentance in it; but if we take it strictly, no doubt there is some acts of it go before repentance, and some follow after.

A flat necessity, both of coming to God as the end, or our chief good; and to Christ as the way to the Father.

Yet it is not of much moment which of the acts before mentioned we shall judge to precede, whether our aversion from sin, and renouncing our idols, or our right receiving Christ, seeing it all composeth but one work, which God doth ever perfect where he beginneth but one step, and layeth but one stone in sincerity; and the moments of time can be but few that interpose between the several acts.

Which part of this turning goes first.

If any object, That every grace is received from Christ, and therefore must follow our receiving him by faith,

I answer, There be receivings from Christ before believing, and before our receiving of Christ himself. Such is all that work of the Spirit, that brings the soul to Christ; and there is a passive receiving of grace before the active. Both power and act of faith are in order of nature before Christ, actually received; and the power of all other gracious acts, is as soon as that of faith. Though Christ give pardon and salvation, upon condition of believing; yet he gives not (in the first degree) a new heart, a soft heart, and faith itself, nor the first true repentance, on that condition; no more than he gives the preaching of the gospel, the Spirit's motion to believe, &c. upon a prerequisite condition of believing.

As the will turns from evil, so at the same time to God, and the Mediator. 1. To the Godhead in order of nature.

Sect. V. 4. And as the will is thus averted from the fore-mentioned objects, so, at the same time, doth it cleave to God the Father, and to Christ. Its first acting in order of nature, is toward the whole divine essence; and it consists, especially, in intending and desiring God for his portion and chief good: having been convinced that nothing else can be his happiness, he now finds it is in God, and therefore looks towards it. But it is yet rather with desire than hope; for, alas! the sinner hath already found himself to be a stranger and enemy to God, under the guilt of sin and curse of his law, and knows there is no coming to him in peace till his case be altered; and, therefore, having before been convinced, also, that only Christ is able and willing to do this, and having heard his mercy in the gospel freely offered, his next act is, secondly, to accept of Christ for Saviour and Lord. I put the former before this, because the ultimate end is necessarily the first intended, and the divine essence is principally that ultimate end, John xiv. 6; yet not excluding the human nature in the second person: but Christ, as Mediator, is the way to that end; and, throughout the gospel, is offered to us in such terms as import his being the means of making us happy in God. And though that former act of the soul toward the Godhead, be not said to justify as this last doth, yet is it, I think, as proper to the people of God as this; nor can any man, unregenerate, truly choose God for his Lord, his portion, and chief good: therefore do they both mistake; they who only mention our turning to Christ, and they who only mention our turning to God, in this work of conversion, as is touched before. Paul's preaching was "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ," Acts xx. 21; v. 31; xi. 18; xxvi. 20. And life eternal consists, first, in knowing the only true God, and then Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent, John xvii. 3. The former is the natural part of the covenant, to take the Lord only for our God; the latter is the super-

2. To the Mediator as the way; which is by faith.

[d] Peruse Master Pemble of this, Vindic. Gratiæ, p. 135, where he shows you what darkness and confusion is in the writings of many learned men, by their restraining conversion to the bare act of believing, not so much as mentioning any other grace. And that to repent, to love God and our neighbour, to abstain from evil, to practise duties, are as proper parts of true conversion, as faith; and that the Scripture gives no ground for any such restraint, but joins repentance and other godly acts with faith.

[e] Heb. xi. 16. Besides, though the person please not God, nor his actions, so as for God to justify them, or to take delight in them as gracious; yet some actions of wicked men, tending to reformation, may please God in some respect, secundum quid; as Ahab's humiliation.

[f] Quum inter se comparantur et distinguuntur, seu distincte a nobis considerantur, salutis illius partes: tum fides respectu justificationis rationem habet conditionis prærequisitæ; nemo enim justificatur nisi per fidem; respectu autem sanctificationis, (i. e. a holy life, and holy motions of the heart,) habet se ut ejus causa. Doctis. Ludov. Capellus, in Thes. Salmur. vol. 2. p. 110. sect. 39.

[g] As it is put for all obedience to the commands proper to the gospel.

natural part, to take Christ only for our Redeemer. The former is first necessary, and implied in the latter.

What justifying faith is. Its proper act is the acceptation of Christ offered.

Though repentance and good works, &c. are required to our full justification, at judgment, as subservient to, or concurrent with, faith; yet is the nature of this justifying faith itself contained in assent, and in this accepting of Christ for Saviour and Lord; and I think it necessarily contains all this in it: some place it in the assenting act only, some in a fiducial adherence, or recumbency; I call it accepting,[h] it being principally an act of the will; but yet also of the whole soul. [i]This accepting being that which the gospel presseth to, and calleth the receiving or accepting Christ: I call it an affectionate accepting, though love seem another act quite distinct from faith, and if you take faith for assent only, so it is; yet I take it as essential to that faith which justifies. To accept Christ without love, is not justifying faith. Nor doth love follow as a fruit, but immediately concur; nor concur as a mere concomitant, but essential to a true accepting. For this faith is the receiving of Christ, either with the whole soul, or with part; not with part only, for that is but a partial receiving: and most clearly, divines of late conclude, that justifying faith resides both in the understanding and the will; therefore, in the whole soul; and so cannot be one single act. I add, it is the most affectionate accepting of Christ; because he that loves father, mother, or any thing more than him, is not worthy of him, nor can be his disciple, Luke xiv. 26; and consequently not justified by him. And the truth of this affection[k] is not to be judged so much by feeling the pulse of it, as by comparing it with our affection to other things. He that loveth nothing so much as Christ, doth love him truly, though he find cause still to bewail the coldness of his affections. [l]I make Christ himself the object of his accepting, it being not any theological axiom concerning himself, but himself in person. I call it an accepting him for Saviour and Lord. For in both relations will he be received, or not at all. [m]It is not only to acknowledge his sufferings, and accept of pardon and glory, but to acknowledge his sovereignty, and submit to his government, and way of saving; and I take all this to be contained in justifying faith. The vilest sinner among us will accept of Christ to justify and save him, if that only would serve the turn to his justification.

What Christ doth for us upon our acceptance.

The work (which Christ, thus accepted of, is to perform) is, to bring the sinners to God, that they may be happy in him: and this both really by his Spirit, and relatively in reconciling them, and making them sons; and to present them perfect before him at last, and to possess them of the kingdom. This will Christ perform: and the obtaining of these, are the sinner's lawful ends in receiving Christ;[n] and to these uses doth he offer himself unto us.

Covenanting with Christ, is an essential part of actual conversion, and of our christianity.

5. To this end doth the sinner now enter into a cordial covenant with Christ. As the preceptive part is called the covenant, so he might be under the covenant before, as also under the offers of a covenant on God's part. But he was never strictly nor comfortably in covenant with Christ till now. He is sure by the free offers, that Christ doth consent, and now doth he cordially consent himself; and so the agreement is fully made; and it never was a match indeed till now.

Next Christ delivereth himself to the sinner, and he delivereth himself up to Christ.

6. With this covenant concurs a mutual delivery; Christ delivereth himself in all comfortable relations to the sinner, and the sinner[o] delivereth up himself to be saved and ruled by Christ. This which I call the delivering of Christ, is his act in and by the gospel; without any change in himself. The change is only in the sinner to whom the conditional promises become equivalent to absolute, when they perform the conditions. Now doth the soul resolvedly conclude, I have been blindly led by the flesh and lust, and the world, and the devil, too long already, almost to my utter destruction; I will now be wholly at the disposal of my Lord, who hath bought me with his blood, and will bring me to his glory. [p]And thus the com-

[h] So Dr. Preston's judgment is, and Dr. Wallis against the Lord Brook, p. 94. It is an accepting of Christ offered, rather than the belief of a proposition affirmed. So that excellent philosopher and divine. Love to Christ, whether it be not essential to justifying faith; see more of this in the positions of justification. Love to Christ must be the strongest love. To accept is only *velle bonum oblatum*, and to love, as it is in the rational appetite, is only *velle bonum* too (as Aquinas oft); so that faith, as it is in the will, (in its most proper act,) and love, as in the same faculty towards the same object, are but two names for one thing. But this with submission. The objections are to be answered elsewhere.

[i] Scriptura fere utitur verbo λαμβάνειν, quod propter sophistas est tutius. Illud tribuitur fidei multoties, John i. 12, ubi Jansenius, &c. et Bellarm. Credere est Christum recipere. Johan. Crocius de Just. Disp. 12. p. 657.

[k] Dr. Sibbs's Soul's Conflict.

[l] Fides considerat Christum ut redemptorem, adeoque sanctificatorum nostrum, inquit. Camero Prælect. in Matt. xviii. 1. prope f. 78.

[m] The pitch of your love, if it be a right conjugal love, is upon the person of Christ, rather than any thing that comes from him, saith Burroughs on Hosea, p. 603. Irenæus, lib. 1. p. 6, saith, that the Valentinians would call Christ their Saviour, but not Lord: justifying faith is the accepting Christ both for Saviour and Lord.

[n] Christo servabatur, omnia retro occulta nudare, dubitata dirigere, prælibata supplere, prædicata repræsentare; mortuorum certe resurrectionem, non modo per semetipsum, verum etiam in semetipso, probare. Tertul. in Lib. de Resurrect. Carnis in principio, p. 405.

[o] Si igitur tradideris ei quod tuum est, id est, fidem in eum, et subjectionem, percipies ejus artem, et eris perfectum opus Dei. Si autem non credideris ei, et fugeris manus ejus, erit causa imperfectionis in te, qui non obedisti; sed non in illo qui vocavit. Ille enim misit qui vocarent ad nuptias; qui autem non obedierunt ei, seipsos privaverunt regia cœna. Sed ille qui non consequitur eam sibimet suæ imperfectionis est causa. Nec enim lumen deficit propter eos, qui seipsos excœcaverunt, &c. Irenæus adv. Hæres. lib. iv. c. 76.

[p] So Dr. Preston tells you frequently. And in the primitive times none were baptized without an express covenanting, wherein they renounced the world, flesh, and devil, and engaged themselves to Christ, and promised to obey him, as you may see in Tertullian, Origen, Cyprian, and others, at large. I will cite but one for all, who was before the rest, and this is Justin Martyr: speaking of the way of baptizing the aged, he saith, "How we are dedicated to God, being renewed by Christ, we will now open to you. As many as, being persuaded, do believe these things to be true which we teach, and do promise to live according to them, they first learn by prayer and fasting to beg pardon of God for their former sins, ourselves joining also our prayer and fasting. Then they are brought to the water, and are born again, or baptized, in the same way as we ourselves were born again: for they are washed with water, in the name of the Father, the Lord and God of all, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Ghost. Then we bring the person thus washed and instructed to the brethren, as they are called, where the assemblies are, that we may pray both for ourselves and for the illuminated person, that we may be found, by true doctrine and by good works, worthy observers and keepers of the commandments, and that we may attain eternal salvation. Then there is brought to the chief brother, (so they called the chief minister,) bread, and a cup of wine, washed, which taking, he offereth praise and thanksgiving to the Father, by the name of the Son and Holy Ghost: and so awhile he celebrateth thanksgiving. After prayers and thanksgiving, the whole assembly saith, Amen. Thanksgiving being ended by the president, or chief guide, and the consent of the whole

plete work of saving faith consisteth in this covenanting, or mystical marriage, of the sinner to Christ.

Lastly, The believer persevereth in this covenant, and all the forementioned grounds of it, to the death.

7. And lastly, I add, that the believer doth herein persevere to the end; though he may commit sins, he never disclaimeth his Lord, renounceth his allegiance, nor recalleth nor repenteth of his covenant, nor can be properly said to break that covenant, while that faith continues which is the condition of it. Indeed, those that have verbally covenanted, and not cordially, may yet tread under foot the blood of the covenant as an unholy thing, (Heb. x. 29; Matt. xxiv. 13; Rev. ii. 26, 27; iii. 11, 12; John xv. 4—6, 9; viii. 31; Col. i. 23; Rom. xii. 22,) wherewith they were sanctified by separation from those without the church; but the elect cannot be so deceived. Though this perseverance be certain to true believers; yet it is made a condition of their salvation, yea, of their continued life and fruitfulness, and of the continuance of their justification, though not of their first justification itself. But eternally blessed be that hand of love, which hath drawn the free promise, and subscribed and sealed to that which ascertains us, both of the grace which is the condition, and the kingdom on that condition offered.

The application of this description by way of examination.

Sect. VI. And thus you have a naked enumeration of the essentials of this people of God: not a full portraiture of them in all their excellences, nor all the notes whereby they be discerned; both which were beyond my present purpose. And though it will be part of the following application, to put you upon trial; yet because the description is now before your eyes, and these evidencing works are fresh in your memory, it will not be unseasonable nor unprofitable for you, to take an account of your own estates, and to view yourselves exactly in this glass, before you pass on any further. And I beseech thee, reader, as thou hast the hope of a christian, yea, or the reason of a man, to deal thoroughly, and search carefully, and judge thyself as one that must shortly be judged by the righteous God; and faithfully answer to these few questions which I shall here propound.

I will not inquire, whether thou remember the time or the order of these workings of the Spirit: there may be much uncertainty and mistake in that: but I desire thee to look into thy soul, and see whether thou find such works wrought within thee; and then, if thou be sure they are there, the matter is not so great, though thou know not when or how thou camest by them.

And first, hast thou been thoroughly convinced of a universal depravation, through thy whole soul; and a universal wickedness through thy whole life; and how vile a thing this sin is; and that by the tenor of that covenant which thou hast transgressed, the least sin deserves eternal death? Dost thou consent to this law, that it is true and righteous? Hast thou perceived thyself sentenced to this death by it, and been convinced of thy natural, undone condition? Hast thou further seen the utter insufficiency of every creature, either to be itself thy happiness, or the means of curing this thy misery, and making thee happy again in God? Hast thou been convinced, that thy happiness is only in God as the end; and only in Christ as the way to him, and the end also as he is one with the Father; and perceived that thou must be brought to God by Christ, or perish eternally? Hast thou seen hereupon an absolute necessity of the enjoying Christ; and the full sufficiency that is in him, to do for thee whatsoever thy case requireth, by reason of the fulness of his satisfaction, the greatness of his power, and dignity of his person, and the freeness and indefiniteness of his promises? Hast thou discovered the excellency of this pearl, to be worth thy selling all to buy it? Hath all this been joined with some sensibility; as the convictions of a man that thirsteth, of the worth of drink; and not been only a change in opinion, produced by reading or education, as a bare notion in the understanding? Hath it proceeded to an abhorring that sin; I mean in the bent and prevailing inclination of thy will, though the flesh do attempt to reconcile thee to it? have both thy sin and misery been a burden to thy soul; and if thou couldst not weep, yet couldst thou heartily groan under the insupportable weight of both? Hast thou renounced all thine own righteousness? Hast thou turned thy idols out of thy heart;[q] so that the creature hath no more the sovereignty, but is now a servant to God and to Christ? Dost thou accept of Christ as thy only Saviour, and expect thy justification, recovery, and glory, from him alone? Dost thou take him also for Lord and King? And are his laws the most powerful commanders of thy life and soul? Do they ordinarily prevail against the commands of the flesh, of Satan, of the greatest on earth that shall countermand; and against the greatest interest of thy credit profit, pleasure, or life; so that thy conscience is directly subject to Christ alone? Hath he the highest room in thy heart and affections; so that though thou canst not love him as thou wouldst, yet nothing else is loved so much? Hast thou made a hearty covenant[r] to this end with him; and delivered up thyself accordingly to him; and takest thyself for his and not thine own? Is it thy utmost care and watchful endeavour, that thou mayst be found faithful in this covenant; and though thou fall into sin, yet wouldst not renounce thy bargain, nor change thy Lord, nor give up thyself to any other government, for all the world? If this be truly thy case, thou art one of these people of God which my text speaks of; and as sure as the promise of God is true, this blessed rest remains for thee. Only see thou abide in Christ, and continue to the end; for if any draw back, his soul will have no pleasure in them.

But if all this be contrary with thee, or if no such work be found within thee, but thy soul be a stranger to all this, and thy conscience tell thee, it is none of thy case; the Lord have mercy on thy soul, and open thine eyes, and do this great work upon thee, and by his mighty power overcome thy resistance: for[s] in the case thou art in, there is no hope. Whatever thy deceived heart may think, or how strong soever thy false hopes be, or though now a little while thou flatter thy soul in confidence and

people, the deacons, as we call them, do give to every one present part of the bread and wine, over which thanks were given, and they also suffer them to bring it to the absent. This food we call the eucharist; to which no man is admitted but only he that believeth the truth of our doctrine, being washed in the laver of regeneration for remission of sin; and that so liveth, as Christ hath taught." Apol. 2. This, then, is no new, over-strict way, you see.

[q] In one word, the very nature of sincerity lieth in this; when Christ hath more actual interest in thy heart, esteem, and will, than the flesh; or when Christ hath the supremacy or sovereignty in the soul; so that his interest prevaileth against the interest of the flesh. Try by this as an infallible mark of grace.

[r] Whether thy infant baptism will serve or no, I am assured thy infant covenant will not now serve thy turn; but thou must actually enter covenant in thy own person. John xv. 4—6; Matt. xxiv. 13; Heb. x. 38, 39.

[s] I speak not this to the dark and clouded christian, who cannot discern that which is indeed within him

security; yet wilt thou shortly find to thy cost, except thy thorough conversion do prevent it, that thou art none of these people of God, and the rest of the saints belongs not to thee. Thy dying hour draws near apace, and so doth that great day of separation, when God will make an everlasting difference between his people and his enemies: then woe, and for ever woe to thee, if thou be found in the state that thou art now in, Deut. xxxii. 25. Thy own tongue will then proclaim thy woe, with a thousand times more dolour and vehemence, than mine can possibly do it now. Oh that thou wert wise to consider this, and that thou wouldst remember thy latter end! That yet while thy soul is in thy body, and a price in thy hand, and day-light, and opportunity, and hope, before thee, thine ears might be open to instruction, and thy heart might yield to the persuasions of God; and thou mightest bend all the powers of thy soul about this great work; that so thou mightest rest among his people, and enjoy the inheritance of the saints in light! And thus I have showed you who these people of God are.

Why called the people of God.

Sect. VII. And why are they called the people of God? You may easily from what is said discern the reasons.

1. By election.

1. They are the people whom he hath chosen to himself from eternity.

2. Special redemption.

2. And whom Christ hath redeemed with an absolute intent of saving them; which cannot be said of any other.

3. Likeness to him.

3. Whom he hath also renewed by the power of his grace, and made them in some sort like to himself, stamping his own image on them, and making them holy, as he is holy, 1 Pet. i. 16.

4. Mutual love.

4. They are those whom he embraceth with a peculiar love, and do again love him above all.

5. Mutual covenanting.

5. They are entered into a strict and mutual covenant, wherein it is agreed for the Lord to be their God, and they to be his people.

6. Near relation.

6. They are brought into near relation to him, even to be his servants, his sons, and the members and spouse of his Son.

7. Future cohabitation.

7. And lastly, they must live with him for ever, and be perfectly blessed in enjoying his love, and beholding his glory. And I think these are reasons sufficient, why they peculiarly should be called his people.

THE CONCLUSION.

And thus I have explained to you the subject of my text; and showed you darkly, and in part, what this rest is; and briefly who are this people of God. Oh that the Lord would now open your eyes, and your hearts, to discern and be affected with the glory revealed! that he would take off your hearts from these dunghill delights, and ravish them with the views of these everlasting pleasures! that he would bring you into the state of this holy and heavenly people, for whom alone this rest remaineth! that you would exactly try yourselves by the foregoing description! that no soul of you might be so damnably deluded, as to take your natural or acquired parts for the characters of a saint! Oh happy and thrice happy you, if these sermons might have such success with your souls, that so you might die the death of the righteous, and your last end might be like his! For this blessed issue, as I here gladly wait upon you in preaching, so will I also wait upon the Lord in praying.

PART II.

CONTAINING

THE PROOFS OF THE TRUTH AND CERTAIN FUTURITY OF OUR REST; AND THAT THE SCRIPTURE PROMISING THAT REST TO US, IS THE PERFECT INFALLIBLE WORD AND LAW OF GOD.

TO MY DEARLY BELOVED FRIENDS,

THE INHABITANTS OF BRIDGNORTH, BOTH MAGISTRATES AND PEOPLE,

RICHARD BAXTER DEVOTETH THIS PART OF THIS TREATISE, IN TESTIMONY OF HIS UNFEIGNED LOVE TO THEM, WHO WERE THE FIRST TO WHOM HE WAS SENT, AS FIXED, TO PUBLISH THE GOSPEL; AND IN THANKFULNESS TO DIVINE MAJESTY, WHO THERE PRIVILEGED AND PROTECTED HIM:

HUMBLY beseeching the God of mercy, both to save them from that spirit of pride, separation, and levity, which hath long been working among them; and also to awake them thoroughly from their negligence and security, by his late heavy judgments on them; and that as the flames have consumed their houses, so the Spirit of God may consume the sin that was the cause; and by those flames they may be effectually warned to prevent the everlasting flames; and that their new-built houses may have new-born inhabitants; and that the next time God shall search and try them, he may not find one house among them, where his word is not daily studied and obeyed, and where they do not fervently call upon his name.

THE PREFACE.

DIRECTED

I. TO UNBELIEVERS AND ANTI-SCRIPTURISTS;
II. TO PAPISTS;
III. AND TO THE ORTHODOX.

BECAUSE it is a point of such high concernment, to be assured of the divine authority of the Scriptures; and all men are not of one mind in the way of proving it; and because I have not handled this so fully as the difficulty and weight of the subject doth require, as intending only a few arguments by way of digression, for the strengthening of weaker and less exercised christians; I have thought meet, therefore, a little more fully to express my mind in this preface, being loth to stand to enlarge the book any further. And that which I have to say, is to three sorts of persons distinctly.

The first is, to all those that believe not the truth of the Scriptures. Open pagans live not among us; but pagans professing christianity, are of late too common, under the name of libertines, familists, seekers, and anti-scripturists. Had I not known it by experience, and had conference with such, I should not speak it. And there is a remnant of paganism and infidelity in the best of christians. The chief causes which pervert the understanding of men in this point, in my observation, are these two: 1. When men have deeply wounded their consciences by sinning against knowledge, and given the victory to their fleshly lusts; so that they must either deeply accuse and condemn themselves, or deny the Scriptures; they choose that which seemeth the more tolerable and desirable to them, and so rather condemn the Scripture than themselves. And what malefactor would not do the like, and except against the law which doth condemn him, if that would serve his turn? And when men that are engaged in a sinful course, do see that the word of God doth speak so terribly against it, they dare not live in that sin while they believe the Scripture, because it is still awakening and galling their guilty consciences; but when they have cast away their belief of the Scripture, then conscience will let them sin with more quietness. These men believe not the Scriptures, principally, because they would not have them to be true, rather than because they do indeed seem untrue; for their fleshly concupiscence having mastered their wills, their wills have also mastered their understandings; and so, as in a well-ordered, gracious soul, all goes straightforward, in these men all is perverted, and moves backward. These men refuse their physic because it is unpleasant, and not because it is unwholesome: yet at last their appetite so mastereth their reason, that they will not believe any thing can be wholesome which goes so much against their stomachs. At least this makes them the readier to pick a quarrel with it, and they are glad to hear of any argument against it. Ahab believed not the message of Micaiah, not because he spoke falsely, but because he spoke not good of him but evil: men will easily be drawn to believe that to be true, which they would fain have to be true; and that to be false, which they desire should be false. But, alas, how short and silly a cure is this for a guilty soul; and how soon will it leave them in incurable misery!

2. Another reason of those men's unbelief, is the seeming contradictions that they find in the Scriptures, and the seeming impossibilities in the doctrines of them, which so far transcend the capacity of man. To the former, let me say this much: 1. It is merely through our ignorance, that Scriptures seem contradictory. I thought myself once that some places were hardly reconcilable, which now I see do very plainly agree: plainly, I say, to them that understand the true meaning of the words. There are no human writings, but lie open to such exceptions of the ignorant. It is rather a wonder that the Scriptures seem not to you more self-contradicting, if you consider but, 1. That they are written in another language, and must needs lose much in the translation, there being few words to be found in any language which have not divers significations. 2. That it being the language also of another country, to men that know not the customs, the situation of places, the proverbial speeches, and phrases of that country, it is impossible but many words should seem dark or contradictory. 3. Also, that the Scriptures are of so exceeding antiquity, as no books else in the world are like them. Now, who knows not that in all countries in the world, customs alter, and proverbial speeches and phrases alter; which must needs make words seem dark, even to men of the same country and language that live so long after. We have many English proverbs, which if in after-ages they should cease to be proverbs, and men finding them in our writings, shall construe them as plain speeches, they would seem to be either false, or ridiculous nonsense. The like may be said of alterations of phrases. He that reads but Chaucer, much more elder writers, will see that English is scarce the same thing now, as it was then. Though the sacred languages have had no such great alterations, yet by this it may appear, that it is no wonder, if to the ignorant they seem contradictory or difficult. Do not the mathematics, and all sciences, seem full of contradictions and impossibilities to the ignorant; which are all resolved and cleared to those that understand them? It is a very foolish, audacious thing, that every novice, or young student in divinity, should expect to have all difficulties resolved presently, or else they will censure the Scriptures, and speak evil of the things they know not, instead of censuring themselves; when yet these men know, that in the easiest science, yea, or basest manufacture, they must have time to learn the reasons of them. It is usual with raw scholars in all kinds of studies, to say as Nicodemus did at first of regeneration, How can these things be? [a] Methinks such frail and shallow creatures, as all men

[a] Sed quemadmodum apud eos qui semel providentiam probe perceperunt, non minuitur, aut perit fides providentiæ ob ea quæ non comprehenduntur; ita neque scripturæ divinitati per eam totam diffusæ quidquam detrahitur, ex eo quod ad singulas dictiones imbecillitas nostra non possit adesse arcano splendori doctrinæ qui in tenui et contempta locutione delitescit. Origen. Philocal. (per Tarinum, Græco-Lat. edit.) p. (mihi) 12, 13.

are, should rather be so sensible of their own incapacity and ignorance, as to be readier to take the blame to themselves, than to quarrel with the truth. It is too large a work for me here to answer all the particular objections of these men against the several passages of Scripture: but if they would be at the pains to inquire of their teachers, or study what is written to that end, they might find that the matter is not so difficult as they imagine. Besides what Althamar, Cumeranus, Sharpius, and others have purposely written for reconciling the seeming contradictions in Scripture, they may find much in ordinary expositors. Junius answereth two-and-twenty cavils, which Simplicius the pagan raised, and after him the antinomians used, against Moses's history of the creation. And he was fit for the work, having for a year's time continued in the desperate error of atheism himself. But the fullest confutation of these blasphemous conceits are in the primitive fathers, as Origen against Celsus, Tertul., Athenas., &c.; where they shall find that the worst of pagans brought forth these monsters, and by what weapons they were destroyed.

2. And what, if you could not see how to reconcile the seeming contradictions of Scripture? When you see arguments sufficient to prove them to be the word of God, (which I doubt not but you may see, if you will search impartially and humbly,) methinks common reason might then conclude, that all that God speaks must needs be true, though our blindness hinders us from a distinct discerning of it. 2. The like I say of the seeming impossibilities in Scripture: is any thing too hard for Omnipotency itself? The atheist derides it, when he hears of the opening of the Red sea, of the standing still of the sun, &c. But, dost thou believe that there is a God? If thou dost, thou must needs know that he is almighty: if not, thou hast put out the eye of reason; for most pagans in the world have acknowledged a God. Canst thou think that all things thou seest are made and preserved without a first cause? Do the heavens keep their courses, and the earth produce that variety of beautiful creatures, and the death of one cause the life of the other, and all kept in that order of superiority and inferiority, and all this without a first cause? If thou say that nature is the cause, I would fain know what it is that thou callest nature; either a reasonable being and cause, or an unreasonable. If unreasonable, it could not produce the reasonable spirits, as are angels, and the souls of men; for these would be more noble than itself: if reasonable, is it not then God himself which thou dost call by the name of nature? To be the first reason, being, and cause of all, is to be God. And then let me ask thee, dost thou not see as great works as these miracles every day and hour before thine eyes? Is it not as great a work for the sun to move, as to stand still; to move 10,388,442 miles an hour, being 166 times bigger than all the earth? Is it not as hard a matter for the sea to move, and keep his times in ebbing and flowing, as for it to open and stand still? Is it only the rarity and strangeness that makes us think one impossible, when we see the other daily come to pass? If it were but usual for the sun to stand still, every man would think it a far more incredible thing that it should move, and so move. Why, then, cannot God do the lesser, who daily doth the greater? The like I might say of all the rest, but that it were too long to insist on them; and for the truth of the history, it is proved afterwards.

2. I would further ask these men, Must not a soul that is capable of immortal happiness, have some guide in the way thereto? If they say no, then they either think God unfaithful or unskilful, who having appointed man an end, hath not given him direction thereto in the means. If they doubt whether man's soul be immortal, and whether there be a life of happiness to some, and misery to others, to be expected after this, I have said enough against that doubt in this book following; and further let me ask them,[b] How comes it to be the common judgment of all nations, even the most ignorant Indians, that there is a life after this, where the good and the bad shall be differently recompensed? This the ancient barbarians believed, as Herodotus testifieth of the Getæ, lib. iv.; and of the Egyptians, Diodorus Siculus, lib. i. Biblioth. numb. 93. The very inhabitants of Guinea, Virginia, Guiana, Peru, China, Mexico, &c. do believe this, as you may see, Descrip. Reg. Africæ, Guianæ, cap. 21, 24; Acost. lib. v. c. 7, 8; Hugh Luiscot. part i. cap. 25; Joannes Lerius, cap. 16; Sir Walter Raleigh, &c. What poets speak not de Tartaro, campis Elysiis, Manibus? and so do philosophers of best note, except Galen, Epicurus, Plinius, &c. As for Pythagoras, and his master, Pherecides, the Druids, the Indian Brahmins, Socrates, Plato, Cicero, Seneca, they all acknowledge it. Lege Marcilium Ficinum de Immort. Anim. Yea, Aristotle himself saw this, as appeareth de Anima, lib. i. context. 65, 66, lib. ii. context. 21, lib. iii. context. 4, 6, 7, 19, 20. Sure then the light of nature discerneth it.

Yet, if these men say that there must be a guide and law for souls in their way to happiness, and yet deny that the Scripture is it, I would fain know of them which is it, and where it is to be found. Hath God any other word or law in the world above this? Sure neither Plato nor Aristotle did ever call their books the word of God; and Mahomet's Alcoran is far more unlike to be it than theirs. If they say that reason is the only guide and law, I reply, 1. Reason is but the eye by which we see our directory and law, and not the directory and law itself. 2. Look on these countries through the world that have no Scripture guides, but follow their reason, and see how they are guided, and what difference there is between them and christians, as bad as we are; and if you think of this well, you will be ashamed of your error. Indians have reason, as well as we: nay, look into the wise Romans, and the great learned philosophers, who had advanced their reason so high, and see how lamentably they were befooled in spirituals; how

[b] Socrates being near death, (apud Platonem, Cicerone interprete,) said thus: Magna me spes tenet, judices, bene mihi evenire quod mittar ad mortem. Necesse est enim ut sit alterum de duobus, ut aut sensus omnino mors omnes auferat, aut in alium quendam locum ex his locis morte migretur. Quamobrem, sive sensus extinguitur, morsque ei somno similis est, qui nonnunquam etiam sine visis somniorum, pacatissimam quietem affert; Dii boni, quid lucri est emori? aut quam multi dies reperiri possunt, qui tali nocti anteponantur? &c. Sin vera sunt quæ dicuntur, migrationem esse mortem in eas oras, quas qui vita excesserunt, incolunt; id multo jam beatius est, te, cum ab iis, qui se judicum numero haberi volunt, evaseris, ad eos venire, qui vere judices appellentur, &c. convenireque eos qui justi et cum fide vixerint. Hæc peregrinatio mediocris vobis videri potest? Ut vero colloqui cum Orphæo, Musæo, Homero, Hesiodo, liceat, quanti tandem æstimatis? Equidem sæpe mori si fieri posset, vellem, ut ea quæ dico, mihi liceret invenire. Quanta delectatione autem afficeret, &c. Nc vos quidem, judices, ii qui me absolvistis, mortem timueritis; nec enim cuiquam bono mali quidquam evenire potest, nec vivo nec mortuo; nec unquam ejus res a Diis immortalibus negligentur, &c. Sic Socrates. Quædam et natura nota sunt, ut immortalitas animæ penes plures, ut Deus noster penes omnes. Utar ergo et sententia Platonis alicujus pronuntiantis, omnis anima est immortalis. Utar et conscientia populi contestantis Deum Deorum. Utar reliquis communibus sensibus, qui Deum judicem prædicant. "Deus videt" et "Deo commendo." At cum aiunt "mortuum quod mortuum" et "vive dum vivis" et "post mortem omnia finiuntur, etiam ipsa tunc meminero et cor vulgi cinerem a Deo deputatum, et ipsamsapientiam seculi stultitiam pronunciatam. Tunc si et hæreticus ad vulgi vitia vel seculi ingenia confugerit, discede, dicam ab Ethnico, hæretice, etsi unum estis omnes, &c. Tertul. lib. de Resurrect. Carn. cap. 3.

they worshipped multitudes of idols, even taking them for their gods, whom they acknowledged to be lecherous, adulterous, perfidious, bloody, and wicked. Read but Justin's Apolog. Athenagoras, Tertullian's Apolog. &c. Origen cont. Cels. Arnobius, Lactantius, Clemens Alexand. Protreptic. Minutius Felix, Athanas., &c. fully of this. Most certainly, either the Scriptures are God's word and law, or else there is none in the known world; and if there be none, how doth the just, true, and righteous God govern the rational creature, so as to lead him to the happiness prepared for him? But of this in the fourth argument following.

3. I would entreat these men, but soberly, to consider this: what if there were no full, absolute certainty of the truth of Scripture or christian religion, but it were only probable, which no considerate man can deny, were it not the wisest way to receive it? What if it should prove true that there is a hell for the wicked, what a case are you in then! You know your worldly happiness is a very dream and a shadow, and a brutish delight, which is mixed with misery, and quieteth not the soul, and perisheth in the using. If you do lose it, you lose but a toy, a thing of nothing, which you must shortly lose whether you will or no; but if you lose heaven, and fall into endless misery, it is another kind of loss. Methinks, then, that common reason should persuade men to venture all, though it were at uncertainty, upon that religion which tells us but of a possibility of a heaven and a hell, rather than to venture on a possibility of everlasting misery, for a little bestial pleasure, which is gone while we are enjoying it; yea, and when even in this life these sensual men have not near so much content as the christian. Verily, if I doubted of the truth of the christian religion, I durst not be of any other; but should judge it the wisest course, to venture all I had in this world upon the hopes that it propoundeth; yea, mere madness to do otherwise. If men that are at a lottery will venture a small sum for a possibility of a great one, though they know there is but one of twenty that shall get it, how much more would any wise man leave a little vanity, in hope of everlasting glory, and to avoid everlasting misery, though it were uncertain; but, most of all, when we have that full certainty of it as we have!

4. Lastly: I would have these men consider, that though we doubt not but to prove that Scripture is God's full and infallible law, yet, if it were so that this could not be proved, this would not overthrow the christian religion. If the Scriptures were but the writings of honest men, that were subject to mistakes and contradictions, in the manner and circumstanees, yet they might afford us a full certainty of the substance of christianity, and of the miracles wrought to confirm the doctrine. Tacitus, Suetonius, Livy, Florus, Lucan, &c., were all heathens, and very fallible; and yet their history affords us a certainty of the great substantial passages of the Roman affairs which they treat of, though not of all the smaller passages and circumstances. He that doubteth whether there was such a man as Julius Cæsar, or that he fought with Pompey and overcame him, &c. is scarce reasonable, if he knew the histories; so, though Matthew Paris, Malmsbury, Hoveden, Speed, Cambden, and our own parliaments that enacted our laws, were all fallible men, and mistaken in divers smaller things, yet they afford us a full certainty that there was such a man as William the Conqueror, William Rufus, &c.; that there were such parliaments, such lords, such fights and victories, &c. He that would not venture all that he hath on the truth of these, especially to gain a kingdom by the venture, were no better in this than mad. Now, if Scripture were but such common writings as these, especially joined with the uncontrolled tradition that hath since conveyed it to us, may it not yet give us a full certainty that Christ was in the flesh, and that he preached this doctrine for the substance, and wrought these miracles to confirm it, and enabled his followers to work the like, which will afford us an invincible argument for our christianity? Therefore, Grotius, &c. and so the old fathers, when they disputed with the heathens, did first prove the truth of christian religion before they came to prove the divine authority of the Scriptures; not that we are at any such uncertainty, or that any christian should take up here, as if the Scriptures were not infallible and divine; but being now speaking to another sort of men according to their capacity, I say, if it were otherwise, yet might we have certainty of our religion. I shall say somewhat more to these men in speaking of the rest.

The second sort that I shall speak to, are the papists. I find the chief thing that turns them from the reformed churches, and confirms them against us, is, because they think they cannot otherwise maintain their christianity, but by deriving it from their church. The first question, therefore, that papists will dispute on with us, is, How know you the Scriptures to be the word of God? For they fondly suppose, that because it cannot be known without the help of tradition, or human testimony, that, therefore, this must be only the testimony of the true church, and that must be some visible church, and that church must be presently in being, and must be judge in the case, and must be infallible in the judging; and all this can agree to no other church; and, therefore, that theirs is the only true church. And thus the particular church of Rome will prove herself the only or universal church. To stand here to confute these vain, ungrounded conclusions, would be to digress too far, and make this preface too long. Yet something I wrote against their pretended papal infallibility, and of the uncertainty of their faith; but, being persuaded by others to insert no more controversy here, I reserve it for a fitter place. Only I would desire briefly any papist to show, whether their doctrine do not leave the whole christian faith at utter uncertainty, and consequently destroy it, as much as in them lies? For seeing they build all upon the supposed infallibility of the church, and that church[c] is the present church, and that is the Roman church only; and that is only the pope, as the Jesuits and most papists say; or a general council, as the French: see what a case they bring christianity to with their followers! Every man that will believe the Scripture, yea, or the christian faith, must, 1. Believe or know that Rome is the true church. 2. That it hath authority to judge of God's word, and of the christian faith, which is truly it, and which not. 3. That this authority was given by God's word (this must be known, before men can know that God hath a word, or what it is). 4. That they are infal-

[c] Vide Greg. de Valent. tom. iii. disp. 1. quæst. 1. punct. 7. sect. 12: et Bellarmin. lib. ii. de Sacrament. in gen. cap. xxv.: et Suarez. de Fide, disputat. v. sect. 4, 7; et disputat. xi. sect. 3: Bellar. lib. i. de Conciliis, c. 4. et 19. et lib. ii. c. 2. Yet sometimes they seem so pious as to prefer the Scripture before the church. Nunquam sane mihi venit in mentem ecclesiæ judicium sacrorum voluminum authoritati anteferre, quæ Spiritus cœlestis afflatu exarata fuisse cum Petro confitemur, cum et pueri, qui ne primoribus quidem labris divina monumenta attigerunt, veræ ecclesiæ rationem sine verbi Dei integritate quæ fidei sedes est atque fundamentum, constare ullo modo posse, &c. Payva D'Andard. Defens. Conc. Trident. cont. Kemnit. lib. ii. p. (mihi) 202. Sed de aliorum impudentia, vide Rivet. Cathol. Orthodox. Tract. q. ix. p. 94.

lible in their judgment. 5. That Peter was at Rome, and was their bishop, and conferred this sovereignty on them as his suecessors. 6. That each particular pope is a true pope, and lawfully called; which all the world must know, that know neither him, nor when, nor how, he was called. 7. That the pope determines it as a matter of faith; otherwise, they confess he may err, and be a heretic. 8. And they must know where is the proper subject of infallibility, whether in the pope or council, or else they know not which to build on, which yet they are far from agreeing on themselves. 9. When two or three popes sit together, which is no new thing, the world must know which is the right, for all the rest may err. 10. Or, if they join a eouncil in the infallibility, they must be certain that Christ hath given councils this infallibility. 11. And that this is only to a council of Romanists. 12. And so that the Roman church is the universal church, and not only a part, as other churches are. 13. And that they are free from error in council, and not out of it. 14. That the council be general and lawful, else they confess it may err. 15. Therefore, all men must be certain that it be summoned by the pope. 16. And that the bishops that constitute it, are lawfully called. 17. And that the pope doth ratify the acts of this council, as well as call the councils; else they conclude that they are unlawful, or may be fallible. He that knows not all these, cannot be certain that Scripture is God's word, no, nor of the truth of the christian faith, according to the papists' grounds. And can all the world be certain of them; or, are all their laics certain; yea, or their clergy; yea, or any man? Adrian VI. tells us, that the pope is fallible: and shall we not believe the pope himself, confessing his own ignorance? Though councils have decreed against councils, and popes against popes, over and over, yet we must needs believe them infallible, or forfeit our christianity, according to their doctrine; that is, we must either renounce both experience, sense, and reason, or our faith. Is not this the way to drive the world again to heathenism? And whether all the world lose not the certainty of their christianity, when there is an *interregnum* upon the death of a pope, let them further study. I am fully certain, that the christian world in Peter's days did never pretend to hold their faith upon his mere infallibility. Nor did Justin, Irenæus, Tertullian, Cyprian, or any of the anciontest that ever I met with, hold their belief of Christ or Scripture on the infallibility of the bishop of Rome. The contrary I shall manifest in a more convenient place. I will only add this question: How doth the pope and his council know the Scripture to be God's word? If they believe it on their own authority, that is, because themselves say so, then they are self-idolizers. And what makes them affirm it to be so; or what reason have they for their belief? If they believe by any convincing reason, proving Scripture to be a divine testimony, then why may not the clergy, out of council, and others also, believe on the same grounds? Else the faith of the pope and his council will not have the same grounds with the faith of the people or church besides; and then it is another faith; and so either the people or the pope are heretics. And why are we blamed for not believing on the authority of the pope and council, when the pope and council themselves believe not on that, that is, their own authority? I hope they will not turn enthusiasts, and pretend to private extraordinary revelations of the Spirit. If they say, that they receive the Scripture by tradition of the ancient church, and so on their credit; why may not we know, as well as they, what the ancients say in the point? And is it not the honestest way, if they knew more herein than we, to produce it, and show us what and where the ancients speak? If they have it merely upon verbal tradition, have not other men as good ears as the pope and his council; and, therefore, being as honest, to be as well credited in such reports? And if it be their offiee to keep traditions,[d] have they been so careless as to lose all the rest of the things which Jesus did, which John saith will fill so many volumes; and also the traditions which themselves suppose Paul to have delivered unwritten to the Thessalonians and others? Shall we believe them infallible, that have already so deeeived us?

As for those that think it of absolute necessity, that the church have some judge for final decision of controversies about the sense of Scripture; and that judge it so absurd a thing for every man to be judge; and, therefore, they think we must needs come to Rome for a judge: 1. I would know whether they speak of fundamentals, and such other points as are plain in Scripture, or smaller points that are dark. For the former, what need is there of a judge? No christian denieth fundamentals, and heathens will not stand to the papal infallibility. A teacher, indeed, is necessary for the ignorant, but not a judge. It is the vilest doctrine that almost ever Rome did forge, that fundamentals themselves are such to us, because they determine them; and that we cannot know them but on their authority; yea, the church (that is, the pope) may by his determination make new fundamentals. If they were not impudent, this abomination would never have found so many patrons. They ask us, how we know fundamentals; and which be they? I answer, Those things that God hath made the conditions of salvation. And what if we take in both them and more, that so we may be sure not to miss of them, so we go but to plain and weighty truths, what danger is that? 2. Seeing all christians in the world do hold the fundamentals (else they are not truly christians,) why are they not fit deciders or judges of them, as well as the pope? 3. And for lesser and darker points, by what means is the pope and his eouncil able to determine them, and to decide the controversy? If by any rational means, what are they? and why may not as rational men decide it as truly? 4. Will it not be as hard a question, who shall judge of the meaning of the pope's decretals or eanons, where they are doubtful? and so *in infinitum.* I see not but the council of Trent speaks as darkly as the Scripture, and is as hard to be understood. 5. If God leave a point dark and doubtful, will it not remain so, whatsoever confident men may determine? 6. If God have left a eertain means, and infallible judge, for determining all controversies, and expounding Scriptures, why then is it not done, but the church left still in such uncertainties and contentions? As some anabaptists among us do boast of a power to work miracles, and yet we can get none of them to show their power in one; just so doth the church of Rome boast of an infallibility in deciding of controversies, yet they will not infallibly decide them. If they should grow modest, and say, they do not determine what is certain in itself, but what we are to rest in; I

[d] So far have the Romanists been from being faithful keepers of their pretended additional traditions, that by depraving the monuments of antiquity, and by adding a multitude of legends and forged writings, to advance their own ends, they have done the church of Christ more wrong than ever they are able to repair; as the late king truly told the Marquis of Worcester in his printed conference. But the vanity and forgery of their pretended monuments is fully manifested by our Dr. James, and Cook's Censura Patrum, Erasmus, Davenant, Blondellus, (on the by, in all his writings,) but most fully in his Examen Decretalem; so our Dr. J. Reynolds, on other parts; and many more have opened their folly.

answer, So Christ thought them not all fit to be decided, and therefore hath left many in doubtfulness; and is it not as fit that we should rest in Christ's decision, and his judgment concerning points fit to be cleared and decided, as in man's? The palpable mistake of that one text, 2 Pet. i. 20, that no scripture is of private interpretation, hath misled many men in this point; for they think it speaks of the quality of the interpreter, as if private men must not interpret it; when the text plainly speaks of the quality of the subject. The true paraphrase is evidently this, q. d. Besides the voice from heaven, giving testimony to Christ, we have also in the Old Scriptures a sure word of prophecy testifying of him, (for to him give all the prophets witness,) whereunto ye do well to take heed, as to light shining in a dark place, &c. But then you must understand this, that no prophecy of Christ in the Old Testament is of private interpretation; that is, it is not to be interpreted as speaking only of those private persons who were but types of Christ, of whom indeed it literally and first speaks. For though it might seem as if the prophets spoke of themselves, or of the type only, who was a private person, yet indeed it is Christ that the Spirit that spake by them intended: for the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man that spoke them, and therefore is not to be interpreted privately of themselves, or what they might seem to intend; but holy men spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; and therefore his meaning must be looked to, and he intended Christ the antitype. For example, David said, "Yet will I set my King on my holy hill of Zion," Psal. ii. You must not interpret this of David only, a private person, and but a type; but of Christ, the public person, and antitype.

But I must spend no more words here on this kind of manner.

Let me adventure on a few words to the ministers of the gospel; not of advice, (for that was judged presumptuous in my last, though but to the younger,) but of apology. Though the acceptance of this treatise be far beyond what I expected, yet some have signified to me their dislike of some things in this second part, of which I think it my duty to tender them satisfaction.

1. Some say it is a digression. *Answ.* And what hurt is that to any man? I confess it was fitted at first to my own use, (as all the rest was,) and why may it not be useful to somebody else? My business was not to open a text; but to help christians to enjoy the solid comforts which their religion doth afford; the greatest hinderance whereof, in my observation, is a weak or unsound belief of the truth of it. And, therefore, I still think that the very main work lieth in strengthening their belief. So that I am sure I digressed not from the way that led to my intended end.

2. Others have told me that I should not have mixed controversy with such practical matter. *Answ.* And some, as wise, tell me they had rather all were omitted than this. For the truth must be known before the goodness will be desired or delighted in. It seems to me the ordinary cause of backsliding, when men either begin at the affections, or bestow most of their labour there, before they have laid a good foundation in the understanding. And they are scarce likely to be the longest winded christians, nor to die for their religion, that scarce know why they are christians. Methinks it is preposterous for men to bestow ten or twenty years in studying the meaning of God's word, before they well know or can prove that it is God's word. As the Italians mentioned by Melancthon, that disputed earnestly, that Christ was really in the bread, when they did not well believe that he was in heaven. If fundamentals be controverted, it concerns us to be well seen in such controversies. However, if this be unuseful to any man, if he will but let it alone, it will do him no harm.

3. Some blame me for making so much use of the argument from miracles; and, withal, they think it invalid, except it be apparent truth which they are brought to confirm. *Answ.* 1. If it be first known to be truth, there need no miracles to prove it. 2. Do not all our divines use this argument from miracles? 3. And I do not by using this, hinder any man from producing or using as many more as he can. I no where say, that this is the only argument. 4. If these men were as wise as they should be, they would take heed of shaking the christian cause, and striking at the very root of it, for the maintaining of their conceits. 5. If they take down the chief arguments which confirm it, what do they less? 6. Search the Scripture, and see, whether this were not the chief argument, 1. Which succeeded then for bringing men to believe; 2. And which Christ himself laid the greatest weight on, and expected most from, Nathanael believing upon Christ's telling him of his conference at a distance, John i. 48, 49. Upon his beginning of miracles at Cana, in Galilee, he manifested forth his glory, and his disciples believed on him, John ii. 11. The Jews, therefore, inquired for signs, as that which must confirm any new revelation to be of God, John ii. 18; vi. 30; 1 Cor. i. 22. And though Christ blame them for their unreasonable, unsatisfied expectations herein, and would not humour them in each particular that they would saucily prescribe him; yet still he continued to give them miracles, as great as they required. Though he would not come down from the cross to convince them, (for then how should he have suffered for sin?) yet he would rise again from the dead, which was far greater. They that saw the miracle of the loaves, said, "This is of a truth the prophet that should come into the world," John vi. 14. "John," say they, "did no miracle; but all that John spake of this man was true: and many believed on him there," John x. 41. "Many believed when they saw the miracles which he did," John ii. 23; See also Acts iv. 16; John vi. 2; vii. 31; xi. 47; Acts vi. 8; viii. 6, 13; Gal. iii. 5; Acts ii. 43. iv. 30; v. 12; vii. 36; xiv. 3; Heb. ii. 4. And Christ himself saith, "If I had not done the works that no man else could do, ye had had no sin in not believing," John xv. 24. And therefore he promiseth the Holy Ghost to his disciples, to enable them to do the like to convince the world, Mark xvi. 17, 18. Yea, to do greater works than he had done, John xiv. 12. And he upbraideth, and most terribly threateneth, the unbelievers that had seen his mighty works, Matt. xi. 20, 21, 23; Luke x. 13. Yea, the blaspheming of the power by which he wrought them, and his disciples afterwards were to work them, and ascribing them to the devil, he maketh the unpardonable sin, Matt. xii. 31, 32. See also Matt. xi. 2—4; xiii. 54; xiv. 2; Mark vi. 2, 14; John v. 19, 20; vii. 3. He tells them, "The works that I do, bear witness of me," John v. 36, and x. 25. "Believe not me, believe the works that I do," John x. 37, 38. "Believe me for the very works' sake," John xiv. 11. And how did the apostles preach to convince the world; but partly, by telling them of Christ's resurrection, the greatest of all his miracles, and his other works; and partly, by doing miracles themselves? They tell them, he was approved of God by signs and wonders, Acts ii. 22; vii. 36. They declared also what miracles and wonders were wrought by the apostles, Acts xv. 12. And Paul vindicateth the credit of his own apostleship,

and so the truth of his testimony, to the Corinthians thus: "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds," 2 Cor. xii. 12. The way of bringing men to believe in those days, is expressed, Heb. ii. 3, 4, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by them that heard him?" (There is sense to the first receivers, and then tradition to the next.) "God also bearing them witness both with signs and wonders, and divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his will."[e] And who dare question this witness of God? And fear fell on them all, and the name of Jesus was magnified, and men converted, by the special miracles that Paul did, Acts xix. 11, 12, 16—19. I will say no more to opposers of the sufficiency of this argument, but wish them to answer or learn of that blind man, John ix. 16; "Can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? We know that God heareth not sinners." Or, hear Nicodemus, "We know thou art a teacher come from God, for no man can do these miracles except God be with him," John iii. 2. Natural reason shows us, that God being the true and merciful Governor of the world, the course of nature cannot be altered but by his special appointment, and that he will never set the seal of his omnipotency to a lie; nor suffer the last and greatest inducement of belief to be used to draw men to falsehood: for then how deplorate were the condition of mankind.

Object. But, you will say, false prophets may arise and show signs. And antichrist shall come with lying wonders. *Answ.* These are all lying wonders, indeed; seeming to be miracles, when they are not. *Object.* But the great question is, how we shall know which are miracles indeed, when poor mortals may be so easily deceived by superior powers? *Answ.* For the difference between true miracles and false, Camero, Prideaux, and most divines that write of this argument, have handled it; to whom I refer you. I will only say this more, that we need not be curious in this inquiry. For if any doubt, whether miracles may not be wrought to delude, I would add these qualifications to that medium, and thus form the major proposition: that doctrine, or those books, which were attested by apparent, frequent, and uncontrolled miracles, must needs be of God; but such is this, &c. A wonder wrought once or twice, may easier deceive, than that which is done one hundred times. A wonder in a corner may be blazed falsely to be a miracle; but Christ had so many thousand witnesses, as of the miracle of the loaves; and five hundred at once that saw him after his resurrection; and the apostles appealed to whole churches, even when they had secret adversaries, who might easily have disproved them, if it had not been true; and they spake with tongues before people of many nations; and it was not one, nor one hundred, but the multitudes of christians that had one gift or other of this sort, either miracles especially so called, or healing, or prophesying, or tongues, &c. See 1 Cor. xii. 1—12; Mark xvi. 17.

But especially no uncontrolled miracles shall ever be used to deceive the world. Two ways doth God control even the seeming miracles of deceivers. 1. By doing greater in opposition to them, and so disgracing and confounding them, and the authors, and the cause. So God did by the magicians in Egypt; by the exorcists, in Acts xix.; and by Simon Magus, as church history tells us. In this case, it is no disparagement to God's mercy or faithfulness, to let men work false wonders; for he doth but make them the occasion of his triumph, that the victory of truth may be more eminent, and men's faith more confirmed. 2. Also, by some clear and undoubted truth, either known to common reason, or by former scriptures, doth God often control deceiving wonders. For if they are used to attest an undoubted falsehood, then the former established truth contradicting them, is sufficient controlment. So that, as God will never set his own proper seal of a true miracle to an untruth, so neither will he suffer a seeming miracle to go uncontrolled when it may endanger the faith and safety of mankind. Nor can it be shown that ever he did otherwise; whereas, the miracles of Christ and his disciples were uncontrolled, frequent, numerous, apparent, prevalent, and triumphant.

Object. Then if miracles be wrought now, they will infer a new Scripture.

Answ. No such matter; they will prove the testimony to be divine, where it is certain that they are wrought to confirm any testimony; but no more. God may work them without man, to stir up men's hearts, and rouse them to repentance,[f] and not to confirm any new testimony; or he may enable men to work them for attestation of formerly revealed truth.

Object. But wicked men may do miracles.

Answ. But not when they please, nor for what they please, but as God pleases. Wicked men may be witnesses of the truth of God.

I conclude with the argument, That which was the great argument used by Christ and his apostles to win the world to believe, should be the great argument now for every man to use to that end with himself and others: but that was this from miracles; therefore, &c.

4. The same men that make this exception are offended, that I over-pass some other arguments, which are taken to be the chiefest; as Scripture efficacy, and the witness of the Holy Ghost to the consciences of believers.

Answ. 1. Why should I be tied to do that which so many have done already? 2. I never intended the full handling of the point, but two or three arguments to strengthen the weak. And may I not choose which I thought fittest, as long as I hinder no man to use what other he please? 3. The efficacy is either on the understanding, or on the will and affections. If on the understanding, then it is the belief of Scripture truth which is thus effected: and so the argument should run thus: Whatsoever is so effectual as to persuade men of its truth or divinity, that is true or divine; but the Scripture is such, &c. I need not speak of the absurdity of the major. [g] Or if the efficacy be on the will and affections, then it presupposeth, that it is first believed to be true. For nothing works on the will, but by means of the understanding. But I neither dare nor need to show the weakness of such arguments; the papists have done too much in it, as their writings generally will show you. See Vane, Cressy, Richworth's Dialogues, Martin, Stapleton; and most run that way.

4. [h] And for the testimony of the Spirit, it consisteth, 1. In its testimony by the miracles which it en-

[e] Observe this text well, and it will help you to answer the question, How know you the Scripture to be the word of God?
[f] Vide Suarez de Fide, disp. iv. sect. 3, 10.
[g] Lege R. Baronium Apol. tract. ix. punct. 6. assert. 3. p. 729, 730. plenissime.
[h] Vide Doctis. Rob. Baron. Apodix. ad Jos. Turnebullum, p. 626. ad 729; et tract. ix. p. 2, 96, et 733. Maximopere

abled the apostles to effect for the sealing of their doctrine. 2. And in the sanctifying illumination of our understandings to see that which is objectively revealed. So that this testimony is the efficient and not objective cause of our belief in this latter sense. If men should judge of the canon of Scripture by the immediate testimony of the Spirit, as if this were some exterior revealer of what is divinely inspired, we should then have as great variety of canons almost as of persons. Men talk of this in mere disputes, but I know not the man that would undertake to determine of the canon by retiring into his heart, and consulting merely with the Spirit within him.

5. Another great exception of the same men is, that I seek to satisfy reason so much of the Scripture's authority: and the reasons which they urge against my reasoning, are these two. It is too near the Socinian way. *Answ.* Socinians will believe nothing without reason or evidence from the nature of the thing revealed: that is, they believe nothing at all as certain; for if the thing be evident, it is, as such, the object of knowledge, and not of belief. I will believe any thing in the world which I know certainly that God speaks or revealeth; though the thing in itself seem never so unreasonable. For I have reason to believe, or rather to know, that all is true which God revealed, how improbable soever to flesh and blood. Is it not a shame that learned men should charge this very opinion in Chillingworth, Dr. Hammond, and others, as guilty of Socinianism? and thereby, 1. Make the papists brag, that we cannot confute them, but on Socinian principles;[i] 2. And make young scholars, through prejudice, turn off from the true ways of defending Scripture authority; to the great wrong, (1.) Of their own souls; (2.) And of their people; (3.) And of the protestant, (4.) And christian cause. 3. And how could all the wits of the world do more to advance Socinianism than these men do, by making men believe that only the Socinians have reason for their religion? which if it were true, as nothing less, who would not turn to them? 4. And what more can be done to the disgrace and ruin of christianity, than to make the world believe that we have no reason for it? nor are able to prove it true against an adversary? What would these men do if they lived among Christ's enemies, and were challenged to defend their religion, or prove it true? Would they say, as they say to me, I will believe and not dispute? Christ's cause then would be little beholden to them. And how would they preach for the conversion of infidels, if they had not reason to give them, for what they persuade them to? How will they try the spirits, and try all things, and hold fast that which is good, but by discourse? But it seems, these men themselves have no more reason for their believing in Christ, than in Mahomet or antichrist. They are good christians and teachers that while!

But the great argument is this, They say, and great ones write so, that the divine authority of Scripture is *principium indemonstrabile*, a principle not to be proved, but believed; for no science proves its principles.

To which I answer, 1. When our R. Baronius and others do affirm it to be *principium indemonstrabile*, it is not as if it were not at all demonstrable, but that it is not *demonstrabile per aliam revelationem;* but they acknowledge that it contains in it those characters of the divine authority, which by reason or discourse may be discerned. 2. It is therefore improper to say it is *credendum*, a thing to be believed first, and directly, that these books are God's word, seeing it is, by consequence, confessed that it is a point to be known by the foresaid evidence; therefore, not first to be believed. 3. And, otherwise, they contradict themselves when they bestow whole volumes to prove that it is part of the formal object of faith, (which answers the *cur credis?*) and yet to affirm it to be *principium primo credendum*, which makes it the material object of faith; for in this sense it cannot be both, as I shall show. 4. How the divine authority of Scripture is the *principium religionis Christianæ*, and how not, would hold a long debate of itself. Our R. Baronius himself saith, that when we say all christians should resolve their faith into the divine and canonical authority of Scripture, they do not mean that this is the only way of resolving faith, as if no other way were possible or available to salvation, but only that this way is the most convenient, profitable, and certain; yea, and is necessary, too, in those churches where the Scriptures are known, Apolog. advers. Turnebul. Tract. i. cap. 2, Observ. i. p. 46; which words show how far Scripture is a *principium*. 5. As theology, christianity, and all religion, do presuppose reason, as all morality presupposeth naturality, so it is evident that some of the principles of religion, or of christianity, must be first proved by reason; and so we may compare it to those inferior sciences, whose principles must be proved by superior sciences, though not by the same science. Though Scripture, in point of excellency, should not be said to be inferior to reason, yet in point of order it may, as still prerequiring or presupposing reason; as the form is after the matter, and the habit after the faculty. 6. Those characters of divine authority which divines mention, may, at least some of them, be demonstrated to others, as prophecies fulfilled, and all to ourselves; therefore, the Scripture authority is not an indemonstrable principle. 7. The very being of all belief lieth in this, that it be an assent to the truth of an enunciation on the credit of the testifier or revealer. Now, if we must first believe Scripture to be God's word, and not know it, then we must believe it on the credit of the revealer; and then it is by some other revelation, or by itself. If by some other, then how know I that other revelation to be of God? and so *in infinitum;* but if I believe it to be of God, because it revealeth itself to be so, as our divines say, then this self-revelation is, 1. Either by way of proper testimony, or, 2. By objective evidence, to be discerned by reason. If the former, which must be said, or it cannot be the material object of faith; then either I must believe every book that affirms itself to be divine, or else I must have some reason to believe this, so affirming of itself, more than others; and these reasons will be things known and not believed. But if the latter, by objective evidence,[k] which is it that divines generally say, then why do they not observe that this is to unsay what they have said, and to say plainly, that it is

damnamus illos qui, &c. Vide etiam Vegam. lib. ix.; De Justificat. c. 47; Greg. Valent. tom. iii. disp. 1. quæst. 1. punct. 1. sect. 5; et Suarez. disp. iii. de Fide, sect. 3; et cont. vide Stapleton. Controv. Relect. iv. quæst. 3. art. ii. resp. ad arg. 1; et in Defens. Authoritat. Eccles. lib. iii. cap. 12. sect. 11; Malder, in ii. 2, quæst. 1. art. 1, sect. 8; Mel. Canu. lib. ii. de loc. cap. 8.

[i] Read Videlius's Rationale Theolog. against Veronius, and throughout, how far reason and natural principles may be used in disputes of divinity.

[k] Vide Baron. tract. 9. per totum. Authoritatem Scripturæ duplici modo Deus apud nos contestatur. 1. In eo quod eandem ornavit notandis qualitatibus et prærogativis supra omnia humana scripta. 2. In eo quod omnium suorum corda spiritu suo afficit; ut agnoscant veritatem suam in scriptis illis micantem. Rivet. Catholic. Orthodox. in Tractat. primo quæst. xii. p. 131. col. 2.

a thing to be known, and not strictly believed, that this is God's revelation? Things evident, are the objects of knowledge; things testified, are the objects of faith, as testified.

8. Yet I confess, that when we first know this or that to be a divine testimony, we may, in a second place, believe it; for it is revealed in Scripture, "Thus saith the Lord," &c.: and so the same thing may be, and is, the object of knowledge, and of belief; but it must, in the rational order, be known first, and not believed first; for else, as is said, I should believe every writing so affirming itself divine, or else believe the affirmation of this without evidence and reason. 9. And, indeed, what else can be the meaning of our divines, when they tell us that all faith is resolved into the credit or authority of the testifier and revealer? as our Baronius (Apol. cont. Turnebul. Tract. iii. sect. 3, cap. iv. pag. 108) saith, faith dependeth upon two principles, which must necessarily be foreknown, that a thing may be believed on one's authority, as Suarez rightly observeth, Disp. ii. De Fide, sect. 4, 5, and Disp. iii. sect. 12, sect. 1. One is, that the party doth speak this; the other is, that he is one worthy to be believed. Mark, he saith these two must be foreknown, and not fore-believed. Though I know what he and others say, to make it both the *objectum formale et materiale* in several respects; but that can be but secondarily, as I said. As for their similitude from the sun, which reveals itself and other things; besides that objects of sense and reason much differ in this, and similitudes prove nothing; in a sound sense, I grant the thing inferred by it; to wit, that Scripture revealeth particular truths to belief by way of divine testimony or affirmation: but it revealeth itself to be God's testimony, first, to knowledge, by its own characters or excellences, seconded by the external testimony of miracles; and then, 2. By testification to belief. Learned Hooker (Eccles. Polit. lib. ii. and iii.) hath showed, that it is not first to be believed that Scripture is God's word, but to be proved by reason, which he affirmeth is not very difficult demonstratively to do. I dare stay no longer on this (referring the more exact discussion to some fitter place); only, if Scriptures cannot be proved to be God's word by reason, 1. Why do all our divines, in their common-places, bring reasons to prove it? 2. How will they deal with pagans and enemies? *Object.* But they still tell you, the Spirit is only sufficient, when all reasons are brought. *Answ.* That is to remove the question; or, when the question is of the objective sufficiency, they answer, of the efficient, rectifying and elevating the faculty. 2. Who knows not that a man may believe or know the Scripture to be God's word, without any more than a common help of the Spirit? The devils and damned believe or know it, and so doth many an ungodly man here; but a saving knowledge or belief doth indeed require a special grace of the Spirit.

In a word, if reason were of no more use here than some make it, as it were in vain to preach or write in this point for christianity, so it would follow, that he that is drunk, or mad, or an infant, if not a brute, were the fittest to make a christian, which is so vile an imagination, that I dare say he that hath the best and rightest reason, and by consideration makes the most use of it, is the best christian, and doth God best service; and that all sin is on the contrary, for want of right reason, and the using of it by consideration. But methinks I should not need to plead for reason, till beasts can speak and plead against me! but, yet, I must tell you, if you heard the accusation, you would excuse my apology.

If none but the ignorant be an enemy to knowledge, sure none but the unreasonable is an enemy to reason.

6. But the greatest offence of all is, that I lay so much upon human testimony and tradition, which some think uncertain: some think that it would make our faith too human, and some think it is too like the papists' arguings.

To all which I answer, 1. See whether the best of our divines do not the like. I will name some of the choicest that ever the reformed church enjoyed. Rob. Baronius saith, (Apol. con. Turnebul. Tract. ii. punct. 2, p. 686,) the testification of the present church is a condition necessarily requisite for our believing the Scripture authority, because faith comes by hearing. 2. From the consent of all the present church, or all christians now living, the chiefest argument may be drawn to prove the authority of any canonical book. 3. From the perpetual and universal tradition and practice of the whole church from the apostles' time to ours, we may have a human persuasion, and that certain and infallible, of the divine and canonical authority of those books which were still undoubted, or which some call the protocanonical. Doctor Whitaker saith it belongs to the church, 1. To be a witness and keeper of the Scriptures; 2. To judge and discern between Scriptures, which are true and genuine, and which are false, suppositious, and apocryphal; 3. To divulge them; 4. To expound them. De Sac. Script. quæst iii. cont. 1, c. ii. p. 203, 204; and in his Duplicat. Advers. Stapleton, more fully, p. 47. Which of us knows not the necessity of the ministry of the church, and that it is safely and wisely appointed of God? so that to contemn the ministry and testimony of the church, is nothing else but to err from the faith, and rush into most certain destruction. See more, p. 15, 58, 59, &c. 364, 60, 62, 69, 77, 78, 438, 119, 328. Davenant alloweth of historical tradition, De Judice Controv. p. 11, sect. 3, 24, 27, 30, 31, 32. The like might be showed out of Camer., Cham., Ames., and divers[1] others, but that I must not enlarge.

2. I would have the contrary-minded tell me how they know, without human testimony or tradition, that these are the same books which the prophets and apostles wrote, and wholly the same; that they are not depraved and wilfully corrupted; that these are all? how know you that one of the books of Esther is canonical and the other apocryphal? Where is the man that ever knew the canon from the apocryphal before it was told him, and without tradition? I confess, for my own part, I could never boast of any such testimony, or light of the Spirit, nor reason neither, which without human testimony or tradition would have made me believe that the Book of Canticles is canonical, and written by Solomon, and the Book of Wisdom apocryphal, and written by Philo, as some think; or that Paul's Epistle to the Laodiceans, which you may see in Bruno in Epist. Sixtus Senensis, and others, is apocryphal, and the second and third Epistles of John canonical. Nor could I have known all or any historical books, such as Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, &c. to be written by divine inspiration, but by tradition. Nor

[1] Chemnitius examen Concil. Trident. par. i. p. (mihi) 109—111, &c. is so full, that, in his eight sorts of tradition, he not only saith much more than I here do, but in some of them satisfieth Andradius himself. Vide Andrad. Defens. Concil. Trident. lib. ii. p. (mihi) 217, usque ad 230. Nemo ex scriptoribus ecclesiasticis qui continuata temporum successione ab apostolis huc usque vixerunt usquam in scriptis suis in memoriam redigere eos dignatus est. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. iii. cap. 19. loquens de libris Apocryph.

could I know all or any of those books to be God's word, which contain mere positive constitutions, as Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, &c. were it not for the same tradition; nor could I know that any of those books were written by divine inspiration, which contain, besides such history and positives, nothing but the truths which are known by the light of nature, without further supernatural revelation, if it had not been for tradition; nor could I have known those books to be written by divine inspiration, which speak of mere supernatural things, (either historical, as Christ's incarnation, resurrection, &c. or doctrinal,) had not tradition or human testimony assured me that these are the books which those holy men wrote, and that such undoubted, uncontrolled miracles were wrought for the confirmation of their doctrine. Further, I would know, How doth an illiterate man know but by human testimony, 1. Whether it be indeed a Bible that the minister reads? 2. Or when he reads true, and when false; and whether any of those words be in the Bible which men say are in it? 3. Or that it is truly translated out of the Hebrew and Greek? 4. Or that it was originally written in those languages? 5. Or that the copies were authentic out of which they were translated? 6. Or how will they know many Jewish customs, or points in chronology, geography, &c. without which some Scripture can never be understood? 7. Or how do the most learned critics know the true signification of any one word of the Hebrew or Greek in Scripture, or any other book, yea, Latin or English, or any language, but only by tradition and human faith?

Yea, there is no doubt but in some cases tradition may save without Scripture: for, 1. Men were saved from Adam to Moses, without any Scripture that we know of: and, as Dr. Usher well observeth, one reason why they might be without it, was the facility and certainty of knowing by tradition; for Methuselah lived many hundred years with Adam, and Shem lived longer with Methuselah, and Isaac lived fifty years with Shem; so that three men saw from the beginning of the world till Isaac's fiftieth year.[m] 2. And thousands were converted and saved by the doctrine of the apostles and primitive preachers, before it was committed to writing: so many Jews in the captivity had not the Scripture. 3. And if any among the Abassines, Arminians, or ignorant papists, do believe in Christ upon mere tradition, (no doubt they may,) who can question their salvation? for Christ saith, that "whosoever believeth in him shall not perish," which way soever he was brought to believe. Will you hear Irenæus in this, who lived before popery was born? *Quid enim? et si quibus de aliqua modica quæstione disceptatio esset? Nonne oporteret in antiquissimas recurrere ecclesias?* (Mark, he saith not *ad ecclesiam Romanam, vel ad unum principem.) In quibus apostoli conversati sunt, et ab eis de præsenti quæstione sumere quod certum et re liquidum est? Quid autem si neque apostoli quidem scripturas reliquissent nobis; nonne oportebat ordinem sequi traditionis, quam tradiderunt iis quibus committebant ecclesias? Cui ordinationi assentiunt multæ geutes barbarorum eorum qui in Christum credunt, sine charactere vel atramento scriptam habentes per Spiritum in cordibus suis salutem, et veterem traditionem diligenter custodientes, &c. Hanc fidem qui sine literis crediderunt, quantum ad sermonem nostrum barbari sunt; quantum autem ad sententiam et consuetudinem et conversationem, propter fidem per quam sapientissimi sunt, et placent Deo, &c. Sic per illam veterem apostolorum traditionem, ne in conceptionem quidem mentis admittunt quodcunque (hæreticorum) portentiloquium est.* Adv. Hæres. lib. 3. c. 4.

As for those that think it favours the papists to argue thus for tradition, they are quite mistaken, as I have showed afterwards. The papists build on the authority of the church's decisive judgment; but I use only the church's testimony. The papists, by the church, mean, 1. The present church; 2. Only their own Romish church; 3. And in that only the pope, or council, as infallible judge. But I mean, 1. The universal church through the world; 2. Especially the ancient church next to the apostles; 3. And therein the godly writers and christians generally. The papists ground all on the church only, and think that we must first know the true church, who is the judge, before we can know the Scripture. But I value, in some cases more, the testimony of heathens, Jews, and all heretics,[n] an enemy's testimony being most valid against himself: and I use not their testimony only, as they are of the church, or as christians, but also as men endued with sense and reason, and the common remnants of moral honesty. In one word, the papists receive the Scriptures on the authoritative, infallible judgment of their own church, that is, the pope: and I receive it as God's perfect law, delivered down from hand to hand to this present age, and know it to be the same book which was wrote by the prophets and apostles, by an infallible testimony of rational men, friends and foes, in all ages. And for them that think that this lays all our faith on uncertainties, I answer, 1. Let them give us more certain grounds. 2. We have an undoubted, infallible certainty of the truth of this tradition, as I have after showed. He is mad that doubts of the certainty of William the Conqueror's reigning in England, because he hath but human testimony. We are certain that the statutes of this land were made by the same parliaments and kings that are mentioned to be the authors; and that those statutes which we have now in our books are the same which they made; for there were many copies dispersed. Men's lands and estates were still held by them. There were multitudes of lawyers and judges, whose calling lay in the continual use of them; and no one lawyer could corrupt them, but his antagonist would soon tell him of it, and a thousand would find it out. So that I do not think any man doubteth of the certainty of the acts being the same they pretend to be. And in our case about the Scripture, we have much more certainty, as I have showed. These copies were dispersed all over the world, so that a combination to corrupt them in secret was impossible. Men judged their hopes of salvation to lie in them, and therefore would sure be careful to keep them from corruption, and to see that no other hand should do it. There were thousands of ministers, whose office and daily work it was to preach these Scriptures to the world, and therefore they must needs look to the preserving of them; and God was pleased to suffer such abundance of heretics to arise, perhaps of purpose for this end, among others, that no one could corrupt the Scriptures, but all his adversaries would soon have catched him in it: for all parties, of each opinion, still pleaded the same Scriptures against all the rest, even as lawyers plead the law of the land at the bar against their adversaries. So that it is impossible that in any main matter it should be depraved. What it may be in a letter or a word, by the negligence of transcribers, is of no great moment.

Indeed, the popish doctrine of traditions, such as you may find in Richworth's Dialogues, leads directly

[m] Vide Euseb. Niremberg. de Orig. S. Scripturæ, præcipue, lib. 1—3.

[n] Origen against Celsus gives you many. Vide lib. 8. et Aug. de Civit. Dei, lib. 12; et testimonium Porphyrii in Cyril. lib. 10. contra Julian. et Hieronym. adver. lib. Vigilant. Plura vide in Annot. Grot. in lib. de Verit. Religionis præcipue, in lib. 3.

to heathenism, and builds all our christianity on such certain uncertainties, yea, palpable untruths, that it is a wonder that they who believe them renounce not their christianity.

But the great objection is, that by arguing thus, our faith is finally resolved into human testimony, and so is but a human faith.

Answ. If I said that those that make this objection, show that they know not what faith is, nor what the resolving of it is which they mention, I should not wrong them; but because I would give a satisfactory account of my belief in this great point, I will more particularly answer the several questions which use to be here raised.

Quest. Why do you believe the incarnation, death, and resurrection of Christ, with all the rest of the articles or doctrines of your faith?

Answ. Because they are the word of God, or God hath testified or reported them, or hath revealed them to the world as true; so that I have no higher or further reason to believe them to be true, but only this, God hath spoken them.

Quest. How know you that God hath revealed or testified these things?

Answ. There are many questions comprehended in this one, or else it is very ambiguous. In regard of the object, it is one thing to ask how I know it to be revealed? and another, how I know that it is God that revealed it? In regard of the act, the words "How know you?" are doubtful. You may either mean, in your inquiry, by what principal efficient cause, or by what nearest efficient, or by what motives or convincing arguments, or by what naturally requisite means, or by what instrument? all these must not be confounded.

Quest. How know you (that is, by what moving reasons) that these things are revealed?

Answ. I need not arguments; my senses of seeing and hearing tell me.

Quest. But how did the prophets and apostles know that they were revealed to them?

Answ. Some by internal sense, who had it by inspiration; and some by external sense, who heard it from God, or Christ, or angels, or read the tables which he wrote.

Quest. How did the other believers in those times know that these things were revealed to the prophets or apostles?

Answ. By their own testimony.

Quest. How knew they that their testimony was true?

Answ. I have answered this at large in the fourth chapter, and third section. If it had not been revealed to them, they could not have revealed it to others.

Quest. But how do we in these times know that these things were revealed to the apostles?

Answ. Some few parts of the world know it only by unwritten tradition; but most of the churches know it by the Scripture which those holy men wrote, containing those doctrines.

Quest. But how know you that these Scriptures were written by them?

Answ. By infallible tradition.[o]

Quest. But how know you that they be not, in the substance, corrupted since?

Answ. By the same infallible tradition assuring my reason of it, even as I know that the statutes of the land were made by those kings in parliaments whose names they bear; and as I know that the works of Aristotle, Cicero, Virgil, Ovid, &c. were made by them, and are not, in the substance, corrupted; yea, far greater certainty doth tradition afford us.

Quest. But though you are thus assured of the revelation, yet how know you it is divine, or that it was God, indeed, that did reveal it?

Answ. You must know, as presupposed, that themselves affirm that God revealeth this to them, both by their speech to those that heard them preach, and by this Scripture which affirms itself to be of divine inspiration.

Quest. But how did they know themselves that they were not mistaken?

Answ. 1. Those whom God inspired, or to whom he spake, knew certainly, by an unexpressible sense, that it was God himself, and no delusion. God never speaks so extraordinarily, but by the same act he both makes known the thing revealed, and himself to be the speaker. 2. Besides, they were fully certain it was no delusion, by the frequent, uncontrolled miracles which Christ did, and which he enabled them to do themselves. See more, chap. iv. sect. 3, where this is more fully answered.

Quest. But how shall we know that they delude us not, and that the Scripture saith true in affirming itself to be of divine inspiration; for we must not believe every person or book that so affirmeth?

Answ. I have answered this in the fore-cited chapter and section.

To which I add: 1. There are such characters[p] of verity and majesty in the Scriptures themselves, that may very strongly persuade us of the verity of them, at least as being exceeding probable. Especially the exceeding spirituality and purity of them, and the high, strange design of God manifested about the way of advancing his glory and saving mankind; which design, in all the parts of its excellency concatenated, was not laid open by one person only, nor in one only age; but was in doing many hundred years, and opened by many several persons at that distance, so that it is impossible that they should lay their heads together to contrive it. Also, the fulfilled prophecies show its verity. And if any one part have not these characters so evident on it, yet it is certain, because it is attested by the rest, or some of them, that have them. 2. But that which fully persuades me, being thus prepared by the quality of the writings, is the many apparent uncontrolled miracles[q] which the apostles themselves did work, who wrote those books. God would not have enabled them to confirm a false, deluding testimony, and that of such moment, by miracles, and such miracles. 3. And when I have once thus believed, I am much confirmed, both by the experience I have of the power and sweet relish of the doctrine of the Scriptures on my own soul, and the efficacy of it on the souls of others; and also in that I find all the rational causes of doubting of the truth of Scripture to be removed.

[o] See Chemnit. Exam. Concil. Trident. part i. p. (mihi) 113, out of Origen, Eusebius, and Austin, showing the use of this sort of tradition.

[p] Vide Greg. de Valent. Analys. Fid. lib. I. c. 25.

[q] Phlegon in lib. 13. of his Annals, confesseth the miracles done by Peter, as Origen saith, lib. 2. contra Celsum.

Quest. But when you make miracles your great argument, how know you that those miracles were indeed wrought?

Answ. By infallible tradition, partly by the instrumentality of Scripture, and partly by other writings, and universal confession; as I know that Julius Cæsar conquered Pompey, and William the Norman won England.

Quest. But did you at first believe the Scripture on these grounds? Or can it be expected that unlearned people should understand the certainty of this tradition?

Answ. 1. I first believed that the Scripture was God's word, merely upon the common, uncontradicted affirmation of my teachers; and so do most others that I meet with; and so proceed to see the more certain arguments afterwards. 2. Yet if they were wisely and diligently taught them, the unlearned are capable of knowing the infallible certainty of that tradition; yea, and the certainty of the truth of the translation in the substance; and that you do read truly the Scripture to them, &c. For there is a human testimony which is certain; and so a human faith; yea, more certain than my own sense. Sense hath always greater evidence than belief; but not so great certainty sometimes. I will rather believe ten thousand sober, impartial witnesses that say they see or hear such a thing, having no considerable contradiction, than I would believe mine own eyes or ears for the contrary.

Quest. But is that faith divine and saving, when men take the Scripture for God's word merely on report, or other weak arguments?

Answ. It is a faith that lies open to great danger by temptation, when the weakness of the grounds shall appear; and will have much weakness in the mean time: but yet it may be divine and saving. For still this man's faith is resolved into God's veracity or authority. Though on weak grounds he take the Scripture to be revealed by God, yet he believes it to be true only because God spoke or revealed it. So that the error not lying in the formal or material object of faith, but only in the arguments persuading that it is from God, this destroys not the soundness and truth of the belief.

Object. But how know we that the miracles were wrought to confirm the truth of these books?

Answ. They were wrought to confirm the testimony of the men, whether delivered by word or writing. And this by writing is that part of their testimony which the church now enjoyeth.

Object. But all that wrote the Scripture did not work miracles.

Answ. Their testimony is confirmed by those that did.

Quest. Into what, then, do you ultimately resolve your faith?

Answ. If you understand the phrase of "resolving faith" strictly and properly, so it is resolved only into the credit or veracity of the speaker, as being the cause of the verity of the proposition which I believe even the principal efficient cause; the knowledge of whose infallible verity doth, above all, and only in that kind, cause me to believe the things revealed to be true.

But if you take the phrase of "resolving faith" in the largest sense, as it containeth not only its resolution into its formal object, but into all its causes in their several kinds, so it is resolved thus: 1. As I have said, I resolve my faith into the prime truth, that is, into God's infallible veracity, as the only formal object, or full, proper efficient of the verity of propositions believed, and the principal reason of my belief. 2. I resolve my belief into God's revelation or testimony, as the *principium patefactionis*, or the naturally necessary means of application of the former, which is the *principium certitudinis* (it is Rob. Baronius's own distinction, Apodix. Tract. iii. c. 6, p. 123.) Yet I am forced to dissent from Baronius, in that he makes this revelation to be part of the formal object, though the veracity of God revealing, and not the truth of God without revelation, be the formal object of belief. Yet I conceive the said revelation to be no part of the formal object, but a natural means of the production of the material object by the formal object which is its efficient; and that not directly of the immediate material object, but of the remote only; for the immediate material object is the truth of propositions, and the remote is the proposition which is true. Now, the revelation is directly a production of the proposition, as such; but not of the verity of it directly. We, therefore, believe it to be true, because the true God spoke it; though, in a second place, the patefaction may be said to produce the verity of the thing. 3. I resolve my belief into the characters of divinity which are found in Scripture, and into the uncontrolled miracles by which it was attested, as the principal motive conjunct, by which I am persuaded that it was God, and no other, that was the author or revealer. 4. I resolve my belief into human testimony, or infallible tradition, rationally, not authoritatively infallible, as the means of discovering to me the matters of fact, viz. that the apostles did write; that this delivered to me is the writing; that it is all; that such miracles were wrought; that the Scriptures are not depraved in any material points, or out of design; which books are canonical, and which not. Had I been the person to whom God from heaven, or Christ on earth, did reveal these truths immediately, then this resolution of my faith should be into my senses (made use of rationally); I should have known, by external sense, what Christ spoke, and what not; what miracles he did; and, by internal sense, that it was God, and no other, that inspired me; and, by both, that it was Christ, and no other, that spake and wrought miracles. But seeing I live at so great a distance, and God revealed not these things to me immediately, but to the apostles, and they to others, and they to others, and so down to this day; therefore tradition must do that for me which sense did to the first receivers; as I say, what sense did for them, that human testimony doth for us; or must carry it between their senses and our senses, and so to our reason. 5. I resolve my belief into all truths revealed in Scripture, as into the material object, if it were not too improper to call that a resolving of it into that which answers the *quid credis*, and not *cur credis*, or the *cui?* 6. I resolve it into the books or writings, as the authentic instrument revealing God's mind: not into the words, as in this or that language, or as considered in themselves, but as considered in relation to the truths which they express, viz. as they are signifiers of all those enunciations which they contain. 7. I resolve my belief into reason or understanding, as the nearest vital, efficient cause. 8. I resolve it into the Holy Ghost's illumination or grace, as into the remote efficient, enabling and causing me to believe sincerely and savingly, but not into any internal testimony of the Spirit, as the object of my faith.

I know our Baronius opposeth Spalatensis for one of the points which I here assert, Apol. Tract. ix. punct. 4, 5, p. 711—714, &c. Were it not that I have been too tedious already, I would answer those

arguments of Baronius, which is very easy to do; but to the unprejudiced and considerate I think it will seem needless, or, at least, is fitter for another discourse.

And thus having catechised myself to give men an account of my belief, and help those that are weaker herein, I shall conclude all with two or three words of advice to the reader.

1. Beware that you exclude not, in your arguing, any cause or necessary medium of your faith, by quarrelling too eagerly with other men's grounds: many men run upon this dangerous rock. Lest they should give too much to reason, or to tradition, or the church, or miracles, some further exclude them than will stand with the rationality, and safety, and honour of christianity. Set not those things in opposition which may and must consist in co-ordination, or subordination to others.

The removal of one necessary cause may destroy the effect; or of one pillar, may pull down the house; or of one of the necessary parts, may kill the man; though all the rest be let alone, or more regarded than before. It is no wit derogatory to the law of the land, to say I must read it with my eyes, and by the help of spectacles, and must receive it with my hands or ears, from a herald or other proclaimer, &c.

2. Take heed of denying the perfection of Scripture in deed, while you maintain it in words. Two sorts I would warn of this.

1. Those that plead for traditional doctrines not contained in Scriptures.[r] To these I have spoken elsewhere: "Appendix to Treatise of Baptism."

2. Those that are so eager as to tie all men to their expositions of Scripture, and censure all for heretical that differ from them therein. When we have disputed and contended ourselves a-weary, and wrangled the church into flames and ashes, yet that which God hath spoken obscurely, and so left difficult in itself, will remain obscure and difficult still;[s] and that which is difficult through the weakness and incapacity of unlearned men, will be far better cleared by a rational explication than by a bare canon. Oh when will the Lord once persuade his churches to take his written word for the only canon of their faith; and that in its own naked simplicity and evidence, without the determinations and canons of men, which are no parts of our creed, but helps to our understandings, and bounds to our practice in matters circumstantial, which God hath left to man's determination? When will the Lord persuade us not to be wise above what is written; but to acknowledge that which is unrevealed in the word, to be beyond us; and that which is more darkly revealed, to be more doubtful to us? Then the hot contentions of the church about the mysteries of God's decrees, and nature and order of his immanent acts; the nature and way of the workings of the Spirit on the soul, &c.; with a hundred quarrels about mere names and words; will be more lovingly and brotherly debated, without such alienation of affections and reproachful expressions.

Two things have set the church on fire, and been the plagues of it above one thousand years. 1. Enlarging our creed, and making more fundamentals than ever God [t] made.

2. Composing, and so imposing, our creeds and confessions in our own words and phrases.

When men have learned more manners and humility than to accuse God's language as too general and obscure, as if they could mend it, and have more dread of God, and compassion on themselves, than to make those to be fundamentals or certainties which God never made so; and when they reduce their confessions, 1. To their due extent, and, 2. To Scripture phrase, that dissenters may not scruple subscribing; then, and, I think, never till then, shall the church have peace about doctrinals.[u] It seems to me no heinous Socinian. motion which Chillingworth is blamed for, viz. Let all men believe the Scripture, and that only, and endeavour to believe it in the true sense, and promise this, and require no more of others; and they shall find this not only a better, but the only means to suppress heresy, and restore unity, &c.

If you say men may subscribe to Scripture, and yet misinterpret it, I answer, so they may do by human canons. If you say, they may preach against fundamentals, or evident truths, while yet they subscribe the Scripture misunderstood, I answer, 1. All such weighty truths are delivered expressly, or very plainly. 2.

[r] Unde ista traditio? utrumne de dominica et evangelica authoritate descendens? An de apostolorum mandatis atque epistolis veniens? Ea enim facienda esse quæ scripta sunt Deus testatur ad Joshuam; non recedat liber legis ex ore tuo, &c. Si ergo aut evangelio præcipitur, aut in apostolorum epistolis aut actibus continetur, observetur divina hæc et sancta traditio. Quæ ista obstinatio, quæve præsumptio, humanam traditionem divinæ dispositioni anteponere? nec animadvertere indignari et irasci Deum, quoties divina præcepta solvit et præterit humana traditio? Mark vii. 8; 1 Tim. vi. 3. Consuetudo sine veritate, Vetustas erroris est; propter quod relicto errore sequamur veritatem. Cyprian. Epist. 74. ad Pomp. p. 229, 230. The same place of Cyprian is vindicated by Dr. Whitaker, De Sac. Scrip. cont. 1. Q. 6. ad Perfect Scrip. mentioned also by Goulartius on Cyprian, ibid.

[s] Doctissimi Nazienzeni consilium ab omnibus Christianis audiendum, "Divina contemplare, verum in terminis maneto; loquere quæ sunt Spiritus; et si possibile est, nihil aliud. Ne patris naturam nimis curiose rimator, unigeniti essentiam, Spiritus gloriam, unam in tribus deitatem; utere verbis consuetis. Ratio pertineat ad sapientiores. Sufficiat tibi ut habeas fundamentum; super ædificent artifices." Utinam soli artifices super ædificarent! Utinam superstructiones suas multas et pœne infinitas cum paucis et planis fundamentalibus pari affectu et honore suscipiendas non commiscerent! Si hoc conentur, decet tamen pios et prudentes christianos discernere, inter prima illa pauca credibilia a Christo et apostolis immediate revelata, et innumeras illas deductiones theologorum pro cujusque ingenio et opinione cum fundamentalibus in eundem locum contrusas. Davenant. Adhort. ad Pacem Eccles. p. 87, 88. It was sound counsel that Pomeranus gives the ministers of God's word, (ne tot articulis, &c.) that they should not, with so many articles, and creeds, and confessions, confound the minds of plain christians, but that they should draw up the sum of their belief into some few heads. Nothing hinders but that professors and licentiates in divinity may busy their thoughts, and spend their hours, upon the knotty and abstruse questions of that sacred faculty; but why should the heads of ordinary christians be troubled with those curious disquisitions? Dr. Hall's Peace-maker, sect. 16. p. 118, 119. I pray read the rest of that small treatise, and his Pax Terris, a smaller, but both worthy of all our serious studying. Read Usher's excellent Sermon on Ephes. iv. 13, before King James, June 20, 1624, throughout.

[t] Ausim confirmare, majorem tam veterum hæresium, quam præsentium, dissidiorum partem, in ecclesia hinc præcipue natam fuisse et esse, quod concilia, episcopi, doctores ecclesiæ, nullo discrimine, quævis scholarum dogmata, et cathedrarum placita pro articulis fidei catholicæ vindicarunt, pariquc ad salutem necessitate credenda conscientiis imposuerunt: ex quavis vero interpretationis Scripturarum discrepantia, nimis facile hæreses vel schismata fecerunt. Paræus in Iren. p. (mihi) 16. Vide et p. 14 et 15. All peace-making divines still harp upon this string, and yet some call it Socinian. If any man would see more of the evil of making points necessary which God made not so, you may throughout Conrad. Bergius's Prax. Cathol. see enough; and the words of very many divines, Lutherans and Calvinists, to that end.

[u] Chillingworth, page last of the preface. Shall men be judged Socinians for advancing the Scriptures as the only rule? I pray read well what that excellent divine Dr. Stoughton hath written expressly and earnestly for what I now urge, in his form of wholesome words, about forming church confessions.

I hope God will once not only bring into use the ministerial power, but also teach magistrates to rule for Christ, to the restraining of such as shall so palpably offend, as openly to contradict what they subscribe.

But that was the third and last word of advice I here intended: viz. That seeing the Scripture is the sacred, perfect law of the most high God, that men would use it reverently, and that magistrates would restrain men that would bring God's word into contempt, under pretence of preaching it; [x] that every ignorant fellow, whose tongue hath caught a lax, may not run up into the pulpit to ease himself; nor every one have leave to disgorge himself in the holy assemblies, that hath got a surfeit of pride and self-conceit. Oh! if you knew the weakness of poor people, and how apt they are to be deceived, you would not give deceivers liberty to do their worst! You that will not give men leave to persuade your wives to adultery, your children to lewdness, your soldiers or subjects to rebellion or treachery, should sure be as regardful of men's souls, and the honour of Christ. And you that will not give every fool leave to go in your names on an embassage, who would but disgrace you, should not let men speak publicly, as in the name of Christ, that cannot speak sense, to the shame of our profession; nor should men turn preachers, as the river Nilus breeds frogs, saith Herodotus, when one half moveth before the other is made, and while it is yet but plain mud.

But I must make this preface no longer. I pray observe that in the margin, and see whether our times be not like Tertullian's.

Reader, as thou lovest thy comforts, thy faith, thy hope, thy safety, thy innocency, thy soul, thy Christ, thine everlasting rest; love, reverence, read, study, obey, and stick close to the Scripture. Farewell.

April 2, 1652.

CHAPTER I.

Confirmation from other Scriptures.

Sect. I. We are next to proceed to the confirmation of this truth, which, though it may seem needless in regard of its own clearness and certainty, yet in regard of our distance and infidelity nothing more necessary: but, you will say, to whom will this endeavour be useful? They who believe the Scriptures are convinced already; and for those who believe it not, how will you convince them? *Answ.* But sad experience tells, that those that believe, do believe but in part, and, therefore, have need of further confirmation; and, doubtless, God hath left us arguments sufficient to convince unbelievers themselves, or else how should we preach to pagans; or what should we say to the greatest part of the world, that acknowledge not the Scriptures? Doubtless the gospel should be preached to them; and though we have not the gift of miracles to convince them of the truth, as the apostles had, yet we have arguments demonstrative and clear, or else our preaching would be in vain; we having nothing left but bare affirmations.

The truth confirmed from other Scriptures.

Though I have all along confirmed sufficiently by testimony of Scripture what I have said, yet I will here briefly add thus much more, that the Scripture doth clearly assert this truth in these six ways.

1. Affirming the saints to have been predestinated to this glory.

1. It affirms, that this rest is fore-ordained for the saints, and the saints also fore-ordained to it. "God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a city," Heb. xi. 16. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor heart conceived, what God hath prepared for them that love him," 1 Cor. ii. 9. Which I conceive must be meant of these preparations in heaven; for those on earth are both seen and conceived, or else how are they enjoyed? To sit on Christ's right and left hand in his kingdom, shall be given to them for whom it is prepared, Matt. xx. 23. And themselves are called "vessels of mercy, before prepared unto glory," Rom. ix. 23. And in Christ we have obtained the inheritance, "being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," Eph. i. 11. "And whom he thus predestinateth, them he glorifieth," Rom. viii. 30; "For he hath, from the beginning, chosen them to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth," 2 Thess. ii. 13.

And though the intentions of the unwise and weak may be frustrated, and "without counsel purposes are disappointed," Prov. xv. 22; yet "the thoughts of the Lord shall surely come to pass; and as he hath purposed it shall stand," Isa. xiv. 24. "The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, and the thoughts of his heart to all generations," therefore, "blessed are they whose God is the Lord, and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance," Psal. xxxiii. 11, 12. Who can bereave his people of that rest which is designed them by God's eternal purpose?

2. That it is procured for them by the blood of Christ.

Sect. II. Secondly: The Scripture tells us that this rest is purchased, as well as purposed for them; or that they are redeemed to this rest. In what sense this may be said to be purchased by Christ, I have showed before, viz. not as the immediate work of his sufferings, which was the immediate payment of our debt, by satisfying the law, but as a more remote, though most excellent fruit; even the effect of that power, which by his death he procured to himself. He himself, for the suffering of death, was crowned with glory, yet did he not properly die for himself, nor was that the direct effect of his death. Some of those teachers who are gone forth of late,[a] do tell us, as a piece of their new discoveries, that Christ never purchased life and salvation for us, but purchased us to life and salvation:[b] not understanding that they affirm and deny the same thing in several expressions. What difference is there betwixt buying

[x] Ordinationes eorum temerariæ, leves, inconstantes: nunc neophytos collocant, nunc seculo, obstrictos, nunc apostatas nostros, ut gloria eos obligent, quia veritate non possunt. Nusquam facilius proficitur quam in castris rebellium, ubi ipsum esse illic, promereri est; itaque alius hodie episcopus, cras alius; hodie diaconus, qui cras lector: hodie presbyter, qui cras laicus; nam et laicis sacerdotalia munera injungunt. Tertul. de Præscript. advers. Hæres. c. 41.

[a] Paul Hobson.

[b] I confess the latter is the more proper expression, and oftener used in the Scriptures.

liberty to the prisoner, and buying the prisoner to liberty? betwixt buying life to a condemned malefactor, and buying him to life? or betwixt purchasing reconciliation to an enemy, and purchasing an enemy to reconciliation? but in this last they have found a difference, and tell us that God never was at enmity with man, but man at enmity with God, and therefore need not be reconciled: directly contrary to Scripture, which tells us that God hateth all the workers of iniquity, and that he is their enemy, Exod. xxiii. 22; Psal. xi. 5; v. 5; Isa. lxiii. 10; Lam. ii. 5: and though there be no change in God, nor any thing properly called hatred, yet it sufficeth that there is a change in the sinner's relation, and that there is something in God which cannot better be expressed or conceived than by these terms of enmity and hatred: and the enmity of the law against a sinner, may well be called the enmity of God. However, this differenceth betwixt enmity in God, and enmity in us; but not betwixt the sense of the fore-mentioned expressions: so that whether you will call it purchasing life for us, or purchasing us to life, the sense is the same, viz. by satisfying the law, and removing impediments, to procure us the title and possession of this life.[c]

It is, then, by the "blood of Jesus that we have entrance into the holiest," Heb. x. 19; even all our entrance to the fruition of God, both that by faith and prayer here, and that by full possession hereafter. Therefore do the saints sing forth his praises, "who hath redeemed them out of every nation by his blood, and made them kings and priests to God," Rev. v. 10.

Whether that εἰς ἀπολύτρωσιν τῆς περιποιήσεως, in Eph. i. 14, which is translated "the redemption of the purchased possession," do prove this or not; yet I see no appearance of truth in their exposition of it, who, because they deny that salvation is purchased by Christ, do affirm that it is Christ himself who is there called the purchased possession.[d] Therefore did God give his Son, and the Son give his life, and therefore was Christ lifted up on the cross, "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," John iii. 15, 16. So, then, I conclude either Christ must lose his blood and sufferings, and "never see of the travail of his soul," (Isa. liii. 11,) but all his pains and expectation be frustrate, or else there remaineth a rest to the people of God.

3. It is promised to them.

Sect. III. Thirdly: And as this rest is purchased for us, so is it also promised to us; as the firmament with the stars, so are the sacred pages bespangled with the frequent intermixture of these divine engagements. Christ hath told us that "it is his will, that those who are given to him should be where he is, that they may behold the glory which is given him of the Father," John xvii. 24: so also, "Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom," Luke xii. 32; q. d. fear not all your enemy's rage, fear not all your own unworthiness, doubt not of the certainty of the gift; for it is grounded upon the good pleasure of your Father. "I appoint to you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me a kingdom, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom," Luke xxii. 29. But because I will not be tedious in the needless confirming of an acknowledged truth, I refer you to the places here cited, 2 Thess. i. 7; Heb. iv. 1, 3; Matt. xxv. 34; xiii. 43; 2 Tim. iv. 18; James ii. 5; 2 Pet. i. 11; 2 Thess. i. 5; Acts xiv. 22; Luke vi. 20; xiii. 28, 29; 1 Thess. ii. 12; Matt. v. 12; Mark x. 21; xii. 25; 1 Pet. i. 4; Heb. x. 34; xii. 23; Col. i. 5; Phil. iii. 20; Heb. xi. 16; Eph. i. 20; 1 Cor. xv.; Rev. ii. 7, 11, 17, &c.

4. The means and motions towards it, do prove that there is such an end.

Sect. IV. Fourthly: All the means of grace, and all the workings of the Spirit upon the soul, and all the gracious actions of the saints, are so many evident mediums to prove that there remaineth a rest to the people of God. If it be an undeniable maxim that God and nature do nothing in vain, then it is as true of God and his grace. [e]All these means and motions imply some end to which they tend, or else they cannot be called means, nor are they the motions of wisdom or reason: and no lower end than this "rest" can be imagined. God would never have commanded his people to repent and believe, to fast and pray, to knock and seek, and that continually, to read and study, to confer and meditate, to strive and labour, to run and fight, and all this to no purpose. Nor would the Spirit of God work them to this, and create in them a supernatural power, and enable them and excite them to a constant performance, were it not for this end whereto it leads us. Nor could the saints reasonably attempt such employments, nor yet undergo so heavy sufferings, were it not for this desirable end. But whatsoever the folly of man might do, certainly divine wisdom cannot be guilty of setting to work such fruitless motions. Therefore, whatever I read of duty required, whenever I find the grace bestowed, I take it as so many promises of rest. The Spirit would never kindle in us such strong desires after heaven, nor such a love to Jesus Christ, if we should not receive that which we desire and love. He that sets our feet in the way of peace will, undoubtedly, bring us to the end of peace, Luke i. 79. How nearly are the means and end conjoined! Matt. xi. 12, "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force;" or, as Luke xvi. 16, "every man presseth into it:" so that the violent apprehends the kingdom.[f] Those whom he causeth to follow him in the regeneration, he will sure provide them thrones of judgment, Matt. xix. 28.

[c] The phrases are used from the effect to the affection, as we say, i. e. God doth that to men, as enemies do; and even to the elect before conversion, he stands, as we may say, engaged by his laws as a just judge, to do that which enemies do, and thence is said to be their enemy, though his decree is to deal in mercy with them. Else, speaking of enmity properly, I say as Clemens Alexandrinus doth of God: viz. we say that God is an enemy to no man, for he is the Creator of all; and there is nothing comes to pass but what he will: but we say that those are enemies to him that do not obey him, and walk not by his precepts, for they bear an enmity to his testament. Clemens Alexandrinus, Stromat. lib. 4.

[d] Paul Hobson.

[e] Intra nostrum rationalem spiritum est quædam viva imago divinæ sapientiæ: ad quam dum respicimus, movemur per quendam divinum impulsum, ad pulsandum, ad petenda, et quærenda ea quæ sunt perficientia imaginem sive ipsam ad exemplaris conformitatem ducentia. Cusanus Exercitat. lib. 10. fol. (mihi) 183. B. Yet I do not argue as some, that because the soul desireth, it must enjoy: for God fulfilleth but sound desires, which are of his own exciting in us, which are limited desires. If a man desire to fly with wings, or to be as God, these desires God is not to fulfil. Of which read Camero Prælect. de Verbo Dei, cap. 7. p. (operum) fol. 455. Cum vitium creaturæ angelicæ (et humanæ) dicitur, quod non adhæret Deo, hinc aptissime declaratur, ejus naturæ ut Deo adhæreat convenire. Quam porro magna sit laus adhærere Deo, ut ei vivat, inde sapiat, illo gaudeat, tantoque bono sine morte, sine errore, sine molestia perfruatur, quis cogitare digne possit, aut eloqui? August. de Civ. lib. 12. cap. 10.

[f] Mr. Burroughs thinks this is meant of the violence of persecution, but Luke's phrase confuteth that: the sense is, that the door being now set open, he that will crowd in first, doth get possession; as the crowd or common people did, while the rulers that pretended to the chief title, stood without the doors, or by unbelief refused to enter.

5. So do the beginnings, foretastes, earnests, and seals.

Sect. V. Fifthly: Scripture further assures us that the saints have the beginnings, foretastes, earnests, and seals of this rest here: and may not all this assure them of the full possession? The very kingdom of God is within them,[g] Luke xvii. 21. They here, as is before said, take it by force, they have a beginning of that knowledge which Christ hath said is eternal life, John xvii. 3. I have fully manifested that before, that the rest and glory of the people of God doth consist in their knowing, loving, rejoicing, and praising; and all these are begun, though but begun, here: therefore, doubtless, so much as we here know of God, so much as we love, rejoice, and praise, so much we have of heaven on earth, so much we enjoy of the rest of souls. And do you think that God will give the beginning where he never intends to give the end? Nay, God doth give his people oftentimes such foresights and foretastes of this same rest, that their spirits are even transported with it, and they could heartily wish they might be present there. Paul is taken up into the third heaven, and seeth things that must not be uttered. The saints are kept by the power of God through faith unto that salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time, wherein they can greatly rejoice, even in temptations, 1 Pet. i. 5, 6: and therefore the apostle also tells us, that they who now see not Christ, nor ever saw him, yet love him, and believing do rejoice in him with joy unspeakable and full of glory; receiving the end of their faith, the salvation of their souls, 1 Pet. i. 8, 9. Observe here, first, how God gives his people this foretasting joy: secondly, how this joy is said to be full of glory, and therefore must needs be a beginning of the glory: thirdly, how immediately upon this there follows "receiving the end of their faith, the salvation of the soul." And Paul also brings in the justified "rejoicing in hope of the glory of God," Rom. v. 2. And I doubt not, but some poor christians among us, who have little to boast of appearing without, have often these foretastes in their souls. And do you think that God will tantalize his people? Will he give them the first-fruits and not the crop? Doth he show them glory to set them a longing, and then deny the actual fruition? Or doth he lift them up so near this rest, and give them such rejoicings in it, and yet never bestow it on them? It cannot be. Nay, doth he give them the "earnest of the inheritance," Eph. i. 14; and "seal them with the Holy Spirit of promise," Eph. i. 13; and yet will he deny the full possession? These absurdities may not be charged on an ordinary man, much less on the faithful and righteous God.

6. Some have entered it already.

Sect. VI. Sixthly, and lastly: The Scripture mentioneth particularly and by name, those who entered into this rest, as Enoch, who was taken up to God. So Abraham, Lazarus, and the thief that was crucified with Christ, &c. And if there be a rest for these, sure there is a rest for all believers. But it is vain to heap up Scripture proof, seeing it is the very end of the Scripture, to be a guide to lead us to this blessed state, and to discover it to us, and persuade us to seek it in the prescribed way, and to acquaint us with the hinderances that would keep us from it, and to be the charter and grant by which we hold all our title to it. So that our rest, and thereby God's glory, is, to the Scripture, as the end is to the way, which is frequently expressed and implied through the whole. There is no one that doubts of the certainty of this promised glory, but only they that doubt of the truth of the Scripture, or else know not what it containeth. And because I find that most temptations are resolved into this, and that there is so much unbelief even in true believers, and that the truth and strength of our belief of Scripture hath an exceeding great influence into all our graces, I shall briefly say something for your confirmation in this.

CHAPTER II.

MOTIVES TO STUDY AND PREACH THE DIVINE AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE.

SECT. I. Thus[a] much may suffice where the Scripture is believed, to confirm the truth of the point in hand, viz. the certain futurity of the saints' rest. And for pagans and infidels who believe not Scripture, it is besides the intention of this discourse to endeavour their conviction. I am endeavouring the consolation and edification of saints, and not the information and conversion of pagans. Yet do I acknowledge the subject exceeding necessary, even to the saints themselves; for Satan's assaults are oft made at the foundation; and if he can persuade them to question the verity of Scripture, they will soon cast away their hopes of heaven.

But if I should here enter upon that task, to prove that Scripture to be the infallible word of God, I should make too broad a digression, and set upon a work as large as that, for the sake whereof I should undertake it; neither am I insensible of how great difficulty it would prove to manage it satisfactorily, and how much more than my ability is thereto requisite.

Yet, lest the tempted christian should have no relief, nor any argument at hand against the temptation, I will here lay down some few, not intending it as a full resolution of that great question, but as a competent help to the weak, that have no time nor ability to read larger volumes. And I the rather am induced to it, because the success of all the rest that I have written depends upon this; no man will love, desire, study, labour for that which he believeth not to be attainable. And in such supernatural points, we must first apprehend the truth of the revelation, before we can well believe the truth of the thing revealed. And I desire the Lord to persuade the hearts of some of his choicest servants in these

[g] Atqui si lumen ipsum Dei illud verum, quod est in persona Christi, vitam in se continet, eaque vita cum lumine, quæ committitur in carnem, peritura est, in quam vita committitur: plane sic periturus et ipsi Thesaurus: perituris enim peritura creduntur, sicut veteribus utribus novum vinum. —Vita Jesu manifestatur: Ubi? In corpora nostro: in quo? In mortali. Ergo in carne plane mortali secundum culpam, sed et vitali secundum gratiam. Vide quantum et illa vita Christi manifestetur. In re ergo alicna salutis, sed in substantia perpetua dissolutionis manifestabitur vita Christi æterna, jugis, incorrupta, jam et Dei vita? aut cujus temporis vita Domini manifestabitur in corpore nostro? Tertul. de Anima, c. 54. p. edit. Pamel. 419. 2 Cor. i. 22; v. 5.

[a] Sed quo plenius et impressius tam ipsum quam dispositiones ejus, et voluntates adiremus, instrumentum adjecit literaturæ, siquis velit de Deo inquirere, et inquisitum invenire, et invento credere, et credito deservire. Viros enim justitia et innocentia dignos Deum nosse et ostendere, a primordio in seculum emisit Spiritu Divino inundatos, quo prædicarent Deum unicum esse, qui universa condiderit, qui hominem de humo struxerit, &c. sed et observantibus præmia destinarit, qui producto ævo isto judicaturus sit suos cultores in vitæ æternæ retributionem, profanos in ignem æque perpetem et jugem, suscitatis omnibus ab initio defunctis, et reformatis et recensitis ad utriusque meriti dispunctionem. Tertul. Apol. c. 18. operum edit. Pamel. p. 34.

times, whom he hath best furnished for such a work, to undertake the complete handling of it; to persuade them to which, I will here annex, first, some considerations, which also are the reasons of this brief attempt of my own, and may also serve to persuade all ministers to bestow a little more pains, in a seasonable grounding their hearers in this so great and needful a point, by a more frequent and clear discovery of the verity of the Scripture, though some, that know not what they say, may tell them that it is needless.[b]

1. Of what exceeding great necessity is it to the salvation of ourselves and hearers, to be soundly persuaded of the truth of Scripture! As God's own veracity is the prime foundation of our faith, from which particular axioms receive their verity, so the Scripture is the principal foundation *quoad patrefactionem*, revealing to us what is of God, without which revelation it is impossible to believe. And should not the foundation be both timely and soundly laid?

2. The learned divines of these latter times have, in most points of doctrine, done better than any, since the apostles, before them; and have much advantaged the church thereby, and advanced sacred knowledge. And should we not endeavour it in this point if possible above all, when yet the ancients were more frequent and full in it, for the most part, than we? I know there are many excellent treatises already extant on this subject, and such as I doubt not may convince gainsayers, and much strengthen the weak; but yet, doubtless, much more may be done for the clearing this weighty and needful point. Our great divines have said almost as much against papists in this, as need to be said, especially Chamier, and our Robert Baronius, Whitaker, Reignoldus, &c. But is not most of their industry there bestowed, while they put off the atheist, the Jew, and other infidels, with a few pages or none? And so the great master-sin of infidelity in the souls of men, whereof the best christians have too great a share, is much neglected, and the very greatest matter of all overlooked. Grotius, Morney, and Camero, above others, have done well; but if God would stir them up to this work, I doubt not but some, by the help of all foregoers, and especially improving antiquities, might do it more completely than any have yet done; which I think would be as acceptable a piece of service to the church as ever by human industry was performed.

3. And[c] I fear the course that too many divines take this way, by resolving all into the testimony of the Spirit, in a mistaken sense, hath much wronged the Scripture and church of God, and much hardened pagans and atheists against the truth. I know that the illumination of the Spirit is necessary: a special illumination for the begetting of a special saving belief, and a common illumination for a common belief. But this is not so properly called the testimony of the Spirit: the use of this is to open our eyes to see that evidence of Scripture verity which is already extant; and as to remove our blindness, so by further sanctifying, to remove our natural enmity to the truth, and prejudice against it, which is no small hinderance to the believing of it; for all the hinderance lieth not in the bare intellect.

But it is another kind of testimony than this, which many great divines resolve their faith into: for when the question is of the objective cause of faith, how know you Scripture to be the word of God; or why do you believe it so to be? They finally conclude, by the testimony of the Spirit: but the Spirit's illumination being only the efficient cause of our discerning, and the question being only of the objective cause or evidence, they must needs mean some testimony besides illuminating, sanctifying grace, or else not understand themselves: and, therefore, even great Chamier calleth this testimony the word of God, and likens it to the revelations made to the prophets and apostles, dangerously, I think. Tom. iii. lib. 13. c. 17. To imagine a necessity, first, either of an internal proper testimony, which is *argumentum inartificiale*, as if the Spirit, as another person, spoke this truth within me, The Scripture is God's word; or, secondly, of the Spirit's propounding that objective evidence internally in the soul, which is necessary to persuade by an artificial argument, without propounding it first *ab extra;* thirdly, or for the Spirit to infuse or create in a man's mind an actual persuasion that Scripture is God's word, the person not knowing how he is so persuaded, nor why; or of any the like immediate injection of the intelligible species: I say, to affirm that the Scriptures cannot be known to be God's word, without such a testimony of the Spirit as some of these, is, in my judgment, a justifying men in their infidelity, and a telling them that there is not yet extant any sufficient evidence of Scripture truth, till the Spirit create it in ourselves, and, withal, to leave it impossible to produce any evidence for the conviction of an unbeliever, who cannot know the testimony of the Spirit in me: and, indeed, it is direct expectation of enthusiasm, and that is ordinary to every christian. And it also infers that all men have the testimony of the Spirit, who believe the Scriptures to be God's word, which would delude many natural men, who feel that they do believe this, though some unsoundly tell us that an unregenerate man cannot believe it. I know that, savingly, he cannot; but undissemblingly, as the devil does, he may. But I leave this point, referring the reader that understands them, for full satisfaction about the nature of the Spirit's testimony, to learned Robert Baronius,[d] Apol. con. Turnebullum, p. 733; and also to judicious Amyraldus, Thes. de Testim. Spir. in Thes. Salmuriens. vol. i. p. 122: in both whom it is most solidly handled.

4. Doubtless, the first and chief work of preachers of the gospel, is to endeavour the conversion of pagans and infidels, where men live within their reach, and have opportunity to do it. And we all believe that the Jews shall be brought in; and it must be by means. And how shall all this be done, if we cannot prove to them the divine authority of what we have to say to them, but naked affirmation? Or, how shall we maintain the credit of christianity, if we be put to dispute the case with an infidel? I know somewhat may be done by tradition where Scripture is not; but that is a more weak, uncertain means: I know also that the first truths, and those that are known by the light of nature, may be evinced by natural demonstrations: and when we deal with pagans, there we must begin. But for all supernatural truth, how shall we prove that to them, but by proving first the certainty of the revelation?

[b] I have since written a supplement to this second part, called "The Unreasonableness of Infidelity."

[c] Of the difference of sense, vision, illumination, and revelation, vide Macarii Homil. 7. edit. Palthen. p. 99. Cognosci sine fide Scripturæ possunt, sive ex ecclesiæ testimonio, sive ex se noscantur. Ut liquido agnoscantur cum certa assentione animi, opus est Spiritus illuminatione. Whitaker rectissime Duplicat. adv. Stapleton. lib. 3. cap. 8. p. 535, 536.

[d] Pessime, ni fallor, argumentatur vir doctiss. Keckerman. Systemate Theol. lib. p. 179: Soli electi habent fidem: ergo soli electi norunt quæ sit norma fidei. This will teach the vilest man to conclude that he is elect, because he knows the rule of faith.

As Aquinas, ut in marg.[e] To tell them that the Spirit testifieth it, is no means to convince them that have not the Spirit. And if they have the Spirit already, then what need we preach to convince them? If the word must be mixed with faith in them that hear it, before it profit them further to salvation, then we cannot expect to find the Spirit in infidels. He that thinks an unholy person may not believe the Scriptures to be the word of God, doth not sure think that they may go so much further as our divines and the Scripture tell us they may do.[f]

And to tell an infidel that it is *principium indemonstrabile*, that Scripture is God's word, and that it is to be believed, and not to be proved, as if the very revelation, *Hoc esse testimonium divinum*, and not only the thing testified, *Hoc esse verum*, were not *objectum scientiæ, sed puræ fidei.* This might sooner harden infidels, than convince them. Sure I am, that both Christ and his apostles used sufficient, *in suo genere*, convincing arguments to persuade men to believe, and dealt with men as rational creatures. Truly, saith Hooker,[g] "It is not a thing impossible, nor greatly hard, even by such kind of proofs, so to manifest and clear that point, that no man living shall be able to deny it, without denying some apparent principle, such as all men acknowledge to be true. And Scripture teacheth us that saving truth, which God hath discovered to the world by revelation; but it presumeth us taught otherwise, that itself is divine and sacred. And these things we believe, knowing by reason, that Scripture is the word of God." Again, saith he, "It is not required, nor can be exacted at our hands, that we should yield it any other assent, than such as doth answer the evidence." Again, "How bold and confident soever we may be in words, when it comes to the trial, such as the evidence is, which the truth hath, such is the assent; nor can it be stronger, if grounded as it should be.

5. Is not faith a rational act of a rational creature? And so the understanding proceeds discursively in its production. And is not that the strongest faith which hath the strongest reasons to prove the testimony to be valid upon which it resteth, and the clearest apprehension and use of those reasons?[h] and the truest faith which hath the truest reasons truly apprehended and used? And must not that, on the contrary, be weak or false faith, which receives the verity and validity of the testimony from weak or false grounds, though the testimony, of itself, be the truest in the world? Our divines use to say, concerning love to Christ, that it is not to be measured by the degree of fervour so much as by the grounds and motives; so that if a man should love Christ upon the same reason as the Turk loves Mahomet, it were no true love: if he love him upon false grounds, it must needs be a false love; and if upon common grounds, it can be but a common love. I will not conclude, that to believe in Jesus Christ upon the grounds that a Turk believes in Mahomet, or to believe Scripture upon the same reasons that the Turks believe the Alcoran, is no true faith, supposing that both have the like verity of their reasons; but at best, it must be more weak and doubtful.

6. Are the generality of christians able to give any better than some such common reason, to prove the verity of Scripture? nay, are the more exercised, understanding sorts of christians able by sound arguments to make it good, if an enemy or a temptation put them to it? nay, are the meaner sort of ministers in England able to do this? Let them that have tried, judge.

7. Can the superstructure be firm, where the foundation is sandy? and can our affections and actions be sound and strong, when our belief of Scripture is unsound or unfirm? Sure this faith will have influence into all. For my own part, I take it to be the greatest cause of coldness in duty, weakness in grace, boldness in sinning, and unwillingness to die, &c. that our faith is either unsound or infirm in this point;[i] few christians among us, for aught I find, have any better than the popish implicit faith in this point, nor any better[k] arguments than the papists have to prove Scripture the word of God. They have received it by tradition, godly ministers and christians tell them so, it is impious to doubt of it, and therefore they believe it. And this worm, lying at the root, causeth the languishing and decay of the whole: yet it is usually undiscerned, for the root lieth secret under ground. But[l] I am apt to judge, that though the most complain of their uncertainty of salvation, through want of assurance of their own interest, and of the weakness of the applying act of faith; yet the greater cause of all their sorrows, and that which shakes the whole building, is the weakness of their faith about the truth of Scripture; though, perhaps, the other be more perceived, and this taken notice of by few. There may be great weakness and unsoundness of belief, where yet no doubtings are perceived to stir. Therefore[m] though we could persuade people to believe never so confidently, that Scripture is the very word of God, and yet teach them no more reason why they should believe this than any other book to be that word; as

[e] See also the Act of the Conference at Paris, 1565, July in the beginning.

[f] Ad primæ veritatis manifestationem per rationes demonstrativas procedendum est. Sed qui tales rationes (i. e. ab evidentia rei) ad secundam veritatem haberi non possunt, non debet esse ad hoc intentio, ut adversarius rationibus (i. e. a re) convincatur, sed ut ejus rationes quas contra veritatem habet solvantur: cum veritati fidei ratio naturalis contraria esse non possit. Singularis vero modus convincendi adversarium contra hujusmodi veritatem, est ex authoritate Scripturæ divinitus confirmata miraculis. Quæ enim supra rationem humanam sunt; non credimus, nisi Deo revelante. Aquin. Cont. Gentil. lib. 1. c. 9. Vid. etiam de hac re Spalatens. de Rep. Eccles. lib. 7. c. 9. sect. 17, 18, 21; et c. 2. sect. 8 et 22.

[g] Hooker, Eccles. Pol. 3. p. 102, 103, and lib. 2. p. 73, 74. I pray read him there more fully opening this point.

[h] Religio omnis christiana per apostolos tradita et scripta est, et super scripta prophetarum et apostolorum fundata. Dr. Sutcliff. contra Bellar. de Monach. p. 11. See Dr. Jackson of Saving Faith, sect. 2. cap. 2. p. 143, &c. See since the first edition of this, a treatise put forth by Dr. Hammond, called The Reasonableness of Christian Religion. As for those that cry out of our producing of reason in this case, as if it were Socinianism, their faith is unlike to be strong whose reason is so weak, or who renounce reason; else an infant, or a madman, would make the best christian, if reason were at such odds with faith as they imagine.

[i] Origen expoundeth the words of the apostles, Luke xvii. 5, "Lord, increase our faith," thus: Having that faith which is not according to knowledge, let us have that which is according to knowledge. Origen in cap. 10. ad Rom.; which Dr. Willet also citeth, and approveth in Comment. on Jud. sect. p. (mihi) 131.

[k] See this more fully in Dr. Preston on the Attributes, p. 61—64.

[l] See the danger and ill effects of believing Scripture on unsound grounds, excellently manifested by that excellent man of God, Mr. Pemble, Vindic. Gratiæ, p. 218—220. If I am able to judge any thing of the methods of Satan's temptations, I dare say that this weapon is reserved usually for the last combat; and that many a man's faith hath perished on this rock, both in life, and especially in the last agonies and conflicts with the power of death and darkness. Pemble ubi supra.

[m] Yet we acknowledge it belongs to the church, first, to be a witness and keeper of the Scriptures, which are true and genuine, and which are false and supposititious, or apocryphal: secondly, to divulge and preach the Scriptures: thirdly, to expound and interpret them. Dr. Whitaker de Sacra Scriptura, q. 3. cont. 1. c. 2. p. 203, 204.

it will prove in them no right way of believing, so is it in us no right way of teaching.

8. There is many a one who feels his faith shake here, who never discovers it: to doubt of our evidence, is taken for no great disgrace, and therefore men more freely profess such doubts; nay, and some, perhaps, who are not much troubled with them, because they would be thought to be humble christians. But to question the truth of Scripture, is a reproachful blasphemy, and therefore all that are guilty here, speak not their doubts.

9. Is not the greatest battery by all sorts of enemies especially made against this foundation? The first place that the papist[n] assaults you in, is here; How know you the Scripture to be the word of God? The seekers will accost you with the like question; How know you that your Scripture and your ministry is of God? The familists and libertines do spit their venom here: and some christians, by experience, are able to testify, that Satan's temptations are most violent here. Yea, and our own carnal, deluded reason is aptest of all to stumble here.

They talk of a toleration of all religions, and some desire that the[o] Jews may have free commerce amongst us: it will then be time for us, I think, to be well armed at this point. Let the ordinary professors of our time, who are of weak judgments and fiery spirits, look to it, how they will stand in such assaults: lest, as now, when they cannot answer a separatist, they yield to him; and when they cannot answer an antinomian, they turn antinomians; so, then, when they can much less answer the subtle arguments of a Jew against Christ and the gospel, they should as easily turn Jews, and deny Christ, and the verity of the gospel.

The libertines[p] among us think it necessary that we should have such a toleration to discover the unsound, who hold their faith upon tradition and custom. I am no more of their minds in this, than of his, who would have a fair virgin to lie with him, and try his chastity, and make its victory more honourable: but if we must needs have such a trial, it is time to look to the grounds of our belief, that we may be ready to give a reason of our hope.

10. However, though I were mistaken in all this, yet certain I am, that the strengthening of our faith in the verity of Scripture, would be an exceeding help to the joy of the saints, and would advance their confident hopes of rest. For myself, if my faith in this point had no imperfection, if I did as verily believe the glory to come, as I do believe that the sun will rise again when it is set; oh! how would it raise my desires and my joys; what haste should I make; how serious should I be; how should I trample on these earthly vanities, and even forget the things below; how restless should I be till my right were assured to this rest; and then, how restless till I did possess it: how should I delight in the thought of death, and my heart leap at the tidings of its approach: how[q] glad should I be of the body's decay; to feel my prison moulder to dust! Surely, this would be the fruit of a perfect belief of the truth of the promise of our eternal rest; which, though it cannot be here expected, yet should we use the most strengthening means, and press on till we have attained. "Truly," saith Mr. Pemble, (Vindic. Grat. p. 219,) "this loose and unsettled faith is one of the fiery darts and forcible engines of Satan, whereby he assaults and overthrows the hope and comfort of many a dying man; who, having not strengthened himself on this point, by undoubted arguments and experiments, is there laid at where he lies open and unarmed, by such cunning cavils, shifts, and elusions against the authority of Scripture, that the poor man, not able to clear himself of them, falls into a doubting of all religion, and sinks into despair.

Sect. II. Thus much I have purposely spoken, as to stir up christians to look to their faith, so especially to provoke some choice servants of Christ, among the multitudes of books that are written, to bestow their labours on this most needful subject; and all ministers to preach it more frequently and clearly to their people. Some think it is faith's honour to be as credulous as may be, and the weaker are the rational grounds, the stronger is the faith; and therefore we must believe and not dispute. Indeed, when it is once known to be a divine testimony, then the most credulous soul is the best. But when the doubt is, whether it be the testimony of God, or no, a man may easily be over-credulous; else, why are we bid, "believe not every spirit, but try them, whether they be of God, or not." And how should the false Christs and false prophets be known, who would "deceive, were it possible, the very elect?" "To be given up of God to believe a lie," is one of the sorest of God's judgments.

Some think the only way to deal with such temptations to blasphemy, is to cast them away, and not to dispute them;[r] and I think the direction is very good, so it be used with distinction and caution. The rule holds good against real blasphemy, known to be such; but if the person know it not, how shall he make use of this rule against it? Further, it is supposed that he who knows it to be blasphemy, hath arguments whereby to prove it such; else, how doth he know it? Therefore, here lies the sin; when a man is, by sufficient evidence, convinced, or, at least, hath evidence sufficient for conviction, that it is a divine testimony, and yet is still cherishing doubts, or hearkening to temptations which may feed those doubts; when a man, like Balaam, will take no answer. But he who will, therefore, cast away all doubts before he hath any arguments sufficient

[n] I would fain know of any papist, why their church believes the Scripture to be the word of God: if the laity must believe it upon the authority of the church, and this church be the pope and his clergy, then it followeth that the pope and clergy believe it on their own authority; as Paræus in Themat. Secul. xv. Et quia papa solus vel cum prælatis est ecclesia, ideo papa et prælati Scripturæ credunt propter seipsos. Laicos volunt credere Scripturis propter papam et prælatos.

[o] Sicut in Polonia ubi non solum preces recitant, mala et criminosa contra christianos et eorum magistratus continentes, sed etiam et audacter et sine omni christianorum metu imprimunt quæcunque volunt, ut testatur Buxtorfius Synagogæ Judaicæ, c. 5. p. 170. Nam si ad divinæ traditionis (viz. in Scripturis) caput et originem revertamur, cessat error humanus. Et quicquid sub caligine et nube tenebrarum obscurum latebat, in luce veritatis aperitur.——In compendio est igitur apud religiosas et simplices mentes et errorem deponere, atque invenire et erucre veritatem. Cyprian. Epist. 74. ad Pomp. p. 231.

[p] If a bare connivance at these divisions have already occasioned such a combustion, what do we think would a toleration do? A toleration of all sorts of sects, and schisms, and heresies, and blasphemies, which is by some, (and those more than a good many,) under the abused notion of liberty of conscience, so earnestly pleaded for? For my own part, should this be once yielded, (which I hope their eyes shall first fail that look for it,) I should look on it as the passing-bell to the church's peace and glory, if not to the true religion of God in this kingdom. Brinsley's Arraignment of Separation, p. 73.

[q] As Graserus, when he saw his legs begin to swell with a dropsy, said, Euge Deo sit laus et gloria, quod jam mea instet liberatio et horula gratissima. Melch. Adam. in vita Graseri.

[r] Impias argumentationes si ratio refutare non possit, fides irridere debet, quæ ratiocinationes evertit, et in captivitatem redigit omnem intellectum in Christi obsequium. August.

against them, or could ever prove the thing in question, he doth indeed cast aside the temptation, but not overcome it, and may expect it should shortly return again; it is a methodical cure which prevents a relapse. Such a neglecter of temptations may be in the right, and may as well be in the wrong; however, it is not right to him, because not rightly believed. Faith always implies a knowledge, and the knowledge usually of the matter and author of that testimony; divine faith hath ever a divine[s] testimony, and supposeth the knowledge of the matter, when the faith is particular, but always of the author of that testimony. An implicit faith in God, that is, a believing that all is true which he testifieth, though we see no reason for it, from the evidence of the matter, this is necessary to every true believer: but to believe implicitly, that the testimony is divine, or that Scripture is the word of God, this is not to believe God, but to resolve our faith into some human testimony; even to lay our foundation upon the sand, where all will fall at the next assault.

It is strange to consider how we all abhor that piece of popery, as most injurious to God of all the rest, which resolves our faith into the authority of the church: and yet that we do; for the generality of professors content ourselves with the same kind of faith. Only with this difference: the papists believe Scripture to be the word of God, because their church saith so;[t] and we, because our church or our leaders say so. Yea, and many ministers never yet gave their people better grounds, but tell them, which is true, that it is damnable to deny it, but help them not to the necessary antecedents of faith.

If any think that these words tend to the shaking of men's faith, I answer, first, only of that which will fall of itself; secondly, and that it may, in time, be built again more strongly; thirdly, or at least that the sound may be surer settled. It is to be understood that many a thousand do profess christianity, and zealously hate the enemies thereof, upon the same grounds, to the same ends, and from the same inward, corrupt principles, as the Jews did hate and kill Christ.[u] It is the religion of the country, where every man is reproached who believes otherwise; they were born and brought up in this belief, and it hath increased in them upon the like occasions. Had they been born and bred in the religion of Mahomet, they would have been as zealous for him. The difference betwixt him and a Mahometan is more that he lives where better laws and religion dwell, than that he hath more knowledge or soundness of apprehension.

Yet would I not drive into causeless doubtings the soul of any true believers, or make them believe their faith is unsound, because it is not so strong as some others; therefore I add, some may, perhaps, have ground for their belief, though they are not able to express it by argumentation; and may have arguments in their hearts to persuade themselves, though they have none in their mouths to persuade another; yea, and those arguments in themselves may be solid and convincing. Some may be strengthened by some one sound argument, and yet be ignorant of all the rest, without overthrowing the truth of their faith. Some, also, may have weaker apprehensions of the divine authority of Scripture than others;[x] and as weaker grounds for their faith, so a less degree of assent; and yet that assent may be sincere and saving, so it have these two qualifications: 1. If the arguments which we have for believing the Scripture, be in themselves more sufficient to convince of its truth, than any arguments of the enemies of Scripture can be to persuade a man to the contrary; and do accordingly discover to us a high degree, at least, of probability. 2. And if being thus far convinced, it prevails with us to choose this as the only way of life, and to adventure our souls upon this way, denying all other, and adhering, though to the loss of estate and life, to the truth of Christ thus weakly apprehended. This, I think, God will accept as true belief.

But though such a faith may serve to salvation, yet when the christian should use it for his consolation he will find it much fail him; even as legs or arms of the weak or lame, which when a man should use them, do fail them according to the degrees of their weakness or lameness: so much doubting as there remains of the truth of the word, or so much weakness as there is in our believing, or so much darkness or uncertainty as there is in the evidence which persuades us to believe; so much will be wanting to our love, desires, labours, adventures, and, especially, to our joys.

Therefore I think it necessary to speak a little, and but a little, to fortify the believer against temptations, and to confirm his faith in the certain truth of that Scripture which contains the promises of this rest.

CHAPTER III.

Sect. I. And here it is necessary that we first distinguish betwixt, 1. The subject matter of Scripture, or the doctrine which it contains: 2. And the words or writings containing or expressing this doctrine. The one is as the blood, the other as the veins in which it runs. Secondly, we must distinguish betwixt, 1. The substantial and fundamental part of Scripture doctrine, without which there is no salvation: and, 2. The circumstantial and the less necessary part, as genealogies, successions, chronology, &c.

Thirdly: Of the substantial, fundamental parts, 1. Some may be known and proved, even without Scripture, as being written in nature itself. 2. Some can be known only by the assent of faith to divine revelation.

Fourthly: Of this last sort, 1. Some things are above reason, as it is without divine revelation, both in respect of their probability, existence, and futurity. 2. Others may be known by mere reason, without divine testimony, in regard of their possibility and probability, but not in regard of their existence and futurity.

Fifthly: Again, matter of doctrine must be distinguished from matter of fact.

Sixthly: Matter of fact is either, 1. Such as God

[s] Though some extend belief so far as to confound it with opinion. A natura ad mysteria, ab oculo ad oraculum, a visu ad fidem, non valet consequentia.

[t] Sequor te non quo ducis, sed quo trahis, inquit Scaliger ad Cardanum in Exerc.

[u] He that doubts of this, let him see Dr. Jackson, of Saving Faith, p. 146, 147; and Mr. Pinke's Sermons of the Sincerity of Love to Christ.

[x] Articulus vi. fidei Judaicæ sic se habet: Credo perfecta fide quod omne, quodcunque prophetæ docuerunt et locuti fuerunt, veritas sincera sit. Octavus autem sic; credo perfecta fide quod lex tota, perinde ut ea hodierno tempore in manibus nostris est, ita per Deum ipsummet Mosi tradita sit. Vide Buxtorf. Synagog. Judaicæ, cap. i. p. 4, 5.

produceth in an ordinary, or, 2. Extraordinary and miraculous way.

Seventhly: History and prophecy must be distinguished.

Eighthly: We must distinguish also the books and writings themselves: 1. Between the main scope, and those parts which express the chief contents; and, 2. Particular words and phrases not expressing any substantials.

Ninthly: Also it is one question, 1. Whether there be a certain number of books which are canonical, or of divine authority? And, 2. Another question, what number there is of these, and which particular books they are?

Tenthly: The direct express sense must be distinguished from that which is only implied or consequential.

Eleventhly: We must distinguish revelation unwritten, from that which is written.

Twelfthly and lastly: We must distinguish that scripture which was spoken or written by God immediately, from that which was spoken or written immediately by man, and but mediately by God. And of this sort, 1. Some of the instruments or penmen are known; 2. Some not known. Of those known, 1. Some that spoke much in Scripture were bad men; 2. Others were godly: and of these, some were, 1. More eminent and extraordinary, as prophets and apostles; 2. Others were persons more inferior and ordinary.

Again; As we must distinguish of Scripture and divine testimony, so must we also distinguish the apprehension of faith by which we do receive it.

1. There is a divine faith, when we take the testimony to be God's own, and so believe the thing testified as upon God's words. Secondly, there is a human faith, when we believe it merely upon the credit of man.

2. Faith is either, first, implicit, when we believe the thing is true, though we understand not what it is; or, secondly, explicit, when we believe, and understand what we believe. Both these are, again, divine or human.

3. It is one thing to believe it as probable, another thing to believe it as certain.

4. It is one thing to believe it to be true conditionally, another to believe it absolutely.

5. We must distinguish betwixt the bare assent of the understanding, to the truth of an axiom, when it is only silenced by force of argument, which will be stronger or weaker as the argument seemeth more or less demonstrative. And, secondly, that deep apprehension and firm assent which proceedeth from a well-established, confirmed faith backed by experience.

6. It is one thing to assent to the truth of the axiom, another to taste and choose the good contained in it, which is the work of the will.

Sect. II. The use I shall make of these distinctions, is to open the way to these following positions, which will resolve the great questions on foot, how far the belief of the written word is of necessity to salvation, and whether it be the foundation of our faith, and whether this foundation hath been always the same?

The word foundation being a metaphor, is to be banished dispute, till first explained.

Pos. 1. The object of belief, is the will of God revealed, or a divine testimony, where two things are absolutely necessary: first, the matter; secondly, the revelation.[a]

[a] We must, therefore, know it to be a divine testimony, before we can believe it *fide divina*. For if you do merely believe it to be God's word, it is either by a divine testimony or without: if without, then it is not *fides divina*, a belief of God; if by it, then why do you believe that testimony to be divine? If upon another divine testimony, so you may run *in infinitum*. But you will say, the first testimony which witnesseth of truth doth also witness itself to be of God. *Answ.* If you mean, that it so witnesseth as a testimony to be merely believed, then the question, how you know it to be a divine testimony, will still recur *in infinitum;* but if you mean that it witnesseth itself to be divine objectively to our reason, as having the evidence of a divine spirit and authority, then you say right. But, then, as this supposeth the use of other helps to our knowledge, as tradition by human, infallible testimony, &c. so this granteth that it is more properly known than believed to be a divine testimony. Yet this is not our resolving our faith into reason or human testimony, but a discerning by reason and the help of human testimony the marks of a divine author in the writing, and the miracles, &c.; and thence also by reason concluding the divineness of that testimony into which my faith is resolved. As I detest their use of tradition, which would make it a part of God's law, to supply the defect of Scripture; so I detest that infidelity, which rejecteth all Scripture, save that which suiteth their reason, and where they can see the evidence of the thing itself. If I once know that God speaks it, I will believe any thing that he saith, though it seem never so unreasonable; but yet I will see reason for the divineness of the testimony, and know that it is indeed God that speaks it, else I must believe every testimony which affirms itself to be divine: and for those that say they only believe Scripture to be God's word, because it so testifieth of itself, and do not know it, and so make it a proper act of faith, and not of knowledge, I ask them, 1. Why, then, do you not believe (but hold him accursed) an angel from heaven, if he preach another gospel besides this, and say, It is from God; and so every one that saith, I am Christ? 2. Why do you use to produce seasons from the objective characters of divinity in the Scriptures, when you prove it to testify of itself? Do you not know, that to discern those characters as the premises, and thence to conclude the divinity, is an act of knowledge, and not of faith? Else you should only say, when you are asked, how you know Scripture to be the word of God, that you believe it, because it saith so, and not give any reason from the thing why you believe it. 3. And then how will you prove it against a Celsus, or Lucian, or Porphyry, or convince Turks and Indians? 4. And why were the Bereans commended for trying apostolical doctrine, whether it were true or not? 5. And why are we bid to try the spirits whether they be of God? What, if one of these spirits say as the old prophet, or as Rabshakeh to Hezekiah, "that he comes from God, and God bid him speak," will you believe, or try by reason? 6. Doth not your doctrine make your belief to be wholly human, as having no divine testimony for the divinity of the first testimony? and so what are all your graces like to prove which are built hereon? And what a sad influence must this needs have into all our duties and comforts! If you fly to the inward testimony of the Spirit, (as distinct from the sanctifying illumination of the Spirit,) then the question is most difficult of all, How you know the testimony of that Spirit to be divine? Unless you will take in the fearful delusion of the enthusiasts, and say, That the Spirit manifesteth the divinity of his own testimony. And then I ask, Doth it manifest it to reason? or only to inward sense? If to reason, then you come to that you fly from; and then you can produce that reason, and prove it? If only to inward sense, then how know you but a counterfeit angel of light may produce more strange effects in your soul, than these which you take to be such a manifestation? Especially seeing, (1.) We know so little of spirits, and what they can do. (2.) And we have still known those that pretended to the strangest sense of spiritual revelations, to have proved the most deluded persons in the end. 7. Doth not your doctrine teach men, in laying aside reason, to lay aside humanity, and to become brutes? If faith and reason be so contrary, as some men talk, yea, or reason so useless, then you may believe best in your sleep; and idiots, infants, and madmen are the fittest to make christians of. 8. And what an injurious doctrine is this to Christ! and disgraceful to the christian faith! 9. And how would it harden infidels, and make them deride us, rather than believe!

Thus much I am forced here to add, both because I see many teachers have need to be taught these principles (the more is the pity;) and, 2. Because some reverend brethren by their exceptions have called me to it. In a word, reason rectified is the eye of the soul, the guide of the life; the illumination of the spirit is the rectifying it. No small part of our sanctification lieth in the rectifying of our reason. The use of the word, and all ordinances and providences, is first to rectify reason, and thereby the will, and thereby the life.

2. All this revealed will is necessary[b] to the completing of our faith;[c] and it is our duty to believe it. But it is only the substance and tenor of the covenants, and the things necessarily supposed to the knowing and keeping of the covenant of grace, which are of absolute necessity to the being of faith, and to salvation. A man may be saved, though he should not believe many things, which yet he is bound by God to believe. 3. Yet this must be only through ignorance of the matter, or of the divineness of the testimony. For a flat unbelief of the smallest truth, when we know the testimony to be of God, will not stand with the being of true faith, nor with salvation. For reason lays down this ground, That God can speak nothing but truth; and faith proceeds upon that supposition. 4. This doctrine, so absolutely necessary, hath not been ever from the beginning the same, but hath differed according to the different covenants and administrations. That doctrine which is now so necessary, was not so before the fall; and that which is so necessary since the coming of Christ, was not so before his coming. Then they might be saved in believing in the Messiah to come of the seed of David: but now it is of necessity to believe, that this Jesus, the Son of Mary, is He, and that we look not for another. I prove it thus: That which is not revealed, can be no object of our faith; much less so necessary; but Christ was not revealed before the fall; nor this Jesus revealed to be He, before his coming; therefore these were not of necessity to be believed, or, as some metaphorically speak, they were then no fundamental doctrines. Perhaps, also, some things will be found of absolute necessity to us, which are not so to Indians and Turks. 5. God hath made this substance of Scripture doctrine to be thus necessary,[d] primarily, and for itself. 6. That it be revealed, is also of absolute necessity: but,[e] secondarily, and for the doctrine's sake, as a means without which believing is neither possible, nor a duty. And though where there is no revelation, faith is not necessary as a duty; yet it may be necessary, I think, as a means, that is, our natural misery may be such as can no other way be cured; but this concerns not us that have heard of Christ. 7. Nature, creatures, and Providence, are no sufficient revelation of this tenor of the covenants. 8. It is necessary not only that this doctrine be revealed, but also that it be revealed with grounds and arguments rationally sufficient to evince the verity of the doctrine, or the divineness of the testimony, that from it we may conclude the former. 9. The revelation of truth is to be considered in respect of the first immediate delivery from God: or, secondly, in respect of the way of its coming down to us, it is delivered by God immediately either by writing, as the two tables, or by informing angels, who may be his messengers, or by inspiring some choice, particular men; so that few in the world have received it from God at the first hand. 10. The only ways of revelations that, for aught I know, are now left, are Scripture and tradition. For though God hath not tied himself from revelations by the Spirit, yet he hath ceased them, and perfected his Scripture revelations; so that the Spirit only reveals what is revealed already in the word, by illuminating us to understand it. 11. The more immediate the revelation, *cæteris paribus*, the more sure; and the more succession of hands it passeth through, the more uncertain, especially in matter of doctrine. 12. When we receive from men, by tradition, the doctrine of God, as in the words of God, there is less danger of corruption, than when they deliver us that doctrine in their own words; because here taking liberty to vary the expressions, it will represent the truth more uncertainly, and in more various shapes. 13. Therefore hath God been pleased, when he ceased immediate revelation, to leave his will written in a form of words which should be his standing law and rule to try all other men's expressions by. 14. In all the fore-mentioned respects, therefore, the written word doth excel the unwritten tradition of the same doctrine. 15. Yet unwritten tradition, or any sure way of revealing this doctrine, may suffice to save him who thereby is brought to believe; as if there be any among the Abassines of Ethiopia, the Coptics in Egypt, or elsewhere, that have the substance of the covenants delivered them by unwritten tradition, or by other writings, if hereby they come to believe, they shall be saved. For so the promise of the gospel runs, giving salvation to all that believe, by what means soever they were brought to it. The like may be said of true believers in those parts of the church of Rome, where the Scripture is wholly hid from the vulgar, if there be any such parts. 16. Yet where the written word is wanting, salvation must needs be more difficult and more rare, and faith more feeble, and men's conversations worse ordered, because they want that clearer revelation, that surer rule of faith and life, which might make the way of salvation more easy. 17. When tradition ariseth no higher, or cometh originally but from this written word, and not from the verbal testimonies of the apostles before the word was written, there that tradition is but the preaching of the word, and not a distinct way of revealing. 18. Such is most of the tradition, for aught I can learn, that is now on foot in the world, for matter of doctrine, but not for matter of fact. 19. Therefore the Scriptures are not only necessary to the well-being of the church, and to the strength of faith, but, ordinarily, to the very being of faith and churches. 20. Not that the present possession of Scripture is of absolute necessity to the present being of a church; nor that it is so absolutely necessary to every man's salvation, that he read or know this Scripture himself; but that it either be at present, or have been formerly in the church: that some knowing it, may teach it to others, is of absolute necessity to most persons and churches, and necessary to the well-being of all. 21. Though negative unbelief of the authority of Scripture may stand with salvation, yet positive and universal, I think, cannot: or, though tradition may save where Scripture is not known, yet he that reads or hears the Scripture, and will not believe it to be the testimony of God, I think, cannot be saved, because this is now the clearest and surest revelation; and he that will not believe it, will much less believe a revelation more uncertain and obscure. 22. Though all Scripture be of divine authority, yet he that believeth but some one book, which containeth the substance of the doctrine of salvation, may be saved; much more they that have doubted

Faith itself is an act of reason; or else it is a brutish act, and not human. The stronger any man's reason is, the stronglier is he persuaded that God is true, and that he cannot lie; and therefore whatsoever he saith must needs be true, though reason cannot discern the thing in its own evidence. He that hath the rightest reason, hath the most grace. Sincerity (and consequently our salvation) lieth in the strength and prevalency of rectified reason over the flesh, and all its interests and desires. But without Scripture or divine revelation, and the Spirit's powerful illumination, reason can never be rectified in spirituals. By thus much, judge of the ignorance and vanity of those men, who when they read any that write of the reasonableness of christian religion, do presently accuse it, or suspect it of Socinianism.

[b] Ad bene esse et fidei perfectionem.
[c] Necessitate præcepti.
[d] Primario et propter se.
[e] Secundario et propter aliud.

but of some particular books. 23. They that take the Scripture to be but the writings of godly, honest men, and so to be only a means of making known Christ, having a gradual precedency to the writings of other godly men, and do believe in Christ upon those strong grounds which are drawn from his doctrine, miracles, &c. rather than upon the testimony of the writing, as being purely infallible and divine, may yet have a divine and saving faith. 24. Much more, those that believe the whole writing to be of divine inspiration where it handleth the substance, but doubt whether God infallibly guided them in every circumstance. 25. And yet more, those that believe that the Spirit did guide the writers to truth, both in substance and circumstance, but doubt whether he guided them in orthography; or whether their pens were as perfectly guided as their minds. 26. And yet more, may those have saving faith, who only doubt whether Providence infallibly guided any transcribers, or printers, as to retain any copy that perfectly agreeth with the autograph: yea, whether the perfectest copy now extant may not have some inconsiderable literal or verbal errors, through the transcribers' or printers' oversight, is of no great moment, as long as it is certain, that the Scriptures are not *de industria* corrupted, nor any material doctrine, history, or prophecy thereby obscured or depraved. God hath not engaged himself to direct every printer to the world's end, to do his work without any error. Yet it is unlikely that this should deprave all copies, or leave us uncertain wholly of the right reading, especially since copies were multiplied, because it is unlikely that all transcribers, or printers, will commit the very same error. We know the true copies of our statute books, though the printer be not guided by an unerring spirit. See Usher's Epistle to Lud. Capell. 27. Yet do all, or most of these, in my judgment, cast away a singular prop to their faith, and lay it open to dangerous assaults, and doubt of that which is a certain truth. 28. As the translations are no further Scripture, than they agree with the copies in the original tongues; so neither are those copies further than they agree with the autographs, or original copies, or with some copies perused and approved by the apostles. 29. Yet is there not the like necessity of having the autographs to try the transcripts by, as there is of having the original transcripts to try the translations by. For there is an impossibility that any translation should perfectly express the sense of the original. But there is a possibility, probability, and facility, of true transcribing, and grounds to prove it true, *de facto*, as we shall touch anon. 30. That part which was written by the finger of God, as also the substance of doctrine through the whole Scriptures, are so purely divine, that they have not in them any thing human. 31. The next to these, are the words that were spoken by the mouth of Christ, and then those that were spoken by angels. 32. The circumstantials are many of them so divine, as yet they have in them something human, as the bringing of Paul's cloak and parchments, and, as it seems, his counsel about marriage, &c. 33. Much more is there something human in the method and phrase, which is not so immediately divine as the doctrine. 34. Yet is there nothing sinfully human, and therefore nothing false in all. 35. But an innocent imperfection there is in the method and phrase, which if we deny, we must renounce most of our logic and rhetoric. 36. Yet was this imperfect way, at that time, all things considered, the fittest way to divulge the gospel. That is the best language which is best suited to the hearers, and not that which is best simply in itself, and supposeth that understanding in the hearers which they have not. Therefore it was wisdom and mercy to fit the Scriptures to the capacity of all. Yet will it not, therefore, follow, that all preachers, at all times, should as much neglect definition, distinction, syllogism, &c. as Scripture doth. 37. Some doctrinal passages in Scripture are only historically related, and therefore the relating them is no asserting them for truth; and therefore those sentences may be false, and yet not the Scriptures false: yea, some falsehoods are written by way of reproving them, as Gehazi's lie, Saul's excuse, &c. 38. Every doctrine that is thus related only historically, is therefore of doubtful credit, because it is not a divine assertion, except Christ himself were the speaker; and therefore it is to be tried by the rest of the Scripture. 39. Where ordinary men were the speakers, the credit of such doctrine is the more doubtful, and yet much more, when the speakers were wicked; of the former sort are the speeches of Job's friends, and divers others; of the latter sort are the speeches of the Pharisees, &c. and perhaps Gamaliel's counsels, Acts v. 34. 40. Yet where God doth testify his inspiration, or approbation, the doctrine is of divine authority, though the speaker be wicked, as in Balaam's prophecy. 41. The like may be said of matter of fact;[f] for it is not either necessary or lawful, to speak such words or do such actions, merely because men in Scripture did so speak or do; no, not though they were the best saints; for their own speeches or actions are to be judged by the law, and therefore are no part of the law themselves. And as they are evil where they cross the law, as Joseph's swearing, the ancients' polygamy, &c.; so are they doubtful where their congruence with the law is doubtful. 42. But here is one most observable exception, conducing much to resolve that great doubt, whether examples bind; where men are designed by God to such an office, and act by commission, and with a promise of direction, their doctrines are of divine authority, though we find not where God did dictate; and their actions done by that commission are current and exemplary, so far as they are intended or performed for example; and so example may be equivalent to a law, and the argument, *a facto ad jus*, may hold. So Moses being appointed to the forming of the old church and commonwealth of the Jews, to the building of the tabernacle, &c.; his precepts and examples in these works, though we could not find his particular direction, are to be taken as divine. So also the apostles, having commission to form and order the gospel churches, their doctrine and examples therein, are by their general commission warranted; and their practices in establishing the Lord's day, in settling the offices and orders of churches, are to us as laws, still binding with those limitations as positives only, which give way to greater. 43. The ground of this position is, because it is inconsistent with the wisdom and faithfulness of God, to send men to a work, and promise to be with them, and yet to forsake them, and suffer them to err in the building of that house, which must endure till the end of the world. 44. Yet if any of the commissioners do err in their own particular conversations,[g] or in matters without the extent of their commission, this may consist with the faithfulness of God: God hath not promised them infallibility and perfection; the disgrace is their own: but if they should miscarry in that wherein they are sent to be

[f] A facto ad jus ad licitum vel debitum non valet argum.

[g] As Peter, Gal. ii. 12, 13.

a rule to others, the church would then have an imperfect rule, and the dishonour would redound to God. 45. Yet I find not that ever God authorized any mere man to be a lawgiver to the church in substantials, but only to deliver the laws which he had given to interpret them, and to determine circumstantials not by him determined. 46. Where God owneth men's doctrines and examples by miracles, they are to be taken as infallibly divine; much more, when commission, promises, and miracles, do concur, which confirmeth the apostles' examples for current. 47. So that if any of the kings or prophets had given laws, and formed the church, as Moses, they had not been binding, because without the said commission; or if any other minister of the gospel shall by word or action arrogate an apostolical privilege. 48. There is no verity about God, or the chief happiness of man written in nature, but it is to be found written in Scriptures.[h] 49. So that the same thing may, in these several respects, be the object both of knowledge and of faith. 50. The Scripture being so perfect a transcript of the law of nature or reason, is much more to be credited in its supernatural revelations. 51. The probability of most things, and the possibility of all things, contained in the Scriptures, may well be discerned by reason itself, which makes their existence or futurity the more easy to be believed. 52. Yet before this existence or futurity of any thing beyond the reach of reason can be soundly believed, the testimony must be known to be truly divine. 53. Yet a belief of Scripture doctrine as probable, doth usually go before a belief of certainty, and is a good preparative thereto. 54. The direct, express sense, must be believed directly and absolutely as infallible, and the consequences, where they may be clearly and certainly raised; but where there is danger of erring in raising consequences, the assent can be but weak and conditional. 55. A consequence raised from Scripture, being no part of the immediate sense, cannot be called any part of Scripture. 56. Where one of the premises is in nature, and the other only in Scripture, there the conclusion is mixed, partly known, and partly believed. That it is the consequence of those premises is known; but that it is a truth, is, as I said, apprehended by a mixed act. Such is a christian's concluding himself to be justified and sanctified, &c. 57. Where, through weakness, we are unable to discern the consequences, there is enough in the express direct sense for salvation. 58. Where the sense is not understood, there the belief can be but implicit. 59. Where the sense is partly understood, but with some doubting, the belief can be but conditionally explicit; that is, we believe it, if it be the sense of the word. 60. Fundamentals must be believed explicitly and absolutely.[i]

CHAPTER IV.

THE FIRST ARGUMENT TO PROVE SCRIPTURE TO BE THE WORD OF GOD.

SECT. I. Having thus showed you in what sense the Scriptures are the word of God, and how far to be believed, and what is the excellency, necessity, and authority of them, I shall now add three or four arguments to help your faith; which, I hope, will not only prove them to be a divine testimony to the substance of doctrine, (though that be a useful work against our unbelief,) but also that they are the very written laws of God, and a perfect rule of faith and duty, 2 Tim. iii. 16. My arguments shall be but few, because I handle it but on the bye, and those such as I find little of in ordinary writings, lest I should waste time in doing what is done to my hands.

1. [a] Those writings and that doctrine which were confirmed by many and real [b] miracles, must needs be of God, and consequently of undoubted truth. But the books and doctrines of canonical Scripture were so confirmed; therefore, &c.

Against the major proposition nothing of any moment can be said; for it is a truth apparent enough to nature, that none but God can work real miracles, or, at least, none but those whom he doth especially enable thereto; and it is as manifest that the righteous and faithful God will not give this power for a seal to any falsehood or deceit.

The usual objections are these: first, antichrist shall come with lying wonders.[c]

Answ. They are no true miracles: as they are τέρατα ψεύδους, 2 Thess. ii. 9, lying, in sealing to a lying doctrine; so also in being but seeming and counterfeit miracles. The like may be said to those of Pharaoh's magicians, and all other sorcerers and witches, and those that may be wrought by Satan himself. They may be wonders, but not miracles.[d]

Object. 2. God may enable false prophets to work

[h] Suffieiunt quidem sanetæ ac divinitus inspiratæ Scripturæ ad omnem instructionem veritatis. Athanas. lib. 1. eont. Gentil. initio.

[i] Credere autem hæe talia debemus Deo, qui et nos feeit rectissime seientes, quia Scripturæ quidem perfeetæ sunt; quippe a verbo Dei et spiritu ejus dictatæ. Nos autem secundum quod minores sumus, et novissimi a verbo Dei et spiritu ejus, secundum hoe et scientia mysteriorum ejus indigemus. Et non est mirum si in spiritualibus, cœlestibus, et in his quæ habent revelari, hoe patimur nos: quandoquidem etiam eorum quæ ante pedes sunt, (dieo autem quæ sunt in hae creatura, quæ et eonteruntur a nobis, et videntur, et sunt nobiseum,) multa fugerunt nostram seientiam, et Deo hæe ipsa eommittimus. Oportet enim eum præ omnibus præeellare. Quid enim si tentemus exponere eausam aseensionis Nili? Multa quidem dieimus, et fortassis suasoria, fortassis autem non suasoria; quod autem verum est et certum adjacet Deo. Sed et volantium animalium habitatio, eorum quæ veris tempore adveniunt ad nos, et autumni reeedunt, eum in hoe mundo hoe ipsum fiat, fugit nostram scientiam, &e. Irenæus adv. Hæres. lib. 2. e. 47.

[a] See this argument from miracles, managed by Camero Prælect. De Verbo Dei, (fol.) p. 439—441, &e. and Grotius De Verit. Religionis Christianæ. Vide et Polan. Syntag. lib. 1. e. 17.

[b] Donum et miraculorum et linguarum dandarum fuisse et extraordinarium, et a solis apostolis (peeuliari privilegio dato a Christo) eonferri solitum, eerto certius est. Danæus contr. Bellarm. de Baptismo, p. 443. But this *certio certius* is a mistake, if he intend to exelude all besides apostles.

[c] Nam ut Ægyptiorum vatum nequaquam vis omnis æquari gratiæ potest, quæ Mosi mirandum est in modum eollata. Sed exitus arguit, Ægyptios prætigiis niti: Moysen vero quæ gesserit, gessisse divinitus. Sie et eorum qui Christi falso sibi nomen adseiseunt, et qui perinde ae Jesu discipuli virtutes mentiuntur et prodigia; coarguuntur plane vel in omnis iniquitatis seduetiones fallaces, &e. Origen. eont. Celsum. lib. 2. fol. (mihi) 23. G. I do not believe that God would have let the Egyptian sorcerers do so great things as they did, had not Moses been present, that so his miraeles might diseredit their wonders, and God be the more magnified by the eonquest.

[d] Fuerunt miraeula ut buceinæ atque præeones quibus evangelium commendabatur. Ut enim lex Mosis eompluribus miraeulis in monte Sinæ et per desertum authoritatem sibi eoneiliavit, quæ postea destiterunt eum ad terram promissionis ventum est; eademque ratione miracula nunc quoque sublata sunt, eum evangelium per universum orbem diffusum est. Promissio igitur quam Christus in Mareo 16, 17, scribi voluit, non ad omnia tempora pertinebat. Pet. Mart. Loe. Commun. Clas. 1. c. 8. sect. 20.

miracles to try the world, without any derogation to his faithfulness.

Answ. No: for divine power being properly the attendant of divine revelation, if it should be annexed to diabolical delusion, it would be a sufficient excuse to the world for their believing those delusions. And if miracles should not be a sufficient seal to prove the authority of the witness to be divine, then is there nothing in the world sufficient; and so our faith will be quite overthrown.

Object. But, however, miracles will no more prove Christ to be the Son of God, than they will prove Moses, Elias, or Elisha, to be the sons of God, for they wrought miracles as well as Christ.

Answ. Miracles are God's seal,[e] not to extol the person that is instrumental, nor for his glory; but to extol God, and for his own glory. God doth not intrust any creatures with his seal so absolutely, as that they may use it when and in what case they please. If Moses, or Elias, had affirmed themselves to be the sons of God, they could never have confirmed that affirmation with a miracle; for God would not have sealed to a lie. Christ's power of working miracles did not immediately prove him to be the Christ, but it immediately proved his testimony to be divine, and that testimony spoke his nature and office; so that the power of miracles in the prophets and apostles was not to attest to their own greatness, but to the truth of their testimony concerning Christ. Whatsoever any man affirms to me, and works a real miracle to confirm it, I must needs take myself bound to believe him.

Object. But what if some one should work miracles to confirm a doctrine contrary to Scripture, would you believe it? Doth not Paul say, "If an angel from heaven teach any other doctrine, let him be accursed?"

Answ. I am sure God will never give any false teacher the power of confirming his doctrine by miracles;[f] else God should subscribe his name to contradictions. The appearance of an angel is no miracle, though a wonder.

Object. But every simple man knows not the true definition of a miracle, and consequently knows not the difference between a miracle and a wonder, and so knows not how to believe on this ground.

Answ. As God doth not use the testimony of miracles, but on very great and weighty causes, to wit, where natural and ordinary means of conviction are wanting, and usually for the delivering of some new law or truth to the world, or the like; so when he doth use it, he sufficiently manifesteth the reality of the miracles.[g] Satan's wonders are such as may be done by natural means; though perhaps, through our ignorance, we see not the means. But God oft worketh that which no natural means can do, and Satan never performed; as the raising of the dead to life, the creating of sight to him that was born blind, the dividing of the sea, the standing still of the sun, with multitudes of the like.[h] Again, though many of Christ's works may be done by natural means, as the healing of the deaf, the dumb, the lame, &c. yet Christ did them all by a word speaking, and so it is apparent that he made no use of natural means, secretly nor openly. Again, the wonders of Satan are most commonly juggling delusions, and therefore the great miracles that pagans and papists have boasted of, have been but some one or two strange things in an age, or usually before one or two, or some few, and that of the simple and more partial sort, that are easily deceived: but if upon the fame of these you go to look for more that may be a full and open testimony, you will fail of your expectation. But, contrarily, that there might be no room for doubting left, Christ wrought his miracles before multitudes; feeding many thousands at several times, with a small quantity; healing the sick, blind, lame, and raising the dead, before many; the persons afterwards showing themselves to the world, and attesting it to his enemies: and this he did not once or twice, but most frequently; so that they that suspected deceit in one, or two, or ten, might be satisfied in twenty. Yea, which is the greatest convincing discovery of the reality, it was not himself only, but multitudes of his followers, whom he enabled, when he was gone from them, to do the like, to speak strange languages before multitudes, to heal the sick and lame, and raise the dead. And usually false wonders are done but among friends, that would have it so, and are ready to believe; but Christ wrought his in the midst of enemies that gnashed the teeth, and had nothing to say against it. And I am persuaded that it was one reason why God would have Christ and all his followers have so many and cruel enemies, that when they had nothing to say against it, who doubtless would pry narrowly into all, and make the worst of it, it might tend to the establishing of believers afterwards. Again, usually false miracles, as they crept out in the dark, so they were not divulged till some after-ages, and only a little muttered of at the present: but Christ and his apostles wrought and published them openly in the world. If the gospel history had been false, how many thousand persons could have witnessed against it, seeing they appealed to thousands of witnesses then living, of several ranks, and qualities, and countries! It is true, indeed, the magicians of Egypt did seem to go far. But consider whether they were mere delusions, or real wonders by secret, natural means; doubtless, they were no miracles directly so called. And lest any should say that God tempted them by such above their strength, you may observe that he doth not suffer Satan to do what he can do, without a sufficient counter-testimony to undeceive men. When did God suffer the like deceit as those sorcerers used? Nor would he then have suffered it, but that Moses was at hand to overcome their delusions, and leave the beholders with full conviction, that so the enemies' strength might make the victory the more glorious. Balaam could not go beyond the word of the Lord. So that I desire all weak believers to observe this, That as God is the faithful Ruler of the world, so he will not let loose the enemy of mankind to tempt us by wonders, further than he himself shall give us a sufficient contradictory testimony. So that if we do not know the difference between a miracle and a wonder, yet God's faithfulness affords us a sufficient preservative, if we disregard it not. And if we should grant that Satan can work miracles; yet he being wholly at God's dispose, it is certain that God will not permit him to do it, without a full contradiction; and, therefore, such as Christ's miracles he shall never work. Else should the creature

[e] See how Christ's miracles prove his Godhead, in Botsacei Anti-Crellio, p. 178, 179, 194, 195, 198, 716—718, &c. So Marius Victorius advers. Arian. lib. 1.

[f] That none but God can work a miracle, (except as an angel may be his instrument,) see Aquin. cont. Gentiles, lib. 3. q. 122; also, what a miracle is, ibid. q. 10; and of magicians' wonders, q. 103, 104.

[g] Read Zanchius at large of this, vol. 1. tom. 3. lib. 4. c. 12. De Potentia Dæmonum.

[h] Miracula vera sunt propria veræ ecclesiæ. Nam certum est Deum veracem et gloriæ suæ zelo ardentem, nunquam testimonia perhibiturum fuisse aut esse iis qui falsam doctrinam de ipso et voluntate ejus spargunt. Pol. Syntagm. lib. 1. cap. 28.

be remedilessly deluded by supernatural powers, while God looks on.

Secondly: But the main assault I know will be made against the minor proposition of the argument, and so the question will be, *de facto*, whether ever such miracles were wrought or no? I shall grant that we must not here argue circularly to prove the doctrine to be of God by the miracles, and then the miracles to have been wrought by the divine testimony of the doctrine, and so round. But yet, to use the testimony of the history of Scripture, as a human testimony of the matter of fact, is no circular arguing.

Sect. II. Toward the confirmation of the minor, therefore, I shall first lay these grounds: 1. That there is so much certainty in some human testimony, that may exclude all doubting, or cause of doubting;[i] or there is some testimony immediately human, which yet may truly be said to be divine: 2. That such testimony we have of the [k] miracles mentioned in Scripture. If these two be cleared, the minor will stand firm, and the main work here will be done.

1. Position.

2. Position.

First: I will therefore show you, that there is such a certainty in some human testimony. Both experience and reason will confirm this. First, I would desire any rational man to tell me, whether he that never was at London, at Paris, or at Rome, may not be certain, by a human faith, that there are such cities? For my own part, I think it as certain to me, nay, more certain, than that which I see: and I should sooner question my own sight alone, than the eyes and credit of so many thousands in such a case. And I think the sceptic arguments brought against the certainty of sense, to be as strong as any that can be brought against the certainty of such a testimony. Is it not somewhat more than probable, think you, to the multitudes that never saw either parliament or king, that yet there is such an assembly, and such a person: may we not be fully certain that there was such a person as King James, as Queen Elizabeth, as Queen Mary, &c. here in England; yea, that there was such a man as William the Conqueror? may we not be certain, also, that he conquered England; with many other of his actions? The like may be said of Julius Cæsar, of Alexander the Great, &c.[l] Sure, those who charge all human testimony with uncertainty, do hold their lands then upon an uncertain tenure.

Secondly: It may be proved, also, by reason; for, 1. If the first testifiers may infallibly know it; and, 2. Also by an infallible means transmit it to posterity; and, 3. Have no intent to deceive; then their testimony may be an infallible testimony. But all these three may easily be proved. I had thought to have laid down here the rules, by which a certain human testimony may be discerned from an uncertain; but you may easily gather them from what I shall lay down for the confirmation of these three positions.

For the first, I suppose none will question whether the testifiers might infallibly know the truth of what they testify? If they should, let them consider: First, If it be not matter of doctrine, much less abstruse and difficult points, but only matter of fact, then it is beyond doubt it may be certainly known. Secondly, If it be those also who did see, and hear, and handle, who do testify it. Thirdly, If their senses were sound and perfect, within reach of the object, and having no deceiving medium. Fourthly, Which may be discerned, 1. If the witnesses be a multitude; for then it may be known they are not blind or deaf, except they had been culled out of some hospitals; especially when all present do both see and hear them: 2. When the thing is done openly, in the daylight: 3. When it is done frequently, and near at hand; for then there would be full opportunity to discover any deceit. So that in these cases it is doubtless sense is infallible, and, consequently, those that see and hear are most certain witnesses.

2. Next let us see, whether we may be certain that any testimony is sincere, without a purpose to deceive us. And I take that for undoubted in the following cases: 1. Where the party is ingenuous and honest: 2. And it is apparent he drives on no design of his own, nor cannot expect any advantage in the world;[m] 3. Nay, if his testimony will certainly undo him in the world, and prove the overthrow of his ease, honour, estate, and life. 4. And if it be a multitude that do thus testify, how can they do it with an intent to deceive? 5. And if their several testimonies do agree; 6. And if the very enemies deny not this matter of fact, but only refer it to other causes; then there is no possibility of deceit, as I shall further, anon, evince, when I apply it to the question: 7. And if no one of the witnesses in life, or at the hour of death, did ever repent of his testimony, and confess it a deceit; as certainly some one would have done for so great a sin, if it had been so.

Thirdly: We are to prove, that there are infallible

[i] De certitudine Histor. lege Reignoldum De Lib. Apocr. Prælect. 124—126. Respondeo, esse quandam famam, quæ tanti esse debet; tantæ, inquam, authoritatis, ac si rem ipsam oculis usurpassemus, Camer. Prælect. de Verbo, fol. p. 440. See there his full proof that these miracles of Christ and the disciples have such infallible testimony, and by what conditions certain fame may be known from uncertain.

[k] Fides humana non habet sua natura certitudinem infallibilem: quamvis sit fides humana, quæ moraliter loquendo, evidens et infallibilis censetur; ut quod Roma sit, quod Indi sint, &e. Ames. in Disput. de Fidei Divin. Veritat. thes. 3.

[l] Nothing commoner in Paul's Epistles than the mention of those miracles which were done among them and by themselves to whom he wrote. This had been stark madness, and not folly only in Paul, if he had lied. For he brought not arguments remote from their senses to whom he wrote, but he mentioneth those miracles which they themselves did work to whom he wrote; yea, he provoked them to miracles, that from thence they might judge of his apostleship. There is no deceiver that dare do thus, especially if his deceit be called into question. We conclude, therefore, that the report of fame ought to be believed, the authors whereof have so commended the things reported to posterity, that they might easily be discovered by them that lived in those times. Camero in Prælect. de Verbo, folio, p. 441. The reasons why no more mention is made of Christ's miracles by pagan writers, you may find in Camero De Verbo Dei, p. 441; where he shows also, as the malice, so the gross ignorance of Suetonius, Tacitus, and the best of their writers, both in the Syrian affairs and in the matters of the Jewish and christian religion, which caused their palpable, ridiculous errors.

[m] Quinam isti sint fortasse quæritis? gentes, populi, nationes, et incredulum illud genus humanum; quod nisi aperta res esset, et luce ipsa clarior, nunquam rebus hujusmodi credulitatis suæ commodarent assensum. An nunquid dicemus illius temporis homines, usque adeo fuisse vanos, mendaces, stolidos, brutos, ut quæ nunquam viderant? vidisse se fingerent? et quæ facta omnino non erant, falsis proderent testimoniis aut puerili assertione firmarent? Cumque possent vobiscum et unanimiter vivere, et inoffensas ducere conjunctiones, gratuita susciperent odia, et execrabili haberentur in nomine? Arnobius advers. Gentes, lib. i. p. (mihi) 46. Nec dixerit aliquis opum assequendarum gratia eos id agere. Qui plerumque ne ad victum quidem necessaria capiunt. Et si forte aliquid præ rerum inopia capere quandoque coguntur, sola sunt necessitate contenti. Cum ingens hominum multitudo ad christianam doctrinam accesserit, et prædivites quidam, et ex his aliqui qui gesserint magistratus, et matronæ insuper opulentæ et nobiles, audebit ne aliquis gloriæ cupiditate hos illosve suæ affirmare christianæ religionis antistites fieri, &c. Origen. cont. Celsum, lib. iii. fol. (mihi) 30.

means of transmitting such testimony down to posterity, without depraving any thing substantial. And then it will remain an undoubted truth, that there is a full certainty in some human testimony, and that to posterity at a remote distance.

Now, this tradition is infallible in these cases: 1. If it be (as before said) in matter of fact only, which the meanest understandings are capable of apprehending. 2. If it be also about the substance of actions, and not every small circumstance. 3. And also if those actions were famous in their times, and of great note and wonder in the world, and such as were the cause of public and eminent alterations. 4. If it be delivered down in writing, and not only by word of mouth, where the change of speech might alter the sense of the matter. 5. If the records be public, where the very enemies may see them; yea, published on purpose by heralds and ambassadors, that the world may take notice of them. 6. If they are men of greatest honesty in all ages, who have both kept and divulged these records. 7. And if there have been also a multitude of these. 8. And this multitude of several countries, where they could never so much as meet to agree upon any deceiving counsels; much less all accord in such a design; and, least of all, be able to manage it with secrecy. 9. If also the after-preservers and divulgers of these records could have no more self-advancing ends, than the first testifiers. 10. Nay, if their divulging and attesting these records, did utterly ruin their estates and lives, as well as it did the first testifiers. 11. If there be such a dispersing of the copies of these records all over the world, that the cancelling and abolishing them is a thing impossible. 12. If the very histories of the enemies do never affirm any universal abolishing and consuming of them.[n] 13. If all these dispersed copies through the world do perfectly agree in every thing material. 14. If it were a matter of such moment in the judgment of the preservers, neither to add nor diminish, that they thought their eternal salvation did lie upon it. 15. If the histories of their enemies do generally mention their attesting these records to the loss of their lives, and that successfully in every age. 16. If these records and attestations are yet visible to the world, and that in such a form as none could counterfeit. 17. If the enemies that lived near or in those times when the things were done, do, 1. Write nothing against them of any moment.[o] 2. But oppose them with fire and sword, instead of argument. 3. Nay, if they acknowledge the fact, but deny the cause only.[p] 18. And if all the enemies were incompetent witnesses. 1. Witnessing to the negative, of which they could have no certainty. 2. And carried on with apparent malice and prejudice. 3. And having all worldly advantages attending their cause. 4. And being generally men unconscionable and impious. 19. If all these enemies, having all these worldly advantages, could neither by arguments nor violence hinder people from believing these famous and palpable matters of fact, in the very age wherein they were done, when the truth and falsehood might most easily be discovered, but that the generality of beholders were forced to assent. 20. If multitudes of the most ingenious and violent enemies, have in every age, from the very acting of these things to this day, been forced to yield, and turned as zealous defenders of these records and their doctrine, as ever they were opposers of them before. 21. If all these converts do confess upon their coming in, that it was ignorance, or prejudice, or worldly respects, that made them oppose so much before. 22. If all the powers of the world, that can burn the bodies of the witnesses, that can overthrow kingdoms, and change their laws, could never yet reverse and abolish these records. 23. Nay, if some notable judgment in all ages, have befallen the most eminent opposers thereof. 24. And lastly, if successions of wonders (though not miracles as the first) have in all ages accompanied the attestation of these records. I say, if all these twenty-four particulars do concur, or most of these, I leave it to the judgment of any man of understanding, whether there be not an infallible way of transmitting matter of fact to posterity? and, consequently, whether there be not more than a probability, even a full certainty, in such a human testimony?

Sect. III. 2. The second thing which I am to manifest, is, that we have such a testimony of the miracles, which confirmed the doctrine and writings of the Bible.[q]

And here I must run over the three foregoing particulars again; and show you, First, That the witnesses of Scripture miracles could and did infallibly know the truth which they testified: Secondly, That they had no intent to deceive the world: and, Thirdly, That it hath been brought down to posterity by a way so infallible, that there remains no doubt whether our records are authentic. For the first of these, I think it will be most easily acknowledged. Men are naturally so confident of the infallibility of their own senses, that sure they will not suspect the senses of others. But if they should, let them have recourse to what is said before, to put them out of doubt. First, It was matter of fact, which might be easily discerned. Secondly, The apostles and others who bore witness to it were present, yea, continual companions of Christ, and the multitude of christians were eye-witnesses of the miracles of the apostles.[r] Thirdly, These were men neither blind

[n] I do confidently say, that for extrinsical testimonies contradicting these of the Scripture, there are none such at all to be found, unless you will take the sayings of such as were both born long after, and were professed enemies to the christian name. Grotius de Ver. Relig. lib. iii. p. (mihi) 168. And it is a strong confirmation, when no man can produce one contradictory testimony of that age. De legis instauratione per Esdram, et an amissæ, an tantum corruptæ essent Scripturæ, lege Serrarii Prolegom. c. 12. q. 1. et quæ colligit Euseb. Nieremb. de Orig. S. Scrip. lib. iv. c. 19.

[o] Rabbini et alii.

[p] Justin Martyr telleth Tryphon, in his Dialogue, of the wickedness of the Jews, that they sent out into all parts of the world their choicest men, to persuade the people against the christians, that they are atheists, and would abolish the Deity; and that they were convicted of gross impiety. And yet this mischievous industry of the Jews did not prevail.

[q] Episcopi communiter tunc habebant potestatem faciendi miracula, inquit Dionysius, Carthu. in Apocal. c. 3.

[r] Beholding the creatures with astonishment, they saw all confessing Christ the Lord: they that had their cogitations intent on men, as if they had been gods, comparing Christ's works with theirs; they acknowledged that Christ only amongst men, was God, and the Son of God, and our Saviour, when they saw that there was no such works wrought by men, as were by the Word of God. They that had believed devils to be gods, seeing them overcome by Christ, they were constrained to confess him only to be God. They whose minds went after the dead, as being accustomed to worship gallant men when they were dead, whom the poets called gods, being better taught by our Saviour's resurrection, they confessed them to be false and liars, and that the Word of the Father was the only true God, who had the command of death. Athanas. de Incarnat. Verbi. Maxima est differentia inter, 1. Testificationem primitivæ ecclesiæ quæ fuit tempore apostolorum: 2. Inter testificationem ecclesiæ quæ proxime post apostolorum tempora secuta est, quæque primæ ecclesiæ testificationem acceperat: 3. Et inter testificationem præsentis ecclesiæ de Scriptura. Quæ enim et nunc et antea fuit ecclesia, si potest ostendere testimonia eorum qui acceperant et novcrant testificationem primæ ecclesiæ de germanis scriptis, credimus ei, ut testi probanti sua dicta: non autem habet

nor deaf, but of as sound and perfect senses as we. Fourthly, This is apparent; 1. Because they were great multitudes, even that were present, and therefore could not all be blind; if they had, how did they walk about? Fifthly, These miracles were not done by night, nor in a corner, but in the open light, in the midst of the people. Sixthly, They were not once or twice only performed, but very oft, of several kinds, by several persons, even prophets, and Christ himself and his apostles, in many generations; so that, if there had been any deceit, it might have been easily discovered. Seventhly, and lastly, It was in the midst of vigilant and subtle enemies, who were able and ready enough to have evinced the deceit.

So that it remains certain that the first eye-witnesses themselves were not deceived.

2. Let us next consider whether it be not, also, as certain that they never intended the deceiving of the world.

First: It is evident that they were neither fools nor knaves, but men of ingenuity, and extraordinary honesty: there needs no more to prove this, than their own writings, so full of enmity against all kind of vice, so full of conscientious zeal and heavenly affections. Yet is this their honesty also attested by their enemies. Sure the very remnants of natural honesty are a divine offspring, and do produce also certain effects according to their strength and nature. God hath planted and continued them in man, for the use of societies, and common converse: for if all honesty were gone, one man could not believe another, and so could not converse together. But now supernatural, extraordinary honesty, will produce its effect more certainly: if three hundred or three thousand honest, godly men should say, they saw such things with their eyes, he is very incredulous that would not believe it.

Secondly: It is apparent that neither prophets, apostles, nor disciples, in attesting these things, could drive on any designs of their own.[s] Did they seek their honour, or ease, or profit, or worldly delights? Did their Master give them any hopes of these? Or did they see any probability of their attaining it? Or did they see any of their fellows attain it before them?

Thirdly: Nay, was it not a certain way to their ruin in the world? Did not their Master tell them, when he sent them out, that they should be persecuted of all for his sake and the gospel's? Did they not find it true, and therefore expected the like themselves? Paul knew, that in every city bonds and afflictions did abide him. And they lay it down as a granted rule, that he that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution. Now I would fain know, whether a man's self, his estate, his liberty, his life, be not naturally so near and dear to all, that they would be loth to throw it away, merely to deceive and cozen the world? All that I know can be objected is, that they may do it out of a desire to be admired in the world for their godliness and their suffering.

Answ. 1. Go see where you can find thousands or millions of men that will cast away their lives to be talked of.

2. Did they not, on the contrary, renounce their own honour and esteem, and call themselves vile and miserable sinners, and speak worse of themselves than the most impious wretch will do, and extol nothing but God and his Son Jesus?

3. Did not their Master foretell them, that they should be so far from getting credit by his service, that they should be hated of all men, and their names cast out as evil-doers? Did they not see him spit upon, and hanged on a cross among thieves before their eyes, some of them? Did they not find by experience, that their way was every where spoken against? and the reproach of the cross of Christ was the great stumblingblock to the world? And could men possibly choose such a way for vainglory? I am persuaded it is one great reason why Christ would have the first witnesses of the gospel to suffer so much to confirm their testimony to future ages, that the world might see that they intended not to deceive them.

Fourthly: Consider, also, what a multitude these witnesses were.[t] How could so many thousands of several countries lay the plot to deceive the world? They were not only thousands that believed the gospel, but thousands that saw the miracles of Christ, and many cities and countries that saw the miracles of the apostles.

Fifthly: And the testimony of all doth so punctually accord, that the seeming contradiction in some smaller circumstances, doth but show their simplicity and sincerity, and their agreement in the main.[u]

Sixthly: And is it possible that no one of them would so much as at death, or in torments, have detected the deceit?

Seventhly and lastly: The very enemies acknowledge this matter of fact;[x] only they ascribe it to other causes. They could not deny the miracles that were wrought: even to this day the Jews acknowledge much of the works of Christ, but slanderously father them upon the power of the devil, or upon the force of the name of God sewed in Christ's thigh, and such-like ridiculous stories they have; even the Turks confess much of the miracles of Christ, and believe him to be a great prophet, though they are professed enemies to the christian name.

potestatem statuendi aut decernendi aliquid de libris sacris, cujus non possit certa documenta ex testificatione primitivæ ecclesiæ proferre. Chemnit. Exam. Conc. Tridentin. part. 1. initio, p. 80. Quisquis adhuc prodigia, ut credat, inquirit, magnum est ipse prodigium, qui mundo credente, non credit. Dr. Humfredus in Jesuitism. p. 166. August.

[s] Nemo jam infamiam incutiat: nemo aliud existimet: quia nec fas est ulli de sua religione mentiri. Ex eo enim quod aliud a se coli dicit, quam colit, et culturam, et honorem in alterum transfert: et transferendo jam non colit quod negavit. Dicimus, et palam dicimus, et vobis torquentibus lacerati et cruenti vociferamur, "Deum colimus per Christum," illum hominem putate: per eum, et in eo se cognosci vult Deus et coli. Tertullian. Apologet. c. 11. Quod si falsa (ut dicitis) historia est illa rerum, unde tam brevi tempore totus mundus ista religione completus est? Asseverationibus allecti sunt nudis, inducti in spes cassas, et in pericula capitis immittere se sponte temeraria desperatione voluerunt? Cum nihil tale vidissent, quod eos in hos cultus novitatis suæ possit excitare miraculo? Immo quia hæc omnia ab ipso cernebant geri, et ab ejus præconibus qui per orbem totum missi beneficia patris et munera hominibus portabant; veritatis ipsius vi victi, dederunt sese Deo: nec in magnis posuere dispendiis membra vobis projicere, et viscera sua lanianda præbere. Arnobius advers. Gent. lib. i. p. 46. Julian confesseth that those were the writings of Peter, Paul, Mark, Luke, which the christians ascribed to them.

[t] In unam coire qui potuerunt mentem Gentes regionibus disjunctæ, ventis, cœli convexionibusque dimotæ? &c. Arnob. ubi supra.

[u] Of the heathen ancient writers' attestations to the several histories of the Bible, I shall particularly say little, it being done so fully by Grotius De Ver. Christ. Rel. lib. i. s. 16, 22. lib. ii. s. 7. lib. iii. s. 16. Tertul. de præscriptione affirmat ipsas authenticas apostolorum literas, hoc est ipsa scripta apostolorum suo adhuc tempore in ecclesiis apostolicis conservata extitisse.

[x] Eodem momento dies, medium orbem signante sole, subducta est. Deliquium utique putaverunt, qui id quoque super Christo prædicatum nescierunt. Et tamen eum mundi casum relatum in archivis vestris habetis. Tertul. Apol. c. 21.

So that I think by all this it is certain, that the first witnesses of the miracles of Christ and his apostles, as they were not deceived themselves, so neither had they any intent to deceive the world.

3. We are next to show you, that the way that this testimony hath come down to us, is a certain infallible way. For,[y]

1. Consider, it is a matter of fact; (for the doctrine we are not now mentioning, except *de facto*, that this was the doctrine attested).

2. They were the substances of the actions that they chiefly related, and that we are now inquiring after the certainty of. Though men may mistake in the circumstances of the fight at such a place, or such a place, yet that there were such fights we may certainly know. Or though they may mistake in smaller actions, circumstances, or qualifications, of Henry the Eighth, of William the Conqueror, &c.; yet that there were such men we may certainly know. Now the thing we inquire after is, whether such miracles were wrought, or no?

3. They were actions then famous through the world,[z] and made great alterations in states: they turned the world upside down: cities were converted, countries and rulers were turned christians. And may not the records in eminent actions be certain? We have certain records of battles, of sieges, of successions of princes among the heathens before the coming of Christ, and of the great alterations in our own state for a very long time.

4. It was a formal record[a] in the very words of the first witnesses in writing, which hath been delivered to us, and not only any unwritten testimony; so that men's various conceivings or expressions could make no alteration.

5. These records, which we call the Scripture, have been kept publicly in all these ages; so that the most negligent enemy might have taken notice of its depravation. Yea, God made it the office of his ministers to publish it, whatever came of it, to all the world, and pronounced a woe to them if they preach not this gospel; which preaching was both the divulging of the doctrine and miracles of Christ, and all out of these authentic records. And how then is it possible there should be a universal depravation, and that even in the narration of the matters of fact, when all nations almost, in all these ages since the original of the history, have had these heralds who have proclaimed it to the death?

6. And it is most apparent that the keepers and publishers of these records, have been men of most eminent piety and honesty. The same testimony which I gave before to prove the honesty of the first witnesses, will prove theirs, though in a lower degree: a good man, but a christian, was the character given them by their very foes.

7. They have been a multitude, almost innumerable.

8. And these of almost every country under heaven. And let any man tell me how all these, or the chief of them, could possibly meet, to consult about the depraving of the history of the Scripture? And whether it were possible, if such a multitude were so ridiculously dishonest, yet that they could carry on such a vain design with secrecy and success.[b]

9. Also, the after-divulgers of the miracles of the gospel could have no more self-advancing ends for a long time than the first witnesses.

10. Nay, it ruined them in the world, as it did the first, so that let any man judge whether there be any possibility that so many millions of so many nations should ruin themselves, and give their bodies to be burned, merely to deprave those Scriptures which they do profess?

11. Consider, also, when this sacred history was so dispersed over the world, whether the cancelling and extirpation of it were not a thing impossible, especially by those means that were attempted?[c]

12. Nay, there is no history of the enemies that doth mention any universal abolition or depravation of these records.[d] When was the time, and where was the place, that all the Bibles in the world were gathered together, and consumed with fire, or cor-

[y] Every sect that acknowledgeth God and Christ, hath those books as we have; and every sect using its testimony against the other, shows it was not falsified; for if it had, the adverse sect would have discovered it, as Grot. De Verit. Rel. lib. iii. s. 15. Irenæus, Tertullian, Cyprian, Lactantius, and the rest of the eldest fathers, fully manifest, that the several books of the New Testament were then current and uncorrupt in the church; and allege abundance of places in the same words, as they are now in our Bibles, as Justin Martyr, Arnobius, Lactantius, Athenagoras, &c. do out of the Old.

[z] The occasion of writing the several books of the New Testament, you may see in Chemnit. Exa. Concilii. Trid. in the beginning.

[a] Dico evangelium Lucæ quod tuemur apud ecclesias apostolicas, et jam universas ab initio editionis suæ stare. Tertul. adv. Marc. Vide Sibrand. Lubbert. De Principiis christianorum Dogmatum, l. 2, &c. Jam etiam quemadmodum diximus, et mortui resurrexerunt, et perseveraverunt nobiscum annis multis; et quid autem? Non est numerum dicere gratiarum, quas per universum mundum ecclesia a Deo accipiens, in nomine Christi per singulos dies in opitulationem gentium perficit, neque seducens aliquem, nec pecuniam ei auferens. Quemadmodum enim gratis accepit a Deo gratis administrat. Nec invocationibus angelicis faciat aliquid, nec incantationibus, nec aliqua prava curiositate. Sed munde et pure et manifeste orationes dirigentes ad Dominum qui omnia fecit, et nomen Domini nostri Jesu Christi invocans, virtutes secundum utilitates hominum, sed non ad seductionem perfecit. Si itaque et nunc nomen Domini nostri Jesu Christi beneficia præstat et curat firmissime, et vere omnes ubique credentes in eum, &c. Irenæus advers. Heresces, lib. ii. c. 57. Evangelium adulterasse alios nullos præter Marcionistas quosdam hereticos norim, et Valentini sectatores, et eos forte qui a Lucano quodam prodierant. Origen. cont. Celsum, lib. ii. fol. (mihi) 20.

[b] Even among the papists, the more learned and modest maintain the perfection of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, as Arias, Pagninus, Vatablus, Cajetan. Quid est gens Judæorum nisi quædam scriniaria christianorum bajulans legem et prophetas in testimonium assertionis ecclesiæ? Aug. cont. Faust. Manichæum, lib. xii. c. 23.

[c] There were some of the first copies kept till two hundred years after: and a book that was dispersed in so many copies, and kept not by private men, but by the public diligence of the church, could not be falsified. Moreover, in the very first ages it was translated into the Syriac, the Ethiopic, the Arabic, and Latin tongues; which translations are all yet extant, and in nothing of any moment differ from the Greek books. Besides, we have the writings of those that were instructed by the apostles themselves, or their disciples, who cite abundance of places out of the Scriptures in the same sense as we read them now. Nor was there any man then of such authority in the church, as that they would have obeyed him if he had changed any thing, as Irenæus's, Tertullian's, Cyprian's free dissent from those who were then most eminent, doth show. Next to these times there succeeded men of great learning and judgment, who after diligent search, did receive these books as remaining in their primitive purity. Grotius de Verit. Relig. lib. iii. sect. 15.

[d] Antiochus did what he could, but left the Jews their Scripture entire in despite of him. Nam cum tot secula intercesserint, nemo tamen quicquam addere vel auferre vel permutare ausus fuit: omnibus enim nostræ gentis hominibus insita quodammodo atque ingenita fides est, credere hæc Dei esse consulta, et his acquiescere. ac pro ipsis, si ita res poscęret, libenter animam ponere. Joseph. cont. Appian. lib. i. Sic et Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. iii. c. 10. Ita Philo, referente Eusebio, Præparat. Evang. lib. viii. c. 2. Mirabile mihi videtur duohus annorum millibus, imo majore tempore jam ferc transacto, nec verbum unum in lege illius esse immutatum, sed centies unusquisque Judæorum prius moriętur; quam legi Mosaicæ derogabit.

rupted with forgery? Indeed, Julian thought by prohibiting the schools of learning to the children of christians, to have extirpated christianity; but Christ did quickly first extirpate him.

13. All those copies of those sacred writings do yet accord, in all things material, which are found through the world. And consider then if they had been depraved, whether multitudes of copies, which had escaped that depravation, would not by their diversity, or contradiction, have bewrayed the rest?

14. It was a matter of such a heinous quality, both by the sentence of the law, and in the consciences of the preservers and divulgers of it, to add or diminish the least tittle, that they thought it deserved eternal damnation. And I refer it to any man of reason, whether so many thousands of men through the world, could possibly venture upon eternal torment, as well as upon temporal death; and all this to deceive others, by depraving the laws which they look to be judged by, or the history of those miracles which were the grounds of our faith? Is not the contrary somewhat more than probable?

15. Furthermore, the histories of the enemies do frequently mention that these Scriptures have been still maintained to the flames. Though they revile the christians, yet they report this their attestation, which proves the constant succession thereof, and the faithful delivery of christianity and its records to us. It would be but needless labour to heap up here the several reports of pagan historians, of the numbers of christians, their obstinacy in their religion, their calamities and torments.

16. These records and their attestations are yet visible over the world, and that in such a form as cannot possibly be counterfeit. Is it not enough to put me out of doubt, whether Homer ever wrote his Iliads, or Demosthenes his Orations, or Virgil and Ovid their several works, or Aristotle his volumes of so many of the sciences, when I see and read these books yet extant; and when I find them such, that I think can hardly now be counterfeited, no, nor imitated? But if they could, who would have been at the excessive pains, as to have spent his life in compiling such books, that he might deceive the world, and make men believe that they were the works of Aristotle, Ovid, &c.; would not any man rather have taken the honour to himself? so here the case is alike. Yea, these Scriptures, though they have less of arts and sciences, yet are incomparably more difficult to have been counterfeited than the other; I mean before the first copies were drawn. I would here stay to show the utter impossibility of any man's forging these writings, but that I intend to make that a peculiar argument.

17. Whether any enemy hath, with weight of argument, confuted the christian cause; whether, when they have undertaken it, it hath not been only arguing the improbability,[e] or assigning the miracles to other causes, or an imposing the doctrine delivered by the christians,[f] rather than these miraculous actions in question; I leave those to judge who have read their writings; yea, whether their common arguments have not been fire and sword.

18. It is an easy matter yet to prove, that the enemies of Scripture have been incompetent witnesses; 1. Being men that were not present, or had not the opportunity to be so well acquainted with the actions of Christ, of the prophets and apostles, as themselves or others, that do attest them. 2. Being men of apparent malice, and possessed with much prejudice against the persons and things which they oppose. This I might easily and fully prove, if I could stand upon it. 3. They had all worldly advantages attending their cause, which they were all to lose, with life itself, if they had appeared for Christ. 4. They were generally men of no great conscience, nor moral honesty; and most of them of most sensual and vicious conversation. This appears by their own writings, both doctrinal and historical.[g] What sensual interpretations of the law did the very strict sect of the Pharisees make! What fleshly laws have the followers of Mahomet! What vices did the laws of the heathens tolerate! Yea, what foul errors are in the ethics of their most rigid moralists! And you may be sure that their lives were far worse than their laws; and, indeed, their own histories do acknowledge as much. To save me the labour of mentioning them, read Dr. Hackwell's apology on that subject. Sure such men are incompetent witnesses in any cause between man and man, and would be so judged at any impartial judicature. And, indeed, how is it possible that they should be much better, when they have no laws that teach them either what true happiness is, or what is the way and means to attain it? 5. Besides all this, their testimony was only of the negative, and that in such cases as it could not be valid.

19. Consider, also, that all the adversaries of these miracles and relations could not, with all their arguments or violence, hinder thousands from believing them, in the very time and country where they were done: but that they who did behold them, did generally assent at least to the matter of fact; so that we may say with Austin, either they were miracles or not: if they were, why do you not believe? if they were not, behold the greatest miracle of all, that so many thousands, even of the beholders, should be so blind, as to believe things that never were, especially in those very times when it was the easiest matter in the world to have disproved such falsehoods. If there should go a report now of a man at London, that should raise the dead, cure the blind, the deaf, the sick, the possessed, feed thousands with

[e] They think the Scripture miracles incredible; and yet every age still hath such wonders as the next ages will not believe. Why is not the raining of manna or quails from heaven as credible as the raining of that grain about ten years ago in England? It fell in many parts of the kingdom. It was like a withered wheat corn, but not so long, with a skin of a dark colour, which being pulled off, the grain had a taste somewhat sharp and hot. I tasted it, and kept some of it long, which fell on the leads of the church, and of the minister's house in Bridgnorth, where I preached the gospel: and within this year I have seen grain that hath fallen twice since; of which the latter seemed the same with the first above mentioned; but the other was of a different sort. Jan. 1661. Tiberius, upon a letter from Pilate of the miracles, death, and resurrection of Christ, did move in the senate to proclaim him to be God; but they refused, because the motion was not first from themselves: but the emperor did abide in his opinion still. Egesip. Anacephal. Wherefore Tertullian bids them, "Go look in your registers, and the acts of your senate," in Apol. Vide Usher, Brit. Eccl. Prim. p. 3, 4.

[f] Not being able to resist such open truths, or say any thing against them, they will not deny what is written, but say they yet expect these things, and that the Word is not yet come. Athanas. de Incarn. Verbi. Malunt nescire, quia jam oderunt: adeo quod nesciunt, præjudicant id esse, quod si sciant, odisse non poterant. Tertul. Apol. 1.

[g] Of the general wickedness of the Romans themselves, and all heathen enemies to Christ, the testimonies are too large here to be inserted. You may find enough in Just. Martyr's Dialog. cum Triph. and Apologies, &c.; in Tertullian's Apol. et passim; in Origen. Cont. Celsum; Arnobius Advers. Gent.; Lactantius's Institutions; Athenagoras; Tatianus; Minutius Fælix, Advers. Gentil.; Athanas. passim; Irenæus; Clemens Alexandrinus, passim; and all the writers of those times.

five loaves, &c.; and that a multitude of his followers should do the like, and that a great many times over and over, and that in the several parts of the land, in presence of crowds, and thousands of people; I pray you, judge whether it were not the easiest matter in the world to disprove this, if it were false; and whether it were possible that whole countries and cities should believe it? Nay, whether the easiness and certainty of disproving it, would not bring them all into extreme contempt?

Two things will be here objected: first, that then the adversaries' not believing will be as strong against it, as the disciples' believing is for it. *Answ.* Read what is said before of the adversary's incompetency, and it may satisfy as to this. Secondly, Consider, also, that the generality of the adversaries did believe the matter of fact, which is all that we are now inquiring after.[h] The recital here of those multitudes of testimonies that might be produced from antiquity, is a work that my strait time doth prohibit, but is done by others far more able. Only that well-known passage in Josephus I will here set down: "In the time of Tiberius, there was one Jesus, a wise man, at least, if he was to be called a man, who was a worker of great miracles, and a teacher of such who love the truth, and had many, as well Jews as gentiles, who clave unto him. This was Christ. And when Pilate, upon his being accused by the men of our nation, had sentenced him to be crucified, yet did they not who had first loved him forsake him: for he appeared to them the third day alive again, according to what the prophets, divinely inspired, had foretold concerning him, as they had done an innumerable number of very strange things besides. And even to this day, both the name and sort of persons called christians, so named from him, do remain." Thus far Josephus, a Jew by nation and religion, who wrote this about eighty-six years after Christ, and fourteen years before the death of St. John, himself being born about five or six years after Christ.

20. Consider, also, how that every age hath offered multitudes of witnesses, who before were most bitter and violent enemies, and divers of those men of note for learning and place in the world.[i] How mad was Saul against the truth! Surely it could be no favour to the cause, nor over-much credulity, that caused such men to witness to the death, the truth of that for which they had persecuted others to the death but a little before. Nor could childish fables, or common flying tales, have so mightily wrought with men of learning and understanding: for some such were christians in all ages.

21. Nay, observe but the confessions of these adversaries, when they came to believe: how generally and ingenuously they acknowledge their former ignorance and prejudice to have been the cause of their unbelief.

22. Consider, also, how unable all the enemies of the gospel have been to abolish these sacred records. They could burn those witnesses by thousands, but yet they could never either hinder their succession, or extinguish their testimonies.

23. Nay, the most eminent adversaries have had the most eminent ruin: as Antiochus, Herod, Julian, with multitudes more. This stone having fallen upon them, hath ground them to powder.

24. It were not difficult here to collect from unquestioned authors, a constant succession of wonders, at least, to have in several ages accompanied the attestation of this truth; and notable judgments that have befallen the persecutors of it. And though the papists, by their fictions and fabulous legends, have done more wrong to the christian cause, than ever they are able to repair; yet unquestionable history doth afford us very many examples: and even many of those actions which they have deformed with their fabulous additions, might yet for the substance have much truth: and God might, even in the times of popery, work some of these wonders, though not to confirm their religion as it was popish, yet to confirm it as it was christian; for, as he had then his church, and then his Scripture, so had he then his special providences to confirm his church in their belief, and to silence the several enemies of the faith. And therefore I advise those who, in their inconsiderate zeal, are apt to reject all these histories of Providence, merely because they were written by papists, or because some witnesses to the truth were a little leavened with some popish errors, that they would first view them, and consider of their probability of truth or falsehood, that so they may pick out the truth, and not reject all together in the lump; otherwise, in their zeal against popery, they should injure christianity.

And now I leave any man to judge, whether we have not had an infallible way of receiving these records from the first witnesses?

Not that every of the particulars before mentioned are necessary to the proving our certain receiving the authentic records without depravation; for you may perceive, that almost any two or three of them might suffice; and that divers of them are from abundance for fuller confirmation.

Sect. IV. And thus I have done with this first argument, drawn from the miracles which prove the doctrines and writings to be of God. But I must satisfy the scruples of some before I proceed. First, Some will question, whether this be not, 1. To resolve our faith into the testimony of man: 2. And so make it a human faith: and so, 3. To jump in this with

Objections against this argument answered.

[h] Julian, when he scorneth Christ, doth acknowledge his miracles. "What," saith he, "hath this Jesus done worthy of memory, or of any account, in all his life, save that he cured a few blind and lame, and delivered some from devils that possessed them?" &c. Hic est qui stellam signare fecit nativitatem, &c. In Judea natum ex Perside supplices adorare venerunt viri. Athanas. de Incarn. Verbi. Ea omnia super Christo Pilatus, et ipse jam pro sua conscientia Christianus, Cæsari tum Tiberio nunciavit; sed et Cæsares credidissent super Christo, si aut Cæsares non essent seculo necessarii; aut si et Christiani potuissent esse Cæsares. Tertul. Apol. c. xxi. Of the sun darkened in Tiberius's time, when Jesus was crucified, and of the earthquake, Phlegon hath written in the thirteenth or fourteenth book, De Temporibus, saith Origen Cont. Celsum, lib. ii. fol. (mihi) 21. The star that appeared at Christ's birth is mentioned by Pliny, lib. ii. c. 25. So do divers others, as Origen reports, Cont. Celsum. Herod's killing the children is mentioned in Augustus's taunt: "I had rather," saith he, "be Herod's swine than his son, because he killed a son of his own among the rest." Macrob. Saturnal.

[i] Josephus relates the life of John the Baptist as the evangelists do. The darkness and earthquake at Christ's death is acknowledged by Phlegon, in lib. Chron. xiii. Lucian bids his tormentors search their own chronicles, and they should find that in Pilate's time the light failed in the midst of the day, and the sun was darkened while Christ was suffering. Tertullian also appealeth to their own chronicles, Apol. And that it was no natural eclipse is known to astronomers. See Marcilius Ficinus of the star. The death of Herod is set out by Josephus, Antiq. lib. xix. c. 7. as by Luke. Irenæus affirmeth, that in his time the working of miracles, the raising of the dead, the casting out of devils, healing the sick by mere laying on of hands, and prophesying, were still in force; and that some that were so raised from the dead remained alive among them long after. See Niceph. Eccles. Histor. tom. 1. lib. iv. c. 23. And Justin Martyr saith that the gift of prophesying was famous in the church in his time, Dialog. ad Tryph. And Cyprian and Tertullian mention the ordinary casting out of devils, and challenge the heathen to come and see it.

the papists, who believe the Scripture for the authority of the church, and to argue circularly in this, as they. To this I answer:

First: I make in this argument the resolution of my faith into the miracles wrought, as testimonies divine to confirm the doctrine.[k] If you ask, why I believe the doctrine to be of God? I answer, because it was confirmed by many undeniable miracles. If you ask, why I believe those miracles to be from God? I answer, because no created power can work a miracle: so that the testimony of man is not the reason of my believing, but only the means by which this matter of fact is brought down to my knowledge. Again, our faith cannot be said to be resolved into that which we give in answer to your last interrogation, except your question be only still of the proper grounds of faith. But if you change your question, from What is the ground of my faith? to What is the means[l] of convcying down the history to me? then my faith is not resolved into this means. Yet this means, or some other equivalent, I acknowledge so necessary, that without it I had never been like to have believed. 2. This shows you also that I argue not in the popish circle, nor take my faith on their common grounds. For, first, when you ask them, How know you the testimony of the church to be infallible? they prove it again by Scripture; and there is their circle. But as I trust not on the authority of the Romish church only, as they do; no, nor properly to the authority of any church; no, nor only to the testimony of the church, but also to the testimony of the enemies themselves: so do I prove the validity of the testimony I bring from nature, and well-known principles in reason, and not from Scripture itself, as you may see before. 3. There is a human testimony, which is also divine; and so a human faith, which is also in some sort divine. Few of God's extraordinary revelations have been immediate; the best schoolmen think none at all;[m] but either by angels, or by Jesus himself, who was man as well as God. You will acknowledge if God reveal it to an angel, and the angel to Moses, and Moses to Israel, this is a divine revelation to Israel. For that is called a divine revelation, which we are certain that God doth any way reveal. Now, I would fain know, why that which God doth naturally and certainly reveal to all men, may not as properly be called a divine revelation,[n] as that which he reveals by the Spirit to a few. Is not this truth from God, that the senses' apprehension of their object, rightly stated, is certain, as well as this, "Jesus Christ was born of a Virgin?" &c. Though a saint or an angel be a fitter messenger to reveal the things of the Spirit, yet any man may be a messenger to reveal the things of the flesh. An ungodly man, if he have better eyes and ears, may be a better messenger or witness of that matter of fact which he seeth and heareth, than a godlier man that is blind or deaf, especially in cases wherein that ungodly man hath no provocation to speak falsely; and, most of all, if his testimony be against himself. I take that relation, whereby I know that there was a fight at York, &c. to be of God, though wicked men were the witnesses. For I take it for an undeniable maxim, that there is no truth but of God, only it is derived unto us by various means.

Sect. V. 2. And as I have evidently discovered the full certainty of this testimony of man, concerning the forementioned matter of fact; so I will show you why I choose this for my first and main argument; and also that no man can believe without the foresaid human testimony. First, then, I demand with myself, by what argument did Moses and Christ evince to the world the verity of their doctrine? and I find it was chiefly by this of miracles; and, sure, Christ knew the best argument to prove the divine authority of his doctrine; and that which was the best then, is the best still. If ourselves had lived in the days of Christ, should we have believed a poor man to have been God, the Saviour, the Judge of the world, without miracles to prove this to us? nay, would it have been our duty to have believed? Doth not Christ say, "If I had not done the works that no man else can do, ye had not had sin?" that is, your not believing me to be the Messias had been no sin: for no man is bound to believe that which was never convincingly revealed.

What the sin against the Holy Ghost is.

And I think that this is it which is called the sin against the Holy Ghost,[o] when men will not be convinced by miracles, that Jesus is the Christ. That which some divines judge to be the sin against the Holy Ghost, an opposing the known truth only out of malice against it, it is a question whether human nature be capable of. And whether all human opposition to truth be not through ignorance, or prevalency of the sensual lusts; and so all malice against truth, is only against it as conceived to be falsehood, or else as it appeareth an enemy to our sensual desires: else how doth man's understanding, as it is an understanding, naturally choose truth, either real or appearing, for its object? So that, I think, none can be guilty of malice against truth as truth; and to be at enmity with truth for opposing our sensuality, is a sin that every man in the world hath been, in some measure, guilty of. And, indeed, our divines do so define the sin against the Holy Ghost, that I could never yet understand by their definition what it might be: some placing it in an

[k] Non fidem quæ verbis Dei habetur, etsi non prorsus nasci ex miraculis, attamen ex eis confirmari possumus credere. Pet. Mart. Loc. Commun. c 8. p. 38. Vide plura ibid. Lege Whitak. Duplicat. adv. Stapleton. De Sac. Script. lib. i. c. 3. p. 55—57, &c. plenissime de hoc disserent. Sic, &c. c. 4. p. 62. et c. 5. et c. 6. de quatuor officiis ecclesiæ circa Scriptur. viz. ut sit tabellio vel registrarius. 2. Vindex qui veras Script. a falsis vindicet. 3. Præco, qui Script. promulget et divulget. 4. Interpres. Vide etiam lib. ii. c. 5. p. 332—334, &c. Et triplex officium ecclesiæ dat Polanus Syntag. lib. i. c. 28.

[l] Non per alios dispositionem salutis nostræ cognovimus, quam per eos per quos evangelium pervenit ad nos; quod quidem tunc præconiaverunt, postea vero per Dei voluntatem in Scripturis nobis tradiderunt, fundamentum et columnam fidei nostræ futurum. Iren. adv. Hær. lib. iii. c. 1.

[m] Aquin. Sum. 3. q. 55. c. 2.

[n] Though I know it is only a testimony, or revelation without evidence, *ex parte rei*, that makes truth the object of faith in a strict sense; yet that which is revealed to reason and sense in its owu evidence, is also certain objectively; and more certain sometimes, *certitudine subjecti*, as Hooker against Mr. Travers. Sacra Scriptura quam apud homines nondum Spiritu Dei, et vera fide donatos habet authoritatem, propter quam ab illis incipit admitti, et audiri tanquam verbum Dei, habet ab ecclesiæ testimonio. Polan. Synt. lib. iii. c. 28.

[o] I confess I kept silent this opinion and exposition some years, because I knew no man that did hold it; and I am afraid of rash adventuring on novelty, though resolved not to reject any revealed truth. But since, I find great Athanasius hath written a tractate on the sin against the Holy Ghost, maintaining the very same exposition which I here give (or with very small difference; though I assent not to his application in the end of all to the Arians); which being from one of so great authority, and explaining it more fully than I might do in this short digression, I desire the learned, who rejected my exposition, to peruse it; where also you may find his confutation of the subtle, but unsound opinion of Origen about this sin, as also of the opinion of Theognostus, though I know some do question that book, but on weak grounds. See my Discourse of the Sin against the Holy Ghost, in my third part of the Unreasonableness of Infidelity.

act incompatible with the rational soul, and others making it but gradually to differ from other sins,[p] which hath cast so many into terror of soul, because they could never find out that gradual difference.

The sense of the place, which the whole context, if you view it deliberately, will show you, seems to me to be this: as if Christ had said, While you believed not the testimony of the prophets, yet there was hope; the testimony of John Baptist might have convinced you; yea, when you believed not John, yet you might have been convinced by my own doctrine; yea, though you did not believe my doctrine, yet there was hope you might have been convinced by my miracles.[q] But when you accuse them to be the works of Beelzebub, and ascribe the work of the divine power, or Spirit, to the prince of devils, what more hope? I will, after my ascension, send the Holy Ghost upon my disciples, that they may work miracles to convince the world, that they who will believe no other testimony, may yet through this, believe: but if you sin against this Holy Ghost, that is, if they will not believe for all these miracles, for the Scripture frequently calls faith by the name of obedience, and unbelief by the name of sin, there is no other more convincing testimony left, and so their sin of unbelief is incurable, and consequently unpardonable: and therefore he that speaketh against the Son of man, that is, denieth his testimony of himself, it shall be forgiven him, if he yet believe this testimony of the Spirit; but they that continue unbelievers for all this, and so reproach the testimony that should convince them, as you do, shall never be forgiven, because they cannot perform the condition of forgiveness.

This I think to be the sense of the text; and the rather, when I consider, what sin it was that these Pharisees committed; for sure that which is commonly judged to be the sin against the Holy Ghost, I no where find that Christ doth accuse them of; but the Scripture seemeth to speak on the contrary, "that through ignorance they did it," Acts iii. 17; "for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory," 1 Cor. ii. 8. And, indeed, it is a thing to me altogether incredible, that these Pharisees should know Christ to be the Messiah, whom they so desirously expected, and to be the Son of God, and Judge of all men, and yet to crucify him through mere malice: charge them not with this, till you can show some scripture that charged them with it.

Object. Why, then, there is no sin against the Holy Ghost, now miracles are ceased?

Answ. Yes:[r] though the miracles are ceased, yet their testimony doth still live;[s] the death and resurrection of Christ are past, and yet men may sin against that death and resurrection. So that, I think, when men will not believe that Jesus is the Christ, though they are convinced by undeniable arguments, of the miracles which both himself and his disciples wrought; this is now the sin against the Holy Ghost. And, therefore, take heed of slighting this argument.

Sect. VI. 2. And here would I have those men, who cannot endure this resting upon human testimony,[t] to consider of what necessity it is for the producing of our faith. Something must be taken upon trust from man, whether they will or no; and yet no uncertainty in our faith neither. 1. The mere illiterate man must take it upon trust, that the book is a Bible which he hears read; for else, he knows not but it may be some other book: 2. That those words are in it, which the reader pronounceth: 3. That it is translated truly out of the original languages: 4. That the Hebrew and Greek copies, out of which it was translated, are true, authentic copies: 5. That it was originally written in these languages: 6. Yea, and the meaning of divers Scripture passages, which cannot be understood without the knowledge of Jewish customs of chronology, of geography, &c. though the words were ever so exactly translated. All these, with many more, the vulgar must take upon the word of their teachers; and, indeed, a faith merely human, is a necessary preparative to a faith divine, in respect of some means, and *præcognita* necessary thereto. If a scholar will not take his master's word that such letters have such or such a power, or do spell so or so; or that such a Latin or Greek word hath such a signification; when will he learn, or how will he know? Nay, how do the most learned linguists know the signification of words in any language, and so in the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures, but only upon the credit of their teachers and authors? and yet certain enough too in the main. Tradition is not so useless to the world or the church as some would have it. Though the papists do sinfully plead it against the sufficiency of Scripture, yet Scripture sufficiency or perfection is only *in suo genere*, in its own kind, not *in omni genere*, not sufficient for every purpose. Scripture is a sufficient rule of faith and life; but not a sufficient means of conveying itself to all generations and persons.[u] If human testimony had not been necessary, why should Christ have men to be witnesses in the beginning; and also still instruments of persuading others, and attesting the verity of these sacred records to those that cannot otherwise come to know them?

And, doubtless, this is the chief[x] use of the minis-

[p] How Hunnius was assaulted with this temptation, "that he sinned against the Holy Ghost," you may read in his life and death: and it is still a common temptation. Matt. xii. 24, &c.; Mark iii. 28; John v. 39, 43, 45—47; John xv. 22, 24.

[q] Deus ad confirmandum ea quæ naturalem cognitionem excedunt, opera visibiliter ostendit, quæ totius naturæ superant facultatem: ut patet in mirabili curatione languorum, mortuorum suscitatione, cœlestium corporum mirabili mutatione; et quod est mirabili humanarum mentium inspiratione, ut idiotæ simplices dono Spiritus Sancti repleti, summam sapientiam et facundiam in instanti consequerentur. Aquin. cont. Gent. l. 1. c. 6.

[r] Ex vetustissima antiquitate prodiit veritas Dei, quænam sit vera religio. Cui confirmandæ Deus miranda testimonia addidit, quæ essent velut perpetua quædam et authentica sigilla veritatis divinæ. Hemming. in Præfat. ante Postil.

[s] Nunc non ut olim sunt necessaria miracula; priusquam crederet mundus, necessaria fuere ad hoc ut mundus crederet, ut Aug. de Civ. Dei, lib. xxii. c. 8.

[t] Yet do I believe that that of 2 Pet. i. 20, is generally mistaken; as if the apostles did deny private men the liberty of interpreting Scriptures, even for themselves; when it is in regard of the object, and not of the interpreter, that the apostle calleth it "private:" as if he should say, The prophets are a sure testimony of the doctrine of christianity: but then you must understand that they are not to be interpreted of the private men that spoke them; for they were but types of Christ the public person. So Psal. ii. and xvi. &c. are to be interpreted of Christ, and not of David only, a private person, and but a type of Christ in all: as Philip answereth the question of the eunuch in Acts viii. Of whom doth the prophet speak; of himself, privately, or some other more public man? This is, I think, the true meaning of Philip.

[u] I wish the papists would read Cyprian, 7. Epist. ad Pompeium, against tradition and their pope's supremacy; and Clem. Alex. saith the apostles' teaching ended in Nero's time. But, after that, about Adrian's time, those that devised heresies arose, as Basilides, who said Glaucia was his master, who was Peter's interpreter. So Valentine, they say, heard Theodate, who was Paul's familiar; and Marcion, being born in the same age, was conversant with them, as an old man with the younger: after whom he awhile heard Simon Peter preach; which being so, it is clear that these latter churches are innovated from the ancient true church, being heresies of adulterine note. Stromat. lib. vii. fine. You see heretics pretended tradition, and what church Clement turns us to!

[x] Oportet discentem credere. Aristot. in Analytic. post. Titus i. 7; 1 Cor. i. 4; xii. 24; xvii. 21; Luke xii. 42; Heb.

The use of church governors and teachers, and how far they are to be obeyed.

ters in the church,[y] and the great end of God in the stating and continuing their function; that what men are uncapable of believing explicitly, with a faith properly divine, that they might receive implicitly, and upon the word of their teachers, with a human faith. Every man should labour indeed to see with his own eyes, and to know all that God hath revealed, and to be wiser than his teachers; but every man cannot bestow that time and pains in the study of languages and sciences, without which that knowledge is not now attained. We may rather wish than hope, that all the Lord's people were prophets. The church of Christ hath been long in a very doleful plight betwixt these two extremes, taking all things upon trust from our teachers, and taking nothing upon trust: and yet those very men who so disclaim taking upon trust, do themselves take as much upon trust as others.

Why else are ministers called the eyes and the hands of the body; stewards of the mysteries, and of the house of God; overseers, rulers, and governors of the church; and such as must give the children their meat in due season; fathers of their people? &c. Surely they clearly know truth and duty must be received from any one, though but a child; and known error and iniquity must be received from none, though an angel from heaven. What, then, is that we are so often required to obey our teaching rulers in? Surely it is not so much in the receiving of new-instituted ceremonies from them, which they call things indifferent: but, as in all professions, the scholar must take his master's word in learning, till he can grow up to know the things in their own evidence; and as men will take the words of any artificers in the matters that concern their own trade;[z] and as every wise patient will trust the judgment of his physician, except he know as much himself; and the client will take the word of his lawyer: so also Christ hath ordered that the more strong and knowing should be teachers in his school, and the young and ignorant should believe them and obey them, till they can reach to understand the things themselves. So that the matters which we must receive upon trust from our teachers, are those which we cannot reach to know ourselves, and therefore must either take them upon the word of others, or not receive them at all: so that, if these rulers and stewards do require us to believe, when we know not ourselves whether it be truth or not; or if they require us to obey, when we know not ourselves whether it be a duty commanded by God or not; here it is that we ought to obey them. For though we know not whether God hath revealed such a point, or commanded such an action, yet that he hath commanded us to obey them that rule over us, who preach to us the word of God, this we certainly know, Heb. xiii. 7. Yet I think we are not so strictly tied to the judgment of a weak minister of our own, as to take his word before another's, that is more judicious, in a neighbour congregation. Nor do I think, if we see but an appearance of his erring, that we should carelessly go on in believing and obeying him without a diligent searching after the truth: even a likelihood of his mistake must quicken us to further inquiry, and may, during that inquiry, suspend our belief and obedience. For where we are able to reach to know probabilities in divine things, we may with diligence possibly reach to that degree of certainty which our teachers themselves have attained, or at least to understand the reason of their doctrine. But still remember what I said before, that fundamentals must be believed with a faith explicit, absolute, and divine.

And thus I have showed the flat necessity of taking much upon the testimony of man; and that some of these human testimonies are so certain, that they may well be called divine. I conclude all with this intimation: you may see by this, of what singular use are the monuments of antiquity, and the knowledge thereof, for the breeding and strengthening of the christian faith; especially the histories of those times. I would not persuade you to bestow so much time in the reading of the fathers, in reference to their judgment in matters of doctrine; nor follow them in all things, as some do.[a] God's word is a sufficient rule; and latter times have afforded far better expositors. But in reference to matters of fact, for confirming the miracles mentioned in Scripture, and relating the wonderful providences since, I would they were read a hundred times more; not only the writers of the church, but even the histories of the enemies, and all other antiquities. Little do most consider how useful these are to the christian faith. And therefore our learned antiquaries are highly to be honoured, and exceeding useful instruments in the church.

If yet any man be so blind that he think it uncertain whether these be the same books which were written by the apostles; I would ask him by what assurance he holdeth his hands? 1. How knoweth he that his deeds, conveyances, or leases, are not counterfeit; or that they are the same that his forefathers made? They have nothing but men's words for it; and yet they think they are certain that their lands are their own. 2. And whereas they hold all they have by the law of the land, how know they that these laws are not counterfeit; and that they are the same laws which were made by such kings and parliaments so long ago, and not forged since? They have nothing but men's words for all this. And yet if this be uncertain, then any man, lord, or knight, or gentleman, may be turned out of all he hath, as if he had no certain tenure or assurance. And is it not evident that those laws which are so kept and practised through all the land, cannot possibly be counterfeit, but it would have been publicly known? And yet a word in the statute-book may be falsely printed. And much more certain it is that the Scriptures cannot be counterfeit, because it is not in one kingdom only, but in all the world that

xiii. 3, 17, 24; 1 Tim. iii. 5; Acts xx. 28; 1 Tim. iii. 4, 5; 1 Pet. v. 2; 1 Cor. iv. 15.

[y] If the revilers of the ministers of Christ, with whom this vicious age aboundeth, did know what power ministers had, both in the apostles' times, and many hundred years after, and what strict discipline was used, as they may see in holy Cyprian among others, they would not for shame charge us with tyranny and proud domination. It is wonderful that religion then had that awe and power on men's consciences, that they would make men stoop to public confessions and penitential lamentations, at the censure of the church guides, even when the censures were rigid, and when the magistrates did not second them, yea, when it was a hazard to their lives to be known christians. And yet, now christianity is in credit, even those that seem religious, do judge Christ's discipline to be tyranny, and subjection to it to be intolerable slavery.

[z] Hæc duo dictat ipsa ratio; primo, in mysteriis quæ superant rationem, non nitendum esse ratiocinantis logica, sed revelantis authoritate. Secundo, in consequentiis deducendis aut obscuris in religione interpretendis, magis fidendum esse cœtui in nomine Domini legitime congregato, quam privatis spiritibus, seorsim sapientibus, recalcitrantibus. Dr. Prideaux, lect. xxii.; De Auth. Eccl. p. 361. See Dr. Jackson's Eternal Truth of Scriptures, lib. ii. c. 1—6.

[a] I may say of many of them for doctrine, as Fulbeck of Bracton, Briton, &c. Direct. p. 17: There be certain ancient writers whom, as it is not unprofitable to read, so to rely on them is dangerous; their books are *monumenta adorandæ rubiginis*, of more reverence than authority.

they have been used, and the copies dispersed; and ministers in office still to preach it, and publish it. So that it could not be generally and purposely corrupted, except all the world should have met and combined together for that end, which could not be done in secret, but all must know of it. And yet many Bibles may be here or there misprinted or miswritten; but then there would be copies enough to correct it by. So that if it be uncertain whether these be the very books which the apostles wrote, then nothing in the world is certain but what we see. And why we may not as well question our eyesight, I do not know. I would believe a thousand other men's eyesight before mine own alone.

CHAPTER V.

THE SECOND ARGUMENT.

SECT. I. I come now to my second argument, to prove Scripture to be the word of God; and it is this:

If the Scripture be neither the invention of devils nor of men, then it can be from none but God;[a] but that it is neither of devils, nor merely of men, I shall now prove; for, I suppose, none will question that major proposition. First, Not from devils; for, First, They cannot work miracles to confirm them. Secondly, It would not stand with God's sovereignty over them, or with the goodness, wisdom, and faithfulness of governing the world, to suffer Satan to make laws, and confirm them with wonders, and obtrude them upon the world in the name of God, and all this without disclaiming them, or giving the world any notice of the forgery. Thirdly,[b] Would Satan speak so much for God? so seek his glory as the Scripture doth? Would he so vilify and reproach himself, and make known himself to be the hatefullest and most miserable of all creatures? Would he so fully discover his own wiles, his temptations, his methods of deceiving, and give men such powerful warning to beware of his snares, and such excellent means to conquer himself? Would the devil lay such a design for men's salvation? Would he show them their danger, and direct them to escape it? Would he so mightily labour to promote all truth and goodness, and the happiness of mankind, as the Scripture doth? Let any man tell me what book or project in the world did ever so mightily overthrow the kingdom of Satan as this book, and this gospel design: and would Satan be such an enemy to his own kingdom? Fourthly, If Satan were the author, he would never be so unweariedly and subtlely industrious, to draw the world to unbelief, and to break the laws which this book containeth, as his constant temptations do sensibly tell many a poor soul that he is; would he be so earnest to have his own words rejected, or his own laws broken? I think this is all clear to any man of reason.

Sect. II. Secondly: That no mere men were the inventors of Scripture, I prove thus: If men were the devisers of it, then it was either good men or bad; but it was neither good men nor bad; therefore, none.

Though goodness and badness have many degrees, yet under some of these degrees do all men fall. Now, I will show you that it could be neither of these: and, First, Good men they could not be; for you might better say that murderers, traitors, adulterers, parricides, sodomites, &c. were good men, rather than such. To devise laws, and father them upon God; to feign miracles, and father them upon the word of the Lord; to promise eternal salvation to those that obey them; to threaten damnation to those that obey them not; to draw the world into a course so destructive to all their worldly happiness, upon a promise of happiness in another world, which they cannot give; to endeavour so egregiously to cozen all mankind: if all this, or any of this, be consistent with common honesty, nay, if it be not as horrible wickedness as can be committed, then I confess I have lost my reason. Much less, then, could such a number of good men in all ages, till Scriptures were finished, be guilty of such unexpressible crimes: neither will it here be any evasion to say, they were men of a middle temper, partly good and partly bad; for these are not actions of a middle nature, nor such as will stand with any remnants of ingenuity or humanity. We have known wicked persons, too many, and too bad; yet where or when did we ever know any that attempted any so more than hellish an enterprise? False prophets have sent abroad indeed particular falsehoods; but who hath adventured upon such a system as this? [c] Mahomet's example, indeed, comes nearest to such a villany; yet doth not he pretend to the hundredth part of so many miracles, nor so great as the Scripture relateth, nor doth pretend to be God, nor any more than a great prophet: trusting more to his sword for success, than to the authority or truth of his pretended revelations: not denying the truth of much of the Scripture; but adding his Alcoran, partly drawn from Scripture, and partly fitted with fleshly liberties and promises to his own ends. And doth not every man among us take that act of Mahomet to be one of the vilest that the sun hath seen; and judge of the man himself accordingly? So that I think it beyound doubt, that no one good man, much less so great a number as were the penmen of Scripture, could devise it of their own brain, and thrust it on the world.

Secondly: And it is as certain that no bad men did devise the Scriptures. Could wicked deceivers so highly advance the glory of God, and labour so mightily to honour him in the world? would they have so vilified themselves, and acknowledged their faults? could such an admirable, undeniable spirit of holiness, righteousness, and self-denial, which runs through every vein of Scripture, have been inspired into it from the invention of the wicked?[d] Would

[a] I take it for granted that good angels could not be guilty of forging the Scripture.

[b] As Origen many times demands of Celsus, if magicians by evil powers could work miracles, would they do it for the leading men from sin to exact holiness and justice?

[c] Saith Duplessis: Mahomet was an Arabian, one of Heraclitus's soldiers; and, in a mutiny, chosen by the Arabian soldiers for their commander. In his Alcoran he confesseth himself to be a sinner, an idolater, an adulterer, given to lechery. His laws run thus: Avenge yourselves of your enemies; take as many wives as you can keep, and spare not; kill the infidels; he that fighteth lazily shall be damned, and he that killeth the most shall be in paradise. He saith that Christ had the Spirit and power of God, and the soul of God, and that he is Christ's servant. See Alcoran Azoar, 2, 3, 6; also, Azoar, 18, 4, 11, 13. He confesseth that Christ is the Spirit, and Word, and Messenger of God; that his doctrine is perfect, that it enlightenth the Old Testament, and that he came to confirm it, yet denieth him to be God. Magnus fuit sanctus, magnus Dei amicus, magnus propheta, &c. Vid. Thom. Bradwin De Causa Dei, lib. i. c. 1. Carol. part. 32. and Aquin. cont. Gentil. lib. i. c. 6.

[d] Origen. contra Cels., Arnob., Tertul., Justin, Athanas., Clemens Alexan. in Protreptic., Athanag., Lactant., with the rest that dealt with the heathen, do make the pure excellency of Christ's doctrine, above all others, one of their main arguments for the christian faith. Christiana fides si miraculis non esset approbata, honestate sua recipi debuit, inquit Ænæas Sylvius, ut Platina, p. 328.

wicked men have been so wise, or so zealous for the suppression of wickedness, or so earnest to bring the world to reformation? Would they have been such bitter adversaries to their own ways, and such faithful friends to the ways they hate? Would they have vilified the ungodly, as the Scripture doth, and pronounced eternal damnation against them? Would they have extolled the godly, who are so contrary to them, and proclaimed them a people eternally blessed? Would they have framed such perfect and such spiritual laws; and would they have laid such a design against the flesh, and against all their worldly happiness, as the scope of the Scripture doth carry on? It is needless, sure, to mention any more particulars: I think every man, of the least ingenuity, that considers this, or deliberately vieweth over the frame of the Scriptures, will easily confess that it is more than probable that it was never devised by any deceiving sinner; much less, that all the penmen of it in several ages were such wicked deceivers.

So, then, if it was neither devised by good men nor by bad men, then sure by no men; and, consequently, must of necessity proceed from God.

Sect. III. Secondly, That it proceeded not merely from man, I also prove thus: That which was done without the help of human learning, or any extraordinary endowments of nature, and yet the greatest philosophers could never reach near it, must needs be the effect of a power supernatural; but such is both the doctrine and the miracles in Scripture; therefore, &c.

It is only the antecedent that here requires proof; which consists of these two branches, both which I shall make clear.

First: That the doctrine of Scripture was compiled, and the miracles done, without the help of much human learning, or any extraordinary natural endowments.[e]

Secondly: That yet the most learned philosophers never could reach near the gospel-mysteries, nor ever work the miracles that were then done.

But I shall say most to the doctrine. For the proof of the former, consider,

First: The whole world was, in the times of Moses and the prophets, comparatively unlearned.[f] A kind of learning the Egyptians then had, and some few other, especially consisting in some small skill in astronomy; but it was all but barbarous ignorance, in comparison of the learning of Greece and Europe. Those writings of greatest antiquity, yet extant, do show this. See also Doctor Hackwell, as before.

2. As rare as learning then was, yet did God choose the unlearned of that unlearned time to be instruments and penmen of his choicest Scriptures. David, who was bred a shepherd, is the penman of those divine, unmatchable psalms. Amos is taken from a herdsman, to be a prophet.

3. But especially in those latter ages, when the world was grown more wise and learned, did God purposely choose the weak, the foolish, the unlearned, to confound them; a company of poor fishermen, tent-makers, and such-like, must write the laws of the kingdom of Christ; must dive into the spiritual mysteries of the kingdom; must silence the wise, and disputers of the world; must be the men that must bring in the world to believe. Doubtless, as God sending David, an unarmed boy, with a sling and a stone against an armed giant, was to make it appear that the victory was from himself; so his sending these unlearned men to preach the gospel, and subdue the world, was to convince both the present and future generations that it was God, and not man, that did the work.

4. Also, the course they took in silencing the learned adversaries, doth show us how little use they made of these human helps. They disputed not with them by the precepts of logic; their arguments were to the Jews, the writings of Moses and the prophets; and both to Jews and gentiles, the miracles that were wrought: they argued more with deeds than with words. The blind, lame, the sick that were recovered, were their visible arguments. The languages which they spake, the prophecies which they uttered, and other such supernatural gifts of the Holy Ghost upon them; these were the things that did convince the world: yet this is no precedent to us, to make as little use of learning as they, because we are not upon the same work, nor yet supplied with their supernatural furniture.

5. The reproaches of their enemies do fully testify this, who cast it still in their teeth, that they were ignorant and unlearned men; and, indeed, that was the great rub that their doctrine found in the world. It was to the Jews a stumblingblock, and to the Greeks foolishness; and therefore it appeared to be the power of God, and not of man. This was it that they discouraged the people with: "Do any of the rulers or Pharisees believe on him? But this people that know not the law are accursed," John vi. 48, 49.

6. To conclude, the very frame and style of these sacred writings, do fully tell us, that they were none of the logicians, nor eloquent orators, of the world, that did compose them. This is yet to this day one of the greatest stumblingblocks in the world, to hinder men from the reverencing and believing the Scriptures. They are still thinking, Surely if they were the very words of God, they would excel all other writings in every kind of excellency; when, indeed, it discovereth them the more certainly to be of God, because there is in them so little of man. They may as well say, If David had been sent against Goliath from God, he would sure have been the most complete soldier, and most completely armed. The words are but the dish to serve up the sense in; God is content that the words should not only have in them a savour of humanity, but of much infirmity, so that the work of convincing the world may be furthered thereby. And I verily think, that this is God's great design, in permitting these precious spirits of divine truth to run in the veins of infirm language, that so men may be convinced, in all succeeding ages, that Scripture is no device of human policy. If the apostles had been learned and subtle men, we should sooner have suspected their finger in the contrivance. Yea, it is observable, that in such as Paul, that had some human learning, yet God would not have them make much use of it, lest the excellency of the cross of Christ should seem to lie in the enticing words of man's wisdom; and lest the success of the gospel should seem to be more from the ability of the preacher, than from the arm of God.

Besides all this, it may much persuade us that the apostles never contrived the doctrine which they preached, by their sudden and not premeditated set-

[e] Vide Wigandum in Method. ante comment. in minores prophetas.

[f] Nam si, fuerunt omnes rudes et imperiti rerum, quorum opera Deus est usus in tradendo verbo, si non fuerunt summo loco nati, si nullis humanis instructi præsidiis hanc rem agressi sunt, profecto oportet doctrinam ab iis profectam esse plane divinam. Camero Prælect. de Verbo, p. 435. vid. ultr. Of the characters of divinity which the Scripture hath in itself, read judicious Amyraldus's Theses, De Authoritate Scripturæ in Thes. Salmuriens, vol. 2. p. 43, &c.

ting upon the work. They knew not whither they should go, nor what they should do, when he calls one from his fishing, another from his custom; they knew not what course Christ would take with himself, or them; no, not a little before he leaves them. Nay, they must not know their employment till he is taken from them. And even then is it revealed to them by parcels and degrees, and that without any study or invention of their own: even after the coming down of the Holy Ghost, Peter did not well understand that the gentiles must be called, Acts x. All which ignorance of his apostles, and suddenness of revelation, I think was purposely contrived by Christ, to convince the world that they were not the contrivers of the doctrine which they preached.

Sect. IV. Let us next, then, consider, how far short the learned philosophers have come of this. They that have spent all their days in most painful studies, having the strongest natural endowments to enable them, and the learned teachers, the excellent libraries, the bountiful encouragement and countenance of princes, to further them, and yet, after all this, are very novices in all spiritual things. They cannot tell what the happiness of the soul is, nor where that happiness shall be enjoyed; nor when, nor how long, nor what are the certain means to attain it; nor who they be that shall possess it. They know nothing how the world was made, nor how it shall end; nor know they the God who did create, and doth sustain it; but, for the most of them, they multiply feigned deities.

But I shall have occasion to open this more fully anon, under the last argument.

CHAPTER VI.

THE THIRD ARGUMENT.

SECT. I. My third argument, whereby I prove the divine authority of the Scriptures, is this:[a] Those writings which have been owned and fulfilled in several ages by apparent extraordinary providences of God, must needs be of God; but God hath so owned and fulfilled the Scriptures; *ergo*, they are of God.

The major proposition will not sure be denied. The direct consequence is, that such writings are approved by God; and if approved by him, then must they needs be his own, because they affirm themselves to be his own. It is beyond all doubt, that God will not interpose his power, and work a succession of wonders in the world, for the maintaining or countenancing of any forgery; especially such as should be a slander against himself.

All the work, therefore, will lie in confirming the minor: where I shall show you, First, By what wonders of providence God hath owned and fulfilled the Scriptures; and, Secondly, How it may appear that this was the end of providences.

1. The first sort of providences here to be considered, are those that have been exercised for the church universal. Where these three things present themselves especially to be observed: First, The propagating of the gospel, and raising of the church: Secondly, The defence and continuance of that church: Thirdly, The improbable ways of accomplishing these.[b]

And, First, Consider what an unlikely design,[c] in the judgment of man, did Christ send his apostles upon. To bid a few ignorant mechanics, Go, preach, and make him disciples of all nations. To send his followers into all the world, to make men believe him to be the Saviour of the world, and to charge them to expect salvation no other way. Why, almost all the world might say, they had never seen him: and to tell them in Britain, &c. of one crucified among thieves at Jerusalem, and to charge them to take him for their eternal King; this was a design very unlikely to prevail. When they would have taken him by force, and made him a king, then he refused, and hid himself. But when the world thought they had fully conquered him, when they had seen him dead, and laid him in his sepulchre, then doth he arise and subdue the world. He that would have said, when Christ was on the cross, or in the grave, that within so many weeks many thousands of his murderers should believe him to be their Saviour; or within so many years, so many countries and kingdoms should receive him for their Lord, and lay down their dignities, possessions, and lives at his feet; would have hardly been believed by any that had heard him: and I am confident, they would most of them have acknowledged, that if such a wonder should come to pass, it must needs be from the finger of God alone. That the kingdoms of the world should become the kingdoms of Christ, was then a matter exceeding improbable. But you may object that, First, It is but a small part of the world that believes. And, Secondly, Christ himself saith, that his flock is little. I answer, First, It is a very great part of the world that are believers at this day, if we consider besides Europe, all the Greek church, and all the believers that are dispersed in Egypt, Judea, and most of the Turks' dominions; and the vast empire of Prestor-John in Africa. Secondly, Most countries of the world have received the gospel; but they had but their time: they have sinned away the light, and therefore are

[a] Vid. Polan. Syntag. lib. i. c. 10.

[b] Miserandam merito quispiam illorum censebit amentiam qui cum vituperant crucem, non vident ejus virtutem orbem implesse universum, ac per ipsam Dei notitiam, ac divina opera, omnibus innotuisse. Athanas. lib. i. cont. Gentil. in prin.

[c] If all this be not sufficient proof of the resurrection of Christ, you may gather it from the things that are continually done. For if the dead can work nothing, and it belong only to the living to work, and to manage human affairs, let any man then see and judge, and let him acknowledge the truth when he is taught by things visible. For could our Saviour work so many things in men, and by a wonderful power persuade such multitudes (invisibly) of Grecians and barbarians to believe in him, and by the force of his power induce them all to obey his doctrine? Dare any man yet doubt of Christ's resurrection, and that he lives; yea, that he is the life of believers? Can a dead man persuade men's minds to renounce their father's laws, and obey the precepts of Christ, or make an adulterer chaste, and the manslayer and injurious to do no wrong? If he be not risen, but still dead, how doth he banish and overthrow all false gods? For wherever his voice soundeth, and his faith is held, thence all idol worship is destroyed, and all the subtle deceits of devils disclosed; and no devil can endure his holy name, but as soon as he hears it doth presently fall down. Is this, I pray you, the work of a dead man, or rather, of the living God? Athanas. de Incarnat. Verbi. Christianis vero quid simile? Neminem pudet; neminem pœnitet; nisi plane retro non fuisse. Si denotatur, gloriatur. Si accusatur, non defendit: interrogatus, vel ultro confitetur; damnatus, gratias agit. Quid hoc mali est, quod naturalia mali non habet? timorem, pudorem, tergiversationem, pœnitentiam, deplorationem? Quid hoc mali est, cujus reus gaudet? cujus accusatio votum est; et pœna felicitas? Tertullian. Apolog. c. 1. Sed hoc agite boni præsides, meliores multo apud populum, si illos christianos immolaveritis; cruciate, torquete, damnate, atterite nos: probatio enim est innocentiæ nostræ iniquitas vestra. Nec quicquam tamen proficit exquisitior quæque crudelitas vestra; illecebra est magis sectæ; plures efficimur quoties metimur a vobis. Semen est sanguis christianorum. Tertullian. Apolog. cap. ult.

now given up to darkness. Thirdly, Though the flock of Christ's elect are small, that shall receive the kingdom; yet the called, that profess to believe his gospel, are many.

2. Consider, also, as the wonderful raising of the kingdom of Christ in the world, so the wonderful preservation and continuance of it. He sends out his disciples as lambs among wolves, and yet promiseth them deliverance and success. His followers are everywhere hated through the world; their enemies are numerous as the sands of the sea: the greatest princes and potentates are commonly their greatest enemies, who, one would think, might command their extirpation, and procure their ruin with a word of their mouths. The learned men, and great wits of the world, are commonly their most keen and confident adversaries; who, one would think, by their wit, should easily overreach them, and by their learning befool them, and by their policy contrive some course for their overthrow. Nay, which is more wonderful than all, the very common professors of the faith of Christ are as great haters of the sincere and zealous professors almost, if not altogether, as are the very Turks and pagans; and those that do acknowledge Christ for their Saviour, do yet so abhor the strictness and spirituality of his laws and ways, that his sincere subjects are in more danger of them, than of the most open enemies: whereas, in other religions, the forwardest in their religion are best esteemed of. Besides the temptations of Satan, the unwillingness of the flesh, because of the worldly comforts which we must renounce, and the tedious, strict conversation which we must undertake, these are greater opposers of the kingdom of Christ than all the rest; yet in despite of all these, is this kingdom maintained, the subjects increased, and these spiritual laws entertained and obeyed: and the church remains both firm and stedfast, as the rocks in the sea, while the waves that beat upon it do break themselves in pieces.

3. Consider, also, in what way Christ doth thus spread his gospel, and preserve his church. First, Not by worldly might and power, nor by compelling men to profess him by the sword. Indeed, when men do profess themselves voluntarily to be his subjects, he hath authorized the sword to see in part to the execution of his laws, and to punish those that break the laws which they have accepted. But to bring men in from the world into his church, from paganism, Turkism, or Judaism, to christianity; he never gave the sword any such commission: he never levied an army to advance his dominion; nor sent forth his followers as so many commanders to subdue the nations to him by force, and spare none that will not become christians; he will have none but those that voluntarily list themselves under him;[d] he sent out ministers, and not magistrates or commanders, to bring in the world. Yea, though he be truly willing of men's happiness in receiving him, and therefore earnestly inviteth them thereto, yet he lets them know that he will be no loser by them; as their service cannot advantage him, their neglect cannot hurt him; he lets them know that he hath no need of them, and that his besecching of them is for their own souls, and that he will be beholden to none of them all for their service; if they know where to have a better master, let them take their course; even the kings of the earth shall stoop to his terms, and be thankful too, or else they are no servants for him: his house is not so open, as to welcome all comers, but only those that will submit to his laws, and accept of him upon his own conditions; therefore hath he told men the worst, as well as the best, that if they will be discouraged or frighted from him, let them go; he tells them of poverty, of disgrace, of losing their lives, or else they cannot be his disciples. And is not this an unlikely way to win men to him; or to bring in so much of the world to worship him? He flatters none, he humoureth none; he hath not formed his laws and ways to please them. Nay, which is yet more, he is as strict in turning some men out of his service, as other masters would be ready to take them in. Therefore he hath required all his followers to disclaim all such as are obstinate offenders, and not so much as to eat, or be familiar with them. How contrary to all this is the course of the great commanders of the world, when they would enlarge their dominions, or procure themselves followers![e] They have no course but to force men, or to flatter them. How contrary was Mahomet's course in propagating his kingdom! he levieth an army, and conquers some adjoining parties; and, as his success increaseth, so doth his presumption: he enticeth all sorts to come to his camp; he maketh laws that would please their fleshly lusts; he promiseth beautiful sights, and fair women, and such carnal delights in another world: in a world, as his kingdom was planted, so hath it been preserved by no other ways, but force and flattery. But Christ hath not one word for either of these: his compelling men to come in, is but rational persuading.

2. Nay, yet more than this, he makes his church to grow by sufferings; when others increase their dominions by the destroying of their enemies, he increaseth his by suffering them to kill his subjects; an unlikely way, one would think, to make the world either love or serve him. There have been few ages, since the first appearing of the gospel in the world, wherein the earth hath not drunk in the blood of believers. In the beginning it was a rare case to be a faithful pastor, and not a martyr. Thirty-three Roman bishops successively are said to have been martyred;[f] thousands, yea, ten thousands slaughtered at a time; insomuch that Gregory and Cyprian cry out, that the witnesses who had died for the truth of the gospel, were to men innumerable; that the world was all over filled with their blood; and they that were left alive to behold it, were not so many as those that were slain; that no war did consume so many: and the histories of the enemies acknowledge almost as much.

Now, whether this be a likely course to gain disciples, and to subdue the world, you may easily judge. Yet did the church never thrive better than

[d] Formido illa cessavit jam diu quæ divexare nos videbatur: et æque futurum est ut in posterum cesset; nec externo ullo timore teneatur noster conventus. Orig. cont. Cels. lib. iii. f. 33. Non leve, immo prodigiosum fuit miraculum tam brevi spacio temporis Christi doctrinam potuisse per universum orbem diffundi, cum tot haberet adversarios: et prædicatorum esset alioquin magna simplicitas et ruditas quoad humanas artes. Intra 20 vel 30 annos Christi prædicatio fere ubique audita est, ut Chrysostomus scribit. Philosophi autem ingeniosi et docti sua dogmata nisi sero admodum extra Græciam protulerunt. Pet. Martyr. in Rom. 10. p. (mihi) 781.

[e] Certe fidem sanctis vocibus pascimus, spem erigimus, fiduciam figimus, disciplinam præceptorum nihilominus inculcationibus densamus: ibidem etiam exhortationes, castigationes, et censura divina· nam et judicatur magno cum pondere, ut apud certos de Dei conspectu; summumque futuri judicii præjudicium est, siquis ita deliquerit, ut a communicatione orationis et conventus, et omnis sancti commercii relegetur. Tertullian Apolog. c. 39. You have here the true description of the primitive church censure, which was performed in one particular church, as the foregoing words show.

[f] Some judicious historians do exempt divers of them (as Hyginus, &c.) from the honour of martyrdom, and affirm that they were only confessors.

by persecution; what they got not in number, yet they got in zeal and excellency of professors; and seldom hath it lost more than in prosperity: yea, when the vulgar professors have enjoyed prosperity, yet persecution hath almost ever been the lot of the zealous and sincere.

And thus I have showed you those wonders of Providence, which have been exercised for the church universal.

Sect. II. Secondly, Consider, next, what strange providences have been exercised to particular churches. I cannot stand to heap up particular examples, you may find them frequent in the histories of the church; what deliverances cities and countries have had, what victories those princes have had, who have been their defenders, as Constantine the Great, and many since; and what apparent manifestations of God's hand in all. Yea, he that reads but the histories of latter times, where wars have been managed for defence of the doctrine of this Scripture, and obedience thereto, against the corruptions and persecutions of Rome,[g] may see more apparent discoveries of the hand of God; yea, even in those wars where the enemy hath at last prevailed, as in Bohemia, in Zisca's time, in France, at Merindol and Cabriers. The history of Belgia will show it clearly: so will the strange preservation of the poor city of Geneva. But all these are further from us; God hath brought such experiments home to our hand. If we should overlook the strange providences that produced the Reformation in the times of Henry the Eighth, Edward the Sixth, Queen Mary, Queen Elizabeth, and King James; yet even the strange passages of these years past, have been such that might silence an atheist, or an antiscripturist: to see the various straits that God hath brought his people through; the unlikely means by which he still performed it; the unexpected events of most undertakings; the uncontrived and unthought-of ways which men have been led in; the strange managing of councils and actions; the plain appearance of an extraordinary providence, and the plain interposition of an Almighty arm, which hath appeared in almost all our public affairs, in all which God hath not only manifested a special providence, but also notably disowned men's sins, encouraged prayer, and fulfilled promises; though as to the particular exposition of some of his providences, we may hear him to say to us, as sometime to Peter, "What I do thou knowest not now, but hereafter thou shalt know."

Sect. III. Thirdly: Consider, also, of the strange judgments which in all ages have overtaken the most eminent of the enemies of the Scriptures.[h] Besides Antiochus, Herod, Pilate, the persecuting emperors, especially Julian; church histories will acquaint you with multitudes more: Fox's Book of Martyrs will tell you of many undeniable remarkable[i] judgments on those adversaries of pure religion, whose greatest wickedness is against these Scriptures, subjecting them to their church, denying them the people, and setting up their traditions as equal to them. Yea, our own times have afforded us most evident examples. Sure God hath forced many of his enemies to acknowledge in their anguish the truth of his threatenings, and cry out, as Julian, *Vicisti Galilæe.*

Sect. IV. Fourthly: Consider, also, the eminent judgments of God which have befallen the vile transgressors of most of his laws. Besides all the voluminous histories that make frequent mention of this, I refer you to Dr. Beard's "Theatre of God's Judgments," and the book entitled "God's Judgments upon Sabbath-breakers:" and it is like your own observations may add much.[k]

Sect. V. Fifthly: Consider, further, of the eminent providences that have been exercised for the bodies and states of particular believers. The strange deliverance of many intended to martyrdom, as you have many instances in the "Acts and Monuments;" besides those in Eusebius, and others, that mention the stories of the first persecutions. If it were convenient here to make particular mention of men's names, I could name you many, who, of late, have received such strange preservations, even against the common course of nature, that might convince an atheist of the finger of God therein. But this is so ordinary, that I am persuaded there is scarce a godly, experienced christian that carefully observes and faithfully recordeth the providences of God toward him, but is able to bring forth some such experiment, and to show you some such strange and unusual mercies, which may plainly discover an Almighty Disposer, making good the promises of this Scripture to his servants: some in desperate diseases of body, some in other apparent dangers, delivered so suddenly, or so much against the common course of nature, when all the best remedies have failed, that no second cause could have any hand in their deliverance.

Sixthly, and lastly: Consider the [l]strange and evident dealing of God with the souls and consciences both of believers and unbelievers. What pangs of hellish despair have many enemies of the truth been brought to! How doth God extend the spirits of his own people; bruising, breaking, killing them with terrors, and then healing, raising, and filling them with joys which they cannot utter! How variously doth he mould them! Sometimes they are brought to the gates of hell, sometimes they are ravished with the foretastes of heaven: the proudest spirits are made to stoop; the lowest are raised to an invincible courage. In a word, the workings of God upon the souls of his people, are so clear and strange, that you may trace a supernatural causality through them all. Besides[m] the

[g] Cum Romani in victoriosæ antiquitatis memoriam templum singulari schemate facere decrevissent, ab omni illa deorum, immo dæmoniorum multitudine, quæsierunt usque quo durare posset tam excellentis operis tam operosa constructio; responsum est, Donec virgo pareret. Illi ad impossibilitatem oraculum retorquentes, templum æternum solennem illam machinam vocaverunt. Nocte autem cum virginali thalamo virgineus flos Mariæ egressus est, ita cecidit et confractum est illud mirabile et columnarium opus, ut vix appareant vestigia ruinarum. Bernard. in Natal. Domini, serm. 23.

[h] Ut memorias taceamus antiquas, et ultronias pro cultoribus Dei sæpe repetitas, documentum recentis rei satis est, quod sic celeriter quodque in tanta celeritate, sic granditer nuper secuta defensio est, ruinis rerum, jacturis opum, dispendio militum, diminutione castrorum. Nec hoc casu accidisse, &c. Cyprian. ad Demetrian. sect. 14. p. 328.

[i] Not that miracles are still necessary, but special providences do much confirm. Nec jam opus est miraculis, cum in omnem terram verbum sonuerit. Doct. Humfredus Jesuitis. part 1. p. 114.

[k] How many churches in England were torn at once with terrible lightning; and almost no place else but churches were touched, especially at the lower part of Devonshire, where many were scorched, maimed, and some had their brains struck out as they sat in church! And at the church of Anthony, in Cornwall, near Plymouth, on Whitsunday, 1640. See the relation in print.

[l] Was it not near a miracle, that God wrought for Mrs. Honywood, when she threw the glass unto the wall, saying, "If this glass break not, I may be saved," &c. and yet took it up whole?

[m] See Cyprian's Epist. 1. to Donat. expressing the change on himself. At Dei per Christum institutæ ecclesiæ, si forte expensæ cum aliorum populorum multitudine conferantur, veluti luminaria quædam in mundo prælucentia futuræ sunt.

admirable efficacy of them in changing men's hearts, and making them to differ from what they were, and from all others, in all holiness, righteousness, and self-denial.

Sect. VI. Secondly: But though it be undeniable that all these are the extraordinary working of God; yet how do they confirm the authority of Scripture? How doth it appear that they have any such ends? Answer: that is it I come to show you next.

First: Some of these works do carry their end apparently with them, and manifest it in the event. The forementioned providences for raising and preserving the church, are such as show us their own ends.

Secondly: They are most usually wrought for the friends and followers of Scripture, and against the enemies and disobeyers of it.

Thirdly: They are the plain fulfilling of the predictions of Scripture. The judgments on the offenders are the plain fulfilling of its threatenings, and the mercies to believers are the plain fulfilling of its promises. As for example; as unlikely as it was, yet Christ foretold his apostles that when he was lifted up he would draw all men to him. He sent them upon an errand as unlikely to be so successful as any in the world; and yet he told them just what success they should find, how good to their message, and how hard to their persons. The promise was of old, to give Christ "the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession," Psal. ii. 2—5. Christ promiseth to be with his messengers to the end of the world. Why now how punctually doth he accomplish all this! What particular prophecies of Scripture have been fulfilled, and when, and how, hath already been discovered by others,[n] and therefore I shall overpass that.

Fourthly: These judgments[o] have been usually executed on offenders, at the very time when they have been either opposing or violating Scripture; and these mercies bestowed chiefly upon believers at such a time, when they have been most engaged in defence of or obedience to the Scriptures.

Fifthly: They usually proceed in such effectual sort, that they force the enemies and ungodly to confess the cause; yea, and ofttimes the very standers-by: so do they force believers also to see, that God makes good his word in all their mercies.

Sixthly: They are performed in answer to the prayers of believers; while they urge God with the promises of Scripture, then doth he appear in these evident providences. This is a common and powerful argument, which most christians may draw from their own experiences. Had we no other argument to prove Scripture to be the word of God, but only the strange success of the prayers of the saints, while they trust upon and plead the promises with fervency, I think it might much confirm experienced men. What wonders, yea what apparent miracles did the prayers of former christians procure! hence the christian soldiers,[p] in their army, were called the thundering legion; they could do more by their prayers, than the rest by their arms. Hence Gregory was called *Θαυματουργος*, from his frequent miracles among the heathen. And Vincentius reporteth, that Sulpitius Biturícensis did expel the devils, heal the sick, and raise the dead, by praying to God for them. When Myconius,[q] a godly divine, lay sick of that consumption, which is called phthisis, Luther prayed earnestly that he might be recovered, and that he might not die before himself. And so confident was he of the grant of his desire, that he writes boldly to Myconius, that he should not die now; but should remain yet longer upon this earth. Upon these prayers did Myconius presently revive, as from the dead, and live six years after, till Luther was dead: and himself hath largely written the story, and professed, that when he heard Luther's letters, he seemed to hear that voice of Christ, "Lazarus, come forth." Yea, so powerful and prevailing was Luther in prayer, that Justus Jonas writes of him, *iste vir potuit quod voluit*, that man could do what he would.[r]

What was it less than a miracle in Baynam the martyr, who told his persecutors, Lo! here is a miracle; I feel no more pain in this fire than in a bed of down; it is as sweet to me as a bed of roses? So Bishop Farrar, who could say before he went to the fire, If I stir in the fire, believe not my doctrine; and accordingly remained unmoved. Theodorus the martyr, in the midst of his torment, had one in the shape of a young man, as he thought, came and wiped off his sweat, and eased him of his pain.

But what need I fetch examples so far off; or to recite the multitudes of them which church history doth afford us? Is there ever a praying christian here who knoweth what it is importunately to strive with God, and to plead his promises with him believingly, that cannot give in his experiences of most remarkable answers? I know men's atheism and infidelity will never want somewhat to say against the most eminent providences, though they were miracles themselves. That nature which is so ignorant of God, and at enmity with him, will not acknowledge him in his clear discoveries to the world, but will ascribe all to fortune or nature, or some such idol, which indeed is nothing. But when mercies are granted in the very time of prayer, and that when to reason there is no hope, and that without the help of any other means or creatures, yea, and perhaps many times over and over, is not this as plain as if God from heaven should say to us, I am

Quis enim non id fateatur vel deteriores quosque nostræ ecclesiæ quæ potiorum respectu inferiores sunt, non longe plurimum bonitate præstare aliorum populorum multitudini? Extat Athenis Dei ecclesia, mansuetior quædam et optime instituta, ut quæ Deo velit omnipotenti cunctis in rebus sese morigeram exhibere. Est contra Atheniensium ipsa respublica seditiosa quidem, et quæ nil prorsus cum Dei eadem fuerit ecclesia comparanda. Haud secus de alia quadam ecclesia dixerit, quæ Corinthi sit vel Alexandriæ constituta, et ea quam seorsum habeat istarum urbium populus. Origen. cont. Celsum, lib. iv. fol. (edit. Ascens.) 33.

[n] Morney, Grotius, Dr. Jackson's Resolut. part 2, &c.

[o] Ask them in New England whether Mrs. Hutchinson's and Mrs. Dyer's most hideous monstrous births were not convincing providences against their antinomian, antiscriptural heresies, as if God from heaven had spoken against them? and yet Old England will not take warning. See Nicephor. Eccl. Hist. tom. 1. lib. 4. c. 13, where Tertul., Jul. Capitolinus, Orosius, &c. do mention.

[p] The legion of Malta, in the time of Mar. Aurelius, who procured by prayer both thunder on the enemies and rain for the army. See the Epistle of M. Aurelius, in Justin Martyr's Apol. et Xiphilin. in vita Aurelii. And it is confidently averred by Tertullian's Apologet. c. 5, with many more, as you may read at large in Pamelius' notes on Tertullian's Apologet. nota 64.

[q] Melch. Adam. in vita Myconii.

[r] O si audire velles et videre, quando a nobis adjurantur et torquentur spiritualibus flagris, et verborum tormentis de obsessis corporibus ejiciuntur, quando ejulantes et gementes voce humana, et potestate divina flagella et verbera sentientes, venturum judicium confitentur! Veni, et cognosce vera esse quæ dicimus. Et quia sic Deos colere te dicis, vel ipsis quos colis crede: aut si volueris et tibi credere, de te ipso loquetur, audiente te qui nunc tuum pectus obsedit: videbis nos rogari ab eis quos tu rogas; timeri ab eis quos tu adoras, videbis sub manu nostra stare vinctos, et tremere captivos, quos tu suspicis et veneraris ut Dominos. Certe vel sic confundi in istis erroribus tuis poteris, cum conspexeris et audieris Deos tuos, quid sint, interrogatione nostra statim prodere, &c. Cyprian. ad Demetrium, p. 328. This is an excellent testimony.

fulfilling to thee the true word of my promises in Christ my Son? How many times have I known the prayer of faith to save the sick, when all physicians have given them up for dead,[s] James v. 13—16. It hath been my own case more than once, or twice, or ten times: when means have all failed, and the highest art or reason has sentenced me hopeless, yet have I been relieved by the prevalency of fervent prayer, and that, as the physician saith, *tuto, cito, et jucunde;* My flesh and my heart failed, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever. And though he yet keep me under necessary weakness, and wholesome sickness, and certain expectation of further necessities and assaults, yet am I constrained by most convincing experiences, to set up this stone of remembrance, and publicly, to the praise of the Almighty, to acknowledge that certainly God is true to his promises, and that they are indeed his own infallible word, and that it is a most excellent privilege to have interest in God, and a spirit of supplication to be importunate with him. I doubt not but most christians that observe the spirit and providences, are able to attest this prevalency of prayer by their own experiences.

Object. Perhaps you will say, If these rare examples were common, I would believe.

Answ. First: If they were common, they would be slighted, as common wonders are.

Secondly: Importunate prayer is not common, though formal babbling be.

Thirdly: The evident returns of prayer are ordinary to the faithful.

Fourthly: If wonders were common, we should live by sense, and not by faith.

Fifthly: I answer, in the words of Augustin,[t] God letteth not every saint partake of miracles, lest the weak should be deceived with this pernicious error, to prefer miracles as better than the works of righteousness, whereby eternal life is attained.

And let me now add, that if the Scriptures were not the word of God, undoubtedly there would have been as many wonders of Providence for the disgracing it, as have been for the defending it; and God would have destroyed the preachers of it, as the greatest abusers of him, and all the world, that should father such a thing on him. Can any man believe that God is the just and gracious Ruler of the world, (that is, that there is a God,) and yet that he would so long suffer such things to be published as his undoubted laws, and give no testimony against it, if it were not true? As Perkins saith, (Cases of Cons. lib. ii. c. 3. p. 130. sect. 1,) If it had not been God's word, the falsehood had been detected long ago. For there hath been nothing falsely said of God at any time which he himself hath not, at some time or other, opened and revealed; as he did the false prophets.

CHAPTER VII.

THE FOURTH ARGUMENT.

SECT. I. My fourth and last argument, which I will now produce to prove the Scripture to be the word and perfect law of God, is this:

Either the Scriptures are the written word and law of God, or else there is no such extant in the world: but there is a written word and law of God in the world; *ergo*, this is it.

Here I have these two positions to prove: First, That God hath such a written word in the world. Secondly, That it can be no other but this.

That there is such a word, I prove thus: If it cannot stand with the welfare of mankind, and consequently with that honour which the wisdom and goodness of God hath by their welfare, that the world should be without a written law, then, certainly, there is such a written law. But that it cannot stand with the welfare of the creature, or that honour of God, appears thus: that there be a certain and sufficient revelation of the will of God to man, more than mere nature and creatures do teach, is necessary to the welfare of man, and the aforesaid honour of God. But there is now no such certain and sufficient revelation unwritten in the world; therefore, it is necessary that there be such a revelation written.

The proof of the major is the main task,[a] which if it be well performed, will clearly carry the whole cause; for I believe all the rest will quickly be granted, if that be once plain. Therefore, I shall stand a little more largely to prove it, viz. that there is a necessity for the welfare of man, and the honour of God's wisdom and goodness, that there be some further revelation of God's will, than is in mere nature or creatures to be found. And first I prove it necessary to the welfare of man, and that thus: If man have a happiness or misery to partake of after this life, and no sufficient revelation of it in nature or creatures, then it is necessary that he have some other revelation of it, which is sufficient. But such a happiness or misery man must partake of hereafter, which nature and creatures do not sufficiently reveal, (either end or means,) therefore some other is necessary. I will stand the largelier on the first branch of the antecedent, because the chief weight lieth on it; and I scarce ever knew any doubt of Scripture, but they also doubted of the immortal state and recompence of souls; and that usually is their first and chiefest doubt.

I will, therefore, here prove these three things in order thus: 1. That there is such a state for man hereafter. 2. That it is necessary that he know it,

[s] Among abundance of instances that I could give, my conscience commandeth me here to give you this one, as belonging to the very words here written. I had a tumour rose on one of the tonsils, or almonds, of my throat, round like a pea, and at first no bigger; and at last, no bigger than a small button, and hard like a bone. The fear lest it should prove a cancer, troubled me more than the thing itself. I used first, dissolving medicines; and after, lenitives for palliation: and all in vain for about a quarter of a year. At last my conscience smote me for silencing so many former deliverances that I had in answer of prayers: merely in pride, lest I should be derided as making ostentation of God's special mercies to myself, as if I were a special favourite of Heaven, I had made no public mention of them. I was that morning to preach just what is here written, and in obedience to my conscience, I spoke these words which are now in this page, with some enlargement not here written. When I went to church I had my tumour as before (for I frequently saw it in the glass, and felt it constantly). As soon as I had done preaching, I felt it was gone, and hastening to the glass, I saw there was not the least vestigium, or cicatrix, or mark wherever it had been; nor did I at all discern what became of it. I am sure I neither swallowed it, nor spit it out; and it was unlikely to dissolve by any natural cause, that had been hard like a bone a quarter of a year, notwithstanding all dissolving gargarisms. I thought fit to mention this, because it was done just as I spoke the words here written in this page. Many such marvellous mercies I have received, and known that others have received, in answer to prayer.

[t] August. De Civitate Dei, l. xxxiii.

[a] I do of purpose pass over those things which others have fully written of, because I would not trouble the world so oft with the same words which others have said before us. In particular, to prove the absolute necessity that there must be some written word among and above others, great Camero hath done it fully, Prælect. de Verbo Dei, c. 4—6, Operum, (fol.) p. 450, 451, &c. and shows how lamentably even the wisest of the philosophers were besotted and ignorant.

and the way to be so happy. 3. That nature and creatures do not sufficiently reveal it.

For the first, I take it for granted, that there is a God, because nature teacheth that;[b] and I shall pass over those arguments drawn from his righteousness and just dispensation, to prove the variety of men's future conditions, because they are commonly known; and I shall now argue from sense itself, because that works best with sensual men: and that thus. If the devil be very diligent to deceive men of that happiness, and to bring them to that misery, then sure there is such a happiness and misery: but the former is true,[c] *ergo* the latter. They that doubt of the major proposition, do most of them doubt, whether there be any devil, as well as whether he seek our eternal undoing. I prove both together. First, By his temptation; Secondly, Apparitions; Thirdly, Their possessions and dispossessions; Fourthly, His contracts with witches. I hope these are palpable discoveries.

1. The temptations of Satan are sometimes so unnatural, so violent, and so importunate, that the tempted person even feels something besides himself persuading and urging him: he cannot go about his calling, he cannot be alone, but he feels somewhat following him, with persuasions to sin, yea, to sins that he never found his nature much inclined to, and such as bring him no advantage in the world, and such as are quite against the temperature of his body. Doth it not plainly tell us, that there is a devil, labouring to deprive man of his happiness, when men are drawn to commit such monstrous sins?[d] Such cruelty as the Romans used to the Jews at the taking of Jerusalem; so many thousand christians so barbarously murdered; such bloody actions as those of Nero, Caligula, Sylla, Messala, Caracalla, the Roman gladiators, the French massacre, the gunpowder-plot, the Spanish inquisition, and their murdering fifty millions of Indians in forty-two years, according to the testimony of Acosta, their Jesuit; men invading their own neighbours and brethren, with an unquenchable thirst after their blood, and merely because of their strictness in the common professed religion; I say, how could these come to pass, but by the instigation of the devil? When we see men making a jest of such sins as these, making them their pleasure, impudently, and implacably against knowledge and conscience, proceeding in them, hating those ways that they know to be better, and all those persons that would help to save them; yea, choosing sin, though they believe it will damn them; despairing, and yet sinning still; doth not this tell men plainly, that there is a devil, their enemy? When men will commit the sin which they abhor in others, which reason is against; when men of otherwise a good nature, as Vespasian, &c. shall be so bloody murderers; when men will not be stirred from sin by any entreaty, though their dearest friends should beg, with tears, upon their knees; though preachers convince them, and beseech them in the name of the Lord; though wife and children, body and soul, be undone by it; nay, when men will be the same under the greatest judgment, and under the most wonderful convincing providences, as appears in England, yea, under miracles themselves.

Surely I think all this shows that there is a devil, and that he is diligent in working our own ruin. Why else should it be so hard a thing to persuade a man to that, which he is convinced to be good?

Sect. II. 2. But yet if this be not evidence sufficient, the frequent apparitions of Satan in several shapes, drawing men or frighting them into sin, is a discovery undeniable.[e] I know many are very incredulous herein, and will hardly believe that there have been such apparitions. For my own part, though I am as suspicious as most in such reports, and do believe that most of them are conceits or delusions, yet having been very diligently inquisitive in all such cases, I have received undoubted testimony of the truth of such apparitions; some from the mouths of men of undoubted honesty and godliness, and some from the report of multitudes of persons, who heard or saw. Were it fit here to name the persons, I could send you to them yet living, by whom you would be as fully satisfied as I: houses that have been so frequently haunted with such terrors, that the inhabitants successively have been witnesses of it.

Learned godly Zanchius in his tom. 3. lib. iv. cap. 10, De Potentia Dæmonum, saith, "he wonders that any should deny that there are such spirits, as from the effects are called hags, or fairies, that is, such as exercise familiarity with men, and do, without hurting men's bodies, come to them, and trouble them, and, as it were, play with them. I could (saith he) bring many examples of persons yet alive, that have experience of these in themselves. But it is not necessary to name them, nor indeed convenient. But hence it appears that there are such spirits in the air; and that when God permits them, they exercise their power on our bodies, either to sport or to hurt." So far Zanchy. And he makes this use of it: "Of this, (saith he,) besides the certainty of God's word, we have also men's daily experience. These devils, therefore, do serve to confirm our faith of God, of the good angels, of the kingdom of heaven, of the blessed souls, and of many things more which the Scripture delivereth. Many deny that the soul of man remaineth and liveth after death, because they see nothing go from him but his breath; and they come to that impiety, that they laugh at all that is said of another life. But we see not the devils; and yet it is clearer than the sun, that this air is full of devils; because, besides God's word, experience itself doth teach it." Thus Zanchy pleads undeniable experience, lib. iv. c. 20. p. 212.

Luther affirmed of himself,[f] that at Coburge, he ofttimes had an apparition of burning torches; the

[b] See Justin Martyr, Serm. ad Gent. proving the unity of the Godhead out of the heathens themselves, Orpheus, the Sybils, Sophocles, Homer, Plato, Pythagoras, &c.

[c] Hear what a heathen saith of the life to come. Miraris hominem ad Deos ire? Deus ad homines venit; immo, quod proprius est, in homines venit. Nulla sine Deo mens bona est. Semina in corporibus humanis divina dispersa sunt; quæ si bonus cultor excipit, similia origine prodeunt, et paria his ex quibus orta sunt surgunt; si malus, non aliter quam humus sterilis ac palustris necat, ac deinde curat purgamenta pro frugibus. Senec. Epist. lxxiii. p. 278, 279. edit. Elsev. 1672.

[d] Suadent autem miris et invisibi libusmodis, per illam subtilitatem suorum corporum, corpora hominum non sentientium penetrando, seseque cogitationibus eorum per quædam imaginaria, visa miscendo, sive vigilantium, sive dormientium. Aug. de Divin. Dæmon. cap. 5. Non potest dæmon instruere novas formas in materiam corporalem, unde nec per consequens in sensum et imaginationem in quibus nil recipitur sine organo corporali; unde relinquitur, ut aliquid præexistat in corpore, quod per quandam transmutationem localem spirituum et humorum reducitur ad principia sensualium organorum; ut sic videantur ab anima imaginaria vel sensuali visione. Aquin. 1. q. 16. a. 1. Experimur multas sæpe nobis invitis malas cogitationes in mentem obrepere. Unde vero hæ cogitationes? Ab aliquo certe agente eas commoventc. Non a nobis; quia inviti illas patimur; non ab angelis bonis, neque a Deo per illos, quia cogitationes malæ sunt. A diabolis igitur sunt. Zanch. tom. 3. lib. iv. De Potent. Dæmon. c. 1. p. 191.

[e] Lege Epistolam Vossii de Samuele apparente Saulo, in Joan. Beverovicii Epistolis; et D. Reignol. de Samuele apparente, in variis prælectionibus de lib. Apoc.

[f] Melch. Adam. in Vita Luther.

sight thereof did so affright him, that he was near swooning; also, in his own garden, the devil appeared to him in the likeness of a black boar, but then he made light of it. Sozomen, in his Ecclesiastical History, writes of Apelles, a smith, famous in Egypt for working miracles, who, in the night, while he was at work, was tempted to uncleanness by the devil, appearing in the shape of a beautiful woman.[g] The like he tells of a strange apparition in Antioch, the night before the sedition against Theodosius. Theodorus mentions a fearful sight that appeared to Gennadius, patriarch of Constantinople, and the threatening words which it uttered. The writings of Gregory, Ambrose, Austin, Chrysostom, Nicephorus, &c. make frequent mention of apparitions, and relate the several stories at large. You may read in Lavater de Spectris,[h] several other relations of apparitions, out of Alexander ab Alexandro, Baptista Fulgosius, and others. Ludovicus Vives, (lib. i.) De Veritate Fidei, saith, "that among the savages in America, nothing is more common than to hear and see spirits in such shapes both day and night."[i] The like do other writers testify of those Indians: so saith Olaus Magnus of the islanders. Cardanus de Subtilit. hath many such stories. So Joh. Manlius in Loc. Commun. Collectan. (cap. 4.) de Malis Spiritibus, et de Satisfactione.[k] Yea, godly, sober Melancthon affirms, that he had seen some such sights or apparitions himself; and many credible persons of his acquaintance have told him, that they have not only seen them, but had much talk with spirits: among the rest he mentions one of his own aunts, who sitting sad at the fire after the death of her husband, there appeared unto her one in the likeness of her husband, and another like a Franciscan friar; the former told her that he was her husband, and came to tell her somewhat; which was, that she must hire some priests to say certain masses for him, which he earnestly besought her; then he took her by the hand, promising to do her no harm, yet his hand so burned her, that it remained black ever after, and so they vanished away. Thus writes Melancthon. Lavater also himself, who hath written a book wholly of apparitions, a learned, godly, protestant divine, tells us, that it was then an undeniable thing, confirmed by the testimonies of many honest and credible persons, both men and women, some alive, and some dead, that sometimes by night, and sometimes by day, have both seen and heard such things; some that going to bed had the clothes plucked off them; others had somewhat lying down in the bed with them; others heard it walking in the chamber by them, spitting, groaning; saying, they were the souls of such or such persons lately departed; that they were in grievous torments, and if so many masses were but said for them, or so many pilgrimages undertaken to the shrine of some saint, they should be delivered. These things, with many such more, saith Lavater, were then frequently and undoubtedly done, and that where the doors were fast locked, and the room searched, that there could be no deceit.

So Sleidan relates the story of Crescentius, the pope's legate, frighted into a deadly sickness by a fearful apparition in his chamber. Most credible and godly writers tell us, that on June 20, 1484, at a town called Hamel, in Germany, the devil took away one hundred and thirty children, that were never seen again.

But I need to say no more of this; there is enough written already, not only by Cycogna, Delrio, Paracelsus, &c. but also by godly and faithful writers, as Lavater, Georg. Agricola, Olaus Magnus, Zanchius, Pictorius, and many more.[l]

Object. But you will say, Though this prove that there are devils, and that they are enemies to our happiness; yet how doth it prove that there is a future happiness or misery for man?

Answ. Why, plainly thus.[m] What need Satan by these apparitions to set up superstition to draw men to sin, if there were no difference between sinners and others hereafter? surely in this life it would be no great displeasure to them; for usually the wicked have the most prosperous lives; therefore his delusions must needs have respect to another life; and that the end of his apparitions is either to drive men to despair, or to superstition, or some sin, is evident to all.[n] Most of the papists' idolatry and will-worship hath either been caused or confirmed by such apparitions;[o] for in former days of darkness they were more common than now. How the order of the Carthusian friars was founded by Bruno, upon the terrible speeches and cries of a dead man, you may read in the life of Bruno, before his "Exposition on Paul's Epistles." Such was the original of All Souls' Day, and other holydays, as Trithemius, Petrus de Natalibus, (lib. x. cap. 1,) Polyd. Virg. de Inv. (lib. ix. cap. 9,) do declare. Also, praying for the dead, praying to saints, purgatory, merits of good works, sanctification, pilgrimages, masses, images, relics, monastical vows, auricular confession, and most of the popish ceremonies, have had their life and strength from these apparitions and delusions of the devil. But especially the cross hath been so magnified thereby,[p] that it is grown the commonest remedy to drive away devils of any in the world for many hundred years: the churchyard must have one to keep the devils from the graves of the dead; and the church, and almost every pinnacle, window, and part of it, to keep him thence: the highways, also, must have them, that he molest not the traveller: yea, when morning and evening, and in times of

[g] Sozomen. lib. vi. c. 28. lib. vii. c. 23.

[h] Lavater, p. 64, 65.

[i] De Gent. Sep. lib. ii. c. 3.

[k] The like may be said of the apparition of good angels encouraging the godly. Cyprian. De Mortalitate, p. (mihi) 345, saith, that one like a glorious young man stood by one of his fellow-presbyters at his death, as he was afraid, and praying against death, and said to him, Are you afraid to suffer? Are you loth to go forth? What shall I do with you? as chiding him for his lothness to suffer death for Christ. Exam. Theol. In obsidione Nolanæ civitatis, Nolanum episcopum felicem mortuum conspectum fuisse a multis civitatem illam defendentem, refert August. lib. de Mirab. Scripturæ (si ille liber sit Augustini). Scio innumera referri fabulosa, vel a fraude, &c. sed (n) a viris tum doctis, tum perspicacibus, tum gravibus et probis, et plurimis retro seculis allata sunt, et hodie memorantur innumera, ubi non possit non cum opera humana concurrisse illusio aut vis diabolica, supplente, viz. spiritu maligno quod hominis superet potestatem. Vossius Epistol. de Samuele in Beverovic. 1. Epistol. p. 203. Vide Mercur. Viperam de Prodig. lib. viii. Psellum.

[l] Thyreus de locis infestis.

[m] Neque Satan hæc præstat ut benefaciat hominibus, quos in summo habet odio; sed ut corporali unius curatione infinitos alios spirituali morte trucidet. Zanch. de Potentia Dæmon. tom. 3. lib. iv. c. 10. Vide etiam Zanch. ibid. c. 12. p. 14.

[n] So his seeming miracles. Lege Joh. Bap. Vanhelmont De Lithiasi, c. 9. sect. 27. p. 168.

[o] Camero shows that miracles are, when things are done without second causes; and proves that the two books which Lipsius wrote, (De Diva Virgine Hallensi, et De Diva Virgine Aspricoli,) filled with pretended miracles, were not indeed of true miracles, as neither reciting the raising of the dead, or the like evident miracle, nor any cure done but with some sensible pain or motion, which showed some second cause. See Camer. Prælect. de Verbo Dei, p. 438. fol.

[p] How the devil doth imitate God, in setting up worship, and deluding men with his wonders, especially about the cross, read Calfhill's Preface before his Answer to Martial, of the cross.

danger, and in the beginning of any work of duty, men must sign themselves with the cross, to keep away devils: insomuch that the learned doctors do handle it among their profound questions, what makes the devil so afraid of the cross, that he shuns it above all things else? So that you may easily see what a great advantage the devil hath got over the souls of a great part of the world by these apparitions; and consequently, that, this being the very end of his endeavours, there is certainly a happiness which he would deprive us of, and a misery that he would bring us to, when this life is ended.

Sect. III. 3. It is manifest also by the devil's possessing and tormenting the bodies of men;[q] for if it were not more for the sake of the soul than the body, why should he not as much possess or torment a beast? Certainly, it is not chiefly the outward torment of the person that he regardeth, though he desires that too; for then he would not labour to settle his kingdom generally in peace and prosperity, and to make men choose iniquity for its worldly advantages: yet it may, perhaps, be the souls of others, more than the possessed persons themselves, that the devil may hope to get advantage on. So among the papists it hath brought their[r] exorcisms into singular credit, by the frequent dispossessing the devils. I confess there hath been many counterfeits of this kind, as the boy at Bilson, by Wolverhampton, hired by some of the papists, and discovered by the vigilant care of Bishop Morton and divers others; but yet, if any doubt whether there is any such thing at all, credible history and late experience may sufficiently satisfy him. The history of the dispossession of the devil out of many persons together in a room in Lancashire, at the prayer of some godly ministers, is very famous: read the book, and judge. Among the papists possessions are common; though very many of them are the priests' and Jesuits' delusions.

What possession is, and how the devils are confined to a body,[s] or whether circumscribed there in whole or in part, are things beyond my reach to know; but that the strange effects which we have seen on some bodies, have been the products of the special power of the devil there, I doubt not. Though, for my own part, I believe that God's works in the world are usually by instruments, and not immediate; and as good[t] angels are his instruments in conveying his mercies both to soul and body, and churches and states; so evil angels are instruments of inflicting his judgments, both corporal and spiritual. Hence God is said (Psal. lxxviii. 49,) to send evil angels among the Israelites. Hence Paul's phrase of delivering to Satan: hence Satan did execution on the children, cattle, and body of Job; and upon Jerusalem in that plague, and numbering the people. To satisfy you fully in this, and to silence your objections, and to teach you the true and spiritual use of this doctrine, I refer you to Mr. Lawrence's book, called "Our Communion and War with Angels;" and, especially, Zanchius's (tome 3) book De Angelis; and, now newly published, Mr. Ambrose's book, in which, in an epistle, I have confirmed and vindicated what I have here said.

So then, though I judge that Satan is the instrument in our ordinary diseases, yet doth he, more undeniably, appear in those whom we call the possessed. Luther thought that all phrenetic persons and idiots, and all bereaved of their understanding, had devils; notwithstanding physicians might ease them by remedies. And, indeed, the presence of the devil may consist with the presence of a disease and evil humour, with the efficacy of means: Saul's melancholy devil would be gone when David played on the harp. Many divines, as Tertullian, Austin, Zanchius, Lavater, &c.[u] think that he can work both upon the body and mind, and that he maketh use to this end of melancholy humours; and, indeed, such strange things are oft said and done by the melancholy and mad, that many learned physicians think that the devil is frequently mixed with such distempers, and hath a main hand in many other symptoms: so Avicen, Rhasis, Arculanus, Aponensis, Jason, Patensis, Hercul. Saxon, &c. Who can give any natural cause of men's speaking Hebrew or Greek, which they never learned or spake before; of their versifying; their telling persons that are present their secrets; discovering what is done at a distance, which they neither see nor hear? Fernelius mentioneth two that he saw;[x] whereof one was so tormented with convulsive pain, sometimes in one arm, sometimes in the other, sometimes in one finger, &c. that four men could scarcely hold him, his head being still quiet and well. The physicians judged it a convulsion, from some malignant humour in the *spina dorsi;* till, having used all means in vain, at last the devil derided them, that they had almost destroyed the man with their medicines. The man spoke Greek and Latin, which he never learned; he told the physicians a great many of their secrets; and a great deal of talk with the devil, which they had, he there mentions. In conclusion, both this and the other were dispossessed by popish prayers, fasting, and exorcism. Forestus mentions a countryman that,[y] being cast into melancholy, through discontent at some injuries that he had received, the devil appeared to him in the likeness of a man, and persuaded him rather to make away himself than to bear such indignities; and, to that end, advised him to send for arsenic and poison himself. But the apothecary would not let him have it except he would bring one to promise that he should not abuse it, whereupon the devil went with him, as his voucher, and so he took a dram; but, though it tormented him, yet it did not presently kill him; whereupon the devil brought him, afterward, a rope, and after

[q] Zanchy thinks it is the very substance of devils that entereth men, and that they have bodies more subtile than the air, by which they enter. Tom. 3. lib. iv. c. 10. p. 188. So Augustine also thinks, De Divinatione Dæmonum, c. 5. And so Tertullian saith, Dæmones sua hæc corpora contrahunt, et dilatant ut volunt; sicut etiam lumbrici et alia quædam infecta, ita dissimile illis non est penetrare in nostra corpora.

[r] Si quando non oporteat his opitulari, non loquamur cum spiritu, vel adjurando, vel imperando, quasi nos audiat, sed tantum precibus et jejunis incumbendo perseveremus. Origen in Matt. 17.

[s] The devil had the power of death, saith the Holy Ghost, Heb. ii. 14.

[t] The angels do serve in both these ministries (superior and inferior) in the administration and economy (or government) of earthly things. Clem. Alex. Stromat. lib. vii. initio. It is Christ that giveth to the Greeks wisdom by inferior angels. For the angels are by an ancient and divine command distributed by (or through) nations. Ibid.

[u] Vide Pet. Martyr, in loc. Commun. class i. c. 8. sect. 8. p. 39, 40. Dæmoniaci semper fere sunt melancholici, sed non omnes melancholici dæmoniaci. Forest. Obs. lib. x. obs. 19. Melch. Adam. in Vita Luther. Vide Pet. Martyr. loc. Commun. per tot. For speaking strange languages and versifying, see Guainerius, tract. 15; de Melanc. c. 4; et Wierum De Præstigiis, lib. ii. c. 21—23; et Forest. Obs. lib. x. obs. 19. in schol.

[x] De Abdit. Rer. Causis, lib. ii. c. 16. Vide Fœl. Plateri Observ. p. 28, de stupore dæmoniaco; et de exorcista ipso a demone percusso et læso.

[y] Lib. xxx. de Venenis, obs. 8. in schol. Cyprian. Serm. de Lapsis, hath a history of one possessed, and of her impatience during the time of prayer: and in those times when they went to sacrament, they catechised the penitents, and the possessed were all warned to depart the assembly.

that a knife, to have destroyed himself: at which sight, the man, being affrighted, was recovered to his right mind again. You may read a multitude of such examples in Scribonius, Sehenkius, Wierus, Chr. a Vega, Langius, Donatus, lib. ii. c. 1, De Med. Mir. Cornel. Gemma, lib. ii., De Natur. Mirae. c. 4. See also Valesius, c. 28; Sacr. Philos. Roderic. a Castro, 2; De Morb. Mul. c. 3; Schol. Cælius Rhodiginus, lib. 1. antiq. lect. c. 34. Tertullian[z] challengeth the heathen to bring any one possessed with the devil before their judgment-seat, or one that pretended to have the spirit of the gods; and if, at the command of a christian, he do not confess himself to be a devil, let them take the christian to be presumptuous, and put him immediately to death. But of Jesus, saith he, they say not so, nor that he was a mere man; but the Power, the Wisdom, and Word of God; and that they are devils, damned for their wickedness. The like doth Cyprian. ad Demetrian. sect. 2.

So that it seems it was then common for the devil in the possessed to confess Christ, or else Tertullian durst not have made such a challenge.

Some wonder that there were so many possessed with devils in Christ's time, and so few since; but they understood not that it was madmen whom they call possessed: and Christ confirmed their judgment; as Mr. Mead, on John x. 20, hath proved out of Scripture, and from Plautus, Justin Mart., Timotheus Alex., Balzamon, Zonaras, to whom I refer the reader for the fuller proof hereof.

Sect. IV. The fourth and last of these palpable arguments, to prove that man hath a future happiness or misery, is drawn from the devil's compacts with witches.[a] It cannot be only his desire of hurting their bodies, that makes him enter into these contracts with them; for that he might procure by other means as likely. Besides, it is some kind of prosperity, or fulfilling their desires, which he conditioneth to give them. It is a childish thing to conceit, that the devil cares so much for a few drops of their blood. Is not the blood of a beast or other creature as sweet? Neither can it be only the acknowledgment of his power that he aims at, nor a mere desire of being honoured or worshipped in the world, as Porphyrius and other pagans have thought; for he is most truly served where he is least discerned; and most abhorred when he most appears. His apparitions are so powerful a means to convince the atheist, who believes not that there is either God, or devil, or heaven, or hell, that I am persuaded he would far rather keep out of sight, and that for the most part he is constrained of God to appear against his will. Besides, if Satan sought his own honour, he would still speak in his own name: but, contrarily, his usual appearance is in the shape or name of some deceased person, affirming himself to be the soul of such a one; or else he pretends to be an angel of light: and when he makes his compacts with witches, it is seldom so plainly and directly as that they understand it is indeed the devil that they deal with. So that it is apparent, Satan seeks something more than the honour of domineering, that is, the ruin of the party with whom he deals. And that it is not their bodily and temporal ruin only, appears further by this, that he will heal as well as hurt, and give power to his confederates to do the like; and this tends not to the ruin of men's bodies. Though there be a great deal of deceit among them, yet doubtless many have been cured by popish spells, and pilgrimages, and exorcisms.[b] Carolus Piso mentions one of his patients who was incurably deaf a year together, and was suddenly cured in the midst of his devotion to the lady of Loretto. Fernelius mentions those that could stop any bleeding by repeating certain words. He saw a universal jaundice cured in one night, by the hanging of a piece of paper about the neck. A great deal more to the same purpose he hath, De abditis rer. causis, lib. ii. c. 16. If any should doubt whether there be any such witches, who thus work by the power of the devil, or have any compact with him, he hath as good opportunity now to be easily resolved, as hath been known in most ages. Let him go but into Suffolk, or Essex, or Lancashire, &c. and he may quickly be informed. Sure it were strange, if in an age of so much knowledge and conscience, there should so many scores of poor creatures be put to death as witches, if it were not clearly manifest that they were such. We have too many examples lately among us, to leave any doubt of the truth of this.

So that by these attempts of Satan to deceive and destroy souls, it is evident, that there is an estate of happiness or misery for every man after this life.[c]

All those arguments, which every common-place book and philosopher almost can afford you, to prove the immortality of the soul, will also serve to prove the point in hand. But many can apprehend these arguments from sense, who cannot yet reach, and will not be convinced by, other demonstrations: as temptations, apparitions, possessions, dispossessions, and witches, are most excellent means to convince a Sadducee, that there are angels and spirits; so, also, by clear consequence, that there is a resurrection and eternal life.

Sect. V. The second thing that I am to clear to you, is, that it is necessary for man to know this happiness, and the way to obtain it; and to know the misery, and the way to escape it. This appears thus:

First: If he must go that way, and use those means, then he must needs first know both the end and the way: but he that will obtain the end, must use the means; therefore, he must necessarily know them. All this is so evident, that, I believe, few will deny it. That man must use means before he attain the end, is evident,

[z] Tertul. Apol. c. 23, where he pressed them on to make trial of it.

[a] See a notable story of a woman pretending to have the Holy Ghost, but proving to be a witch, and what wonders she did; and had a gift of prayer, and did baptize and administer the Lord's supper in the ordinary way, in Firmilianus, Epist. Cyprian, 75. p. 238.

[b] Bishop Hall saith Satan's prevalency, in this age, is most clear in the marvellous number of witches abounding in all parts. Now, hundreds are discovered in one shire: and, if fame deceive us not, in a village of fourteen houses, in the north, are found so many of this damned breed. Heretofore, only barbarous deserts had them; now the civilest and most religious parts are frequently pestered with them. Heretofore, some silly, poor, ignorant, old woman, &c.; now, we have known those of both sexes, who have professed much knowledge, holiness, and devotion, drawn into this damnable practice. Hall's Soliloq. 15. p. 53, 54. Car. Piso de morbis serosis observ. De dolore auris cum odontalgia, p. 45, 46. Even the papists confess that all those spells, and scrolls, and actions, which must be done at such an hour, or in such a form and order, and with such circumstances, as nothing conduce to the effect intended; if these do any thing, it is from the devil. Vide Reginaldum. Prax. Conscien. Cas. part 1. q. 7; et Prax. for Pœnitential, lib. xvii. nu. 157, et seq. Read Bodin, and Perrigius, and Danæus, of witches, and many authors together in the Malleus Maleficarum. See more in my book against infidelity.

[c] De Simonis Magi præstigiis scripsere Abdias Epist.; Bahil. in Certam; Apost.; et Egesyp., et Nicephor., et plures. Vide etiam quæ scripsit Olaus Magn. De Gent. Septentrional, lib. iii. c. 4, de Metothin. Magno. et de aliis, lib. iii. c. 18.

First: From the nature of the motion of the rational soul, which is to seek the attainment of its propounded end, by a voluntary use of means conducing thereto: for as it hath not, at its first infusion, that height of perfection, whereof it is capable, so neither is it carried thereto by violence, or by blind instinct, for then it were not a rational motion.

Secondly: Yea, the very enjoyment of the end, and the seeking of it, are actions of the same nature: it is enjoyed by the knowing, loving, rejoicing, &c. and these actions are the means to attain it.

Thirdly: And if the means were not necessary to the end, the wicked were as capable of it as the godly; but that will not stand with the justice of God.

Fourthly: If knowledge of the end, and use of means, were not of necessity to the obtaining of that end, then a beast, or a block, were as fit a subject for that blessedness as a man: but these cannot be.

And that man cannot seek a happiness, which he never knew; and shun a misery, which he was not aware of; nor use means thereto, which he never was acquainted with; I think would be lost and needless labour for me to prove.

Sect. VI. The third thing that I am to prove, is this: That mere nature and creatures contain no sufficient revelation of the fore-mentioned end and means.[d] This appears thus: First, Nature, by the help of creatures, though it tell us that there is a God, yet how he will be worshipped, or how he came to be displeased with the world, or how he must be reconciled; of all this it tells us but little. Again, though it may possibly acquaint us with the immortal state, yet what the happiness there is, and what the misery, or how we are naturally deprived of that happiness, and how it must be recovered, and who they be that shall enjoy it; of all this it tells us little: much less of the resurrection of our bodies from the grave. So, also, though nature may possibly find itself depraved, yet how it came to be so, or how to be healed, or how to be pardoned, it cannot tell. Secondly: If nature, by the mere book of the creatures, could learn all things necessary, yet, first, it would be slow, and by so long study, secondly, and so doubtfully and uncertainly, thirdly, and so rarely, that it appears by this, the means of revelation is not sufficient. All this apparent by event and success. For what nature and creatures do sufficiently teach, that some of their scholars have certainly learned.

First, then, observe, how long did the most learned philosophers study before they could know those few rude, imperfect notions, which some of them did attain to, concerning eternity! They were grey with age and study, before they could come to know that which a child of seven years old may now know by the benefit of Scripture. But all men lived not to such an age, therefore this is no sufficient means.

Secondly, observe, also, how uncertain they were, when all was done: what they speak rightly concerning God, or the life to come, in one breath, they are ready to unsay it again in another, as if their speeches had fallen from them against their wills, or as Caiaphas's confession of Christ. They raise their conclusions from such uncertain premises, that the conclusions also must needs be uncertain.

Thirdly, observe, also, how rare that knowledge was among them. It may be in all the world, there may be a few hundreds of learned philosophers, and among those there is one part epicures, another peripatetics, &c. that acknowledge not a future happiness or misery. And of those few that do acknowledge it, none knows it truly, nor the way that leads to it. How few of them could tell what was man's chief good! And those few, how imperfectly; with what mixtures of falsehood! We have no certainty of any of them that did know so much, as that there was but one God. For though Socrates died for deriding the multitudes of gods, yet there is no certain record of his right belief of the unity of the Godhead. Besides, what Plato and Plotinus[e] did write of this that was sound, there is far greater probability that they had it from Scripture, than merely from nature and creatures. For that Plato[f] had read the writings of Moses, is proved already by divers authors. The like may be said of Seneca,[g] and many others. So that if this means had contained any sufficiency in it for salvation, yet it would have extended but to some few of all the learned philosophers: and what is this to a universal sufficiency to all mankind? nay, there is not one of all their exactest moralists, that have not mistaken vice for virtue; yea, most of them give the name of virtue to the foulest villanies, such as self-murder in several cases, revenge, a proud and vain-glorious affectation of honour and applause, with other the like: so far have these few learned philosophers been from the true knowledge of things spiritual and divine, that they could never reach to know the principles of common honesty. Varro saith, that there were in his days two hundred and eighty-eight sects or opinions among philosophers concerning the chief good: what, then, should the multitudes of the vulgar do, who have neither strength of wit to know, nor time, and books, and means to study, that they might attain to the height of these learned men? so that I conclude with Aquinas,[h] that if, possibly, nature and creatures might teach some few enough to salvation, yet were the Scriptures of flat necessity; both for the more enlarged, secondly, and the more easy and speedy, thirdly, and the more certain, spreading of knowledge and salvation.

Sect. VII. But here are some objections[i] to be answered. First, Were not the fathers, till Moses, without Scripture? *Answ.* First, Yet they had a revelation of God's will, besides what nature or creatures taught them. Adam had the doctrine of the tree of knowledge, and the tree of life, and the tenor of the covenant made with him, by such revelation, and not by nature. So had the fathers the doctrine of sacrificing; for nature could teach them nothing of that, therefore, even the heathens had it from the church. Secondly, All other revelations are now ceased, therefore this way is more necessary. Thirdly, And there are many truths necessary now

[d] If it were not God's book, then all God's will should be hidden, and God should never yet have revealed his will to man. Perkins' Cases of Conscience, lib. ii. c. 3.

[e] Sir Walter Raleigh's History of the World showeth that Pythagoras, Orpheus, and Plato, had their doctrine of God from Scripture, but durst not profess it. Plotinus was Origen's condisciple of Ammonius, therefore no wonder if he be liker a divine than the rest. See Pemble Vind. Grat. of this, p. 60—62, &c.

[f] Therefore Numenius, cited by Origen against Celsus, doth call him Moses Atticus: and divers of Numenius's books do recite with great reverence many texts out of Moses and the prophets

[g] Though the epistles betwixt Paul and Seneca may be feigned, yet it is more than probable that he had heard or read Paul's doctrine. And Clemens Alex. citing the same in Numenius, shows also out of Aristobulus, l. Philomatrem, that Plato was very studious of Moses and the Jews' laws; and saith also that Pythagoras took many things out of the Scriptures. Stromat. lib. i.

[h] Aquin. Sum. 1a, 1æ. art. 1. q. 1. and 2a, 2æ, q. 1. art. 34. But more fully, Cont. Gent. lib. i. c. 4—6.

[i] See Scharpii cursus Theol. de S. Scrip. Contro. 6. de Neces. S. S. p. 122—124, and so almost every common-place book answers this.

to be known, which then were not revealed, and so not necessary.

Object. 2. Doth not the apostle say, that which may be known of God, was manifest in them, &c.

Answ. This, with many other objections, are fully scanned by many divines, to whom I refer you; particularly Dr. Willet, on Rom. i. 14, 20, &c. Only in general I answer, there is much difference between knowing that there is a God of eternal power, which may make the sinner unexcusable for his open sin against nature, (which the apostle there speaks of,) and knowledge which is sufficient to salvation. How God deals with the multitude that have not the Scripture, as to their eternal state, I leave as a thing beyond us, and so nothing to us: but if a possibility of the salvation of some of them be acknowledged, yet in the three respects above mentioned, there remains still a necessity of some further revelation than nature or creatures do contain. And thus I have manifested a necessity for the welfare of man. Now it would follow that I show it necessary for the honour of God; but this follows so evidently as a consectary of the former, that I think I may spare that labour.

Object. But what if there be such a necessity, doth it follow that God must needs supply it? *Answ.* Yes, to some part of the world. For, First, It cannot be conceived how it can stand with his exceeding goodness, bounty, and mercy, to make a world, and not to save some. Secondly, Nor with his wisdom, to make so many capable of salvation, and not reveal it to them, or bestow it on them. Thirdly, Or to prepare so many other helps to man's happiness, and to lose them all for want of such a sufficient revelation. Fourthly, Or to be the Governor of the world, and yet to give them no perfect law to acquaint men with their duty, and the reward of obedience, and penalty of disobedience.

Having thus proved that there is certainly some written word of God in the world, the last thing that I have to prove is, that there is no other writing in the world but this that can be it. And, First, There[k] is no other book in the world, that ever I heard of, that doth so much as claim this prerogative and dignity. Mahomet[l] calleth himself but a prophet, he acknowledgeth the truth of most of the Scripture, and his Alcoran[m] contradicteth the very light of nature. Aristotle, Plato, and other philosophers, acknowledge their writings to be merely of their own study and invention. What book saith, Thus saith the Lord, and, This is the word of the Lord, but this? So that if it hath no competitor, there needs not so much to be said.

2. What other book doth reveal the mysteries of God, of the Trinity, of God and man in one person, of creation, of the fall, the covenants, their conditions, heaven, hell, angels, devils, temptations, regeneration, worship, &c. besides this one book, and those that profess to receive it from this, and profess their end to be but the confirming and explaining the doctrine of this? Indeed, upon those subjects which are below the Scripture, as logic, arithmetic, &c. other books may be more excellent than it; as a tailor may teach you to make a cloak better than all the statute books or records of parliament. But this is a lower excellency than the Scripture was intended to.[n]

And thus I have done with this weighty subject, that the Scripture, which contains the promises of our rest, is the certain, infallible word of God. The reason why I have thus digressed, and said so much of it, is, because I was very apprehensive of the great necessity of it, and the common neglect of being grounded in it; and withal, that this is the very heart of my whole discourse; and that if this be doubted of, all the rest that I have said will be in vain. If men doubt of the truth, they will not regard the goodness. And the reason why I have said no more, but passed over the most common arguments, is, because they are handled in many books already; which I advise christians to be better versed in. To the mere English reader I commend especially these: Sir Philip Morney, Lord du Plessis's Verity of Christian Religion; Grotius, Of the Truth of Christian Religion, which is lately translated into English; and Mr. Perkin's Cases of Conscience, lib. ii. c. 3; Parson's Book of Resolution, corrected by Bunny, the second part; Dr. Jackson on the Creed; and (come forth since I began this) Mr. White's, of Dorchester, Directions for Reading Scripture; Mr. John Goodwin's Divine Authority of Scripture asserted. Also, read a book called, A Body of Divinity, (first part,) written by our honest and faithful countryman, Colonel Edward Leigh. Also, Ursinus's Catechism on this question; and Ball's Catechism, with the exposition, which, to those that cannot get larger treatises, is very useful.[o]

For the question, How it may be known which books are canonical? I here meddle not with it: I think human testimony, with the fore-mentioned qualifications, must do most in determining that. Yet we must carefully distinguish between those canonical books which have been questioned, and those which were unquestioned, but delivered by more infallible tradition; and also between those which contain most of the substance of our faith, and those which do not.

Prop. 1. No book in the canon was ever generally doubted of; but when one church doubted of it,

[k] The apocryphal books are but records more imperfect and uncertain, of the same doctrine for the substance with the rest, though mixed with some suspected history, and doth confirm, but not contradict, the Scriptures; and but few of those books do pretend to a divine authority, as the rest.

[l] Though Mahomet pretended to speak from God as a prophet, the barbarousness and sottishness of his Alcoran, its contradiction to itself, and to the Scripture, which he acknowledgeth, may satisfy any man of its forgery; so that it is the most stupendous judgment of God, that so great a part of the world should continue so brutish as to believe and follow him still. Read Bradwardine's excellent dispute of this subject, De Causa Dei, lib. i. Corol. part 32, and Grotius De Veritate Relig. Christianæ.

[m] Certe in Alcorano nulla, aut infrequens, fit mentio miraculorum; aut si quæ fiat, sunt illa monstrosa, et hae nota inusta, ut non modo pro ingenio conficta, sed barbare quoque excogitata videantur: tum non audet ullius miraculi testes appellare; non enim sunt talia, ut author Alcorani palam ausit asserere patrata. Camero de Verbo Dei, p. 441.

[n] That the heathen religion is not the true religion, all the old fathers that wrote against them, Justin, Arnobius, Lactantius, Tertullian, Athanasius, Origen, and the rest before named, have showed at large. Non ideo majorem fidem adhibemus evangelio Joannis, quam Nicodemi, quod ab ecclesia constitutum et decretum sit, &c. Nullibi enim decretum est, nec ullum de hae re concilium unquam vocatum. Sed quod apostoli adhue in vivis, hujusmodi evangelia rejecerunt. His enim credidit ecclesia, et eorum fides posteris manifestavit; apostoli etiam et evangelistæ evangelia sua conscripta tradiderunt ecclesiæ, quibus ipsa alia deinde examinavit; et quoniam illa multum differre cognovit ea rejecit; aliosque de illis præmonuit. Bullinger. Corp. Doct. lib. i. c. 4.

[o] In Latin, the best that I know of is Grotius De Veritate Relig. and especially Camero's Prælectiones de Verbo Dei; though every common-place book speaks to this end, and some very well, as Lud. Crocius, Polanus, &c. Kimidontius De Verbo Scripto, &c. And the fathers that write against the pagans, are of great use to students in this point, as Justin, Athenagoras, Tatianus, Lactantius, Tertullian, Cyprian, Athanasius, Clemens Alexandrinus, &c. but especially Origen against Celsus. So Dr. Preston on the Attributes, p. 40, 41, and forward; and Byfield's Principles.

others received it, from whom we have as much reason to receive them, as from the Roman church.

Prop. 2. Those books which have been generally received, are known to be canonical, by the same way, and testimony, and means, as the Scripture in general is known to be God's word.[p]

Prop. 3. It is not a thing which one cannot be saved without, to believe every particular book to be canonical; if we believe all that were generally received, yea, or but one book which containeth the substance of christian doctrine, though we doubt of those that some formerly doubted of, it would not exclude from salvation. The books are received for the doctrine's sake. It is vain cavilling, therefore, for the papists, when they put us to prove the canon, they stick only on the questioned books; especially when those were but few and short. Matthew, and Mark, and Luke, and John, and Paul's writings, which are full, and contain the main body of christian doctrine, do, withal, contain the characters of their own canonical verity, which, seconded with the conveyance of universal, rational, infallible tradition, (not Romish authoritative tradition, or the judgment of the pope, or the present church,) may certainly be discerned; even with a saving certainty, by those that are specially illuminated by God's Spirit; and with an ordinary rational certainty, by those that have God's common help.

I conclude this as I began, with an earnest request to ministers that they would preach, and to people that they would study, this subject more thoroughly; that while they firmly believe the truth of that word which promiseth them rest, and prescribes them the means thereto, they may believe, and hope, and love, and long, and obey, and labour, with the more seriousness, and liveliness, and patient constancy.

CHAPTER VIII.

REST FOR NONE BUT THE PEOPLE OF GOD, PROVED.

SECT. I. It may here be expected, that as I have proved, that the rest remaineth for the people of God; so I should now prove, that it remaineth only for them, and that the rest of the world shall have no part in it. But the Scripture is so full and plain in this, that I suppose it needless to those who believe Scripture. Christ hath resolved, that those who make light of him, and the offers of his grace, shall never taste of his supper: "and that without holiness none shall see God: and that, except a man be regenerate, and born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That he that believes not, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him: that no unclean person, nor covetous, nor railer, nor drunkard, &c. shall enter into the kingdom of Christ and of God," Eph. v. 4, 5. "That the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all they that forget God: that all they shall be damned that obey not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness," 2 Thess. ii. 12. "That Christ will come in flaming fire, to take vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."[a] And Christ himself hath opened the very manner of their process in judgment, and the sentence of their condemnation to eternal fire, prepared for the devil and his angels, Matt. xxv. So that here is no rest for any but the people of God, except you will call the intolerable everlasting flames of hell a rest.

And it were easy to manifest this also by reason. For, First, God's justice requires an inequality of men's state hereafter, as there was of their lives here. And, Secondly, They that walk not in the way of rest, and use not the means, are never like to obtain the end. They would not follow Christ in the regeneration, nor accept of rest upon his conditions; they thought him to be too hard a master, and his way too narrow, and his laws too strict: they chose the pleasures of sin for a season, rather than to suffer affliction with the people of God: they would not suffer with Christ, that so they might reign with him. What they made choice of, that they did enjoy; they had their good things in this life; and what they did refuse, it is but reason they should want: how oft would Christ have gathered them to him, and they would not! and he useth to make men willing before he saves them, and not to save them against their wills.

Therefore will the mouth of the wicked be stopped for ever, and all the world shall acknowledge the justice of God. Had the ungodly but returned before their life was expired, and been heartily willing to accept of Christ for their Saviour and their King, and to be saved by him in his way, and upon his most reasonable terms, they might have been saved.

Object. But may not God be better than his word, and save those that he doth not promise to save?

Answ. But not false of his word, in saving those whom he hath said he will not save. Men's souls are in a doleful case when they have no hope of happiness, except the word of God prove false. To venture a man's eternal salvation, upon hope that God will be better than his word, that is, in plain English, that the God of truth will prove a liar, is somewhat beyond stark madness, which hath no name bad enough to express it.

Yet do I believe, that the description of God's people in England, and in America, must not be the same; because, as God's revelations are not the same, so neither is the actual faith which is required in both the same; and as the written and positive laws in the church were never given them, so obedience to those mere positives is not required of them. Whether, then, the threats against unbelievers be meant of unbelief privative and positive only, and not negative (such as is all non-believing that which was never revealed); or, whether their believing that God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek him, will serve the turn there; or, whether God hath no people? I acknowledge again is yet past my understanding.

So that in what is said, you may discern not only the truth, but also the reason and equity, that none but God's people shall enter into his rest. Though God's will is the first cause of all things, yet all the fault lies in sinners themselves. Their consciences shall one day tell them that they might have been saved, if they would; and that it was their own wil-

[p] When Jerom proveth the Epistle to the Hebrews to be canonical, he showeth how we must judge of the canon: Non per hujus temporis consuetudinem, sed veterum Scriptorum authoritatem plerumque utriusque abutentium testimoniis; non ut apocryphis, sed canonicis et ecclesiasticis. Hier. ad Dardan. tom. 4. fol. 29. Where then is the papists' judicial authority of the present pope or church?

[a] Matt. xxii. 5—7; Luke xiv. 25; Heb. xii. 14; John i. 33, and iii. 18, 36; 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10; Gal. v. 21; Psal. ix. 17; 2 Thess. i. 8—10.

ful refusal, which shut them out.[b] God freely offered them life, and they would not accept it on his easy and reasonable conditions. They perish, because they would not be saved in God's way. The pleasures of the flesh seemed more desirable to them than the glory of the saints: Satan offered them the one, and God offered them the other, and they had free liberty to choose which they would; and they chose the pleasures of sin for a season, before the everlasting rest with Christ. And is it not a righteous thing, that they should be denied that which they denied to accept? Nay, when God pressed them so earnestly, and persuaded them so importunately, and even beseeched them by his messengers, and charged us to compel men by importunity, and taking no denial, to come in; and, yet, they would not; where should they be, but among the dogs without? Though man be so wicked, that he will not yield, till the mighty power of grace do prevail with him, yet, still we may truly say, that he may be saved, if he will, on God's terms.[c] And his disability being moral, lying in wilful wickedness, is no more excuse to him, than it is to a common adulterer, that he cannot love his own wife; or to a malicious person, that he cannot choose but hate his brother: is he not so much the worse, and deserveth so much the sorer punishment? As, therefore, I would have all sinners believe this, so I would advise all ministers more to preach it. Pry not too much into the depths of God's decrees. Alas! how little know we of far lower things! lay all the blame on the wills of sinners; bend your speeches to persuade their wills. Is not that the business of our calling? Let me give you but one argument, which deserves to be considered. Sinners shall lay all the blame on their own wills in hell for ever. Hell is a rational torment by conscience, according to the nature of the rational subject. If sinners could but say, then, it was long of God, whose will did necessitate me, and not of me, it would quiet their consciences, and ease their torment, and make hell to be no hell to themselves. But to remember their wilfulness, will feed the fire, and cause the worm of conscience never to die.

CHAPTER IX.

REASONS WHY THIS REST REMAINS, AND IS NOT HERE ENJOYED.

Sect. I. The next thing promised in the beginning, in my method, which in the first edition I forgot to perform, is to show you, why this rest must yet remain, and not be enjoyed till we come to another world. And I will speak but a little to this, because it may be gathered from what is said before; and because much is said to it in the first and second chapters of the fourth part.

And, First, The main reason is the will of God, that it should be so. Who should dispose of the creatures, but he that made them; and order the times and changes of them, but their absolute Lord, who only also hath wisdom to order them for the best, and power to see his will accomplished? You may therefore as well ask, Why have we not the spring and harvest without winter? and why is the earth below, and the heavens above? and why is not all the world a sun, that it may be more glorious? &c.; as to ask, why we have not rest on earth?

2. Yet may you easily see satisfactory reason in the thing itself also. As first, God should subvert the established order in nature, if he should give us our rest on earth. All things must come to their perfection by degrees: nothing is perfect in its beginning, where the fall brought an imperfection. The strongest man must first be a child, and formed in the womb from small, obscure principles. The greatest scholar must be first a schoolboy, and begin in his alphabet. In the best-ordered governments men must come to their dignity and authority by degrees, beginning at the lower, and rise as they deserve. The skilfullest artificer was first an ignorant learner. The tallest oak was once an acorn. This is the constant course of nature in the production of sublunary things; and I know none that deny it, but only some enthusiasts concerning the production of grace, who think they are taught of God fully in an instant; and think themselves perfect, as soon as they have learned the opinion of the perfectionists; when all knowing men about them discern their imperfections; yea, such horrid paganism and profaneness in some of them, as if they had almost renounced humanity and reason. Now, this life is our infancy; and would we be perfect in the womb, or born at full stature? must God overturn the course of nature for us?

3. And it were an absurdity in morality, as well as a monster in nature, if our rest and full content were here. For, First, It would be injurious both to God and to ourselves.

First, To God; and that both in this life, and in the life to come. 1. In this life it would be injurious to God, both in regard of what he is here to do for us, and in regard of what he is to receive, as it were, from us. 1. If our rest were here, then most of God's providences must be useless, his great designs must be frustrate, and his gracious workings and mercies needless to us. Should God lose the glory of all his church's deliverances, of the fall of his enemies, of his wonders and miracles wrought to this end, and that all men may have their happiness here? If the Israelites must have been kept from the brick-kilns, and from the danger of the Egyptians' pursuit, and of the Red sea, then God must have lost the exercise of his great power, and justice, and mercy, and the mighty name that he got upon Pharaoh. If they had not felt their wilderness necessities, God should not have exercised his wilderness providences and mercies. If man had kept his first rest in paradise, God had not had opportunity to manifest that far greater love to the world in the giving of his Son. If man had not fallen into the depth of misery, Christ had not come down from the height of glory, nor died, nor risen, nor been believed on in the world. If we were all well, what need we the physician. And if all were happy, and innocent, and perfect, what use were there for the glorious

[b] The catholic verity neither denieth free-will either to a good life or a bad; nor yet ascribeth so much to it, as if it were able, without God's grace, either to convert a man from bad to good, or to make him perseveringly proceed in good, or attain to that everlasting good where he need not fear falling away. August. Epist. 47. The precepts of love were in vain given to men that have not free-will: but when they are given by the old and new law; and the law without grace is a killing letter, but in the grace of the Spirit it is quickening; whence, then, have men the love of God, but from God? August. lib. de Grat. et lib. Arbit. c. 11.

[c] I would that excellent treatise of Mr. William Fenner, Of Wilful Impenitency, published by Rev. Dr. Hill, were more imitated by some divines in their preaching. And that, when they have done, they would not quite contradict their popular doctrine in their polemical.

works of our sanctification, justification, preservation, and glorification: what use for his ministers, and word, sacraments, and afflictions, and deliverances?

2. And, as God should not have opportunity for the exercise of all his grace, but some only; so he would not have returns from us for all. We should never fear offending him, and depend on him so closely, and call upon him so earnestly, if we wanted nothing. Do we not now feel how ready our prayers are to freeze, and how sleepily we serve him, and how easily we let slip or run over a duty, if we be but in health, and credit, and prosperity, though still we are far from all content and rest? How little then should he hear from us if we had what we would have! God delighteth in the soul that is humble and contrite, and trembleth at his word; but there would be little of this in us, if we had here our full desires. What glorious songs of praise had God from Moses, at the Red sea and in the wilderness; from Deborah, and Hannah, and David, and Hezekiah; from all his churches, and from eaeh particular gracious soul in every age! which he should never have had, if they had been the choosers of their own condition, and had nothing but rest. Have not thine own highest joys and praises to God, reader, been occasioned by thy dangers, or sorrows, or miseries? We think we could praise God best, if we wanted nothing; but experience tells us the contrary: we may have a carnal joy in congratulating our flesh's felicity, which may deceive a hypocrite; but not so sensible acknowledgments of God: indeed in heaven, when we are fit for such a state, it will be far otherwise. The greatest glory and praise that God hath through the world, is for redemption, reconciliation, and salvation by Christ; and was not man's misery the occasion of that? Besides, as variety is part of the beauty of the creation, so it is of Providence also. If all the trees, or herbs, or fowls, or beasts, or fishes, were of one kind, and all the world were but like the sea, all water, or like one plain field, yea, or one sun, it were a diminution of its beauty. And if God should exercise here but one kind of providence, and bestow but one kind of grace, (delight,) and receive thanks but for one, it would be a diminution of the beauty of Providence.

2. And it would be no small injury to ourselves, as well as to God, if we had our full contents and rest on earth; and that both now and for ever. 1. At the present it would be much our loss. Where God loseth the opportunity of exercising his mercies, man must needs lose the happiness of enjoying them. And where God loseth his praises, man doth certainly lose his comforts. Oh! the sweet comforts that the saints have had in returns to their prayers; when they have lain long in sorrow, and importunate requests, and God hath lift them up, and spoken peace to their souls, and granted their desires, and said, as Christ, "Be of good cheer, son, thy sins are forgiven thee;" arise from thy bed of sickness, and walk, and live. How should we know what a tender-hearted Father we have, and how gladly he would meet us, and take us in his arms, if we had not, as the prodigal, been denied the husks of earthly pleasure and profit, which the worldly swine do feed upon? We should never have felt Christ's tender hand, binding up our wounds, and wiping the blood from them, and the tears from our eyes, if we had not fallen into the hands of thieves, and if we had not had tears to be wiped away. We should never have had those sweetest texts in our Bibles, "Come to me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden," &c.; and, "To every one that is athirst, come and buy freely," &c.; and, "Blessed are the poor in spirit;" and, "Thus saith the High and Lofty One, I dwell with him that is of a humble and contrite spirit," &c.; if we had not been weary, and heavy laden, and thirsty, and poor, and humble, and contrite. In a word, we should all lose our redemption mercies, our sanctification, justification, and adoption mercies; our sermon, sacrament, and prayer-mercies; our recoveries, deliverances, and thanksgiving mercies; if we had not our miseries and sorrows to occasion them.

3. And it would be our loss for the future, as well as for the present. It is a delight to a soldier, or a traveller, to look back upon his adventures and escapes when they are over; and for a saint in heaven, to look back upon the state he was in on earth, and remember his sins, his sorrows, his fears, his tears, his enemies and dangers, his wants and calamities, must needs make his joys to be, rationally, more joyful. And, therefore, the blessed in their praising of the Lamb do mention his redeeming them out of every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and so out of their misery and wants, and sins which redemption doth relate to, and making them kings and priests to God. When they are at the end, they look back upon the way. When the fight is done, and the danger over, and their sorrow gone, yet their rejoicing in the remembrance of it is not done, nor the praises of their Redeemer yet over. But if we should have had nothing but content and rest on earth, what room would there have been for these rejoicings and praises hereafter? So that you see, 1. It would be our loss. 2. And then our incapacity forbids it, as well as our commodity. We are not capable of rest on earth; for we have both a natural incapacity, and a moral.

1. A natural incapacity, both in regard of the subject, and the object; that is, both in regard of our personal unfitness, and the defect or absence of what might be our happiness.

1. Ourselves are now uncapable subjects of happiness and rest: and that both in respect of soul and body. 1. Can a soul that is so weak in all grace, so prone to sin, so hampered with contradicting principles and desires, and so nearly joined to such a neighbour as this flesh, have full content and rest in such a case? What is rest, but the perfection of our graces in habit and in act; to love God perfectly, and know him, and rejoice in him? How then can the spirit be at rest, that finds so little of this knowledge, and love, and joy? What is the rest but our freedom from sin, and imperfections, and enemies? And can the soul have rest that is pestered with all these, and that continually? What makes the souls of sensible christians so groan and complain, desiring to be delivered, and to cry out so oft in the language of Paul, "Oh wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me?" If they can be contented, and rest in such a state, what makes every christian to press hard toward the mark, and run that they may obtain, and strive to enter in, if they are capable of rest in their present condition? Doubtless, therefore, doth God perfectly purge every soul at its removal from the body, before he receives it to his glory, not only because iniquity cannot dwell with him in the most holy, but, also, because themselves are uncapable of the joy and glory, while they have imperfect, sinful souls. The right qualification of our own spirits, for reception and action, is of absolute necessity to our happiness and rest.

2. And our bodies are uncapable as well as our souls. They are not now those sun-like bodies which they shall be, when this corruptible hath put on incorruption, and this mortal immortality. They are our prisons, and our burdens; so full of infirmi-

ties and defects, that we are fain to spend the most of our time in repairing them, and supplying their continual wants, and lenifying their grievances. Is it possible that an immortal soul should have rest, in such a rotten, dirty, diseased, wayward, distempered, noisome habitation; when it must every day expect to be turned out, and leave its beloved companion to the worms? Surely these sickly, weary, loathsome bodies must be refined to a perfection suitable thereto, before they can be capable of enjoying rest.

Answ. 2. As we are unfit for rest on earth ourselves, so we want those objects that might afford us content and rest. For, first, Those we do enjoy are insufficient; and, secondly, That which is sufficient is absent from us. 1. We enjoy the world and its labours, and what fruit they can afford; and, alas! what is in all this to give us rest? They that have the most of it, have the greatest burden and the least rest of any others. They that set most by it, and rejoice most in it, do all cry out at last of its vanity and vexation. A contentation with our present estate, indeed, we must have; that is, a competent provision in our journey; but not as our portion, happiness, or rest. Men cry out upon one another in these times, for not understanding providences, which are but commentaries on Scripture, and not the text. But if men were not blind, they might easily see that the first lecture that God readeth to us in all our late changes, and which providence doth still most inculcate and insist on, is the very same that is the first and greatest lesson in the Scripture; that is, that There is no rest nor happiness for the soul, but in God. Men's expectations are high raised upon every change, and unexperienced fools do promise themselves presently a heaven upon earth; but when they come to enjoy it, it flieth from them, and when they have run themselves out of breath in following this shadow, it is no nearer them than at the first setting out, and would have been as near them if they had sat still: as Solomon's dreamer, they feast in their sleep, but awake hungry. He that hath any regard to the works of the Lord, may easily see that the very end of them is to take down our idols, to weary us in the world, and force us to seek our rest in him. Where doth he cross us most, but where we promise ourselves most content? If you have one child that you dote upon, it becomes your sorrow. If you have one friend that you trust in, and judge him unchangeable, and think yourself happy in, he is estranged from you, or becomes your scourge. Oh what a number of these experiences have I had! Oh what sweet idolizing thoughts of our future estate had we in the time of wars! And now where is the rest that I promised my soul? Even that is my greatest grief, from which I expected most content.

And for this, the greatest shame that ever befell our religion, and the greatest sorrow to every understanding christian, God hath the solemn thanks of men, as if they begged that he would do so still; and they rejoice in it, and are heinously offended with those that dare not do so too, and run to God on all their errands. Instead of pure ordinances, we have a puddle of errors, and the ordinances themselves cried down and derided. Instead of the power and plenty of the gospel, we have every where plenty of violent gainsayers and seducers. We have pulpits and pamphlets filled with the most hellish reproachings of the servants and messengers of the most high God; provoking the people to hate their teachers, slandering them with that venom and impudent falsehood, as if the devil in them were bidding defiance to Christ, and were now entered upon his last and greatest battle with the Lamb; as if they would justify Rabshakeh, and have Lucian and Julian sainted for the modesty of their reproaches. If a conscionable minister be but in doubt, (as knowing himself uncapable of understanding state mysteries, and not called to judge of them,) and so dare not go whine before God hypocritically in pretended humiliation, nor rejoice and give thanks when men command him, and read their scriptures; that is, their orders, which ministers were to read on pain of deposition or ejection, as knowing that men are fallible; and if a man should upon mistake incur the guilt of so heinous unexpressible sin, it were a fearful thing:[a] and, therefore, that to go to God doubtingly, or ignorantly, in an extraordinary duty, in a cause of such weight, is a desperate venture, far beyond venturing upon ceremonies, or popish transubstantiation, to say Christ is really present in the bread, for refusing of which the martyrs suffered in the flames; I say, if he dare not do these, he must part from his dear people, whose souls are more precious to him than his life. Oh! how many congregations in England have been again forced to part with their teachers in sorrow, not to speak of the ejection of such numbers in our universities! And for our so-much-desired discipline and holy order, was there ever a people under heaven, who called themselves reformers, that opposed it more desperately, and that vilified it and railed against it more scurrilously, as if it were but the device of ambitious presbyters, that traitorously sought domination over their superiors, and not the law and order established by Christ? as if these men had never read the Scriptures, Heb. xiii. 7, 17; 1 Thess. v. 10—12; Acts xx. 28; 1 Cor. iv. 1; Matt. xxiv. 25—27; Tit. i. 7; 1 Tim. iii. 1, 4—6; iv. 11; v. 17—20; or will tread in the dirt the laws of Christ, which must judge them. And for railing at the ministers of the gospel, the pretenders of religion have so far outstripped the former profane ones, that it even woundeth my soul to think of their condition. Oh, where are the tender-hearted mourners that shall weep over England's sins and reproaches? Is this a place or state of rest? Hath not God met with our idolatrous setting-up of creatures, and taught us that all are not saints that can talk of religion? much less are these pillars of our confidence, or the instrument to prepare us a rest upon earth. Oh that all this could warn us to set less by creatures, and at last to fetch our comforts and contentments from our God!

2. And as what we enjoy here is insufficient to be our rest, so God, who is sufficient, is little here enjoyed. It is not here that he hath prepared the presence-chamber of his glory; he hath drawn the curtain between us and him; we are far from him as creatures, and farther as frail mortals, and farthest as sinners. We hear now and then a word of comfort from him, and receive his love-tokens, to keep up our hearts and hopes; but, alas! this is not our full enjoyment. While we are present in the body, we are absent from the Lord; even absent while he is present. For though he be not far from us, seeing we live, and move, and have our being in him, who is all in all, (not in all places, but all places in him,) yet have we not eyes now capable of seeing him, for mortals cannot see God and live; even as we are present with stones and trees, but they neither see nor know us. And can any soul that hath made God his portion, and chosen him for his only happiness and rest, (as every one doth that shall be saved by him,) find rest in so vast a distance from

[a] This was written when the usurpers made a war on Scotland, and made orders to sequester all ministers that would not keep days of humiliation and thanksgiving for those wars.

him, and so seldom and so small enjoyment of him?

3. And lastly, as we are thus naturally uncapable, so are we also morally, Gen. xxxii. 10. There is a worthiness must go before our rest. It hath the nature of a reward; not a reward of debt, but a reward of grace, Rom. iv. 3, 4. And so we have not a worthiness of debt, or proper merit; but a worthiness of grace and preparation.[b] If the apostles must give their peace and gospel to the worthy, (Matt. x. 10—13, 37, 38; Eph. iv. 1; Col. i. 10; 1 Thess. ii. 12; 2 Thess. i. 11,) Christ will give the crown to none but the worthy; and those which, by preferring the world before him, do show themselves unworthy, shall not taste of his supper, Matt. xxii. 8; Luke xiv. 24; xx. 35; xxii. 36; 2 Thess. i. 5; Acts v. 41. Yea, it is a work of God's justice, to give the crown to those that overcome; not of his legal, but his evangelical justice; for Christ hath bought us to it, and God hath promised it, and, therefore, in his judiciary process, he will adjudge it them as their due. To those that have fought the good fight, and finished their course, and kept the faith, a crown of righteousness is laid up for them, which the Lord, as a righteous Judge, will give them at that day, 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. And are we fit for the crown before we have overcome; or the prize, before we have run the race; or to receive our penny, before we have worked in the vineyard; or to be ruler of ten cities, before we have improved our ten talents; or to enter into the joy of our Lord, before we have well done as good and faithful servants; or to inherit the kingdom, before we have testified our love to Christ above the world, if we have opportunity? Let men cry down works while they please, you shall find that these are the conditions of the crown: so that God will not alter the course of justice to give you rest, before you have laboured; nor the crown of glory, till you have overcome.

You see, then, reason enough why our rest should remain till the life to come. O take heed, then, christian reader, how thou darest to contrive and care for a rest on earth; or to murmur at God for thy trouble and toil, and wants in the flesh. Doth thy poverty weary thee? thy sickness weary thee? thy bitter enemies and unkind friends weary thee? why, it should be so here. Do thy seeing and hearing the abominations of the times, the ruins of the church, the sins of professors, the reproach of religion, the hardening of the wicked, all weary thee? why, it must be so while thou art absent from thy rest. Do thy sins, and thy naughty, distempered heart weary thee? I would thou wast wearied with it more. But, under all this weariness, art thou willing to go to God, thy rest; and to have thy warfare accomplished; and thy race and labour ended? If not, O complain more of thy own heart, and get it more weary, till rest seem more desirable.

[b] Oportet enim te quidem primo ordinem hominis custodire; tunc deinde participare gloriæ Dei: non enim tu Deum facis, sed te Deus facit. Si ergo opera Dei es, manum artificis tui expecta, opportune omnia facientem, opportune autem quantum ad te attinet qui efficeris; præsta ei cor tuum molle et tractabile, et custodi figuram qua te figuravit artifex, habens in temetipso humorem, ne induratus amittas vestigia digitorum ejus. Custodiens compaginationem, ascendens ad perfectum. Irenæus advers. Hæres. lib. iv. c. 76.

[c] It is a doubt, whether to be in place only *definitive*, and not *circumscriptive*, do not contradict the definition of place. Anima dicitur esse in corpore ut suo domicilio. Sed non proprie continetur in corpore, sed potius continet corpus. Et Deus dicitur esse in omnibus locis; sed impropriissime. Zanch. de Angelis, c. 11. p. (mihi) 87. Vide Twiss against Dr. Jackson, p. 230, and Zanch. tom. 3. c. 11. p. 86, 87, de Angelis.

[d] Except we return to the opinion of Tertul. and the rest of the ancientest of the fathers, who say that angels and other spirits are but bodies more rare and pure; of which, see learned Zanchius, vol. 1. tom. 8. de Ang. c. 3. q. 66, &c. who determines it as the fathers, that angels are corporeal, in his judgment.

[e] Grotius' fancy, that to be with Christ is no more than to be *Christi depositum*, is evidently vain: for so to be with Christ, would not be best of all, seeing that our mere deliverance from present sufferings is not so great a good as our present life in the service and enjoyment of God in his ordinances and mercies, though accompanied with imperfection and afflictions, except he take a stone or a carcass to be happier than a man. Non ignoro quid multi e patribus de hac re judicarunt, ut nominatim Irenæus advers. Hæres. lib. v. p. ult. Cum enim Dominus in medio umbræ mortis abierit, ubi animæ mortuorum erant; hinc ita discipulorum ejus propter quos et hæc operatus est Dominus, animæ abibunt in invisibilem locum definitum eis a Deo; et ibi usque ad

CHAPTER X.

WHETHER THE SOULS DEPARTED ENJOY THIS REST BEFORE THE RESURRECTION.

SECT. I. I have but one thing more to clear, before I come to the use of this doctrine; and that is, whether this rest remains till the resurrection, before we shall enjoy it; or whether we shall have any possession of it before? The Socinians, and many others of late among us, think the soul separated from the body, is either nothing, or at least not capable of happiness or misery. Truly, if it should be so, it would be somewhat a sad, uncomfortable doctrine to the godly at their death, to think of being deprived of their glory till the resurrection; and somewhat comfortable to the wicked to think of tarrying out of hell so long. But I am in strong hopes that this doctrine is false; yea, very confident that it is so. I do believe, that as the soul separated from the body is not a perfect man, so it doth not enjoy the glory and happiness so fully and so perfectly, as it shall do after the resurrection, when they are again conjoined. What the difference is, and what degree of glory souls in the mean time enjoy, are too high things for mortals particularly to discern. For the great question, what place the souls of those before Christ, of infants, and all others since Christ, do remain in, till the resurrection? I think it is a vain inquiry of what is yet beyond our reach.[c] It is a great question what place is; but if it be only a circumstant body, and if to be in a place be only to be in a circumstant body, or in the superficies of an ambient body, or in the concavity of that superficies, then it is doubtful whether spirits can be properly said to be in a place. We can have yet no clear conceivings of these things.[d] But that separated souls of believers do enjoy unconceivable blessedness and glory, even while they remain thus separated from the body, I prove as followeth. (Besides all those arguments for the soul's immortality, which you may read in Alexander Ross's Philosophical Touchstone, part last; and in abundance of writers, metaphysical and theological.)

1. Those words of Paul, 2 Cor. v. 8, are so exceeding plain, that I yet understand not what tolerable exception can be made against them. "Therefore we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord: for we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord," ver. 6—8. What can be spoken more plainly. So also verses 1—4, of the same chapter.

2. As plain is that in Phil. i. 23, "For[e] I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and

to be with Christ, which is far better." What sense were in these words, if Paul had not expected to enjoy Christ till the resurrection? Why should he be in a strait, or desire to depart? Should he be with Christ ever the sooner for that? Nay, should he not have been loth to depart upon the very same grounds? For while he was in the flesh, he enjoyed something of Christ; but being departed, (according to the Socinians' doctrine,) he should enjoy nothing of Christ till the day of resurreetion.

3. And plain enough is that of Christ to the thief, "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise." The dislocation of the words "This day" is but a gross evasion.

4. And sure if it be but a parable of the rich man in hell and Lazarus; yet it seems unlikely to me, that Christ would teach them by such a parable, what seemed evidently to intimate and suppose the soul's happiness or misery presently after death, if there were no such thing.

5. Doth not his argument against the Sadducees, for the resurrection, run upon this supposition, that (God being not the God of the dead, but of the living, therefore) Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, were then living, i. e. in soul, and, consequently, should have their bodies raised at the resurrection.

6. Plain also is that in Rev. xiv. 13, "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them;" i. e. close as the garments on a man's back follow him, and not at such a distance as the resurrection; for if the blessedness were only in resting in the grave, then a beast or a stone were as blessed; nay, it were evidently a curse, and not a blessing. For was not life a great mercy? was it not a greater mercy to enjoy all the comforts of life; to enjoy the fellowship of the saints, the comfort of the ordinances, and much of Christ in all; to be employed in the delightful work of God, and to edify his church? &c. Is it not a curse to be so deprived of all these? do not these yield a great deal more sweetness, than all the troubles of this life can yield us bitterness? Though I think not, as some,[f] that it is better to be most miserable, even in hell, than not to be at all; yet it is undeniable, that it is better to enjoy life, and so much of the comforts of life, and so much of God in comforts and affliction, as the saints do, though we have all this with persecution; than to lie rotting in the grave, if that were all we could expect. Therefore it is some further blessedness that is there promised.

7. How else is it said, "that we are come to mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect," Heb. xii. 22, 23. Sure at the resurrection the body will be made perfect, as well as the spirit. To say (as Lushington doth) that they are said to be made perfect, because they are sure of it as if they had it, is an evasion so grossly contradicting the text, that by such commentaries he may as well deny any truth in Scripture; to make good which, he as much abuseth that of Phil. iii. 12.

8. Doth not the Scripture tell us, that Enoch and Elias are taken up already? and shall we think that they possess that glory alone?

9. Did not Peter, and James, and John, see Moses also with Christ on the mount? yet the Scripture saith Moses died. And is it likely that Christ did delude their senses, in showing them Moses, if he should not partake of that glory till the resurrection?

10. And is not that of Stephen as plain as we can desire? "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Sure, if the Lord receive it, it is neither asleep, nor dead, nor annihilated; but it is where he is, and beholds his glory.

11. The like may be said of that, "The spirit shall return to God who gave it," Eccles. xii. 7.

12. How else is it said, "that we have eternal life already," John vi. 54. And that "the knowledge of God (which is begun here) is eternal life," John xvii. 3. So 1 John v. 13. "And he that believeth on Christ, hath everlasting life. He that eateth this bread shall not die. For he dwelleth in Christ, and Christ in him. And as the Son liveth by the Father, so he that eateth him shall live by him," John iii. 36; vi. 47, 50, 56, 57. How is "the kingdom of God and of heaven (which is eternal) said to be in us?" Luke xvii. 21; Rom. xiv. 17; Matt. xiii.

Surely, if there be as great an interruption of our life as till the resurrection, which with some will be many thousand years, this is no eternal life, nor everlasting kingdom. Lushington's evasion is, "That because there is no time with dead men, but they so sleep that when they awake it is all one to them as if it had been at first, therefore the Scripture speaks of them as if they were there already." It is true, indeed, if there were no joy till the resurrection, then that consideration would be comfortable; but when God hath thus plainly told us of it before, then this evasion contradicteth the text. Doubtless there is time also to the dead, though, in respect of their bodies, they perceive it not. He will not sure think it a happiness to be putrified or stupified, whilst others are enjoying the comforts of life; if he do, it were the best course to sleep out our lives.

13. In Jude 7, the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah are spoken of as "suffering the vengeance of eternal fire:" and if the wicked do already suffer eternal fire, then no doubt but the godly do enjoy eternal blessedness. I know some understand the place, of

resurrectionem, commorabuntur, sustinentes resurreetionem, post receipientes corpora et perfeete resurgentes, hoc est, eorporaliter, quemadmodum Dominus resurrexit; sic venient ad conspeetum Dei sieut magister noster non statim evolans abiit; sed sustinet definitum tempus, &c. sic et nos sustinere debemus definitum a Deo resurrectionis nostræ tempus, &e. Hæe recito et errores et patris hujus proeuldubio nævos. E contrario audi Tertullian. Nos autem animam corporalem et hie profitemur, (that was a common error then,) et in suo volumine probamus; habentem proprium genus substantiæ, soliditatis, per quam quid et sentire et pati possit. Nam et nunc animas torqueri, foverique penes inferos, licet nudas, licet adhuc exules earnis, probavit Lazari exemplum. Tertullian de Resurrect. Carnis, e. 17. And Irenæus's own words do confirm the immortality of the soul, and deny not all joy to it before the resurrection, but full joy. And so Origen saith, Ubi e vita Christus excessit, deposito corpore in animam nudam reductus, cum animis etiam corpore vaeuis, nudatisque versabatur; ex his ad se revocans quos vel sequi se vellet, vel pro eognitis sibi rationibus aptiores videret ut ad seipsum eoneitet. Origen cont. Celsum, lib. ii. fol. (mihi) 22.

[f] Dr. Twiss. See Barlow's Exereitat. post Metaph. Seheib. Jo. Franeiseus. Picus Mirand. saith he heard of a pope that in his life-time told a familiar friend of his, that he believed not the immortality of souls: his friend being dead, appeared to him as he watched, and told him, that his soul which he believed to be mortal, he should, by the just judgment of God, find to be immortal, to his exeeeding torment in eternal fire. This pope seemeth to be Leo the Tenth. Vid. Du Plessis' Mystery of Iniquity, p. 641. Polyearpus inter multas præclaras voces quas flammæ admotus edidit, eo die representandum se dixit eoram Deo in spiritu. Quod eodem tempore Melito episcopus Sardensis vir paris sinceritatis librum scripsit de eorpore et anima, &c. Adeo autem hæc sententia meliore illo seeulo valuit, ut Tertullianus reponat eam inter communes et primas animi eoneeptiones quæ natura communiter apprehenduntur. Calv. in Psychopann. Vide Euseb. Hist. lib. i. cap. 1. lit. c.

that fire which consumed their bodies, as being a type of the fire of hell: I will not be very confident against this exposition, but the text seemeth plainly to speak more.

14. It is also observable, that when John saw his glorious revelations, he is said to be "in the Spirit," Rev. i. 10; iv. 2, and to be "carried away in the Spirit," Rev. xvii. 3; xxi. 10. And when Paul had his revelations, and saw things unutterable, he knew not whether it were in the body, or out of the body. All implying that spirits are capable of these glorious things, without the help of their bodies.

15. And though it be a prophetical, obscure book, yet it seems to me, that those words in the Revelation do imply this, where John saw the souls under the altar, Rev. vi. 9, &c.

16. We are commanded by Christ, "not to fear them that can kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul," Luke xii. 4. Doth not this plainly imply, that when wicked men have killed our bodies, that is, separated the souls from them, yet the souls are still alive?[g]

17. The soul of Christ was alive when his body was dead, and therefore so shall ours too; for his created nature was like ours, except in sin. That Christ's human soul was alive, is a necessary consequent of its hypostatical union with the divine nature, as I judge. And by his words to the thief, "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise:" so also by his voice on the cross, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit," Luke xxiii. 46. And whether that in 1 Pet. iii. 18, 19, that he went and preached to the spirits in prison, &c. will prove it, I leave to others to judge. Read Illyricus's arguments in his Clavis Scripturæ, on this text. Many think that the opposition is not so irregular, as to put the dative σαρκὶ for ἐν σαρκὶ, as the subject recipient, and the dative πμεύματι for διὰ πνεύματος, as the efficient cause; but that it is plainly to be understood as a regular opposition, that Christ was mortified in the flesh, but vivified in the spirit, that is, in the spirit which is usually put in opposition to this flesh, which is the soul, by which spirit, &c. But I leave this as doubtful; there is enough besides.

18. Why is there mention of God's breathing into man the breath of life, and calling his soul a living soul? There is no mention of any such thing in the creating of other creatures; sure, therefore, this makes some difference between the life of our souls and theirs.

19. It appears in Saul's calling for Samuel to the witch, and in the Jews' expectation of the coming of Elias, that they took it for current, then, that Elias and Samuel's souls were living.

20. Lastly: If the spirits of those that were disobedient in the days of Noah, were in prison, (1 Pet. iii. 19,) then certainly the separated spirits in the just, are in an opposite condition of happiness. If any say that the word "prison" signifieth not their full misery, but a reservation thereto, I grant it; yet it importeth a reservation in a living and suffering state, for were they nothing, they could not be in prison.

Though I have but briefly named these twenty arguments,[h] and put them together in a narrow room, when some men cannot see the truth without a multitude of words; yet I doubt not but, if you will well consider them, you will discern the clear evidence of Scripture verity. It is a lamentable case that the brutish opinion of the soul's mortality should find so many patrons professing godliness, when there is so clear light of Scripture against them, and when the opinion tends to no other end than the imboldening of sin, the cherishing of security, and the great discomfort and discouragement of the saints, and when many pagans were wiser in this without the help of Scripture: surely this error is an introduction to paganism itself. Yea more, the most of the nations in the world, even the barbarous Indians, do, by the light of nature, acknowledge that, which these men deny, even that there is a happiness and misery which the souls go presently to, which are separated from their bodies. I know the silly, evading answers that are usually given to the forementioned scriptures, which being carried with confidence and subtle words, may soon shake the ordinary sort of christians that are not able to deal with a sophister. And if they be thoroughly dealt with, they presently appear to be mere vanity or contradiction. Were there but that one text, 2 Cor. v. 8; or that, 1 Pet. iii. 19; or that, Phil. i. 23; all the seducers in the world could not answer them.

Believe, therefore, stedfastly, O faithful souls, that whatever all the deceivers in the world shall say to the contrary, your souls shall no sooner leave their prisons of flesh, but angels will be their convoy, Christ will be their company, with all the perfected spirits of the just; heaven will be their residence, and God will be their happiness. And you may boldly and believingly, when you die, say, as Stephen, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," and commend it, as Christ did, into a Father's hands.

[g] If you would see this subject handled more fully, and all the arguments answered, which are brought to prove that souls have neither joy nor pain till the resurrection, see Calvin's treatise hereof, called Psychopannychia, and Beckmanni Exercit. xxiv. D. Jo. Reignoldum De Lib. Apocryph. Prælect. 79 and 80, and Prælect. 3, p. (mihi) 23, 34, &c.

[h] Dr. J. Reignolds, De Lib. Apoc. Prælect. 79, p. (mihi) 946, hath another argument from Col. i. 20. God reconciled by Christ all things to himself, both things in heaven and in earth: nothing in heaven was capable of reconciliation but the souls of the godly, who were then there, but reconciled before, by virtue of Christ's blood afterwards to be shed. Angels were not enemies, devils were hopeless, therefore it must needs be the souls departed which are called "things in heaven reconciled." But of the validity of this argument I have nothing to say, but that I incline to another exposition.

PART III.

CONTAINING

SEVERAL USES OF THE FORMER DOCTRINE OF REST.

TO MY DEARLY BELOVED FRIENDS,

THE INHABITANTS OF THE CITY OF COVENTRY, BOTH MAGISTRATES AND PEOPLE,

RICHARD BAXTER DEVOTETH THIS PART OF THIS TREATISE, IN THANKFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THEIR GREAT AFFECTION TOWARD HIM, AND READY ACCEPTANCE OF HIS LABOURS AMONG THEM, WHICH IS THE HIGHEST RECOMPENCE, IF JOINED WITH OBEDIENCE, THAT A FAITHFUL MINISTER CAN EXPECT:

HUMBLY beseeching the Lord on their behalf, that he will save them from that spirit of pride, hypocrisy, dissension, and giddiness, which is of late years gone forth, and is now destroying and making havoc of the churches of Christ; and that he will teach them highly to esteem of those faithful teachers whom the Lord hath made rulers over them, (1 Thess. v. 12, 13; Heb. xiii. 7, 17,) and to know them so to be, and to obey them; and that he will keep them unspotted of the guilt of those sins, which in these days have been the shame of our religion, and have made us a scandal or scorn to the world.

CHAPTER I.

SECT. I. Whatsoever the soul of man doth entertain, must make its first entrance at the understanding; which must be satisfied, first, of its truth, and, secondly, of its goodness, before it find any further admittance: if this porter be negligent, it will admit of any thing that bears but the face or name of truth and goodness; but if it be faithful, able, and diligent in its office, it will examine strictly, and search to the quick; what is found deceitful, it casteth out, that it go no further; but what is found to be sincere and current, it letteth in to the very heart, where the will and affections do with welcome entertain it, and by concoction, as it were, incorporate it into their own substance. Accordingly, I have been hitherto presenting to your understandings, first, the excellency of the rest of saints, in the first part of this book; and then the verity, in the second part. I hope your understandings have now tasted this food, and tried what hath been expressed. Truth fears not the light. This perfect beauty abhorreth darkness; nothing but ignorance of its worth can disparage it. Therefore search, and spare not; read, and read again, and then judge. What think you; is it good, or is it not? nay, is it not the chiefest good? And is there any thing in goodness to be compared with it? And is it true, or is it not? [a] Nay, is there any thing in the world more certain, than that there remaineth a rest to the people of God? Why, if your understandings are convinced of both these, I do here, in the behalf of God and his truth, and in the behalf of your own souls, and their life, require the further entertainment hereof; and that you take this blessed subject of rest, and commend it as you have found it to your wills and affections: let your hearts now cheerfully embrace it, and improve it, and I shall present it to you, in its respective uses.

And though the laws of method do otherwise direct me, yet because I conceive it most profitable, I will lay close together, in the first place, all those uses that most concern the ungodly, that they may know where to find their lesson, and not to pick it up and down intermixed with uses of another strain. And then I shall lay down those uses that are more proper to the godly by themselves, in the end.

USE I.—*Showing the unconceivable misery of the ungodly in their loss of this rest.*

Sect. II. And, first, If this rest be for none but for the people of God, what doleful tidings is this to the ungodly world! That there is so much glory, but none for them! so great joys for the saints of God, while they must consume in perpetual sorrows! such rest for them that have obeyed the gospel, while they must be restless in the flames of hell! If thou who readest these words, art in thy soul a stranger to Christ, and to the holy nature and life of

[a] Caveat quivis Christo fidelis sibi ab impiissimis sermonibus, quibus despicati et profligatissimi quidam homines utantur, dicentes, morte omnia deleri, nullam esse futuram vitam, in alio mundo; et homines ut pecora morte consumi; ideoque si corpori belle prospiciatur, animæ abunde prospectum esse, &c. Gravissimis pœnis hujusmodi sermones a christiano magistratu puniendos esse arbitramur. Etenim si nulla est vita post hanc præsentem, cur, &c. Vide ultra, Bullinger. Corp. Doct. Christian. lib. x. c. 1. p. (mihi) 141.

his people, and art not of them who are before described, and shalt live and die in the same condition that thou art now in; let me tell thee, I am a messenger of the saddest tidings to thee, that ever yet thy ears did hear: that thou shalt never partake of the joys of heaven, nor have the least taste of the saints' eternal rest.[b] I may say to thee, as Ehud to Eglon, I have a message to thee from God; but it is a mortal message, against the very life and hopes of thy soul, that, as true as the word of God is true, thou shalt never see the face of God with comfort. This sentence I am commanded to pass upon thee, from the word: take it as thou wilt, and escape it if thou canst. I know thy humble and hearty subjection to Christ would procure thy escape; and if thy heart and life were thoroughly changed, thy relation to Christ and eternity would be changed also; he would then acknowledge thee for one of his people, and justify thee from all things that could be charged upon thee, and give thee a portion in the inheritance of his chosen: and if this might be the happy success of my message, I should be so far from repining like Jonas, that the threatenings of God are not executed upon thee, that, on the contrary, I should bless the day that ever God made me so happy a messenger, and return him hearty thanks upon my knees, that ever he blessed his word in my mouth with such desired success. But if thou end thy days in thy present condition, whether thou be fully resolved never to change, or whether thou spend thy days in fruitless purposing to be better hereafter, all is one for that; I say, if thou live and die in thy unregenerate estate, as sure as the heavens are over thy head, and the earth under thy feet; as sure as thou livest, and breathest in this air, so sure shalt thou be shut out of this rest of the saints, and receive thy portion in everlasting fire. I do here expect that thou shouldst, in the pride and scorn of thy heart, turn back upon me, and show thy teeth, and say, Who made you the doorkeeper of heaven? When were you there? and when did God show you the book of life, or tell you who they are that shall be saved, and who shut out?

I will not answer thee according to thy folly, but truly and plainly as I can discover this thy folly to thyself, that if there be yet any hope, thou mayst recover thy understanding, and yet return to God and live. First, I do not name thee, nor any other: I do not conclude of the persons individually, and say, This man shall be shut out of heaven, and that man shall be taken in. I only conclude it of the unregenerate in general, and of thee conditionally, if thou be such a one. Secondly, I do not go about to determine who shall repent, and who shall not; much less that thou shalt never repent, and come in to Christ. These things are unknown to me; I had far rather show thee what hopes thou hast before thee, if thou wilt not sit still and lose them, and by thy wilful carclessness cast away thy hopes; and I would far rather persuade thee to hearken in time, while there is hope, and opportunity, and offers of grace, and before the door is shut against thee, that so thy soul may return and live, than to tell thee that there is no hope of thy repenting and returning. But if thou lie hoping that thou shalt return, and never do it; if thou talk of repenting and believing, but still art the same; if thou live and die with the world, and thy credit or pleasure nearer thy heart than Jesus Christ; in a word, if the foregoing description of the people of God do not agree with the state of thy soul, it is then a hard question, whether thou shalt ever be saved; even as hard a question as, whether God be true, or the Scripture be his word. Cannot I certainly tell, that thou shalt perish for ever, except I had seen the book of life? Why, the Bible also is the book of life, and it describeth plainly those that shall be saved, and those that shall be condemned. Though it do not name them, yet it tells you all those signs and conditions by which they may be known. Do I need to ascend up into heaven, to know, "that without holiness none shall see God," Heb. xii. 14; or, "that it is the pure in heart who shall see God," Matt. v. 8; or, "that except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," John iii. 3; or, "that he that believeth not (that is, stoops not to Christ as his King and Saviour) is condemned already, and that he shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him," John iii. 18, 36; "and that except you repent, (which includes reformation,) you shall all perish," Luke xiii. 3, 5; with a hundred more such plain Scripture expressions. Cannot these be known without searching into God's counsels? Why, thou ignorant, or wilful, self-deluding sot! hath thy Bible lain by thee in thy house so long, and didst thou never read such words as these? or hast thou read it, or heard it read so oft, and yet dost thou not remember such passages as these? Nay, didst thou not find that the great drift of the Scripture is, to show men who they are that shall be saved, and who not; and let them see the condition of both estates? And yet dost thou ask me, how I know who shall be saved? What need I go up to heaven to inquire that of Christ, which he came down to earth to tell us; and sent his Spirit in his prophets and apostles to tell us; and hath left upon record to all the world? And though I do not know the secrets of thy heart, and therefore cannot tell thee by name whether it be thy state, or no; yet, if thou art but willing or diligent, thou mayst know thyself, whether thou art an heir of heaven, or not. And that is the main thing that I desire, that if thou be yet miserable, thou mayst discern it, and escape it. But canst thou possibly escape, if thou neglect Christ and salvation? Heb. ii. 3. Is it not resolved on, "that if thou love father, mother, wife, children, house, lands, or thine own life, better than Christ, thou canst not be his disciple," Matt. x. 31; Luke xiv. 20; and consequently can never be saved by him? Is this the word of man, or of God? Is it not then

[b] Consuevimus nos homines, præsertim qui crassiore mente prædíti sumus, metu potius quam beneficiis quod oportet addiscere. Theophylact. in Joan. c. 5. v. 22; Judg. ii. 20, 21. Non improbissimi quique tam facile christianæ doctrinæ subduntur, quam simpliciores et recti, graves alioquin et modesti. Hi namque suppliciorum denunciata formidine, quæ et maxime movet, et ab his, ut caveant admodum exhortantur quorum gratia inseruntur tormenta, enixe adeo dedere se totos christianæ disciplinæ nituntur; tantopere nostra hac ipsa detinentur doctrina, æternas veriti pœnas, &c. Origen cont. Celsum, circa fin. I add these for them that think we should win men to Christ, only by arguments from his love, and not by any mention of hell, which I confess must not be the chief; for terror will not win to love. But yet, 1. Fear, and care, and obedience, are necessary as well as love. 2. God would not have given us mixed affections, if he would not have had us to use them. 3. The doctrine and example of Christ require us to stir up in men both love and fear, Matt. xxiii. xxv. &c. Even Dr. Sibbs could say, "Fear is the awe-band of the soul." And Clemens Alexand. Stromat. lib. ii. saith, "Fear and sufferance are the helpers of faith;" they that accuse fear, do reproach the law; and if the law, then it is plain, him also that made the law. And he answers them that say, "Fear is a perturbation, and a declining from reason." And the same Clemens Pædagog. lib. i. c. 9, saith, "As we have all need of a Saviour, so he useth not only gentle and mild remedies, but also sharp doubts; fear doth stop the eating corrosions of the roots of sin." Fear, therefore, is wholesome, though it be bitter.

an undoubted concluded case, that, in the case thou art now in, thou hast not the least title to heaven? Shall I tell thee from the word of God, it is as impossible for thee to be saved, except thou be born again, and be made a new creature, as it is for the devils themselves to be saved? Nay, God hath more plainly and frequently spoken it in the Scripture, that such sinners as thou shall never be saved, than he hath done, that the devils shall never be saved. And doth not this tidings go cold to thy heart? Methinks, but that there is yet life and hope before thee, and thou hast yet time and means to have thy soul recovered, else it should kill thy heart with terror; and the sight of thy doleful, discovered case, should even strike thee dead with amazement and horror. If old Eli fell from his seat and died, to hear that the ark of God was gone, which was but an outward sign of his presence; how then should thy heart be astonished with this tidings, that thou hast lost the Lord God himself, and all thy title to his eternal presence and delight! If Rachel wept for children, and would not be comforted, because they were not; how then shouldst thou now sit down and weep for the happiness and future life of the soul, because to thee it is not! When king Belshazzar saw but a piece of a hand sent from God, writing over against him on the wall, it made his countenance change, his thoughts trouble him, his loins loosen in the joints, and knees smite one against another, Dan. v. 6. Why, what trembling then should seize on thee, who hast the hand of God himself against thee; not in a sentence or two only, but in the very tenor and scope of the Scriptures; not threatening thee with the loss of a kingdom only, as he did Belshazzar, but with the loss of thy part in the everlasting kingdom! But because I would fain have thee, if it be possible, to lay it close to thy heart, I will here stay a little longer, and show thee, First, The greatness of thy loss; and, Secondly, The aggravations of thy unhappiness in this loss; Thirdly, And the positive miseries that thou mayst also endure, with their aggravations.

Sect. III. First: The ungodly, in their loss of heaven, do lose all that glorious, personal perfection which the people of God do there enjoy. They lose that shining lustre of the body, surpassing the brightness of the sun at noon-day: though perhaps even the bodies of the wicked will be raised more spiritual, incorruptible bodies, than they were on earth; yet that will be so far from being a happiness to them, that it only makes them capable of the more exquisite torments; their understandings being now more capable of apprehending the greatness of their loss, and their senses more capable of feeling their sufferings. They would be glad, then, if every member were a dead member, that it might not feel the punishment inflicted on it; and if the whole body were a rotten carcass, or might again lie down in the dust and darkness. The devil himself hath an angelical and excellent nature,[c] but that only honoureth his skilful Creator, but is no honour or comfort at all to himself; the glory, the beauty, the comfortable perfections, they are deprived of; much more do they want that moral perfection which the blessed do partake of: those holy dispositions and qualifications of mind; that blessed conformity to the holiness of God; that cheerful readiness to his will; that perfect rectitude of all their actions: instead of these, they have their old, ulcerous, deformed souls, that perverseness of will, that disorder in their faculties, that loathing of good, that love to evil, that violence of passion, which they had on earth. It is true, their understandings will be much cleared, both by the ceasing of their temptation and deluding objects which they had on earth, as also by the sad experience which they will have in hell, of the falsehood of their former conceits and delusions; but this proceeds not from the sanctifying of their natures; and perhaps their experience and too-late understanding may restrain much of the evil motions of their wills, which they had formerly here on earth; but the evil disposition is never the more changed; so also will the conversation of the damned in hell be void of many of those sins which they commit here on earth. They will be drunk no more, and whore no more, and be gluttonous no more, nor oppress the innocent, nor grind the poor, nor devour the houses and estates of their brethren, nor be revenged on their enemies, nor persecute and destroy the members of Christ: all these, and many more actual sins, will then be laid aside. But this is not from any renewing of their natures; they have the same dispositions still, and fain they would commit the same sins, if they could: they want but opportunity; they are now tied up. It is part of their torment to be denied these their pleasures: no thanks to them, that they sin not as much as ever; their hearts are as bad, though their actions are restrained; nay, it is a great question whether those remainders of good which were left in their natures on earth, as their common honesty and moral virtues, be not all taken from them in hell, according to that, "From him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath," Matt. iii. 12; Luke viii. 18. This is the judgment of divines generally; but because it is questionable, and much may be said against it, I will let that pass. But certainly they shall have none of the glorious perfections of the saints, either in soul or body: there will be a greater difference between these wretches and the glorified christian, than there is betwixt a toad under a sill and the sun in the firmament. The rich man's purple robes and delicious fare did not so exalt him above Lazarus at his door in scabs, nor make the difference between them so wide, as it is now made on the contrary in their vast separation.

Sect. IV. Secondly: But the great loss of the damned will be their loss of God; they shall have no comfortable relation to him, nor any of the saints' communion with him. As they did not like to retain God in their mind, but said to him, "Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways," (Rom. i. 28; Job xxi. 14,) so God will abhor to retain them in his household, or to give them entertainment in his fellowship and glory.[d] He will never admit them to the inheritance of his saints, nor endure them to stand

[c] Sicut melior est natura sentiens et eum dolet, quam lapis, qui dolere nullo modo potest; ita rationalis natura præstantior est, etiam miseria, quam illa quæ rationis et sensus est expers, et ideo in eam non eadit miseria. Quod eum ita sit, huic naturæ, quæ in tanta excellentia ereata est, ut lieet ipsa sit mutabilis, inhærendo tamen incommutabili bono, i. e. summo Deo, beatitudinem consequatur, nec expleat indigentiam suam nisi utique beata sit, eique explendæ non sufficiat nisi Deus; profecto non illi adhærere vitium est. Aug. de Civit. lib. xii. c. 1. Anima illic posita bene esse perdidit, at esse non perdidit. Ex qua re semper cogitur, ut et mortem sine morte, et defectum sine defectu, et finem sine fine patiatur; quatenus ei et mors immortalis sit, et defeetus indefieiens, et finis infinitus. Gregor. Dial. lib. iv. In inferno etsi erit stimulus sanitudinis, nulla ibi erit correctio voluntatis; a quibus ita eulpabitur iniquitas, ut nullatenus ab eis possit diligi vel desiderari justitia. August. de Fide ad Pet. Illa est peeeati pœna justissima, ut amittat quique quo bene uti noluit, eum sine ulla possit difficultate uti si vellet. Id est autem, ut qui seiens recte non fecit, amittat scire quod rectum sit; et qui rectum faeere, cum posset noluit, amittat posse eum velit. Aug. lib. iii. de Liber. Arbitr. e. 18.

[d] Decem mille qui ponat gehennas, nihil tale dieit quale est a beata gloria exeidere, a Christo audire, non novi vos.

amongst them in his presence; but bid them, "Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, I know you not." Now, these men dare belie the Lord, if not blaspheme, in calling him by the title of their Father. How boldly and confidently do they daily approach him with their lips, and indeed reproach him in their formal prayers, with that appellation, "Our Father!" As if God would father the devil's children; or as if the slighters of Christ, the pleasers of the flesh, the friends of the world, the haters of godliness, or any that trade in sin, and delight in iniquity, were the offspring of heaven! They are ready now, in the height of their presumption, to lay as confident claims to Christ and heaven, as if they were sincere, believing saints. The swearer, the drunkard, the whoremaster, the worldling, can scornfully say to the people of God, What, is not God our Father as well as yours? Doth he not love us as well as you? Will he save none but a few holy precisians? Oh! but when that time is come, when the case must be decided, and Christ will separate his followers from his foes, and his faithful friends from his deceived flatterers, where then will be their presumptuous claim to Christ? Then they shall find that God is not their Father, but their resolved foe, because they would not be his people, but were resolved in their negligence and wickedness. Then, though they had preached or wrought miracles in his name, he will not know them; and though they were his brethren or sisters after the flesh, yet he will not own them, but reject them as his enemies. And even those that did eat and drink in his presence on earth, shall be cast out of his heavenly presence for ever; and those that in his name did cast out devils, shall yet at his command be cast out to those devils, and endure the torments prepared for them. And, as they would not consent that God should by his Spirit dwell in them, so shall not these evil-doers dwell with him. The tabernacles of wickedness shall have no fellowship with him; nor the wicked inhabit the city of God: for without are the dogs, the sorcerers, whoremongers, murderers, idolaters, and whatsoever loveth and maketh a lie. For God knoweth the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked leads to perishing. God is first enjoyed in part on earth, before he be fully enjoyed in heaven. It is only they that walked with him here, who shall live and be happy with him there. Oh, little doth the world now know what a loss that soul hath, who loseth God! What were the world but a dungeon, if it had lost the sun? What were the body but a loathsome carrion, if it had lost the soul? Yet all these are nothing to the loss of God; even the little taste of the fruition of God, which the saints enjoy in this life, is dearer to them than all the world. As the world, when they feed upon their forbidden pleasures, may cry out with the sons of the prophet, "There is death in the pot!" 2 Kings iv. 40; so when the saints do but taste of the favour of God, they cry out with David, "In his favour is life!" Psal. xxx. 5. Nay, though life be naturally most dear to all men, yet they that have tasted and tried, do say with David, "His loving-kindness is better than life!" Psal. lxiii. 3. So that, as the enjoyment of God is the heaven of the saints, so the loss of God is the hell of the ungodly. And, as the enjoying of God is the enjoying of all, so the loss of God is the loss of all.

Sect. V. Thirdly: Moreover, as they lose God, so they lose all those spiritual, delightful affections and actions, by which the blessed do feed on God: that transporting knowledge; those ravishing views of his glorious face;[e] the unconceivable pleasure of loving God; the apprehensions of his infinite love to us; the constant joys which his saints are taken up with, and the rivers of consolation wherewith he doth satisfy them. Is it nothing to lose all this? The employment of a king in ruling a kingdom doth not so far exceed the employment of the vilest scullion or slave, as this heavenly employment exceedeth his.

These wretches had no delight in praising God on earth, their recreations and pleasures were of another nature; and now, when the saints are singing his praises, and employed in magnifying the Lord of saints, then shall the ungodly be denied this happiness, and have an employment suitable to their natures and deserts. Their hearts were full of hell upon earth, instead of God, and his love, and fear, and graces; there was pride, and self-love, and lust, and unbelief: and, therefore, hell must now entertain those hearts which formerly entertained so much of it. Their houses on earth were the resemblances of hell; instead of worshipping God, and calling upon his name, there was scorning at his worship, and swearing by his name: and now hell must therefore be their habitation for ever, where they shall never be troubled with that worship and duty which they abhorred, but join with the rest of the damned in blaspheming that God who is avenging their former impieties and blasphemies. Can it probably be expected, that they who made themselves merry, while they lived on earth, in deriding the persons and families of the godly, for their frequent worshipping and praising God, should at last be admitted into the family of heaven, and join with those saints in those most perfect praises? Surely, without a sound change upon their hearts before they go hence, it is utterly impossible. It is too late then to say, "Give us of your oil, for our lamps are out; let us now enter with you to the marriage feast; let us now join with you in the joyful heavenly melody." You should have joined in it on earth, if you would have joined in heaven. As your eyes must be taken up with other kind of sights, so must your hearts be taken up with other kind of thoughts, and your voices turned to another tune. As the doors of heaven will be shut against you, so will that joyous employment be denied to you. There is no singing the songs of Sion in the land of your thraldom. Those that go down to the pit do not praise him. Who can rejoice in the place of sorrows; and who can be glad in the land of confusion? God suits men's employments to their natures. The bent of your spirits was another way; your hearts were never set upon God in your lives; you were never admirers of his attributes and works, nor ever thoroughly warmed with his love. You never longed after the enjoyment of him; you had no delight to speak or to hear of him; you were weary of a sermon or prayer an hour long; you had rather have continued on earth, if you had known how; you had rather

Chrysost. in Mat. Hom. 33. Multi gehennam abhorrent: ego autem casum illius gloriæ multo amariorem gehennæ par aio. Greg. Nulla major et pejor est mors, quam ubi non moritur mors. Sed quod animæ natura per id quod immortalis creata est, sine qualicunque vita esse non potest; summa mors ejus est alienatio a vita Dei in æternitate supplicii. Aug. de Civit. lib. vi. c. 12. Matt. vii. 22; xxv. 41; Psal. i. 6, 7; xciv. 10; cxxxii. 3; Rev. xxii. 25.

[e] Quicunque erga eum custodiunt dilectionem, solum his præstat communionem. Quicunque autem absistunt secundum sententiam suam ab eo, his eam quæ electa est ab ipsis separationem inducit. Separatio autem a Deo mors, et separatio lucis tenebræ; et separatio a Deo amissio omnium quæ sunt apud Deum bonorum. Irenæus adv. Hæres. lib. v. c. 27.

yet have a place of earthly preferment, or lands and lordships, or a feast, or sports, or your cups, or whores, than to be interested in the glorious praises of God: and is it meet, then, that you should be members of the celestial quire? A swine is fitter for a lecture of philosophy, or an ass to build a city or govern a kingdom, or a dead corpse to feast at thy table, than thou art for this work of heavenly praise.

Sect. VI. Fourthly: They shall also be deprived of the blessed society of angels and glorified saints. Instead of being companions of those happy spirits, and numbered with those joyful and triumphing kings, they must now be members of the corporation of hell, where they shall have companions of a far different nature and quality. While they lived on earth, they loathed the saints; they imprisoned, banished them, and cast them out of their societies; or at least they would not be their companions in labour and in sufferings; and, therefore, they shall not now be their companions in their glory: scorning them and abusing them, hating them, and rejoicing in their calamities, was not the way to obtain their blessedness. If you would have shined with them as stars in the firmament of their Father, you should have joined with them in their holiness, and faith, and painfulness, and patience. You should have first been ingrafted with them into Christ, the common stock, and then incorporated into the fraternity of the members, and walked with them in singleness of heart, and watched with them with oil in your lamps, and joined with them in mutual exhortation, in faithful admonitions, in conscionable reformation, in prayer, and in praise. You should have travelled with them out of the Egypt of your natural estate, through the Red sea and wilderness of humiliation and affliction, and have cheerfully taken up the cross of Christ, as well as the name and profession of christians, and rejoiced with them in suffering persecution and tribulation. All this if you had faithfully done, you might now have been triumphing with them in glory, and have possessed with them their Master's joy. But this you could not, you would not endure; your souls loathed it, your flesh was against it, and that flesh must be pleased, though you were told plainly and frequently what would come of it: and now you partake of the fruit of your folly, and endure but what you were foretold you must endure; and are shut out of that company, from which you first shut out yourselves; and are separated but from them whom you would not be joined with. You could not endure them in your houses, nor in your town, nor scarce in the kingdom. You took them, as Ahab did Elias, for the troublers of the land; (1 Kings xviii. 17;) and as the apostles were taken for men that turned the world upside down; (Acts xvii. 6;) if any thing fell out amiss, you thought all was long of them. When they were dead or banished, you were glad they were gone, and thought the country was well rid of them. They molested you with their faithful reproving your sin. Their holy conversation did trouble your consciences, to see them so far excel yourselves, and to condemn your looseness by their strictness, and your profaneness by their conscionable lives, and your negligence by their unwearied diligence. You scarce ever heard them pray or sing praises in their families, but it was a vexation to you; and you envied their liberty in the worshipping of God. And is it, then, any wonder if you be separated from them hereafter? The day is near when they will trouble you no more: betwixt them and you will be a great gulf set, that those that would pass from thence to you (if any had a desire to ease you with a drop of water) cannot; neither can they pass to them who would go from you, for if they could, there would none be left behind, Luke xvi. 26. Even in this life, while the saints were imperfect in their passions and infirmities, clothed with the same frail flesh as other men, and were mocked, destitute, afflicted, and tormented, yet, in the judgment of the Holy Ghost, they were such, of whom the world was not worthy, Heb. xi. 36—38. Much more unworthy are they of their fellowship in their glory.

CHAPTER II.

THE AGGRAVATION OF THE LOSS OF HEAVEN TO THE UNGODLY.

Sect. I. I know many of the wicked will be ready to think, if this be all, they do not much care, they can bear it well enough: what care they for losing the perfections above? What care they for losing God, his favour, or his presence? They lived merrily without him on earth, and why should it be so grievous to be without him hereafter? And what care they for being deprived of that love, and joy, and praising of God? They never tasted sweetness in the things of that nature. Or what care they for being deprived of the fellowship of angels and saints? They could spare their company in this world well enough, and why may they not be without it in the world to come? To make these men, therefore, to understand the truth of their future condition, I will here annex these two things:

1. I will show you why this fore-mentioned loss will be intolerable, and will be most tormenting then, though it seem as nothing now.

2. I will show you what other losses will accompany these; which, though they are less in themselves, yet will now be more sensibly apprehended by these sensual men: and all this from reason, and the truth of Scripture.

1. Then, That this loss of heaven will be then most tormenting, may appear by these considerations following:

First: The understandings of the ungodly will be then cleared, to know the worth of that which they have lost. Now, they lament not their loss of God, because they never knew his excellency, nor the loss of that holy employment and society, for they were never sensible what they were worth.[a] A man that hath lost a jewel, and took it but for a common stone, is never troubled at his loss; but when he comes to know what he lost, then he lamenteth it. Though the understandings of the damned will not then be sanctified, (as I said before,) yet will they be cleared from a multitude of errors which now possess them, and mislead them to their ruin. They think now that their honour with men, their estates, their pleasures, their health, and life, are better worth their studies and labour than the things of another world which they never saw; but when these things, which had their hearts, have left them in misery, and given them the slip in their greatest need; when they come to know by experience the things which before they did but read and hear of, they will then be quite in another mind. They would not believe that water would drown, till they were in the sea; nor that the fire would burn, till they were cast into it; but when they feel it, they will easily believe. All that error of their mind, which made them set light by God, and abhor his worship, and vilify his

[a] Ignis gehennæ lucebit miseris ut videant unde doleant, ad tormentum, et non ad consolationem, ne videant unde gaudeant. Isidor. de Sum. Bon. lib. i.

people, will then be confuted and removed by experience, (Eccles. i. 18,) their knowledge shall be increased, that their sorrows may be increased; as Adam by his fall did come to the knowledge of good and evil, so shall all the damned have this increase of knowledge. As the knowledge of the excellency of that good which they do enjoy, and of that evil which they have escaped, is necessary to the glorified saints, that they may rationally and truly enjoy their glory; so the knowledge of the greatness of that good which they have lost, and of that evil which they have procured to themselves, is necessary to the tormenting of these wretched sinners: for as the joys of heaven are not so much enjoyed by the bodily senses, as by the intellect and affections; so it is by understanding their misery, and by affections answerable, that the wicked shall endure the most of their torments: for as it was the soul that was the chiefest in the guilt, (whether it be positively, by leading to sin, or only privatively, in not keeping the authority of reason over sense, that the understanding is most usually guilty, I will not now dispute,) so shall the soul be chiefest in the punishment: doubtless, those poor souls would be comparatively happy, if their understandings were wholly taken from them, if they had no more knowledge than idiots or brute beasts; or if they knew no more in hell than they did upon earth, their loss and misery would then less trouble them. Though all knowledge be physically good, yet some may be neither morally good, nor good to the owner. Therefore, when the Scripture saith of the wicked, "that they shall not see life," (John iii. 36,) nor "see God," (Heb. xii. 14,) the meaning is, they shall not possess life, nor see God, as the saints do, to enjoy him by that sight; they shall not see him with any comfort, nor as their own; but yet they shall see him, to their terror, as their enemy; and, I think, they shall have some kind of eternal knowledge or beholding of God and heaven, and the saints that are there happy, as a necessary ingredient to their unutterable calamity. The rich man shall see Abraham and Lazarus, but afar off, Luke xvi. 23: as God beholdeth them afar off, (Psal. cxxxviii. 6,) so shall they behold God afar off. Oh how happy men would they think themselves, if they did not know that there is such a place as heaven;[b] or if they could but shut their eyes, and cease to behold it! Now, when their knowledge would help to prevent their misery, they will not know, or will not read and study that they may know; therefore, then when their knowledge will but feed their consuming fire, they shall know, whether they will or no. As toads and serpents know not their own vile and venomous nature, nor the excellent nature of man, or other creatures, and therefore are neither troubled at their own, nor desirous of ours, so is it with the wicked here; but when their eyes at death shall be suddenly opened, then the case will be suddenly altered. They are now in a dead sleep, and they dream they are the happiest men in the world, and that the godly are but a company of precise fools, and that either heaven will be theirs, as sure as another's, or else they may make a shift without it as they have done here; but when death smites these men, and bids them awake, and arouses them out of their pleasant dreams, how will they stand up amazed and confounded; how will their judgments be changed in a moment; and they that would not see, shall then see, and be ashamed!

Sect. II. Another reason to prove that the loss of heaven will more torment them then, is this; because as the understanding will be cleared, so it will be more enlarged, and made more capacious to conceive of the worth of that glory which they have lost. The strength of their apprehensions, as well as the truth of them, will then be increased. What deep apprehensions of the wrath of God, or the madness of sinning, of the misery of sinners, have those souls that now endure this misery, in comparison of those on earth that do but hear of it! What sensible apprehensions of the worth of life hath the condemned man that is going to be executed, in comparison of what he was wont to have in the time of his prosperity! much more will the actual deprivation of eternal blessedness make the damned exceeding apprehensive of the greatness of their loss; and as a large vessel will hold more water than a shell, so will their more enlarged understandings contain more matter to feed their torment, than now their shallow capacity can do.

Sect. III. And as the damned will have clearer and deeper apprehensions of the happiness which they have lost, so will they have a truer and closer application of this doctrine to themselves, which will exceedingly tend to increase their torment. It will then be no hard matter to them to say, This is my loss, and this is my everlasting remediless misery. The want of this is the main cause why they are now so little troubled at their condition; they are hardly brought to believe that there is such a state of misery, but more hardly to believe that it is like to be their own. This makes so many sermons to them to be lost, and all threatenings and warnings to prove in vain.[c] Let a minister of Christ show them their misery never so plainly and faithfully, and they will not be persuaded that they are so miserable: let him tell them of the glory they must lose, and the sufferings they must feel, and they think it is not they whom he means; such a drunkard, or such a notorious sinner, they think may possibly come to such a doleful end, but they little think that they are so near it themselves. We find in all our preaching, by sad experience, that it is one of the hardest things in the world to bring a wicked man to know that he is wicked; and a man who is posting in the way to hell, to know that he is in that way indeed; or to make a man see himself in a state of wrath and condemnation: yea, though the preacher do mark him out by such undoubted signs, which he cannot deny, yet he will not apply them, nor be brought to say, It is my case: though we show them the chapter and verse where it is written, "that without regeneration and holiness, none shall see God;" and though they know no such work that was ever wrought upon themselves; nay, though they might easily find by their strangeness to the new birth, and by their very enmity to holiness, that they were never partakers of them; yet do they as verily expect to see God, and to be saved, as if they were the most sanctified persons in the world.[d] It

[b] Charron of Wisdom, lib. i. c. 16. p. 69, tells of a man who, having his eyes covered to receive death, and uncovered again to receive his pardon, was found dead on the scaffold. If the imagination can kill, how will the apprehension of real helpless misery torment!

[c] Usitatum generis humani vitium est libendo peccatum committere, commissum negando abscondere, et convictum defendendo excusare. Greg. Moral. lib. xxii. Superbus vult se credi constantem, prodigus liberalem, avarus diligentem, temerarius fortem, inhumanus parcum, ignavus quietum, timidus cautum. Prosp. Hoc enim maximum est vitium, quo laborat humanitas, ut post peccatum suum, maxime ad excusationis refugium, quasi pœnitudinis se confessione prosternat; quod facinus inter summa peccata constet numeratum esse, quia inde nascitur, ut ad pœnitentiam reus tardius venire videatur. Greg. Moral. John iii. 3; Heb. xii. 14. Cœpisti non defendere peccatum tuum? jam inchoasti justitiam. Aug. de Carne Serm. 4.

[d] Fevers and gouts are felt and known when they are strong, though we doubt of them before; but in the diseases

is a most difficult work to make a proud person know that he is proud, or a covetous man to know that he is covetous; or an ignorant, or erroneous, heretical man to know himself to be such a one indeed; but to make any of these to confess the sin, and to apply the threatening, and to believe themselves the children of wrath, this is to human strength an impossibility. How seldom do you hear men, after the plainest discovery of their condemned estate, to cry out and say, I am the man; or to acknowledge, that if they die in their present condition, they are undone for ever! and yet Christ hath told us in his word, that the most of the world are in that estate; yea, and the most of those that have the preaching of the gospel; "for many are called, but few are chosen." So that it is no wonder that the worst of men are not now troubled at their loss of heaven, and at their eternal misery; because, if we should convince them by the most undeniable arguments, yet we cannot bring them to acknowledge it: if we should preach to them as long as we live, we cannot make them believe that their danger is so great: except a man rise from the dead, and tell them of that place of torments, and tell them that their merry, jovial friends, who did as verily think to be saved as they, are now in hell in those flames, they will not believe. Nay, more, though such a messenger from the dead should appear, and speak to them, and warn them that they come not to that place of torments, and tell them, that such and such of their dear, beloved, worshipful, or honourable friends are now there destitute of a drop of water, yet would they not be persuaded by all this; for Christ hath said so, "that if they will not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one should rise from the dead," Luke xvi. 31.

There is no persuading them of their misery till they feel it, except the Spirit of the Almighty persuade them.

Oh! but when they find themselves suddenly in the land of darkness, perceive, by the execution of the sentence, that they were indeed condemned, and feel themselves in the scorching flames, and see that they are shut out of the presence of God for ever, it will then be no such difficult matter to convince them of their misery: this particular application of God's anger to themselves, will then be the easiest matter in the world; then they cannot choose but know and apply it, whether they will or no. If you come to a man that hath lost a leg, or an arm, or a child, or goods, or house, or his health, is it a hard matter to bring this man to apply it, and to acknowledge that the loss is his own? I think not. Why, it will be far more easy for the wicked in hell to apply their misery in the loss of heaven, because their loss is incomparably greater. Oh! this application, which now, if we should die, we cannot get them to, for prevention of their loss, will then be part of their torment itself! Oh that they then could say, It is not my case! but their dolorous voices will then roar out these forced confessions, Oh, my misery! oh, my folly! oh, my unconceivable, irrecoverable loss!

Sect. IV. Again, as the understandings and consciences of sinners will be strengthened against them, so also will their affections be then more lively and enlarged than now they are; as judgment will be no longer blinded, nor conscience stifled and bribed as now it is, so the affections will be no longer so stupified and dead. A hard heart now makes heaven and hell to seem but trifles: and when we have showed them everlasting glory and misery, they are as men half asleep, they scarce take notice what we say; our words are cast as stones against a hard wall, which fly back in the face of him that casteth them, but make no impression at all where they fall. We talk of terrible, astonishing things, but it is to dead men that cannot apprehend it. We may rip up their wounds, and they never feel us: we speak to rocks, rather than to men; the earth will as soon tremble as they.[e] Oh, but when these dead wretches are revived, what passionate sensibility, what working affections, what pangs of horror, what depth of sorrow, will there then be! How violently will they fly in their own faces; how will they rage against their former madness! The lamentations of the most passionate wife for the loss of her husband, or of the tenderest mother for the loss of her children, will be nothing to theirs for the loss of heaven. Oh, the self-accusing and self-tormenting fury of those forlorn wretches! How they will even tear their own hearts, and be God's executioner upon themselves! I am persuaded, as it was none but themselves that committed the sin, and themselves that were the only meritorious cause of their sufferings, so themselves will be the chiefest executioners of those sufferings. God will have it for the clearing of his justice, and the aggravating of their distress; even Satan himself, as he was not so great a cause of their sinning as themselves, so will he not be so great an instrument as themselves of their torment. And let them not think here, that if they must torment themselves, they will do well enough, they shall have wit enough to ease and favour themselves, and resolution enough to command down this violence of their passions. Alas! poor souls, they little know what passions those will be, and how much beyond the power of their resolutions to suppress! Why have not lamenting, pining, self-consuming persons on earth, so much wit or power as this? Why do you not thus persuade despairing souls, who lie, as Spira, in a kind of hell upon earth, and dare not eat, nor drink, nor be merry, but torment themselves with continual terrors? Why do you not say to them, Sir, why will you be so mad as to be your own executioner? and to make your own life a continual misery, which otherwise might be as joyful as other men's? Cannot you turn your thoughts to other matters, and never think of heaven or hell? Alas! how vain are all these persuasions to him; how little do they ease him! You may as well persuade him to remove a mountain, as to remove these hellish thoughts that feed upon his spirit: it is as easy to him to stop the stream of the rivers, or to bound the overflowing waves of the ocean, as to stop the stream of his violent passions, or to restrain those sorrows that feed upon his soul. Oh how much less, then, can those condemned souls, who see the glory before them which they have lost, restrain their heart-rending, self-tormenting passions! So some direct to cure the tooth-ache, Do not think of it, and it will not grieve you; and so these men think to ease their pains in hell. Oh, but the loss and pain will make you think of it, whether you will or not. You were as stocks or stones under the threatenings, but you shall be

which hurt men's souls, it is contrary. The worse a man is, the less he feels it; and no wonder. For he that doth but slumber and dream, doth sometime think in his sleep that he is asleep; but a deep sleep expelleth dreams, and drowns the mind so deeply that it leaves no use of the understanding. Why doth no man confess his faults? Because he is yet in them. To rehearse a dream, is the work only of a man that is waking; and to confess one's faults, is a sign of recovery. Epist. 54. ad Lucil. p. 616.

[e] Maxima est factæ injuriæ pœna, fecisse; nec quisquam gravius afficitur, quam qui ad supplicium pœnitentiæ traditur. Senec. de Ira, lib. iii. c. 26.

most tenderly sensible under the execution. Oh how happy would you think yourselves then, if you were turned into rocks, or any thing that had neither passion nor sense! Oh, now, how happy were you, if you could feel as lightly as you were wont to hear! and if you could sleep out the time of execution, as you did the time of the sermons that warned you of it! But your stupidity is gone, it will not be.

Sect. V. Moreover, it will much increase the torment of the damned, in that their memories will be as large and strong as their understandings and affections, which will cause those violent passions to be still working. Were their loss never so great, and their sense of it never so passionate, yet if they could but lose the use of their memory, those passions would die, and that loss, being forgotten, would little trouble them. But as they cannot lay by their life and being, though then they would account annihilation a singular mercy; so neither can they lay aside any part of that being. Understanding, conscience, affections, memory, must all live to torment them, which should have helped to their happiness. And as by these they should have fed upon the love of God, and drawn forth perpetually the joys of his presence; so by these must they now feed upon the wrath of God, and draw forth continually the dolours of his absence: therefore never think, that when I say the hardness of their hearts, and their blindness, dulness, and forgetfulness, shall be removed, that, therefore, they are more holy or more happy than before; no, but morally more vile, and hereby far more miserable. Oh how many hundred times did God by his messengers here call upon them, Sinners, consider whither you are a going! Do but make a stand a while, and think where your way will end, what is the offered glory that you so carelessly reject: will not this be bitterness in the end?

And yet these men would never be brought to consider; but in the latter days, (saith the Lord, Jer. xxiii. 20,) they shall perfectly consider it; when they are insnared in the work of their own hands, (Psal. ix. 16,) when God hath arrested them, and judgment is passed upon them, and vengeance is poured out upon them to the full, then they cannot choose but consider it, whether they will or not. Now, they have no leisure to consider, nor any room in their memories for the things of another life. Ah! but then they shall have leisure enough, they shall be where they have nothing else to do but consider it; their memories shall have no other employment to hinder them, it shall even be engraven upon the tables of their hearts, Deut. vi. 9. God would have had the doctrine of their eternal state to have been written on the posts of their doors, on their houses, on their hands, and on their hearts: he would have had them mind it, and mention it, as they rise and lie down, as they sit at home, and as they walk abroad, that so it might have gone well with them at their latter end. And seeing they rejected this counsel of the Lord, therefore shall it be written always before them in the place of their thraldom, that which way soever they look, they may still behold it.

Among others, I will briefly lay down here some of those considerations which will thus feed the anguish of these damned wretches.

Sect. VI. First: It will torment them to think of the greatness of the glory which they have lost. Oh, if it had been that which they could have spared, it had been a small matter; or if it had been a loss repairable with any thing else; if it had been health, or wealth, or friends, or life, it had been nothing; but to lose that exceeding, eternal weight of glory!

Sect. VII. Secondly: It will torment them, also, to think of the possibility that once they were in of obtaining it. Though, all things considered, there was an impossibility of any other event than what did befall, yet the thing in itself was possible, and their will was left to act without constraint.[f] Then they will remember, The time was, when I was in as fair a possibility of the kingdom as others: I was set upon the stage of the world; if I had played my part wisely and faithfully, now I might have had possession of the inheritance; I might have been amongst yonder blessed saints, who am now tormented with these damned fiends![g] The Lord did set before me life and death, and having chosen death, I deserve to suffer it: the prize was once held out before me; if I had run well, I might have obtained it; if I had striven, I might have had the mastery; if I had fought valiantly, I had been crowned.

Sect. VIII. Thirdly: It will yet more torment them to remember, not only the possibility, but the great probability that once they were in, to obtain the crown, and prevent the misery.[h] It will then wound them to think, Why, I had once the gales of the Spirit ready to have assisted me. I was fully purposed to have been another man, to have cleaved to Christ, and to have forsaken the world; I was almost resolved to have been wholly for God; I was once even turning from my base, seducing lusts; I was purposed never to take them up again; I had even cast off my old companions, and was resolved to have associated myself with the godly; and yet I turned back, and lost my hold, and broke my promises, and slacked my purposes: almost God had persuaded me to be a real christian, and yet I conquered those persuasions. What workings were in my heart, when a faithful minister pressed home the truth! Oh how fair was I once for heaven! I had almost had it, and yet I have lost it: if I had but followed on to seek the Lord, and brought those beginnings to maturity, and blown up the spark of desires and purposes which were kindled in me, I had now been blessed among the saints.

Thus will it wound them, to remember what hopes they once had, and how a little more would have brought them over to Christ, and have set their feet in the way of peace.

Sect. IX. Fourthly: Furthermore, it will exceedingly torment them, to remember the fair opportunity that once they had, but now have lost;[i] to look back upon an age spent in vanity, when his salvation lay at the stake; to think how many weeks, and months, and years, did I lose, which, if I had improved, I might now have been happy! Wretch that I was! Could I find no time to study the work, for which I had all my time? Had I no time among all my labours to labour for eternity? Had I time to eat, and drink, and sleep, and work, and none to seek the saving of my soul? Had I time for sports, and mirth, and vain discourse, and none for prayer,

[f] Non satis acute igitur Hieronymus ad Ctesiph. advers. Pelagian. fol. (mihi) 117. Rogo quæ est ista argumentatio, posse esse quod nunquam fuerit?

[g] Actus eveniens est evitabilis secundum se, inevitabilis vero secundum quod est prævisus; at licet hoc sit verum, tamen non solvit nodum, quia actus eveniens est jam de facto prævisus ab æterno; nec quietat intellectum, qui hic in ignorantia sola quietem invenit, inquit Cajetanus super Tho. i. p. q. 20. art. 4.

[h] O vere reconciliatio facilis sed perutilis! quam facilis modo, tam difficilis erit postea: et sicut modo nemo est qui reconciliari non possit: ita post paululum nemo qui possit; quoniam sicut benignitas apparuit ultra omnem spem, ultra omnem æstimationem; similem expectare possumus judicii districtionem. Bern. Serm. 1. in Epiphan.

[i] Stultæ valetudinis fructus est peccatum. Nazianzen.

or meditation on the life to come? Could I take time to look to my estate in the world, and none to try my title to heaven, and to make sure of my spiritual and everlasting state? O pernicious time, whither art thou fled? I had once time enough, and now I must have no more! I had so much, that I knew not what to do with it; I was fain to devise pastimes; and to talk it away, and trifle it away; and now it is gone, and cannot be recalled![k] Oh, the golden hours that I did enjoy! Had I spent but one year of all those years, or but one month of all those months, in thorough examination, and unfeigned conversion, and earnest seeking God with my whole heart, it had been happy for me that ever I was born; but now it is past, my days are cut off, my glass is run, my sun is set, and will rise no more. God himself did hold me the candle, that I might do his work, and I loitered till it was burnt out; and now fain would I have more, but cannot: oh that I had but one of these years to live over again! Oh that it were possible to recall one day, one hour, of that time! Oh that God would turn me into the world, and try me once again, with another life-time! how speedily would I repent; how earnestly would I pray, and lie on my knees day and night; how diligently would I hear; how cheerfully would I examine my spiritual estate; how watchfully would I walk; how strictly would I live! but it is now too late; alas! too late; I abused my time to vanity whilst I had it, and now must I suffer justly for that abuse.

Thus will the remembrance of the time which they lost on earth, be a continual torment to these condemned souls.

Sect. X. Fifthly: And yet more will it add to their calamity, to remember how often they were persuaded to return, both by the ministry in public and in private, by all their godly, faithful friends: every request and exhortation of the minister will now be as a fiery dart in his spirit; how fresh will every sermon come now into his mind! even those that he had forgotten as soon as he heard them. He even seems to hear still the voice of the minister, and to see his tears: Oh how fain would he have had me to have escaped these torments! How earnestly did he entreat me! With what love and tender compassion did he beseech me! How did his bowels yearn after me! And yet I did but make a jest of it, and hardened my heart against all this. How oft did he convince me that all was not well with me! And yet I stifled all these convictions. How plainly did he rip up my sores, and open to me my very heart, and show me the unsoundness and deceitfulness of it! and yet I was loth to know the worst of myself, and therefore shut mine eyes, and would not see. Oh how glad would he have been, after all his study, and prayers, and pains, if he could but have seen me cordially entertain the truth, and turn to Christ! He would have thought himself well recompensed for all his labours and sufferings in his work, to have seen me converted and made happy by[l] it And did I withstand and make light of all this? Should any have been more willing of my happiness than myself? Had not I more cause to desire it than he? Did it not more nearly concern me? It was not he, but I, that was to suffer for my obstinacy. He would have laid his hands under my feet, to have done me good; he would have fallen down to me upon his knees to have begged my obedience to his message, if that would have prevailed with my hardened heart. Oh how deservedly do I now suffer these flames, who was so forewarned of them, and so entreated to escape them! nay, my friends, my parents, my godly neighbours, did admonish and exhort me; they told me what would come of my wilfulness and negligence at last, but I did never believe them, nor regard them. Magistrates were fain to restrain me from sinning, by law and punishment. Was not the foresight of this misery sufficient to restrain me?

Thus will the remembrance of all the means that ever they enjoyed, be fuel to feed the flames in their consciences. Oh that sinners would but think of this, when they sit under the plain instruction and pressing exhortations of a faithful ministry! How dear must they pay for all this, if it do not prevail with them! And how they will wish a thousand times, in the anguish of their souls, that they had either obeyed his doctrine, or had never heard him! The melting words of exhortation which they were wont to hear, will be hot burning words to their hearts upon this sad review. It cost the minister dear, even his daily study, his earnest prayers, his compassionate sorrows for their misery, his care, his sufferings, his spendings, weakening, killing pains; but, oh! how much dearer will it cost these rebellious sinners! His lost tears will cost them blood, his lost sighs will cost them eternal groans, and his lost exhortations will cause their eternal lamentations. For Christ hath said it, "that if any city or people receive not, or welcome not, the gospel,[m] the very dust of the messenger's feet who lost his travel to bring them that glad tidings, shall witness against them; much more, his greater pains. And it shall be easier for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city," Matt. xix. 14—16. That Sodom which was the shame of the world for unnatural wickedness, the disgrace of mankind, that would have committed wickedness with the angels from heaven, that were not ashamed to prosecute their villany in the open street; that proceeded in

[k] Æternum Dei qui fugiunt lumen, quod continet in se omnia bona, ipsi sibi causa sunt, ut æternas inhabitent tenebras; destituti omnibus bonis, sibimetipsis causa hujusmodi habitationis facti. Irenæus adv. Hæres. lib. iv. c. 76. Here no man is hindered by sins repented of, or by age, from obtaining salvation. While a man is in this world, no true repentance is too late. The passage to God's mercy is still open; and to them that seek and understand the truth, the access is easy. If thou ask pardon of thy sins at the very time of thy death, and in the passage of thy temporal life, and implore the true and only God in confession and believing acknowledgment of him; pardon shall be given thee by the goodness of God on thy confessing, and saving indulgence, and thou shalt pass immediately from death to immortality. This grace doth Christ bestow; this gift of his mercy he giveth, by subduing death in the trophy of his cross, by redeeming the believer by the price of his blood, by reconciling man to God the Father, and by quickening the mortal by heavenly regeneration. Cyprian. ad Demetrian. p. 331. Can there be a fuller testimony against purgatory, or necessity of meritorious works, with many the like popish doctrines, when this was written by Cyprian to a bloody, persecuting pagan?

[l] Make your life doleful, and Christ will make your death doleful, be as great as you will: stay long in the birth, and kill the midwife, and you will be delivered in hell. Ease us, and ease Christ, for Christ striveth in us. Lockier in Col. i. 29. p. 530. When I hear men under all the means that we enjoy, yet think that their ignorance should excuse them, it maketh me think of the answer of the agent of Charles V. emperor, to the ambassador of Siena. The Sienois having rebelled against the emperor, sent their ambassador to excuse it; who, when he could find no other excuse, thought in a jest to put it off thus: "What," saith he, "shall not we of Siena be excused, seeing we are known to be all fools?" The agent replied, "Even that shall excuse you but upon the condition which is fit for fools, which is, to be kept bound and enchained." Lord Remy's Civil Considerations, chap. 76. p. 200.

[m] Mundus eum non cognovit; ut possit secundum hoc dici, redemptor mundi dedit pro mundo sanguinem suum, et mundus redimi noluit; quia lucem tenebræ non receperunt. Prosper. Respons. ad c. 9. Gallor.

their rage against Lot's admonitions, yea, under the very miraculous judgment of God, and groped for the door when they were stricken blind: that Sodom which was consumed with fire from heaven, and turned to that deadly sea of waters, and suffers the vengeance of eternal fire, Jude 7; even that Sodom shall escape better in the day of judgment, than the neglecters of this so great salvation, Heb. ii. 3. It will somewhat abate the heat of their torment, that they had not those full and plain offers of grace, nor those constant sermons, nor pressing persuasions, nor clear convictions, as those under the sound of the gospel have had. I beseech thee who readest these words, stay here awhile, and sadly think of what I say; I profess to thee from the Lord, it is easier thinking of it now than it will be then. What a doleful aggravation of thy misery would this be, that the food of thy soul should prove thy bane! and that that should feed thy everlasting torment, which is sent to save thee, and prevent thy torments!

Sect. XI. Sixthly: Yet further,[n] it will much add to the torment of the wretches, to remember that God himself did condescend to entreat them, that all the entreatings of the minister were the entreatings of God. How long he did wait, how freely he did offer, how lovingly he did invite, and how importunately he did solicit them! How the Spirit did continue striving with their hearts, as if he were loth to take a denial! How Christ stood knocking at the door of their hearts, sermon after sermon, and one sabbath after another, crying out, "Open, sinner, open thy heart to the Saviour, and I will come in, and sup with thee, and thou with me," Rev. iii. 20. Why, sinner,[o] are thy lusts and carnal pleasures better than I? Are thy worldly commodities better than my everlasting kingdom? Why, then, dost thou resist me? Why dost thou thus delay? What dost thou mean, that thou dost not open to me? How long shall it be till thou attain to innocency? How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee? Woe to thee, O unworthy sinner! Wilt thou not be made clean? Wilt thou not be pardoned, and sanctified, and made happy? When shall it once be? Oh! that thou wouldst hearken to my word, and obey my gospel![p] Then should thy peace be as the river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea; though thy sins were as red as the crimson or scarlet, I would make them as white as the snow or wool. Oh that thou wert but wise to consider this; and that thou wouldst in time remember thy latter end, before the evil days come upon thee, and the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say of all thy vain delights, I have no pleasure in them! Why, sinner, shall thy Maker thus bespeak thee in vain? Shall the God of all the world beseech thee to be happy, and beseech thee to have pity upon thine own soul, and wilt thou not regard him? Why did he make thy ears, but to hear his voice? Why did he make thy understanding, but to consider? or, thy heart, but to entertain the Son in obediential love? "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Consider thy ways," Hag. i. 5.

Oh how all these passionate pleadings of Christ will passionately transport the damned with self-indignation, that they will be ready to tear out their own hearts! How fresh will the remembrance of them be still in their minds, lancing their souls with renewed torments! What self-condemning pangs will it raise within them, to remember how often Christ would have gathered them to himself, even as the hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but they would not! Matt. xxiii. 37. Then will they cry out against themselves, Oh how justly is all this befallen me! Must I tire out the patience of Christ? Must I make the God of heaven to follow me in vain, from home to the assembly, from thence to my chamber, from ale-house to ale-house, till I had wearied him with crying to me, Repent, return! Must the Lord of all the world thus wait upon me, and all in vain?[q] Oh, how justly is that patience now turned into fury, which falls upon my soul with irresistible violence! When the Lord cried out to me, in his word, How long will it be before thou wilt be made clean and holy? my heart, or at least my practice, answered, Never, I will never be so precise. And now when I cry out, How long will it be till I be freed from this torment, and saved with the saint? how justly do I receive the answer, Never, never! O sinner, I beseech thee for thy own sake; think of this for prevention while the voice of mercy soundeth in thine ears! Yet patience continueth waiting upon thee; canst thou think it will do so still? Yet the offers of Christ and life are made to thee in the gospel, and the hand of God is stretched out to thee; but will it still be thus? The Spirit hath not yet done striving with thy heart; but dost thou know how soon he may turn away, and give thee over to a reprobate sense, and let thee perish in the stubbornness and hardness of thy heart? Thou hast yet life, and time, and strength, and means, but dost thou think this life will always last? "Oh! seek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near," Isa. lv. 6, 7. He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what Christ now speaketh to his soul, Rev. ii. and iii. And to-day, while it is called to-day, harden not your hearts, lest he swear in his wrath that you shall never enter into his rest, Heb. iii. 8, 11, 15. For ever blessed is he that hath a hearing heart and ear, while Christ hath a calling voice.

Sect. XII. Seventhly: Again, it will be a most cutting consideration to these damned sinners, to remember on what easy terms they might have escaped their misery, and on what easy conditions the crown was tendered to them. If their work had been to remove mountains, to conquer kingdoms, to fulfil the law to the smallest tittle, then the impossibility would somewhat assuage the rage of their self-accusing conscience; if their conditions for heaven had been the satisfying of justice for all their transgressions, the suffering of all that the law did lay upon them, or bearing the burden which Christ was fain to bear, why this were nothing but to suffer hell to escape hell; but their conditions were of an-

[n] Subjectio autem Dei requies est æterna; ut hi qui fugiunt lumen, dignum fugæ suæ habeant locum, et qui fugiunt æternam requiem, congruentem fugæ suæ habeant habitationem. Cum autem apud Deum omnia sint bona, qui ex sua sententia fugiunt Deum, semetipsos ab omnibus fraudant bonis. Fraudati autem omnibus erga Deum bonis, consequenter in justum Dei judicium incident. Qui enim fugiunt requiem, juste in pœna conservabuntur; et qui fugerunt lumen, juste inhabitabunt tenebras. Iren. adv. Hæres. lib. iv. c. 76.

[o] Satanas fecit, dicit peccator, ipse mihi persuasit; quasi Satanas habeat potestatem cogendi! Astutiam suadendi habet; sed si Satanas loqueretur, et taceret Deus, haberes unde te excusares. Modo aures tuæ positæ sint inter monentem Deum, et suggerentem serpentem, quare huc flectuntur, hinc avertuntur? Non cessat Satanas suadere malum, sed nec Deus cessat admonere bonum; Satanas autem non cogit invitum; in tua potestate est, consentire aut non consentire. August. Enarrat. in Psal. xci.; Hos. viii. 5; Jer. iv. 14; xiii. 27.

[p] Psal. lxxxi. 13, 14; Isa. xlviii. 17, 18; i. 18; Deut. xxxii. 29; Eccles. xii. 1.

[q] Lex jubere novit; gratia juvare. Nec lex juberet, nisi esset voluntas; nec gratia juvaret, si sat esset voluntas. Jubetur ut faciamus bonum et non faciamus malum; et tamen pro his oratur, &c. Sicut ergo agnoscimus voluntatem cum hæc præcipiuntur; sic et ipse agnoscat gratiam cum petuntur. Aug. Epist. 95.

other nature:[r] the yoke was light, and the burden was easy, which Jesus Christ would have laid upon them; his commandments were not grievous, Matt. xi. 28, 29; 1 John v. 3. It was but to repent of their former transgressions, and cordially to accept him for their Saviour and their Lord; to study his will, and seek his face; to renounce all other happiness but that which he procureth us, and to take the Lord alone for our supreme good; to renounce the government of the world and the flesh, and to submit to his meek and gracious government; to forsake the ways of our own devising, and to walk in his holy, delightful way; to engage ourselves to this by covenant with him, and to continue faithful in that covenant: these were the terms on which they might have enjoyed the kingdom; and was there any thing unreasonable in all this, or had they any thing to object against it? Was it a hard bargain to have heaven upon these conditions, when all the price that is required is only our accepting it in that way that the wisdom of our Lord thinks meet to bestow it? And for their want of ability to perform this, it consisteth chiefly in their want of will.[s] If they were but willing, they should find that God would not be backward to assist them: if they be willing, Christ is much more willing.

Oh when the poor tormented wretch shall look back upon these easy terms which he refused, and compare the labour of them with the pains and loss which he there sustaineth, it cannot be now conceived how it will rent his very heart. Ah! thinks he, how justly do I suffer all this, who would not be at so small a cost and pains to avoid it! Where was my understanding when I neglected that gracious offer? when I called the Lord a hard Master! and thought his pleasant service to be a bondage, and the service of the devil and my flesh to be the only delight and freedom? Was I not a thousand times worse than mad, when I censured the holy way of God, as needless preciseness, and cried out on it as an intolerable burden? when I thought the laws of Christ too strict, and all too much that I did for the life to come? Oh! what had all the trouble of duty been in comparison of the trouble that I now sustain; or all the sufferings for Christ and well-doing, in comparison of these sufferings that I must undergo for ever! What if I had spent my days in the strictest life that ever did saint; what if I had lived still upon my knees; what if I had lost my credit with men, and been hated of all men for the sake of Christ, and borne the reproach and scorn of the foolish; what if I had been imprisoned, or banished, or put to death; oh! what had all this been to the miseries that I now must suffer! Then had my sufferings now been all over, whereas they do but now begin, but will never end. Would not the heaven which I have lost, have recompensed all my losses; and should not all my sufferings have been there forgotten? What if Christ had bid me do some great matter, as to live in continual tears and sorrow, to suffer death a hundred times over, which yet he did not, should I not have done it? How much more when he said but, Believe and be saved; seek my face, and thy soul shall live; love me above all, walk in my sweet and holy way, take up thy cross and follow me, and I will save thee from the wrath of God, and I will give thee everlasting life! Oh, gracious offer! Oh, easy terms! Oh, cursed wretch, that would not be persuaded to accept them!

Sect. XIII. Eighthly: Furthermore, this also will be a most tormenting consideration, to remember what they sold their eternal welfare for, and what it was that they had for heaven. When they compare the value of the pleasures of sin with the value of the recompence of reward, which they forsake for those pleasures, how will the vast disproportion astonish them! To think of a few merry hours, a few pleasant cups or sweet morsels, a little ease or low delight to the flesh, the applauding breath of the mouth of mortal men, or the possession of so much gold on earth,[t] and then to think of the everlasting glory; what a vast difference between them will then appear! To think this is all I had for my soul, my God, my hopes of blessedness, it cannot possibly be expressed how these thoughts will tear his very heart! Then will he exclaim against his folly, Oh! deservedly miserable wretch, did I set my soul to sale at so base a price; did I part with my God for a little dirt and dross,[u] and sell my Saviour, as Judas, for a little silver! Oh, for how small a matter have

[r] As voluntary election is the principle of action, so faith is found to be the principle of action, the foundation of prudence, choice, &c. All propriety and difference of faith and unbelief, would neither be liable to praise nor dispraise, if they had a foregoing natural necessity, arising from him who is omnipotent. If we are drawn by natural operations, as by ropes, like things that have no life, then it is in vain to talk of involuntary or voluntary; nor do I understand that to be a living creature, whose power of desire is subject to necessity. But for us who have learned from the Scripture that God hath given men to choose and avoid things by a free and absolute power, let us rest in the judgment of faith, which cannot be moved, or fail us, manifesting a cheerful and ready spirit, because we have chosen life, &c. Clem. Alex. Stromat. lib. ii. prope init.

[s] The feud is as mortal about this question, between the papists themselves, as us; and for all the means to silence it, as hot breaks out again as ever; as you may see in August. Yprens. Apol. and Theriaca Vincentii Lerin.; and the answer of Petavius and Ricardus to it. All men can, if they will, believe in God, and convert themselves from the love of visible and temporal things, to the keeping of his commandments. Aug. de Gen. cont. Manich. c. 3. It is a certain truth, that men can do this if they will; but the will is prepared by the Lord. Aug. Retract. lib. i. c. 10. exponens locum priorem. All men have power to believe, if they will; but actuality, or will, is from that grace which is proper to the faithful. Aug. de Prædest. Sanct. c. 5. There is a first power which the will commandeth: this we deny not to be in the most wicked men, and contemners of God. We can worship God if we will, and thence it is that God is just in pronouncing sentence against sinners; for, what hindereth us but we may obey? Certainly it is not the want of any faculty which the will commandeth, as oft as it impelleth us to do what we willed; else it were no sin to us; as if a man would fain relieve the poor, and cannot. If our disability were such, it were a calamity, not a vice; but there is a disability which is in the will itself, which is indeed a sin, and spreads itself far and wide. When we say, therefore, that there are many that cannot be good men, we would not be so understood, as if we meant, as if there were any that could not be a good man, and yet would, &c. Camero Prælect. ad Phil. ii. 12, 13, operum fol. p. 340. Voluntas libera tanto liberior quanto divinæ gratiæ misericordiæque subjectior; ut August. Epist. 89. Perhaps some such tolerable sense may be put on Clem. Alexand.'s words, who so oft saith over and over, that to believe and obey is in our own power. Stromat. lib. vi. vii. et passim.

[t] Avarus potius vult in inferno æternaliter comburi, quam hæreditatem falso acquisitam minui vel injuste retentam restituere. Alex. Fabri. in Destruct. Vitiorum, part iv. c. 2. m.

[u] Lutum est divitiarum propriissimum epitheton; ut lutum enim in plateis a pedibus ambulantium conculcatur, ita Deus in pœnis opes vel maximas dispergit et delet. Wigan. in Habac. 2. p. 400. Avarus est pueris similis papiliones sequentibus, magna negligentibus. Fab. ubi sup. l. Cæterum non leviter peccat in Dominum, qui cum æmulo ejus diabolo pœnitentia renunciasset, et hoc nomine illum Domino subjecisset, rursus eundem regressu suo erigit; et exultationem ejus seipsum facit, ut denuo malus, recuperata præda sua adversus Dominum gaudeat. Nonne, quod dicere periculosum est, sed ad ædificationem proferendum est, diabolum Domino præponit? Comparationem enim videtur egisse qui utrumque cognoverit, et judicato pronunciasse eum meliorem cujus se rursus esse maluerit. Tertul. lib. de Pœnitent. c. 5. p. (edit. Pamel.) 119.

I parted with my happiness! I had but a dream of delight for my hopes of heaven; and now I am awaked, it is all vanished! Where are now my honours and attendance? Who doth applaud me, or trumpet out my praises? Where is the cap and knee that was wont to do me reverence? My morsels are now turned to gall, and my cups to wormwood. They delighted me no longer than while they were passing down; when they were past my taste, the pleasure perished; and is this all that I have had for the inestimable treasure? Oh what a mad exchange did I make! What if I had gained all the world, and lost my soul, would it have been a saving match? But, alas! how small a part of the world was it for which I gave up my part in glory! Oh! that sinners would forethink of this when they are swimming in delights of flesh, and studying to be rich and honourable in the world; when they are desperately venturing upon known transgression, and sinning against the checks of conscience!

Sect. XIV. Ninthly: Yet much more will it add unto their torment, when they consider that all this was their own doings,[x] and that they, most wilfully, did procure their own destruction. Had they been forced to sin whether they would or not, it would much abate the rage of their consciences; or if they were punished for another man's transgressions, or if any other had been the chiefest author of their ruin: but to think that it was the choice of their own wills, and that God had set them in so free a condition that none in the world could have forced them to sin against their wills; this will be a griping thought to their hearts. What! thinks this wretched creature, had I not enemies enough in the world, but I must be enemy to myself? God would neither give the devil nor the world so much power over me as to force me to commit the least transgression. If I had not consented, their temptations had been in vain: they could but entice me; it was myself that yielded; and that did the evil: and must I needs lay hands upon my own soul, and imbrue my hands in my own blood? Who should pity me, who pitied not myself, and who brought all this upon mine own head? When the enemies of Christ did pull down his word and laws, his ministry and worship, the news of it did rejoice me; when they set up seducing or ungodly ministers, instead of the faithful preachers of the gospel, I was glad to have it so; when the minister told me the evil of my ways, and the dangerous state that my soul was in, I took him for my enemy, and his preaching did stir up my hatred against him, and every sermon did cut me to the heart, and I was ready to gnash my teeth in indignation against him. Never was I willing of the means of mine own welfare; never had I so great an enemy as myself; never did God do me any good, or offer me any for the welfare of my soul, but I resisted him, and was utterly unwilling of it. He hath heaped mercy upon me, and renewed one deliverance after another, and all to entice my heart unto him, and yet was I never heartily willing to serve him: he hath gently chastised me, and made me groan under the fruit of my disobedience; and yet, though I promised largely in my affliction, I was never unfeignedly willing to obey him. Never did a good magistrate attempt a reformation, but I was against it; nor a good minister labour the saving of the flock, but I was ready to hinder as much as I could; nor a good christian labour to save his soul, but I was ready to discourage and hinder him to my power; as if it were not enough to perish alone, but I must draw all others to the same destruction. Oh, what cause hath my wife, my children, my servants, my neighbours, to curse the day that ever they saw me! As if I had been made to resist God, and to destroy my own and other men's souls, so have I madly behaved myself! Thus will it gnaw upon the hearts of these wretches, to remember that they were the cause of their own undoing; and that they wilfully and obstinately persisted in their rebellion, and were mere volunteers in the service of the devil. They would venture; they would go on; they would not hear him that spoke against it: God called to them to hear and stay, but they would not; men called, conscience called, and said to them, as Pilate's wife, Matt. xvii. 19, "Have nothing to do with that hateful sin, for I have suffered many things because of it;" but they would not hear: their will was their law, their rule, and their ruin.

Sect. XV. Tenthly, and lastly: It will yet make the wound in their consciences much deeper, when they shall remember that it was not only their own doing, but that they were at so much cost and pains for their own damnation.[y] What great undertakings did they engage in for to effect their ruin! to resist God, to conquer the Spirit, to overcome the power of mercies, judgments, and the word itself, to silence conscience; all this they did take upon them, and perform. What a number of sins did they manage at once! What difficulties did they set

[x] Ille qui non consequitur eam, sibimet suæ imperfectionis est causa. Nec enim lumen deficit propter eos, qui semetipsos excæcaverunt. Sed illo perseverante quale et est, excæcati per suam culpam in caligine constituuntur. Neque lumen cum magna necessitate subjiciet sibi quenquam; neque Deus cogit eum qui nolit continere ejus ortem. Qui igitur abstiterunt a paterno lumine, et transgressi sunt legem libertatis, per suam abstiterunt culpam, liberi arbitrii et suæ potestatis facti. Deus autem omnia præsciens utrisque aptas præparavit habitationes: eis quidem qui inquirunt lumen incorruptibilitatis, et ad id recurrunt, benigne donans hoc quod concupiscunt lumen; aliis vero id contemnentibus et avertentibus se ab eo, et id fugientibus, et quasi seipsos excæcantibus, congruentes lumini adversantibus præparavit tenebras; et his qui fugiunt ei esse subjecti, convenientem subdidit pœnam. Iren. adv. Hæres. lib. iv. c. 76. As if a man be armed all over, yet it is left in his own will, either to use his arms to fight and strive with the enemy, and carry the victory, or else to love and make peace with his enemy, and not to fight for all he is armed; so christians that have put on perfect virtue, and have got the heavenly armour, if they will, they may be delighted in Satan, and make peace with him, and forbear war: for nature is changeable; and if a man will, he may be the son of God; if not, the son of death; because there remains to us our free-will or choice. Macarius in Hom. xxvii. p. 336. Yet this doth not intimate any sufficiency without grace. Austin himself, and all the fathers, and all divines, acknowledge *liberum arbitrium*, free will or choice, who yet plead most for a necessity of grace.

Qua petiit rutilans opum splendore bonorum,
Quæ Deus in nobis veluti sua dona coronat.
Liberum enim arbitrium divina ita gratia semper
Adjuvat, ut sine ea sit inauis cuncta potestas.

Ut canit Eucharius Gaudensis in Vita Dionysii Carthusiani, ante ejus opera.

[y] Cupiditas mundi initium habet ex arbitrio voluntatis, progressum ex jucunditate voluptatis, et firmamentum ex vinculo consuetudinis. Aug. lib. i. de Patientia, c. 7. Est quippe anima condita libera potestque bona ut eligere, ita et adversari. Quum igitur quod bonum est refugiat, necessario contraria cogitat; quiescere enim a motu omnino non prævalet, cum sit, ut dixi, naturaliter mobilis. Agnoscens vero arbitrii sui libertatem, conspicit se posse in utramque partem membris corporis uti, sive ad ea quæ sunt, sive ad ea quæ non sunt. Sunt quippe bona; non sunt autem mala. Athanas. cont. Gent. lib. i. Neque enim malum in Deo est, neque per seipsum omnino subsistit. Alioqui bonus non esset, si vel permixtam haberet contrariam naturam, vel causa esset mali. Athanas. ubi supra. Veritas sententiæ ecclesiasticæ per se elucet. Malum scilicet neque a Deo, neque in Deo, neque ab initio fuisse; ne illam quidem ipsius mali esse substantiam; sed homines per privationem boni sibi, quæ non sunt, et quæ volunt, cœpisse confingere. Vid. ultra in Athanasio ibid.

upon! even the conquering the power of reason itself. What dangers did they adventure on! Though they walked in continual danger of the wrath of God, and knew he could lay them in the dust in a moment; though they knew they lived in danger of eternal perdition, yet would they run upon all this. What did they forsake for the service of Satan, and the pleasures of sin? They forsook their God, their conscience, their best friends, their eternal hopes of salvation, and all. They that could not tell how to forsake a lust, or a little honour or ease, for Christ, yet can lose their souls; and all for sin! Oh the labour that it costeth poor wretches to be damned! Sobriety they might have at a cheaper rate, and a great deal of health and ease to boot; and yet they will rather have gluttony and drunkenness, with poverty, and shame, and sickness, and belchings, and vomitings, with the outcries and lamentations of wife and children, and conscience itself. Contentedness they might have with ease and delight, yet will they rather have covetousness and ambition, though it cost them study, and care, and fears, and labour of body and mind, and a continual unquietness and distraction of spirit, and usually a shameful overthrow at the last. Though their anger be nothing but a tormenting themselves, and revenge and envy do consume their spirits, and keep them upon a continual rack of disquiet; though uncleanness destroy their bodies, and estates, and names; and though they are foretold of the hazard of their eternal happiness; yet will they do and suffer all this, rather than suffer their souls to be saved. How fast runs Gehazi for his leprosy! What cost and pains is Nimrod at, to purchase a universal confusion! How doth an amorous Amnon pine himself away for a self-destroying lust! How studiously and painfully doth Absalom seek a hanging! Ahithophel's reputation and his life must go together. Even when they are struck blind by a judgment of God,[z] yet how painfully do the Sodomites grope and weary themselves to find the door! What cost and pains are the idolatrous papists at, for their multifarious will-worship! How unweariedly and unreservedly have the enemies of the gospel put out the light that should guide them to heaven, and how earnestly do they still prosecute it to the last! How do the nations generally rage, and the people imagine a vain thing! the kings of the earth setting themselves, and the rulers taking counsel together, against the Lord, and against his Christ; that they may break the bonds of his laws asunder, and cast away the cords of his government from them; though he that sitteth in heaven do laugh them to scorn, though the Lord have them in derision; though he speak to them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure, and resolve that yet in despite of them all, he will set his King upon his holy hill of Sion, yet will they spend and tire out themselves as long as they are able to stir against the Lord. Oh how the reviews of this will feed the flames in hell! With what rage will these damned wretches curse themselves, and say, Was damnation worth all my cost and pains? was it not enough that I perished through my negligence, and that I sit still while Satan played his game, but I must seek so diligently for my own perdition? might I not have been damned on free cost, but I must purchase it so dearly? I thought I could have been saved without so much ado; and could I not have been destroyed without so much ado? How well is all my care, and pains, and violence, now requited! Must I work out so laboriously my own damnation, when God commanded me to work out my salvation?[a] Oh! if I had done as much for heaven as I did for hell, I had surely had it! I cried out of the tedious way of godliness, and of the painful course of duty and self-denial; and yet I could be at a great deal more pains for Satan, and for death. If I had loved Christ as strongly as I did my pleasures, and profits, and honours, and thought on him as often, and sought him as painfully, oh how happy had I now been! But justly do I suffer the flames of hell, who would rather buy them so dear, than have heaven on free cost, when it was purchased to my hands.

Thus I have showed you some of those thoughts which will aggravate the misery of these wretches for ever. Oh that God would persuade thee, who readest these words, to take up these thoughts now seasonably and soberly, for the preventing of that unconceivable calamity, that so thou mayst not be forced, in despite of thee, to take them up in hell as thy own tormentor.

It may be some of these hardened wretches will jest at all this, and say, How know you what thoughts the damned in hell will have?

Answ. First: Why read but the 16th of Luke, and you shall there find some of their thoughts mentioned.

Secondly: I know their understandings will not be taken from them, nor their conscience, nor passions. As the joys of heaven are chiefly enjoyed by the rational soul, in its rational actions, so also must the

[z] Gen. xix. 11. As Phocion, when being condemned to die, his fellows had drunk up all the poison before him, so that he could not have any except he would pay for it at a dear price, he desires his friend to pay for it, quoniam Athenis ne mori quidem gratis licet; so because God in mercy hath resolved that no man shall be damned except he buy it with his sinful labour, they will pay the price rather than escape. Phil. ii. 12.

[a] Though I am no Arminian, yet I detest their doctrine and way of preaching on the other extreme, who teach men to lay the chief cause of their sin and damnation from themselves on God; and would have wicked men believe, that none but the elect do sin against the price that was paid for them, and the Christ that died for them; and so would quiet their consciences in hell, as if they were not guilty of any such sin. And the doctrine of a physical, active predetermination of man's will to sin, or the act which is sinful by God's effectual influx, hath need of a wary consideration. And though Twisse and other learned men assert it, yet ordinary christians need not put it into their creed. May not all common christians well take up with a contented ignorance here, when Cajetan could find rest no where? and Arriba, that reproveth him, saith in a manner as much. Lib. i. c. 30. p. 188. And our learned Barlow takes up with this: De futuritione mali, præsertim moralis, statuant alii; non ego: qui rem tot difficultatibus perplexam determinare nec volo nec valeo. Solum hoc firmum maneat et immotum; nempe mali moralis futuritionem ita statuendam, ut hypotheses nostræ peccati originem in Deum non rejiciant. Si quidem spuria illa et deformis soboles nostri progenies est, non Dei; qui peccatum placido vultu nec videt quidem, nedum faciat. Scilicet insaniam ethnicorum superlativam arguit, quod Jovem Deum agnoverunt et adulterum, ut Minutius: et miratur Athenagoras, qui fieri potuit, ut illum tanquam Deum colerent, quem et ἐπίκλοπον et ὑπέρθυμον, furem et superbum cognoverunt. Certe Deus non est, nisi omnino bonus, malitia nulla vitiatus. Recte Nazianzi episcopus, ἀναμάρτητος ὁ Θεὸς, Deus peccati nescius. Cum impossibile est ut vitiis succumbat ipsa bonitas, &c. Barlow Exercitat. 5. p. 127. Nullo modo cogimur, aut retenta præscientia Dei tollere voluntatis arbitrium; aut retento voluntatis arbitrio, Deum (quod nefas est) negare præscium futurorum. Sed utrumque amplectimur; utrumque fideliter et veraciter confitemur; illud, ut bene credamus; hoc, ut bene vivamus; male autem vivitur, si de Deo non bene credere. Aug. de Civ. lib. v. c. 10. Quisquis audet dicere, Habeo ex meipso fidem, non ergo accepi, profecto contradicit huic apertissimæ veritati, Quid habes quod non accepisti? Non quia credere vel non credere non est in arbitrio voluntatis humanæ; sed in electis præparatur voluntas a Domino. Ideo ad ipsam quoque fidem, quæ in voluntate est, pertinet Quis te discernit? Aug. de Prædest. Sanct. c. 5.

pains of hell be suffered. As they will be men still, so will they act as men.

Thirdly: Besides, Scripture hath plainly foretold us as much, that their own thoughts shall accuse them, (Rom. ii. 15,) and their hearts condemn them, 1 John iii. 19—21; and we see it begun in despairing persons here.

CHAPTER III.

THEY SHALL LOSE ALL THINGS THAT ARE COMFORTABLE, AS WELL AS HEAVEN.

Sect. I. Having showed you those considerations which will then aggravate their misery, I am next to show you their additional losses which will aggravate it.[a] For as godliness hath the promise both of this life and that which is to come, and as God hath said, "that if we first seek his kingdom and righteousness, all things else shall be added to us;" so also are the ungodly threatened with the loss both of spiritual and of corporal blessings; and because they sought not first Christ's kingdom and righteousness, therefore shall they lose both it and that which they did seek, and there shall be taken from them even that little which they have. If they could but have kept their present enjoyments, they would not have much cared for the loss of heaven, let them take it that have more mind of it: but catching at the shadow, and losing the substance, they now find that they have lost both; and that when they rejected Christ, they rejected all things. If they had lost and forsaken all for Christ, they would have found all again in him; for he would have been all in all to them; but now they have forsaken Christ for other things, they shall lose Christ, and that also for which they did forsake him.

But I will particularly open to you some of their other losses.

Sect. II. First: They shall lose their present presumptuous conceit and belief of their interest in God, and of his favour towards them, and of their part in the merits and sufferings of Christ. This false belief doth now support their spirits, and defend them from the terrors that would else seize upon them, and fortify them against the fears of the wrath to come. Even as true faith doth afford the soul a true and grounded support and consolation, and enableth us to look to eternity with undaunted courage; so also a false, ungrounded faith doth afford a false, ungrounded comfort, and abates the trouble of the considerations of judgment and damnation. But, alas! this is but a palliate salve, a deceitful comfort; what will ease their trouble when this is gone? When they can believe no longer, they will be quieted in mind no longer, and rejoice no longer. If a man be near to the greatest mischief, and yet strongly conceit that he is in safety, his conceit may make him as cheerful as if all were well indeed, till his misery comes, and then both his conceit and comforts vanish. An ungrounded persuasion of happiness, is a poor cure for real misery. When the mischief comes, it will cure the misbelief; but that belief can neither prevent nor cure the mischief. If there were no more to make a man happy, but to believe he is so, or shall be so, happiness would be far commoner than now it is like to be. It is a wonder that any man who is not a stranger both to gospel and reason, should be of the antinomian faith in this;[b] who tell us, that faith is but the believing that God loveth us, and that our sins are already pardoned through Christ; that this is the chief thing that ministers should preach; that our ministers preach not Christ, because they preach not this; that every man ought thus to believe, but no man to question this faith, whether he believe truly or not, &c. But if all men must believe that their sins are pardoned, then most of the world must believe a lie; and if no man ought to question the truth of his faith, then most men shall rest deluded with an ungrounded belief. The Scripture commandeth us first to believe for a remission of sins, before we believe that our sins are remitted. If we believe in Christ, that is, accept him cordially for our Saviour and our King, then we shall receive the pardon of sins. The truth is, we have more ado to preach down this antinomian faith, than they have to preach it up; and to preach our people from such a believing, than they have to preach them to it. I see no need to persuade people to believe; the generality are strong and confident in such a belief already. Take a congregation of five thousand persons, and how few among them all will you find, that do not believe that their sins are pardoned, and that God loves them; especially of the vilest sinners, who have least cause to believe it! Indeed, as it is all the work of those men to persuade people to this belief, so it is the hardest task almost that we meet with, to convince men of the ungroundedness of this belief, and to break that peace which Satan maintaineth in their souls. Neither do I know a commoner cause of men's destruction, than such a misbelief. Who will seek for that which he believes he hath already? This is the great engine of hell, to make men go merrily to their own perdition. I know men cannot believe Christ, or believe in or upon Christ, either too soon or too much. But they may believe or judge that themselves are pardoned, adopted, and in favour with God, too soon, and too much; for a false judgment is always too much and too soon. As true, grounded faith is the master-grace in the regenerate, and of the greatest use in the kingdom of Christ; so is false, ungrounded faith the master-vice in the unregenerate soul, and of greatest use in the kingdom of Satan. Why do such a multitude sit still, when they might have pardon for the seeking, but that they verily think they are pardoned already? Why do men live so contentedly in the power of the devil, and walk so carelessly in the certain way to hell; but that they think their way will have no such end, and that the devil hath nothing to do with them? They defy him, they spit at the mention of his name. If you could ask so many thousands as are now in hell, What madness could cause you to come hither vo-

[a] It is a great question with many, whether there be no mercy in hell. Aquinas (1 q. 21 a. 4, 1 m.) saith there is; so Lorinus, Par. Cajetan. Feuardentius, Salmeron; also Ursin. Cit. with some of ours; but I say, as Jac. Laurentius, in Jac. (2, 13.) What need is there curiously to inquire, or boldly to determine in this? It is enough to know that the pains and torments of hell to the wicked will be both eternal and incomprehensible. (p. 165.)

[b] Indeed, to speak the plain truth, that which the presumptuous conceit to be true, justifying faith, viz. a believing that our sins are pardoned before they are; that is, upon our bare receiving Christ as a Saviour to justify us, before we receive him as Lord to rule us; this is truly a believing the devil, the father of lies, and not God; yea, against God. And it is a resting on the deceiving promise of the devil for justification: and are not such like to be well justified by their accuser? Nay, it is a making the devil their god, by taking his word, who tells them they shall be justified and saved by a bare expecting justification and salvation from Christ, when God telleth them the contrary. Tertullian saith, Per diversitatem enim promissionum, diversitas insinuatur Deorum. Tertul. Lib. de Resurrect. Carn. c. 2. p. 407.

luntarily, or to follow Satan to this place of torment, when you might follow Christ to the land of rest? they would most of them answer you, We believed that we had followed towards salvation; and that the way which we were in would have brought us to heaven. We made sure account of being saved, till we found ourselves damned; and never feared hell, till we were suddenly in it. We would have renounced our sinful courses and companions, but that we thought we might have them and heaven too. We would have sought after Christ more heartily, but that we thought we had part in him already. We would have been more earnest seekers of regeneration, and the power of godliness, but that we verily thought we were christians before. Oh! if we had known as much as now we know, what lives would we have led, what persons would we have been! But we have flattered ourselves into these insufferable torments. We were told of this before, from the word of God, but we would not believe it till we felt it; and now there is no remedy. Reader, do but stop, and think here with thyself, how sad a case is this, that men should so resolutely cheat themselves of their everlasting rest! The Lord grant it never prove thy own case! I would be very loth to weaken the true faith of the meanest christian, or to persuade any man that his faith is false, when it is true: God forbid that I should so disparage that precious grace which hath the stamp of the Spirit; or so trouble the soul, that Christ would have to be comforted! But I must needs in faithfulness tell thee that the confident belief of their good estate, and of the pardon of their sins, which the careless, unholy, unhumbled multitude among us do so commonly boast of, will prove, in the end, but a soul-damning delusion. It hath made me ready to tremble many a time, to hear a drunken, ungodly, unfaithful minister, as confidently in his formal prayers in the pulpit, give God thanks for vocation, justification, sanctification, and assured hope of glorification, as if he had been a most assured saint; when, it may be, his sermon was intended to reproach the saint, and to jeer at sanctification! Methought I even heard the Pharisee say, I thank thee that I am not as other men, Luke xviii. 11; or Korah, Are not all the people holy, every one? Numb. xvi. 3, 5. How commonly do men thank God for these, which they never received, nor ever shall do! How many have thanked God for pardon of sin, who are now tormented for it; and for sanctification, and assured hope of glory, who are now shut out of that inheritance of the sanctified! I warrant you, there is none of this believing in hell; nor any persuasions of pardon or happiness, nor any boasting of their honesty, nor justifying of themselves. This was but Satan's stratagem, that being blindfold they might follow him the more boldly; but then he will uncover their eyes, and they shall see where they are.

Sect. III. Secondly: Another addition to the misery of the damned will be this; that with the loss of heaven, they shall lose also all their hopes.[c] In this life, though they were threatened with the wrath of God, yet their hope of escaping it did bear up their hearts. And when they were wounded with the terrors of the word, they licked all whole again with their groundless hopes; but then they shall part with their hopes and heaven together. We can now scarce speak with the vilest drunkard, or swearer, or covetous worldling, or scorner at godliness, but he hopes to be saved for all this. If you should go to all the congregation, or town, or country, and ask them one by one, whether they hope to be saved, how few shall you meet with that will not say yea, or that make any great question of it! But, oh! happy world, if salvation were as common as this hope; even those whose hellish nature is written in the face of their conversation, that he that runs may read it, whose tongues plead the cause of the devil and speak the language of hell, and whose delight is in nothing but the works of the flesh; yet these do strongly hope for heaven, though the God of heaven hath told them over and over again in his word, that no such as they shall ever come there. Though most of the world shall eternally perish, and the Judge of the world himself hath told us, that of the many that are called yet but few are chosen, yet almost all do hope for it, and cannot endure any man that doth but question their hopes. Let but their minister preach against their false hopes, or their best friend come to them and say, I am afraid your present hopes of heaven will deceive you; I see you mind not your soul, your heart is not set upon Christ and heaven, you do not so much as pray to God, and worship him in your family; and the Scripture gives you not the least hope of being saved in such a condition as this is; how ill would they take such an admonition as this, and bid the admonisher look to himself, and let them alone, he should not answer for them; they hope to be saved, as soon as these preciser men, that pray and talk of heaven so much: nay, so strong are these men's hopes, that they will dispute the cause with Christ himself at judgment, and plead their eating and drinking in his presence, their preaching in his name, and casting out devils (and these are more probable arguments than our baptism, and common profession, and name of christians); they will stiffly deny that ever they neglected Christ in hunger, nakedness, prison, &c. (and if they did, yet that is less than stripping, imprisoning, banishing, or killing Christ in his members,) till Christ confute them with the sentence of their condemnation! Though the heart of their hopes will be broken at their death, and particular judgment, yet it seems they would fain plead for such hope at the general judgment. But oh the sad state of these men, when they must bid farewell to all their hopes, when their hopes shall all perish with them! Reader, if thou wilt not believe this, it is because thou wilt not believe the Scriptures. The Holy Ghost hath spoken it as plain as can be spoken: "When a wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish, and the hope of unjust men perisheth," Prov. xi. 17. "The hope of the righteous shall be gladness, but the expectation of the wicked shall perish," Prov. x. 28. See Isa. xxviii. 15, 18. "For what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul? Will God hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him?" Job xxvii. 8, 9. "Can the rush grow up without mire? can the flag grow without water? Whilst it is yet in its greenness, not cut down, it withereth before any other herb. So are the paths of all that forget God; and the hypocrite's hope shall perish: whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spider's web. He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand: he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure," Job viii. 11—15. "But the eyes of the wicked shall fail, and they shall not escape, and their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost,"[d] Job xi. 20. The giving up of the ghost is

[c] It doth us no good to know what is to come, but to fear it; that we may be always as set on our watch, that so the righteous grow not remiss or negligent, or the sinner secure; that so not knowing, we should always fear; and observing and looking for the time, we should amend. Ambros. de Fid. lib. v. c. 8.

[d] One of the commonest causes of men's self-deceit is, because they say they daily repent as they daily sin, and there-

a fit but terrible resemblance of a wicked man's giving up of his hopes. For, First, As the soul departeth not from the body without the greatest terror and pain, so also doth the hope of the wicked depart. Oh the direful gripes and pangs of horror that seize upon the soul of the sinner at death and judgment, when he is parting with all his former hopes! Secondly, The soul departeth from the body suddenly, in a moment, which hath there delightfully continued so many years; just so doth the hope of the wicked depart. Thirdly, The soul which then departeth, will never return to live with the body in this world any more; and the hope of the wicked when it departeth, taketh an everlasting farewell of his soul. A miracle of resurrection shall again conjoin the soul and body, but there shall be no such miraculous resurrection of the damned's hope. Methinks it is the most doleful spectacle that this world affords, to see an ungodly person dying, and to think of his soul and hopes departing together; and with what a sad change he presently appears in another world. Then, if a man could but speak with that hopeless soul, and ask it; What! are you now as confident of salvation as you were wont to be; do you now hope to be saved as soon as the most godly? Oh what a sad answer would he return! They are just like Korah, Dathan, and their companions: while they are confident in their rebellion against the Lord, and cry out, "Are not all the people holy?" they are suddenly swallowed up, and their hopes with them: or like Ahab, who hating and imprisoning the prophet for foretelling his danger, while he is in confident hopes to return in peace, is suddenly smitten with that mortal arrow, which let out those hopes, together with his soul: or like a thief upon the gallows, who hath a strong conceit that he shall receive a pardon, and so hopes and hopes, till the ladder is turned; or like the unbelieving sinners of the world before the flood, who would not believe the threatening of Noah, but perhaps derided him for preparing his ark so many years together, when no danger appeared, till suddenly the flood came and swept them all away. If a man had asked these men, when they were climbing up into the tops of trees and mountains: Where is now your hope of escaping, or your merry deriding at the painful preventing preparations of godly Noah; or your contemptuous unbelief of the warnings of God? what do you think these men would then say, when the waters still pursued them from place to place, till it devoured their hopes and them together? Or if one had asked Ahab, when he had received his wound, and turned out of the battle to die; What think you now of the prophecy of Micaiah; will you release him out of prison; do you now hope to return in peace? Why, such a sudden overthrow of their hopes will every unregenerate sinner receive. While they were upon earth, they frustrated the expectations, as I may say, of God and man. God sent his messengers to tell them plainly of their danger, and said, It may be they will hear, and return and escape; but they stiffened their necks and hardened their hearts: the minister studied, and instructed, and persuaded them in hope; and when one sermon prevailed not, he laboured to speak more plainly and piercingly in the next, in hope that at last they would be persuaded and return; till their hopes were frustrate, and their labour lost, and they were fain to turn their exhortation to lamentation, and to sit down in sorrow for men's wilful misery; and take up the sad exclamation of the prophet, "Who hath believed our report; and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?"[e] Isa. liii. 1: so did godly parents also instruct their children in hope, and watch over them, and pray for them, hoping that at last their hearts would turn to Christ. And is it not meet that God should frustrate all their hopes, who have frustrated the hopes of all that desired their welfare! Oh that careless sinners would be awaked to think of this in time! If thou be one of them, who art reading these lines, I do here as a friend advise thee, from the word of the Lord, that, as thou wouldst not have all thy hopes deceive thee, when thou hast most need of them, thou presently try them, whether they will prove current at the touchstone of the Scripture; and if thou find them unsound, let them go, whatsoever sorrow they cost thee. Rest not till thou canst give a reason of all thy hopes, 1 Pet. iii. 15; till thou canst prove that they are the hopes which grace and not nature only hath wrought; that they are grounded upon Scripture promises and sound evidences; that they purify thy heart; that they quicken, and not cool, thy endeavours in godliness; that the more thou hopest, the less thou sinnest,[f] and the more painful thou art in following on the work, and not grown more loose and careless by the increasing of thy hopes; and they make thee set lighter by all things on earth, because thou hast such hopes of higher possessions; that thou art willing to have them tried, and fearful of being deceived; that they stir up thy desires of enjoying what thou hopest for, and the deferring thereof is the trouble of thy heart, Prov. xiii. 12. If thou be sure that thy hopes be such as these, God forbid that I should speak a word against them, or discourage thee from proceeding to hope thus to the end. No, I rather persuade thee to go on in the strength of the Lord; and whatever men or devils, or thy own unbelieving heart,[g] shall say against it, go on and hold fast thy hope, and be sure it shall never make thee ashamed. But if thy hope be not of this spiritual nature, and if thou art able to give no better reason why thou hopest, than the worst in the world may give, that God is merciful, and thou must

Marks of sound hopes.

fore hope they have daily pardon; indeed, in ordinary unavoidable infirmities, such as some call venial, and as Paul laments, (I think) Rom. vii. this may hold good. But when men will daily or frequently swear, whore, be drunk, deceive, revenge, lie, backbite, &c. and then comfort themselves in that they repent of it, and so spend their lives in gross sinning and repenting, it will prove an unprofitable repentance: as Clem. Alexand. saith, Continued repenting for gross sins, which run on in course, repenting and sinning again, do nothing differ from them that believe not at all, save only in this, that they perceive themselves to sin; and I know not which is the worse, to sin wittingly and willingly, or thus to sin again after repenting, &c. It seemeth therefore to be repentance, but indeed is not, for a man frequently to beg pardon, when he frequently sinneth, viz. grossly, or, as some call it, mortally (for that is his meaning). Clem. Alexand. Stromat. lib. ii. Quod adjungit de secunda tantum, et non tertia pœnitentia admissa, improbandum est.

[e] When our ministry petrifies, turns hearts into stones, and these taken up and thrown at us, this kills us: the recoiling of our pains kills us: when our peace returns to us; when we spend our strength to make men more naught than they were; this wounds our heart: which should be considered of sinners. To kill oneself, and one's minister too, that would save him, what a bloody condition is this! The blood of a minister on a man's soul, is more than the blood of many men: stubborn souls, lay this to heart. Lockier on Col. i. 29. p. 52.

[f] There is a twofold repentance: the one, for that a man hath sinned, which is common; the other, when a man hath learned the nature of sin, persuadeth him by principal reason to desist from sin; the consequent of which is, to sin no more. Clem. Alexan. Stromat. lib. vi.

[g] Give me a man that, after many secret bickerings and hard conflicts in his breast, upon a serious penitence, and sense of reconciliation with his God, hath attained to a quiet heart; walking conscionably and close with that Majesty with whom he is atoned. I shall bless and emulate him as a meet subject of true joy. Bishop Hall, Soliloq. 11. p. 37, 38.

speed as well as thou canst, or the like; and hast not one sound evidence of a saving work of grace upon thy soul, to show for thy hopes; but only hopest that thou shalt be saved, because thou wouldst have it so, and because it is a terrible thing to despair: if this be thy case, delay not an hour; but presently cast away those hopes, that thou mayst get into a capacity of having better in their stead. But it may be thou wilt think this strange doctrine, and say, What, would you persuade me directly to despair? *Answ.* Sinner, I would be loth to have thy soul destroyed by wilful self-delusion. The truth is, there is a hope, such as I have before showed thee, which is a singular grace and duty; and there is a hope which is a notorious, dangerous sin. So, consequently, there is a despair which is a grievous sin; and there is a despair which is absolutely necessary to thy salvation. I would not have thee despair of the sufficiency of the blood of Christ to save thee, if thou believe, and heartily obey him; nor of the willingness of God to pardon and save thee, if thou be such a one; nor yet absolutely of thy own salvation; because, while there is life and time, there is some hope of thy conversion, and so of thy salvation: nor would I draw thee to despair of finding Christ, if thou do but heartily seek him; nor of God's acceptance of any sincere endeavours; nor of thy success against Satan, or any corruption which thou shalt heartily oppose; nor of any thing whatsoever God hath promised to do, either to all men in general, or to such as thou art. I would not have thee doubt of any of these in the least measure, much less despair. But this is the despair that I would persuade thee to, as thou lovest thy soul: that thou despair of ever being saved, except thou be born again; or of seeing God, without holiness; or of escaping perishing, except thou soundly repent; or of ever having part in Christ, or salvation by him, or ever being one of his true disciples, except thou love him above father, mother, or thy own life; or of ever having a treasure in heaven, except thy very heart be there; or of ever escaping eternal death, if thou walk after the flesh, and dost not by the Spirit mortify the deeds of the flesh; or of ever truly loving God, or being his servant, while thou lovest the world, and servest it.[h] These things I would have thee despair of, and whatever else God hath told thee shall never come to pass. And when thou hast sadly searched into thy own heart, and findest thyself in any of these cases, I would have thee despair of thyself of ever being saved in that state thou art in. Never stick at the sadness of the conclusion, man, but acknowledge plainly, If I die before I get out of this estate, I am lost for ever. It is as good deal truly with thyself as not; God will not flatter thee, he will deal plainly whether thou do or not. The very truth is, this kind of despair is one of the first steps to heaven. Consider, if a man be quite out of his way, what must be the first means to bring him in again? Why, a despair of ever coming to his journey's end in the way that he is in. If his home be eastward, and he be going westward, as long as he hopes he is in the right, he will go on; and as long as he so goes on hoping, he goes further amiss: therefore, when he meets with somebody that assures him that he is clean out of his way, and brings him to despair of coming home, except he turn back again; then he will return, and then he may hope and spare not. Why, sinner, just so is it with thy soul: thou art born out of the way to heaven; and in that way thou hast proceeded many a year; yet thou goest on quietly, and hopest to be saved, because thou art not so bad as many others. Why, I tell thee, except thou be brought to throw away those hopes, and see that thou hast all this while been quite out of the way to heaven; and hast been a child of wrath, and a servant of Satan, unpardoned, unsanctified, and if thou hadst died in this state, hadst been certainly damned: I say, till thou be brought to this, thou wilt never return and be saved. Who will turn out of his way while he hopes he is right? And let me once again tell thee, that if ever God mean good to thy soul, and intend to save thee, that is one of the first things that he will work upon thee: remember what I say, till thou feel God convincing thee, that the way which thou hast lived in will not serve the turn, and so break down thy former hopes, there is yet no saving work wrought upon thee, how well soever thou mayst hope of thyself. Yea, thus much more, if any thing keep thy soul out of heaven, which God forbid, there is nothing in the world liker to do it, than thy false hopes of being saved, while thou art out of the way to salvation. Why else is it that God cries down such hopes in his word? Why is it that every faithful, skilful minister doth bend all his strength against the false faith and hope of sinners, as if he were to fight against neither small nor great, but this prince of iniquity? Why, alas! they know that these are the main pillars of Satan's kingdom; bring down but them too, and the house will fall. They know also the deceit and vanity of such hopes; that they are directly contrary to the truth of God; and what a sad case that soul is in, who hath no other hope, but that God's word will prove false, when the truth of God is the only ground of true hope: alas! it is no pleasure to a minister to speak to people upon such an unwelcome subject, any more than it is to a pitiful physician to tell his patient, I do despair of your life, except you let blood; or there is no hope of the cure, except the gangrened member be cut off: if it be true, and of flat necessity, though it be displeasing, there is no remedy. Why, I beseech you, think on it reasonably without prejudice or passion, and tell me, where doth God give any hope of your salvation, till you are new creatures? Gal. vi. 15. Nay, I have showed you where he flatly overthroweth all such hope, Gal. v. 18—24; 2 Cor. v. 7. And will it do you any good for a minister to give you hope, where God gives you none; or would you desire him to do so? Why, what would you think of such a minister when those hopes forsake you; or what thanks will you give him when you find yourself in hell? would you not there lie and curse him for a deceiver for ever? I know this to be true, and therefore I had rather you were displeased with me here, than curse me there. For my own part, if I had but one sermon to preach while I lived, I think this should be it: to persuade down all your ungrounded hopes of heaven, not to leave you there in despair, but that you may hope upon better grounds which will never deceive you. God hath told us what we shall say: "Say to the righteous, It shall be well with him; and to the wicked, It shall be ill with him," Isa. iii. 10, 11. And if I shall say, it will be well with thee, when God hath said, it shall be ill with thee, what the better wert thou for this? Whose word would stand, think you, God's or mine? Oh, little do carnal ministers know what they do, who strengthen the hopes of ungodly men! They work as hard as they can against God, while they stand there to speak in the name of God, who layeth his battery against these false hopes, as knowing that they must now

[h] John iii. 5; Heb. xii. 14; Luke xiv. 25—27, &c.; xv. 3, 4; xvi. 23; Matt. vi. 11; Rom. viii. 13; 1 John ii. 15.

down, or the sinner must perish: and these teachers build up what God is pulling down. I know not what they can do worse to destroy men's souls. They are false teachers in regard of application, though they are true in regard of doctrine: this is partly through their flattering, men-pleasing temper; partly because they are guilty themselves, and so should destroy their own hopes, as well as others; and partly because, being graceless, they want that experience which should help them to discern betwixt hope and hope. The same may be said of carnal friends: if they see a poor sinner but doubting whether all be well with him, and but troubled for fear lest he be out of the way, what pains do they take to keep up his old hopes! What, say they, if you should not be saved, God help a great many: you have lived honestly, &c.: never doubt, man, God is merciful! Alas, silly creatures, you think you perform an office of friendship, and do him much good! even as much as to give cold water to a man in a fever; you may ease him at the present, but it afterwards inflames him. What thanks will he give you hereafter, if you settle him upon his former hopes again? Did you never read, "He that saith to the wicked, Thou art righteous, him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him?" Prov. xxiv. 24. If you were faithful friends indeed, you should rather say thus to him; Friend, If you perceive the soundness of your hopes for heaven to be doubtful, oh! do not smother those doubts, but go and open them to your minister, or some able friend; and try them thoroughly in time, and hold no more of them now than will hold good at judgment: it is better they break while they may be built more surely, than when the discovery will be your torment, but not your remedy. This were friendly and faithful counsel indeed. The proverb is, "If it were not for hope, the heart would break:" and Scripture tells us, that the heart must break that Christ will save. How can it be bound up till it be broken first? So that the hope which keeps their hearts from breaking, doth keep them also from healing and saving.

Well, if these unwise men (who are, as we say, penny wise and pound foolish, who are wise to keep off the smart of a short, conditional, necessary, curable despair, but not wise to prevent an eternal, absolute, tormenting, uncurable despair) do not change their condition speedily, those hopes will leave them which they would not leave; and then they that were fully resolved to hold fast their hopes, let all the preachers in the world say what they would, shall let them go whether they will or no. Then let them hope for heaven if they can.

So that, you see, it will aggravate the misery of the damned, that with the loss of heaven, they shall lose all that hope of it which now supporteth them.

Sect. IV. Thirdly: Another additional loss will be this, They will lose all the false peace of conscience which maketh their present life so easy. The loss of this must necessarily follow the loss of the former. When presumption and hope are gone, peace cannot tarry. Who would think now, that sees how quietly the multitude of the ungodly live, that they must very shortly lie roaring in everlasting flames? They lie down, and rise, and sleep as quietly; they eat and drink as quietly; they go about their work as cheerfully; they talk as pleasantly, as if nothing ailed them, or as if they were as far out of danger as an obedient believer: like a man that hath the falling sickness; you would little think, while he is a labouring as strong, and talking as heartily, as another man, how he will presently fall down, lie gasping and foaming, and beating his breast in torment: so it is with these men. They are as free from the fears of hell as others, as free from any vexing sorrows, not so much as troubled with any cares of the state of their souls, nor with any sad or serious thoughts of what shall become of them in another world; yea, and for the most part, they have less doubts and disquiet of mind, than those who shall be saved. O happy men, if it would be always thus; and if this peace would prove a lasting peace! But, alas! there's the misery, it will not. They are now in their own element, as the fish in the water; but little knows that silly creature when he is most fearlessly and delightfully swallowing down the bait, how suddenly he shall be snatched out, and lie dead upon the bank! And as little think these careless sinners what a change they are near. The sheep or the ox is driven quietly to the slaughter, because he knows not whither he goes; if he knew it were to his death, you could not drive him so easily. How contented is the swine, when the butcher's knife is shaving his throat, little thinking that it is to prepare for his death! Why, it is even so with these sensual, careless men. They fear the mischief least, when they are nearest to it, because they fear it not, or see it not with their eyes. "As in the days of Noah (saith Christ) they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, till the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not till the flood came, and took them all away," Matt. xxiv. 37—39; so will the coming of Christ be, and so will the coming of their particular judgment be. "For (saith the apostle) when they say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape," 1 Thess. v. 3. O cruel peace, which ends in such a war! Reader, if this be thy own case, if thou hast no other peace in thy conscience than this ungrounded, self-created peace, I could heartily wish, for thy own sake, that thou wouldst cast it off. As I would not have any humble, gracious souls to vex their own consciences needlessly, nor to disquiet and discompose their spirits by troubles of their own making, nor to unfit themselves for duty, nor to interrupt their comfortable communion with God, nor to weaken their bodies, or cast themselves into melancholy distempers to the scandal of religion; so would I not have a miserable wretch, who lives in a daily and hourly danger of dropping into hell, to be as merry and as quiet as if all were well with him: it is both unseemly and unsafe: more unseemly than to see a man go laughing to the gallows; and more unsafe than to favour the gangrened member, which must be cut off, or to be making merry when the enemy is entering our habitations. Men's first peace is usually a false peace; it is a second peace, which is brought into the soul upon the casting out of the first, which will stand good, and yet not always that neither; for, where the change is by the halves, the second or third peace may be unsound, as well as the first; as many a man that casteth away the peace of his profaneness, doth take up the peace of mere civility and morality; or if he yet discover the unsoundness of that, and is cast into trouble, then he healeth all with outward righteousness, or with a half christianity, and there he taketh up with peace. This is but driving Satan out of one room into another; but till he be cast out of possession, the peace is unsound. Hear what Christ saith, "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace; but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour whereon he trusted, and divideth his spoils," Luke xi. 21, 22. The soul of every man, by nature, is Satan's garrison; all is at

peace in such a man, till Christ comes: when Christ storms this heart, he breaks the peace; he giveth it most terrible alarms of judgment and hell, he batter-eth it with the ordnance of his threatenings and terrors, he sets all in a combustion of fear and sorrow, till he have forced it to yield to his mere mercy, and take him for the governor, and Satan is cast out; and then doth he establish a firm and last-ing peace. If, therefore, thou art yet but in that first peace, and thy heart was never yet either taken by storm, or delivered up freely to Jesus Christ, never think that thy peace will endure. Can the soul have peace which is at enmity with Christ, or stands out against him, or thinks his government too severe, and his conditions hard? can he have peace against whom God proclaimeth war? I may say to thee, as Jehu to Joram, when he asked, "Is it peace? What peace while the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel remain?" So thou art desirous to hear nothing from the mouth of a minister but peace; but what peace can there be, till thou hast cast away thy wickedness and thy first peace, and make thy peace with God through Christ? Wilt thou believe God himself in this case? why, read then what he saith twice over, "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked," Isa. xlviii. 22; lvii. 22. And hath he said it, and shall it not stand? Sinner, though thou mayst now harden and fortify thy heart against fear, and grief, and trouble, yet as true as God is true, they will batter down thy proud and fortified spirit, and seize upon it, and drive thee to amazement: this will be done either here or here-after. My counsel therefore to thee is, that thou presently examine the grounds of thy peace, and say, I am now at ease and quiet in my mind; but is it grounded, and will it be lasting; is the danger of eternal judgment over; am I sure my sins are par-doned, and my soul shall be saved? if not, alas! what cause of peace? I may be in hell before the next day, for aught I know. Certainly, a man that stands upon the pinnacle of a steeple, or that sleeps on the top of the main-mast, or that is in the heat of the most bloody fight, hath more cause of peace and carelessness than thou. Why, thou livest under the wrath of God continually, thou art already sentenced to eternal death, and mayst every hour expect the execution, till thou have sued out a pardon through Christ. I can show thee a hundred threatenings in Scripture which are yet in force against thee; but canst thou show me one promise for thy safety an hour? What assurance hast thou when thou goest forth of thy doors that thou shalt ever come in again? I should wonder, but that I know the desperate hardness of the heart of man, how a man that is not sure of his peace with God, could eat, or drink, or sleep, or live in peace! That thou art not afraid when thou liest down, lest thou shouldst awake in hell; or when thou risest up, lest thou shouldst be in hell before night; or when thou sittest in thy house, that thou still fearest not the approach of death, or some fearful judgment seizing upon thee, and that the threats and sentence are not always sounding in thy ears. Well, if thou wert the nearest friend that I have in the world, in this case that thou art in, I could wish thee no greater good, than that God would break in upon thy careless heart, and shake thee out of thy false peace, and cast thee into trouble, that when thou feelest thy heart at ease, thou wouldst remember thy misery; that when thou art pleasing thyself with thy estate, or business, or labours, thou wouldst still remember the approach-ing woe; that thou wouldst cry out in the midst of thy pleasant discourse and merry company, Oh, how near is the great and dreadful change! that whatever thou art doing, God would make thee read thy sen-tence, as if it were still written before thine eyes; and which way soever thou goest, he would still meet thee full in the face with the sense of his wrath, as the angel did Balaam with a drawn sword, till he had made thee cast away thy groundless peace, and lie down at the feet of Christ, whom thou resisted, and say, Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do? and so receive from him a surer and better peace, which will never be quite broken, but will be the beginning of thy everlasting peace, and not perish in thy perishing, as the groundless peace of the world will do.

Sect. V. Fourthly: Another additional loss, ag-gravating their loss of heaven, is this, They shall lose all their carnal mirth.[e] Their merry vein will then be opened and empty; they will say themselves, as Solomon doth, of their laughter, "Thou art mad," and of their mirth, "What didst thou?" Eccles. ii. 2. Their witty jests and pleasant conceits are then ended, and their merry tales are all told. "Their mirth was but as the crackling of thorns under a pot," (Eccles. vii. 6;) it made a great blaze and unseemly noise for a little while, but it was presently gone, and will return no more. They scorned to entertain any saddening thoughts: the talk of death and judg-ment was irksome to them, because it damped their mirth: they could not endure to think of their sin or danger, because these thoughts did sad their spirits. They knew not what it was to weep for sin, or to humble themselves under the mighty hand of God. They could laugh away sorrow, and sing away cares, and drive away these melancholy thoughts. They thought, if they should live so austerely, and medi-tate, and pray, and mourn, as the godly do, their lives would be a continual misery, and it were enough to make them run mad. Alas, poor souls! what a misery then will that life be, where you shall have nothing but sorrow, intense, heart-piercing, mul-tiplied sorrow; when you shall have neither the joys of the saints, nor your own former joys! Do you think there is one merry heart in hell; or one joy-ful countenance, or jesting tongue? You cry now, A little mirth is worth a great deal of sorrow; but sure a little godly sorrow, which would have ended in eternal joy, had been more worth than a great deal of your foolish mirth, which will end in sorrow. Can men of gravity run laughing and playing in the streets as little children do; or wise men laugh at a mischief as fools and madmen; or men that are sound in their brain, fall a dancing, as they will do in a *viti saltus*, till they fall down dead with it? No more pleasure have wise men in your pitiful mirth; for the end of such mirth is sorrow.

Sect. VI. Fifthly: Another additional loss will be this, They shall lose all their sensual contentments and delights.[f] That which they esteemed their chiefest good, their heaven, their god, that must

[e] The sorrow of the godly is with hope and joy, but the sorrow of the wicked is without hope. Jest not with hell: it is a horrible thing to fall into the hands of a consuming fire. Rollock on John, lect. vi. p. 152. I know mirth is lawful, but as Seneca saith to the epicure, Tu voluptatem com-plceteris: ego compesco. Tu voluptate frueris: ego utor. Tu illum summum bonum putas: ego nec bonum. Tu omnia voluptatis causa facis; ego nihil. Senec. de Vit. Beat. c. 10. Vide Platerum. Observ. lib. i. p. 92.

[f] The dead skull of a king retains not so much as a print of the crown; the guilty soul may the spots of sin. As the bold bishop told the great emperor, taking hold of his purple robe, Sir, you shall not carry this hence with you. Dr. Stoughton Magis. Commis. p. 32. Tunc edax flamma comburit ques nunc carnalis delectatio polluit; tunc infinitum patens inferni ba-rathrum devorat, quos inanis elatio nunc exaltat; et qui olim ex vitio voluntatem callidi persuasoris explcverunt, tunc cum duce suo reprobo ad tormenta pervenit. Greg. Moral. 9.

they lose, as well as heaven and God himself. They shall then, in despite of them, fulfil that command, which here they would not be persuaded to obey, of "making no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof," Rom. xiii. 14. Oh what a fall will the proud, ambitious man have from the top of his honours! As his dust and bones will not be known from the dust and bones of the poorest beggars, so neither will his soul be honoured or favoured any more than theirs. What a number of the great, noble, and learned, are now shut out of the presence of Christ! If you say, How can I tell that? why, I answer, because their Judge hath told me so. Hath he not said by his apostle, "that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called?" 1 Cor. i. 26. And if they be not called, they be not predestinate, or justified, or glorified, Rom. viii. 30. Sure that rich man (Luke xvi.) hath now no humble obeisance done him, nor titles of honour put upon him; nor do the poor now wait at his gates to receive of his scraps. They must be shut out of their well-contrived houses, and sumptuous buildings; their comely chambers, with costly hangings; their soft beds, and easy couches. They shall not find their gallant walks, their curious gardens, with variety of beauteous, odoriferous fruits and flowers; their rich pastures, and pleasant meadows, and plenteous harvest, and flocks and herds. Their tables will not be so spread and furnished, nor they so punctually attended and observed. They have not there variety of dainty fare, nor several courses, nor tempting dishes prepared to please their appetites to the full. The rich man there fareth not deliciously every day, neither shall he wear there his purple and fine linen. The jetting, gorgeous, well-dressed gallant, that must not have a pin amiss, that stands as a picture set to sale, that take themselves more beholden to the tailor or sempster for their comeliness, than to God; they shall then be quite in a different garb. There is no powdering or curling of their hair, nor eyeing of themselves, nor desirous expecting the admiration of beholders. [g] Sure our voluptuous youths must leave their cards and dice behind them, as also their hawks, and hounds, and bowls, and all their former pleasant sports: they shall then spend their time in a more sad employment, and not in such pastimes as these. Where will then be your May-games, and your morrice-dances, your stage-plays, and your shows? what mirth will you have in remembering all the games, and sports, and dancings, which you had on the Lord's days, when you should have been delighting yourselves in God and his work? Oh what an alteration will our jovial, roaring swaggerers then find; what bitter draughts will they have instead of their wine and ale! If there were any drinking of healths, the rich man would not have begged so hard for a drop of water. The heat of their lust will be then abated; they shall not spend their time in courting their mistresses, in lascivious discourse, in amorous songs, in wanton dalliance, in their lustful embracements, or brutish defilements: yet they are like enough to have each other's company there; but they will have no more comfort in that company, than Zimri and Cosbi in dying together; or than lewd companions have, in being hanged together on the same gallows. Oh the doleful meeting that these lustful wantons will have there! how it will even cut them to the heart, to look each other in the face, and to remember that beastly pleasure, for which they now must pay so dear! So will it be with the fellowship of drunkards, and all others that were playfellows together in sin, who got not their pardon in the time of their lives. What direful greeting will there then be, cursing the day that ever they saw the faces of one another; remembering and ripping up all their lewdness, to the aggravation of their torment! Oh that sinners would remember this in the midst of their pleasure and jollity, and say to one another, We must shortly reckon for this before the jealous God. Will the remembrance of it then be comfortable or terrible? will these delights accompany us to another world? How shall we look each other in the face, if we meet in hell together for these things? will not the memorial of them be then our torment? shall we then take these for friendly actions, or rather wish we had spent this time in praying together, or admonishing one another? Oh why should we sell such a lasting, incomprehensible joy, for one taste of seeming pleasure? Come, as we have sinned together, let us pray together before we stir, that God would pardon us; and let us enter into a promise to one another, that we will do thus no more, but will meet together with the godly in the worship of God, and help one another towards heaven, as oft as we have met for our sinful merriments, in helping to deceive and destroy each other. This would be the way to prevent this sorrow, and a course that would comfort you, when you look back upon it hereafter. Who would spend so many days,[h] and years, and thoughts, and cares, and be at so much cost and pains, and all to please this flesh for a moment, which must shortly be most loathsome, stinking rottenness; and in the mean time neglect our precious souls, and that state which we must trust to for ever and ever? to be at such pains for that pleasure which dies in the enjoying, and is almost as soon gone as come; and when we have most need of comfort, will be so far from following us as our happiness, that it will be perpetual fuel to the flames which shall torment us! Oh that men knew but what they desire, when they would so fain have all things suited to the desires of the flesh! They would have buildings, walks, lands, clothes, diet, and all so fitted as may be most pleasing and delightful. Why, this is but to desire their temptations to be increased, and their snare strengthened: their joys will be more carnal; and how great an enemy carnal joy is to spiritual, experienced men can quickly tell you.

Quid enim consolatur eos, qui suam habent consolationem? Non consolatur Christi infantia garrulos; non consolantur Christi lachrymæ cachinnantes; non consolantur panni ejus ambulantes in stolis; non consolantur præsepe et stabulum amantes primas cathedras in synagogis; sed æquanimiter forte universam hanc consolationem expectantibus in silentio Dominum lugentibus, pannosis pauperibus credere videbuntur. Bern. Serm. 22.

[g] Defectus a summo bono ad infimum bonum, hoc est, peccatoris proprium et voluntarium malum, quo malo seipsum perdit injustus. Et quia huic malo author non est Deus, sed homo perversus, digne itaque homini qui se perdidit peccato, redditur in tormentis æterna perditio, ut pereat quidem qui perire voluit, non tamen sic pereat quemadmodum voluit. Qui enim sic peribit, delectatione peccatorum illectus, ut si posset fieri, maneret in opere peccati perpetuus; juste quidem est in perditione peccati dimissus quo propria cecidit voluntate. Fulgent. ad Monim. lib. i. c. 19. A voluptate occupatus, quomodo resistet labori ac periculo, egestati et tot humanam vitam circumstrepentibus minis? Quomodo conspectum mortis? Quomodo dolores feret? Quomodo mundi fragores, et tantum acerrimorum hostium, a tam molli adversario victus. Quicquid voluptas suaserit, faciet, Age, non vides quam multa suasura sit. Sen. de Vit. Beat. c. 11.

[h] Quid mihi voluptatem nominas? Hominis bonum quæro, non ventris, qui pecudibus et belluis laxior est. Senec. de Vit. Beat. c. 9. Most certain it is, that virtue hath not a more capital enemy than such a perpetual success as they call most happy, which, to join together with honesty, is no less difficulty than to combine things by nature most contrary. Bodin. Commonwealth, lib. i. p. 1.

If we took the flesh so much for our enemy as we do profess, we could not so earnestly desire and contrive to accommodate it, and so congratulate all its contentments as we do.

CHAPTER IV.

THE GREATNESS OF THE TORMENTS OF THE DAMNED DISCOVERED.

SECT. I. Having thus showed you how great their loss is, who are shut out of rest, and how it will be aggravated by those additional losses which will accompany it, I should next here show you the greatness of those positive sufferings which will accompany this loss. But because I am to treat of rest, rather than of torment, I will not meddle with the explication of the quality of those sufferings, but only show their greatness in some few brief discoveries, lest the careless sinner, while he hears of no other punishment but that of loss before mentioned, should think he can bear that well enough by his own resolvedness, and so flatter himself in hope of a tolerable hell. That there are, besides the loss of happiness, such actual, sensible torments for the damned, is a matter beyond all doubt to him that doth not doubt the truth of the Scriptures; and that they will be exceeding great, may appear by these arguments following.

First: From the principal Author of them, which is God himself:[a] as it was no less than God whom the sinner had offended, so it is no less than God that will punish them for their offences. He hath prepared those torments for his enemies. His continued anger will still be devouring them. His breath of indignation will kindle the flames. His wrath will be an intolerable burden to their souls. Oh, if it were but a creature that they had to do with, they might bear it, for the penalty would be answerable to the infirmity of him that should inflict it. A child can give but an easy stroke, but the strokes of a giant will be answerable to his strength. Woe to him that falls under the strokes of the Almighty! They shall feel to their sorrow, that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. It were nothing in comparison to this, if all the world were against them, or if the strength of all creatures were united in one to inflict their penalty. They had now rather venture upon the displeasure of God, than to displease a landlord, a master, a friend, a neighbour, or their own flesh: but then they will wish a thousand times in vain, that they had lost the favour of all the world, and had been hated of all men, so they had not lost the favour of God; for, as there is no life like his favour, so is there no death like his displeasure. Oh what a consuming fire is his wrath! If it be kindled here, and that but a little, how do we wither before it, as the grass that is cut down before the sun! How soon doth our strength decay, and turn to weakness, and our beauty to deformity! Churches are rooted up, commonwealths are overthrown, kingdoms depopulated, armies destroyed, and who can stand before his wrath? Even the heavens and earth will melt at his presence; and when he speaks the word at his great day of account, they will be burnt up before him as a scroll in the fire. The flames do not so easily run through the dry stubble, or consume the houses where its violence hath prevailed, as the wrath of God will feed upon these wretches. Oh, they that could not bear a prison, or a gibbet, or fire, for Christ, no, nor scarce a few scorns from the mouths of the ignorant, how will they now bear the devouring fire!

Sect. II. 2. The place or state of torment, is purposely ordained for the glorifying of the attribute of God's justice. As all the works of God are great and wonderful, so those above all, which are specially intended for the eminent advancing of some of his attributes. When he will glorify his power, he makes the worlds by his wisdom. The comely order of all and singular creatures, declares his wisdom. His providence is shown, in sustaining all things, and maintaining order,[b] and attaining his excellent ends, amongst the confused, perverse, tumultuous agitations of a world of wicked, foolish, self-destroying miscreants. When a spark of his wrath doth kindle upon the earth, the whole world, save only eight persons, are drowned. Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, are burned with fire from heaven, to ashes. The sea shuts her mouth upon some. The earth doth open and swallow others. The pestilence destroyeth them up by thousands. The present deplorable state of the Jews may fully testify this to the world. And yet the glorifying of the two great attributes of mercy and justice, is intended most eminently for the life to come. As, therefore, when God will purposely then glorify his mercy, he will do it in a way and degree that is now incredible, and beyond the comprehension of the saints that must enjoy it; so that the blood of his Son, and the enjoyment of himself immediately in glory, shall not be thought too high an honour for them. So also, when the time comes that he will purposely manifest his justice, it shall appear to be indeed the justice of God. The everlasting flames of hell will not be thought too hot for the rebellious; and when they have there burnt through millions of ages, he will not repent him of the evil which is befallen them. Oh! woe to the soul that is thus set up for a butt, for the wrath of the Almighty to shoot at; and for a bush, that must burn in the flames of his jealousy, and never be consumed!

Sect. III. 3. The torments of the damned must needs be extreme, because they are the effect of divine revenge.[c] Wrath is terrible, but revenge is implacable. When the great God shall say, I will now be righted for all the wrongs that I have borne from rebellious creatures; I will let out my wrath, and it shall be stayed no more, you shall now pay

[a] Yet I know what Gibieuf saith, and many schoolmen, that God is not *causa mali, (etiam pœnæ,) qua malum.* And Irenæus speaks as if he thought it were a natural consequent of their own wilfulness, and not properly effected by God. And, indeed, if it be true that malum sensus, as well as malum damni est formaliter privatio boni, &c. tunc causam efficientem per se non habet Deum; qui ergo per apostasiam amiserunt quæ prædicta sunt, quippe desolati ab omnibus bonis, in omni pœna conversantur; Deo quidem principaliter non a seipso eos puniente; prosequente autem eos pœna, quoniam sunt desolati ab omni bono. Ut in immenso lumine, qui exœcaverunt seipsos, vel ab aliis exœcati sunt, semper privati sunt jucunditate luminis. Non quod lumen pœnam eis inferat cœcitatis; sed quod ipsa cœcitas superindueat eis calamitatem. Iren. adv. Hæres. lib. v. c. 27.

[b] Deus permittit mala ut inde eliciat bona, ut probat Gibieuf. lib. ii. c. 22. sect. 6—10. Et si malum in terris abundet; si tamen disponentem desuper providentiam spectes, nihil usquam mali deprehendes. Boetius referent. Gibieuf.

[c] Cremabit addictos ardens semper gehenna; et vivacibus flammis vorax pœna. Nec erit unde habere tormenta vel requiem possint aliquando vel finem. Servabuntur cum corporibus suis animæ infinitis cruciatibus ad dolorem. Vermis eorum non moritur, et ignis eorum non extinguitur, &c. Cyprian. ad Demetr. p. 330. Psal. ii. 9.

for all the abuse of my patience! Remember, now, how I waited your leisure in vain, how I stooped to persuade you; how I, as it were, kneeled to entreat you. Did you think I would always be slighted by such miscreants as you? Oh, who can look up when God shall thus plead with them in the heat of revenge? Then will he be revenged for every mercy abused, for his creatures consumed in luxury and excess, for every hour's time mispent, for the neglect of his word, for the vilifying of his messengers, for the hating of his people, for the profanation of his ordinances and neglect of his worship, for the breaking of his sabbaths and the grieving of his Spirit, for the taking of his name in vain, for unmerciful neglect of his servants in distress. Oh! the numberless bill that will be brought in! and the charge that will overcharge the soul of the sinner! And how hotly revenge will pursue them all to the highest! How God will stand over them with the rod in his hand, (not the rod of fatherly chastisement, but that iron rod wherewith he bruiseth the rebellious,) and lay it on for all their neglects of Christ and grace! Oh that men would foresee this, and not put themselves under the hammer of revenging fury, when they may have the treasure of happiness at so easy rates, and please God better in preventing their woe!

Sect. IV. 4. Consider, also, how this justice and revenge will be the delight of the Almighty. Though he had rather men would stoop to Christ, and accept of his mercy, yet when they persist in rebellion, he will take pleasure in their execution.[d] Though he desire not the death of him that dieth, but rather that he repent and live; yet, when he will not repent and live, God doth desire and delight in the execution of justice conditionally. So that men will repent, he desires not their death, but their life, Ezek. xxxiii. 11; yet, if they repent not, in the same place he uttereth his resolution for their death, ver. 8, 13. He tells us, "that fury is not in him;" yet he addeth in the next words, "Who would set the briers and thorns together in battle? I would go through them; I would burn them together," Isa. xxvii. 4. What a doleful case is the wretched creature in, when he shall thus set the heart of his Creator against him! "And he that made him, will not save him; and he that formed him, will not have mercy upon him," Isa. xxvii. 11. How heavy a threatening is that, "As the Lord rejoiced over you to do you good, so the Lord will rejoice over you to destroy you, and to bring you to nought," Deut. xxviii. 63. Woe to the soul which God rejoiceth to punish! Yea, he tells the simple ones that love simplicity, and the scorners that delight in scorning, and the fools that hate knowledge, "that because he called, and they refused, he stretched out his hand, and no man regarded, but set at nought all his counsel, and would none of his reproof; therefore he will also laugh at their calamity, and mock when their fear cometh: when their fear cometh as desolation, and their destruction as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon them, then shall they call upon him, but he will not answer; they shall seek him early, but shall not find him; for that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord," Prov. i. 22—29. I could entreat thee, who readest them, if thou be one of that sort of men, that thou wilt but view over seriously that part of the chapter (Prov. i.) from the 20th verse to the end, and believe them to be the true words of Christ by his Spirit in Solomon. Is it not a terrible thing to a wretched soul, when it shall lie roaring perpetually in the flames of hell, and the God of mercy himself shall laugh at them; when they shall cry out for mercy, yea, for one drop of water, and God shall mock them instead of relieving them; when none in heaven or earth can help them but God, and he shall rejoice over them in their calamity? Why, you see these are the very words of God himself in Scripture. And most just is it, that they who laughed at the sermon, and mocked at the preacher, and derided the people that obeyed the gospel, should be laughed at and derided by God. Ah! poor ignorant fools, (for so this text calls them,) they will then have mocking enough, till their hearts ache with it.[e] I dare warrant them for ever making a jest at godliness more, or making themselves merry with their own slanderous reports. It is themselves, then, that must be the woeful objects of derision, and that of God himself, who would have crowned them with glory. I know when the Scripture speaks of God's laughing and mocking, it is not to be understood literally, but after the manner of men: but this may suffice us, that it will be such an act of God to the tormenting of the sinner, which he cannot more fitly conceive or express under any other notion or name, than these.

Sect. V. 5. Consider who shall be God's executioners of their torment; and that is, First, Satan; Secondly, Themselves. First, He that was here so successful in drawing them from Christ, will then be the instrument of their punishment, for yielding to his temptations. It was a pitiful sight to see the man possessed, that was bound with chains, and lived among the tombs: and that other that would be cast into the fire and into the water; but, alas! that was nothing to the torment that Satan puts them to in hell: that is the reward he will give them for all their service; for their rejecting the commands of God, and forsaking Christ, and neglecting their souls at his persuasion. Ah, if they had served Christ as faithfully as they did Satan, and had forsaken all for the love of him, he would have given them a better reward. 2. And it is most just, also, that they should there be their own tormentors, that they may see that their whole destruction is of themselves; and they who were wilfully the meritorious cause, should also be the efficient in their own sufferings: and then who can they complain of but themselves? And they will be no more able to cease their self-tormenting, than men that we see in a deep melancholy, that will by no arguments be taken off from their sorrows.

Sect. VI. 6. Consider, also, how that their torment will be universal, not upon one part alone, while the rest are free; but as all have joined in the sin, so must they all partake of the torment. The soul, as it was the chief in sinning, shall be the chief in suffering; and as it is of a more spiritual and excellent nature than bodies are, so will its torments as far exceed our present bodily sufferings.[g] And as the joys of the soul do far surpass all sensual plea-

[d] Unus igitur, et idem Deus Pater qui concupiscentibus ejus communicationem, et perseverantibus in subjectione ejus quæ sunt apud se preparata bona: principi autem abscessionis, diabolo, et qui cum eo abscesserunt angelis, æternum ignem præparans: in quem mittuntur, inquit Dominus, illi qui in sinistra separati sunt. Iren. adv. Hæres. lib. iv. c. 76.

[e] See also Psal. xxxvii. 13.

[f] Utrum ignis gehennæ sit corporeus, lege plenissime disserentem D. Jo. Reignoldum de Lib. Apocryp. Prælect. 51—59.

[g] Duplex damnatorum pœna est in gehenna, nam et mentem urit tristitia, et corpus flamma. Bern. de Medit. Gehennalis Supplicii. Patietur etiam corpus, non qua sentire quid sine carne non possit anima, sed qua necesse est illam etiam cum carne sentire. Quantum enim ad agendum de suo suffi-

sures, and corporal contentments; so do the pains of the soul surpass those corporal pains: and as the martyrs did triumph in the very flames, because their souls were full of joy, though their bodies were in pain; so, though these damned creatures could enjoy all their bodily pleasures, yet the soul's sufferings would take away the sweetness of them all.

And it is not only a soul, but a sinful soul that must suffer; the guilt which still remains upon it, will make it fit for the wrath of God to work upon: as fire will not burn, except the fuel be combustible; but if the wood be dry, or it light upon straw, how fiercely will it burn then! Why, the guilt of their former sins will be as tinder to gunpowder, to the damned soul, to make the names of hell to take hold upon them with fury.

And as the soul, so also the body must bear its part. That body that must needs be pleased, whatsoever become of its eternal safety, shall now be paid for all its unlawful pleasures: that body which was so carefully looked to, so tenderly cherished, so curiously dressed; that body which could not endure heat or cold, or an ill smell, or a loathsome sight; oh what must it now endure! how are its haughty looks now taken down! how little will those flames regard its comeliness and beauty! But as death did not regard it, nor the worms regard it, but as freely feed upon the face of the proud and lustful dames, and the heart of the most ambitious lords or princes, as if they had been but beggars or brutes; so will their tormentors then as little pity their tenderness, or reverence their lordliness, when they shall be raised from their graves to their eternal doom. Those eyes which were wont to be delighted with curious sights, and to feed themselves upon beauteous and comely objects, must then see nothing but what shall amaze and terrify them; an angry, sin-revenging God above them, and those saints whom they scorned, enjoying the glory which they have lost; and about them will be only devils and damned souls; ah, then, how sadly will they look back and say, Are all our merry meetings, our feasts, our plays, our wanton toys, our games and revels, come to this? Then those ears which were wont to be delighted with music, shall hear the shrieks and cries of their damned companions; children crying out against their parents, that gave them encouragement and example in evil, but did not teach them the fear of the Lord; husbands crying out upon their wives, and wives upon their husbands; masters and servants cursing each other; ministers and people, magistrates and subjects, charging their misery upon one another, for discouraging in duty, conniving in sin, and being silent or formal, when they should have plainly told one another of their misery, and forewarned them of this danger. Thus will soul and body be companions in calamity.[h]

Sect. VII. 7. And the greater by far will their torments be, because they shall have no comfort left to help to mitigate them. In this life, when a minister foretold them of hell, or conscience began to trouble their peace, they had comforts enough at hand to relieve them: their carnal friends were all ready to speak comfort to them, and promise them that all should be well with them; but now they have not a word of comfort either for others or themselves. Formerly they had their business, their company, their mirth, to drive away their fears; they could think away their sorrows, or play them away, or sleep them away, or at least, time did wear them away; but now all these remedies are vanished. They had a hard, a presumptuous, and unbelieving heart, which was a wall to defend them against troubles of mind; but now their experience hath banished these, and left them naked to the fury of those flames. Yea, formerly Satan himself was their comforter, and would unsay all that the minister had said against them, as he did to our first mother: Hath God said, Ye shall not eat? ye shall not surely die. So doth he now: Doth God tell you that you shall lie in hell? It is no such matter; God is more merciful; he doth but tell you so, to fright you from sinning: who would lose his present pleasures, for the fear of that which he never saw? Or, if there be a hell, what need you to fear it? Are not you christians, and shall you not be saved by Christ? Was not his blood shed for you? Ministers may tell you what they please; they delight to fright men, that they may be masters of their consciences, and therefore would make them believe that they shall all be damned, except they will fit themselves to their precise humour. Thus, as the Spirit of Christ is the comforter of the saints, so Satan is the comforter of the wicked; for he knows if he should now disquiet them, they would no longer serve him; or if fears or doubts should begin to trouble them, they would bethink themselves of their danger, and so escape it. Never was a thief more careful lest he should awake the people, when he is robbing the house, than Satan is careful not to awaken a sinner. And as a cut-purse will look you in the face, and hold you in a tale, that you may never suspect him, while he is picking your pockets; so will Satan labour to keep men from all doubts, or jealousies, or sorrowful thoughts. But when the sinner is dead, and he hath his prey, and his stratagem hath had success, then he hath done flattering and comforting them. While the sight of sin and misery might have helped to save them, he took all the pains he could to hide it from their eyes; but when it is too late, and there is no hope left, he will make them see and feel to the utmost. Oh! which way will the forlorn sinner then look for comfort? They that drew him into the snare, and promised him safety, do now forsake him, and are forsaken themselves. His ancient comforts are taken from him, and the righteous God, whose forewarnings he made light of, will now make good his word against him to the least tittle.

Sect. VIII. 8. But the great aggravation of this misery will be its eternity.[i] That when a thousand

cit, tantum et ad patiendum: ad agendum autem minus de suo sufficit. Habet enim de suo solummodo cogitare, velle, cupere, disponere; ad perficiendum autem, operam carnis expectat. Sic itaque et ad patiendum societatem carnis expostulat, ut tam plene per eam pati possit, quam sine ea plene agere non potuit. Tertul. de Resur. Carnis, c. 17. p. 335. Negent operarum societatem, ut merito possint etiam mercedem negare. Non sit particeps in sententia caro, si non fuerit et in causa. Sola anima revocetur, si sola decedit. At enim non magis sola decedit, quam sola decucurrit, illud unde decedit, vitam hanc dico. Adeo autem non sola anima transigit vitam, ut nec cogitatus licet solos, licet non ad effectum per carnem deductos, auferamus a collegio carnis. Siquidem et in carne, et cum carne, et per carnem agitur ab anima, quod agitur in corde. Tertul. de Resur. Carnis. c. 15. p. 333.

[h] Hanc denique carnis speciem, arcem animæ, etiam Dominus in sugillationem cogitationum taxat, Quid cogitatis in cordibus vestris nequam? et Qui conspexerit mulierem ad concupiscendum, &c. Adeo et sine opere et sine effectu, cogitatus carnis est actus; sed etsi in cerebro, vel in medio supercilliorum discrimine, vel ubi philosophis placet, principalitas sensuum conseerata est, quod Hegemonicon appellatur, Caro erit omne animæ cogitatorium. Nunquam anima sine carne est, quamdiu in carne est. Nihil non cum illa agit, sine qua non est. Quære adhuc an cogitatus quoque per carnem administrentur, qui per carnem dignoscuntur extrinsecus. Volutet aliquid anima; vultus operatur indicium. Facies intentionum omnium speculum est. Negent factorum societatem, cui negare non possunt cogitatorum. Et illi quidem delinquentias carnis enumerant, ergo peccatrix tenebitur supplicio. Tert. de Resurrect. Carnis, c. 15.

[i] Horrendo modo fit miseris mors sine morte, finis sine fine,

millions of ages are past, their torments are as fresh to begin as at the first day. If there were any hope of an end, it would ease them to foresee it; but when it must be for ever so, that thought is intolerable: much more will the misery itself be. They were never weary of sinning, nor ever would have been, if they had lived eternally upon earth: and now God will not be weary of plaguing them. They never heartily repented of their sin, and God will never repent him of their suffering. They broke the laws of the eternal God, and therefore shall suffer eternal punishment. They knew it was an everlasting kingdom which they refused when it was offered them, and therefore what wonder if they be everlastingly shut out of it; it was their immortal souls that were guilty of the trespass, and therefore must immortally suffer the pains. Oh, now, what happy men would they think themselves, if they might have lain still in their graves, or continued dust, or suffered no worse than the gnawing of those worms! Oh! that they might but there lie down again; what a mercy now would it be to die! and how will they call and cry out for it, O death, whither art thou now gone? Now come and cut off this doleful life! Oh! that these pains would break my heart, and end my being! Oh! that I might once die at last![k] Oh! that I had never had a being! These groans will the thoughts of eternity wring from their hearts. They were wont to think the sermon long, and prayer long; how long then will they think these endless torments! What difference is there betwixt the length of their pleasures and of their pains! The one continued but a moment, but the other endureth through all eternity. Oh that sinners would lay this thought to heart! Remember how time is almost gone. Thou art standing all this while at the door of eternity; and death is waiting to open the door, and put thee in. Go sleep out but a few more nights, and stir up and down on earth a few more days, and then thy nights and days shall end; thy thoughts, and cares, and displeasures, and all shall be devoured by eternity; thou must enter upon the state which shall never be changed. As the joys of heaven are beyond our conceiving, so also are the pains of hell. Everlasting torment is unconceivable torment.

Sect. IX. *Object.* But I know if it be a sensual unbeliever that readeth all this, he will cast it by with disdain, and say, I will never believe that God will thus torment his creatures. What! to delight in their torture? and that for everlasting? and all this for the faults of a short time? it is incredible. How can this stand with the infiniteness of his mercy? I would not thus torment the worst enemy that I have in the world, and yet my mercifulness is nothing to God's. These are but threats to awe men; I will not believe them.

Answ. Wilt thou not believe? I do not wonder if thou be loth to believe so terrible tidings to thy soul, as these are; which if they were believed and apprehended, indeed, according to their weight, would set thee a trembling and roaring in the anguish of horror day and night. And I do as little wonder that the devil who ruleth thee, should be loth, if he can hinder it, to suffer thee to believe it. For if thou didst believe it, thou wouldst spare no cost or pains to escape it.[l] But go to: if thou wilt read on, either thou shalt believe it before thou stirrest, or prove thyself an infidel or pagan. Tell me, then, dost thou believe Scripture to be the word of God? If thou do not, thou art no more a christian than thy horse is, or than a Turk is. For what ground have we besides Scripture to believe that Jesus Christ did come into the world, or die for man? If thou believe not these, I have nothing here to do with thee, but refer thee to the second part of this book, where I have proved Scripture to be the word of God. But if thou do believe this to be so, and yet dost not believe that the same Scripture is true, thou art far worse than either infidel or pagan. For the vilest pagan durst hardly charge their idol-gods to be liars: and darest thou give the lie to the God of heaven; and accuse him of speaking that which shall not come to pass; and that in such absolute threats and plain expressions? But if thou darest not stand to this, but dost believe Scripture both to be the word of God, and to be true, then I shall presently convince thee of the truth of these eternal torments. Wilt thou believe if a prophet should tell it thee? Why read it then in the greatest prophets, Moses, David, and Isaiah, Deut. xxxii. 22; Psal. xi. 6; ix. 17; Isa. xxx. 33. Or wilt thou believe one that was more than a prophet? Why, hear then what John Baptist saith, Matt. iii. 10; Luke iii. 17. Or wilt thou believe if an apostle should tell thee? Why hear what one saith, where he calls it the "vengeance of eternal fire; and the blackness of darkness for ever," Jude 7, 13. Or what if thou have it from an apostle that had been rapt up in revelations into the third heaven, and seen things unutterable, wilt thou believe then? Why take it then from Paul: "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power," 2 Thess. i. 7—9. And "that they all might be damned, who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness," 2 Thess. ii. 12. So Rom. ii. 5—7. Or wilt thou believe it from the beloved apostle, who was so taken up in revelations, and saw it, as it were, in his visions? Why see then Rev. xx. 10, 15. They are said there to be "cast into the lake of fire, and tormented day

defectus sine defectu; quia mors semper vivit, et finis semper incipit, et defectus deficere nescit. Mors perimit et non extinguit; dolor cruciat, sed nullatenus pavorem fugat; flamma comburit, sed nequaquam tenebras excutit. Greg. Moral. lib. ix. I approve not learned Parker's judgment about the desert of eternal suffering, as arising from the eternity or perpetuity of sinning, which he taketh from Scotus and Mirandula, lib. iv. de Descensu, p. 164, 165.

[k] Quando istinc excessum fuerit, nullus jam pœuitentiæ locus est, nullus satisfactionis effectus: hic vita aut amittitur aut tenetur: hic saluti æternæ cultu Dei, et fructu fidei providetur. Cypr. ad Demetrian. lib. xxii. p. 331. Ubi hic purgatorium pontificiorum? Æterna autem et sine fine sunt a Deo bona, propter hoc et amissio eorum æterna et sine fine est. Iren. adv. Hæres. lib. iii. p. (mihi) 610.

[l] Credunt Judæi quod ex Israelitis solis tria genera mortuorum in die judicii sint resuscitanda, quorum unum futurum sit Israelitarum probissimorum: alterum improbissimorum et impiissimorum; tertium mediocrium, qui non minus bene quam male operati fuerint. Probos illos e vestigio ad vitam æternam inscriptum obsignatumque improbos autem in gehennam, sive ignem infernalem abjectum iri dicunt. Mediocres vero istos peccatores per spatium Chadaschim sive mensium tantummodo duodecim pro peccatis ipsorum in inferno torquebuntur; deinde corpora eorum cousumentur, ventusque cineres eorum difflando dispergit subter plantas pedum justorum, &c. Sic R. Bechar. Talmudo. Magno ut Buxtorf. Synag. Jud. 1. p. 25—27. Ad hanc hæresin appropinquat doctrina papistarum. Non est vera vita nisi ubi fœliciter vivitur; nec vera incorruptio, nisi ubi salus nullo dolore corrumpitur. Ubi autem infelix non finitur, ut ita dicam, mors ipsa non moritur; et ubi dolor perpetuus non interimit, sed affligit, ipsa corruptio non sinitur. Aug. Enchirid. c. 92. Nisi per indebitam misericordiam nemo liberatur et nisi per debitum judicium nemo damnatur. Aug. Enchirid. c. 94. Vindictam divinam certo futuram super impios et resipiscere nolentes, obsignant quotidie tot exempla iræ Dei quæ nobis ante oculos ponuntur. Pol. in Ezek. 41. p. 191.

and night for ever." So Rev. xxi. 8; so 2 Pet. ii. 17. Or wilt thou believe it from the mouth of Christ himself the Judge? Why read it then: "As therefore the tares are gathered and burnt in the fire, so shall it be in the end of this world: the Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth," &c. Matt. xiii. 40—42, 49, 50. So Matt. xviii. 8, 9: so Mark ix. 43, 44, 46, 48: where he repeateth it three times over, "Where their worm never dieth, and their fire is not quenched." And, "Then shall he say to them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was, &c. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, and the righteous into life eternal," Matt. xxv. 41, 46.

What sayest thou now to all this; wilt thou not believe? If thou wilt not believe Christ, I know not whom thou wilt believe; and therefore it is in vain to persuade thee any further: only let me tell thee, the time is at hand when thou wilt easily believe, and that without any preaching or arguing: when thou seest the great and terrible day, and hearest the condemning sentence passed, and art thyself thrust down to hell, as Luke x. 11, then thou shalt believe, and never doubt again: and do not say but thou wast told so much. Surely he that so much dissuades thee from believing, doth yet believe and tremble himself, Jam. ii. 19.

And whereas thou thinkest that God is more merciful,[m] why, sure, he knows best his own mercifulness. His mercy will not cross his truth. Cannot God be infinite in mercy, except he save the wilful and rebellious? Is a judge unmerciful for condemning malefactors? Mercy and justice have their several objects. Thousands of humble, believing, obedient souls shall know to their eternal comfort, that God is merciful, though the refusers of his grace shall lie under justice. God will then force thy conscience to confess it in hell, that God who condemned thee was yet merciful to thee. Was it not mercy to be made a reasonable creature; and to have patience to endure thy many years' provocations, and waiting upon thee from sermon to sermon; desiring and entreating thy repentance and return? Was it not mercy to have the Son of God, with all his blood and merits, freely offered thee, if thou wouldst but have accepted him to govern and to save thee? nay, when thou hadst neglected and refused Christ once, or twice, yea, a hundred times, that God should yet follow thee with invitations from day to day? And shalt thou wilfully refuse mercy to the last hour, and then cry out that God will not be so unmerciful as to condemn thee? Thy conscience will smite thee for thy madness, and tell thee, that God was merciful in all this, though such as thou do perish for thy wilfulness. Yea, the sense of the greatness of his mercy will then be a great part of thy torment.[n]

And whereas thou thinkest the pain to be greater than the offence, that is because thou art not a competent judge. Thou knowest what pain is, but thou knowest not the thousandth part of the evil of sin. Shall not the righteous Judge of the world do justly? Nay, it is no more than thou didst choose thyself. Did not God set before thee life and death, and tell thee, if thou wouldst accept of the government of Christ, and renounce thy lusts, that then thou shouldst have eternal life? And if thou wouldst not have Christ, but the world or flesh to rule over thee, thou shouldst then endure eternal torments? Did not he offer thee thy choice, and bid thee take which of these thou wouldst; yea, and entreat thee to choose aright? And dost thou now cry out of severity, when thou hast but the consequence of thy wilful choice? But it is not thy accusing God of cruelty that shall serve thy turn; instead of procuring thy escape, or the mitigation of thy torments, it will but make thy burden the more heavy.

And whereas thou sayest that thou wouldst not so torment thy own enemy; I answer, There is no reason that thou shouldst: for is it all one to offend a crawling worm of the earth, and to offend the eternal glorious God? Thou hast no absolute dominion over thine enemy, and there may be some fault in thyself as well as in him; but with God and us the case is contrary. Yet thou makest nothing of killing a flea if it do but bite thee; yea, a hundred of them, if they did not touch thee; and yet never accusest thyself of cruelty. Yea, thou wilt torment thy ox all his life-time with toilsome labour, and kill him at last, though he never deserved ill of thee, nor disobeyed thee, and though thou hast over him but the borrowed authority of a superior fellow-creature, and not the sovereign power of the absolute Creator. Yea, how commonly dost thou take away the lives of birds, and beasts, and fishes! Many times a great many of lives must be taken away to make for thee but one meal. How many deaths, then, have been suffered in obedience to thy will, from thy first age to thy last hour; and all this without any desert of the creature! And must it yet seem cruelty, that the sovereign Creator, who is ten thousand times more above thee than thou art above a flea or a toad, should execute his justice upon such a contemner of his authority? But I have given you some reasons of this before.

Sect. X. But methinks I perceive the obstinate sinner desperately resolving, If I must be damned, there is no remedy; rather than I will live so pre-

[m] Sic diabolico spiritu pleni innumeras accusationes inferunt factori nostro, cum et spiritum vitæ nobis donaverit, et legem omnibus aptam posuerit, et nolunt justum esse judicium Dei: qua propter et alterum quendam excogitarunt patrem neque curantem; neque providentem eorum, quæ sunt erga nos, aut etiam conscientem omnibus peccatis. Irenæus adv. Hær. lib. v. p. 609. Jam scies nequitia sua hanc eos meruisse fortunam: nec quicquam accidisse, quod non sit his, si in contumacia perseverarent, antea prædictum. Ita prius eos deseruisse comprehendes, quam esse desertos. Minut. Fœlix. Octav. p. 394.

[n] When I read in Spanhemius's Posthum. Vind. against Amyraldus, and some other divines, (that love not to be named in opposition,) both pages filled with extenuations of God's mercy to the wicked, as if because he gives them not effectual grace to believe, therefore Christ's dying for them (in Davenant and Camero's middle sense) is no mercy to them, but a mocking of them; and therefore conclude that Christ died not for them at all: it makes me tremble to think that learned divines, in the heat of dispute, should speak so desperately against God; and yet this is almost all they have to say. I entreat such to consider, seeing conscience is the great tormentor of the damned in hell; and the rejecting of Christ, and the abuse of gospel mercy, will be the greatest thing that God and conscience will charge them with; whether these men's doctrine, if the damned could believe it, would not make hell to be no hell to them, or more easy? If they could say, Christ never died for me at all; or if he had, yet it had been no mercy, because God would not give me faith in him; it was merely God's will that I should be damned that brought me hither, which I could not resist: if they could thus lay all on God, where were the worm of conscience? Shall we deny that which is clear and plain, because we cannot comprehend that which is hid and secret? Shall we say, that it is not so, which we see to be so, because we cannot find why it is so? saith Augustine excellently, Lib. de Bono Persever. c. 14; which saying I would desire the persons before mentioned well to consider. Christ makes it the perfection of our heavenly Father, to do good in common cases, to the just and unjust, Matt. v. 45, 48.

cisely as the Scripture requireth, I will put it to the venture: I shall escape as well as the rest of my neighbours, and as the most of the world, and we will even bear it as well as we can. *Answ.* Alas, poor creature! I wish thou didst but know what it is that thou dost so boldly venture on; I dare say thou wouldst sleep this night but very unquietly. Wilt thou leave thyself no room for hope? Art thou such a malicious, implacable enemy to Christ and thy own soul? And dost thou think, indeed, that thou canst bear the wrath of God, and go away so easily with these eternal torments! Yet let me beg this of thee, that before thou dost so flatly resolve, thou wouldst lend me thine attention to these few questions which I shall put to thee, and weigh them with the reason of a man; and if then thou think thou canst bear these pains, I shall give thee over and say no more.

First: Who art thou that thou shouldst bear the wrath of God? Art thou a god, or art thou a man? What is thy strength to undergo so much? Is it not as the strength of wax or stubble to resist the fire; or as chaff to the wind; or as the dust before the fierce whirlwind? Was he not as stout a man as thyself, who cried to God, "Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro; and wilt thou pursue the dry stubble?"[o] Job xiii. 25; and he that confesseth, "I am a worm and no man," Psal. xxii. 6. If thy strength were as iron, and thy bones as brass, thou couldst not bear. If thy foundation were as the earth, and thy power as the heavens, yet shouldst thou perish at the breath of his indignation. How much more when thou art but a little piece of a worm, creeping, breathing clay, kept a few days from stinking, and from being eaten with worms, by the mere support and favour of him whom thou thus resistest.

Secondly: If thou art able to wrestle with the indignation of the Almighty, why then dost thou tremble at the signs of his power or wrath? Do not the terrible thunder-claps sometimes affright thee; or the lightning-flashes, or that unseen power which goes with it, in rending in pieces mighty oaks, and tearing down the strongest buildings? If thou hadst been in the church of Withicombe, in Devonshire, when the lightning broke in, and scorched and burnt the people, and left the brains and hair upon the pillars, would it not have made thee afraid? If thou be put in a place where the plague doth rage, so that it comes to so many thousand a week, doth it not astonish thee, to see men that were well within a few days to be thrown into the graves by heaps and multitudes? If thou hadst stood by when Pharaoh and his people were so strangely plagued, and at last drowned together in the sea; or when the earth swallowed up Dathan, Abiram, and their companies, and the people fled away at the cry, lest the earth should swallow them up also; or when Elias brought fire from heaven to consume the captains and their companies; would not any of these sights have daunted thy spirit? Why, how then canst thou bear the hellish plagues?

Thirdly: Tell me also, if thou be so strong, and thy heart so stout, why do those small sufferings so dismay thee which befall thee here? If thou have but a tooth-ache, or a fit of the gout or stone, what groans dost thou utter, what moans dost thou make! The house is filled with thy constant complaints; thy friends about thee are grieved at thy pains, and stand over thee condoling thy miserable state. If thou shouldst but lose a leg or an arm, thou wouldst make a greater matter of it. If thou lose but a friend; if thou lose thine estate, and fall into poverty, and beggary, and disgrace; how heavily wouldst thou bear any one of these! And yet all these laid together will be one day accounted a happy state, in comparison of that which is suffered in hell. Let me see thee shake off the most painful sickness, and make as light of convulsive, epileptic, arthritic, nephritic pains, or such-like diseases, when they seize upon thee, and then the strength of thy spirit will appear. Alas, how many such boasters as thyself have I seen made stoop and eat their words! And when God hath but let out a little of his wrath, that Pharaoh who before asked, Who is the Lord, that I should let all go for him? hath turned his tune, and cried, I have sinned.

Fourthly: If thy stout spirit do make so light of hell, why then doth the approach of death so much affright thee? Didst thou never find the sober thoughts of death to raise a kind of dread in thy mind? Wast thou never in a fever, or consumption, or any disease wherein thou didst receive the sentence of death? If thou wast not, thou wilt be before long; and then when the physician hath plainly told thee that there is no hopes, oh how cold it strikes to thy heart! Why is death to men the king of terrors else? and the stoutest champions then do abate their courage? Oh! but the grave would be accounted a palace or a paradise, in comparison of that place of torment which thou desperately slightest.

Fifthly: If all this be nothing, go try thy strength by some corporeal torment; as Bilney, before he went to the stake, would first try his finger in the candle, so do thou. Hold thy finger awhile in the fire, and feel there whether thou canst endure the fire of hell. Austin mentioneth a chaste christian woman, who being tempted to uncleanness by a lewd ruffian, she desired him for her sake to hold his finger one hour in the fire: he answereth, It is an unreasonable request: How much more unreasonable is it, said she, that I should burn in hell for the satisfying your lust! So say I to thee: If it be an intolerable thing to suffer the heat of the fire for a year, or a day, or an hour, what will it be to suffer ten thousand times more for ever? What, if thou wert to suffer Lawrence's death, to be roasted upon a grid-iron; or to be scraped or pricked to death as other martyrs were; or if thou wert to feed upon toads for a year together? If thou couldst not endure such things as these, how wilt thou endure the eternal flames?

Sixthly: Tell me yet again, If hell be so small a matter, why canst thou not endure so much as the thoughts or the mention of it? If thou be alone, thou darest scarcely think of hell, for fear of raising disquietness in thy spirit. If thou be in company, thou canst not endure to have any serious speech of it, lest it spoil the sport, and mar the mirth, and make thee tremble, as Felix did when Paul was discoursing of the judgment to come. Thou canst not endure to hear a minister preach of hell, but thou gnashest thy teeth, and disdainest him, and reproachest his sermon, as enough to drive men to desperation, or make them mad. And canst thou endure the torments, when thou canst not endure so much as to hear of them? Alas! man, to hear thy judgment from the mouth of Christ, and to feel the execution, will be another kind of matter, than to hear it from a minister.

Seventhly: Furthermore, What is the matter that the rich man in hell, mentioned in Luke xvi. could not make as light of it as thou dost? Was not he as likely a man to bear it as thyself? Why doth he so cry out that he is tormented in the flames; and

[o] Read Psal. lxxvii. 18; Exod. ix. 28.

stoop so low, as to beg a drop of water of a beggar that he had but a little before despised at his gates; and to be beholden to him, that had been beholden to the dogs to lick his sores?

Also, what aileth thy companions, who were as resolute as thyself, that when they lie a dying, their courage is so cooled, and their haughty expressions are so greatly changed? They who had the same spirits and language as thou hast now, and made as light of all the threats of the word; yet when they see they are going into another world, how pale do they look; how faintly do they speak; how dolefully do they complain and groan! They send for the minister then, whom they despised before, and desire to be prayed for, and would be glad to die in the state of those whom they would not be persuaded to imitate in their lives; except it be here and there a desperate wretch, who is given over to a more than hellish hardness of heart. Why cannot these make as light of it as thou?

Eighthly: Yet further, If thou be so fearless of that eternal misery, why is the least foretaste of it so terrible? Didst thou never feel such a thing as a tormenting conscience? If thou hast not, thou shalt do. Didst thou never see and speak with a man that lived in desperation, or in some degree of those wounds of spirit that were near despair? How uncomfortable was their conference! How burdensome their lives! Nothing doth them good which they possess; the sight of friends, or house, or goods, which refresh others, is a trouble to them; they feel no sweetness in meat or drink; they are weary of life, and fearful of death. What is the matter with these men? If the misery of the damned itself can be endured, why cannot they more easily endure these little sparks?

Ninthly: Again, tell me faithfully, what if thou shouldst but see the devil appear to thee in some terrible shape, would it not daunt thee? What if thou shouldst meet him in thy way home, or he should show himself to thee at night in thy bed-chamber, would not thy heart fail thee, and thy hair stand on end? I could name thee those that have been as confident as thyself, who, by such a sight, have been so appalled, that they were in danger of being driven out of their wits. Or what if some damned soul, of thy former acquaintance, should appear to thee in some bodily likeness, would not this amaze thee? What fears do people live in, whose houses or persons have been but haunted with spirits, though they have only heard some noises, and seen some sights, but never felt any hurt upon their bodies? Alas! what is this to the torments of hell? Canst thou not endure a shadow to appear before thee? Oh, how wilt thou endure to live with them for ever, where thou shalt have no other company but devils and the damned; and shalt not only see them, but be tormented with them, and by them! And as incredible a matter as this seems to thee, if thy thorough conversion prevent it not, thou knowest not how few months thou shalt be out of this estate.

Tenthly and lastly: Let me ask thee one more question, If the wrath of God be to be made so light of as thou dost, why did the Son of God himself make so great a matter of it? When he, who was perfectly innocent himself, had taken upon him the payment of our debt, and stood in our room, and bore that punishment that we had deserved, it makes him sweat forth water and blood; it makes the Lord of life cry, "My soul is heavy, even to the death;" it makes him cry out upon the cross, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" Surely, if any one could have borne these sufferings easily, it would have been Jesus Christ. He had another measure of strength to bear it than thou hast.

And let me tell thee one thing, which every one understandeth not; thou wilt have sins of a more heinous nature and degree to suffer for, than ever were laid upon Jesus Christ. For Christ suffered only for the breaches of the covenant of works,[p] and not for the violation of the covenant of grace (properly so called, that is, not for the final non-performance of the conditions of this covenant). There was no man's final prevailing unbelief, impenitency, or rejecting of Christ, that did lie upon Christ. Howsoever the aggravation of all men's sins might aggravate his burden, yet the punishment due to those sins particularly was not like the punishment which is due to thine. For as the first covenant gave not so great a reward, so neither did it threaten so great a penalty as the latter doth. And the penalty which the new covenant threateneth, Christ never underwent. So that the punishment which thou must suffer, is that which the apostle speaks of, "Of how much sorer punishment," &c. Heb. x. 29; and that fearful looking-for of judgment and fire, which devoureth the adversaries, Heb. vi. 8. Woe to poor sinners for their mad security! Do they think to find it tolerable to them, which was so heavy to Christ? Nay, the Son of God is cast into a bitter agony, and bloody sweat, and dolorous complaints, under the curse of the law alone; and yet the feeble, foolish creature makes nothing to bear also the curse of the gospel. The good Lord bring these men to their right minds by repentance, lest they buy their wit at too dear a rate.

Sect. XI. And thus I have showed you somewhat of their misery, who miss of this rest prepared for the saints. And now, reader, I demand thy resolution, what use thou wilt make of all this? shall it all be lost to thee; or, wilt thou, as thou art alone, consider of it in good earnest? Thou hast cast by many a warning of God, wilt thou do so by this also? Take heed what thou dost, and how thou so resolvest. God will not always stand warning and threatening. The hand of revenge is lifted up, the blow is coming, and woe to him, whoever he be, on whom it lighteth! Little thinkest thou how near thou standest to thy eternal state, and how near the pit thou art dancing in thy greatest jollity. If thy eyes were but opened, as they will be shortly, thou wouldst see all this that I have spoken before thine eyes, without stirring from the place, I think, in which thou standest. Dost thou throw by the book, and say, It speaks of nothing but hell and damnation? Thus thou usest also to complain of the minister; but wouldst thou not have us tell thee of these things? Should we be guilty of the blood of thy soul, by keeping silent that which God hath charged

[p] It is a wonder that learned, sober divines should deny this; as if either the new law did threaten hell to any but final, impenitent unbelievers, and rebels to Christ, or Christ had ever died for such final rebellion. This is such a doctrine of universal redemption, as a Jesuit would abhor. Read Matth. Martinius and Lud. Crocius's "Theses in the Synod of Dort," on the second article, among suffrages. Is not that of great Camero, an easy, plain truth, Quæst. in Hebr. (operum folio,) p. 413. Certe nemo servatur nisi fœdere observato. Ergo fœdus quo servantur homines, diversum est ab eo quo a nemine observato nemo servatur: i. e. Certainly no man is saved, but by covenant performed or kept; therefore the covenant which men are saved by, is not the same with that which saveth no man, being performed by none. And learned Parker saith: Descendit eo sua in exinanitione Christus, quo primus Adam suo lapsu cecidit, ut nos inde liberaret. Parker de Deseensu, lib. iii. p. 1. And yet I dare not nor will not say so much this way as the learned Parker doth, lib. iv. p. 164, 165; nor will I repeat it.

us upon pain of death to make known? Wouldst thou perish in case and silence, and also have us to perish with thee, rather than to awake thee, or displease thee, by speaking the truth? If thou wilt be guilty of such inhuman cruelty, yet God forbid we should be guilty of such most sottish folly! There are few preachers so simple, but they know that this kind of preaching is the ready way to be hated of their hearers. And the desire of applause, and the favour of men, is so natural to all men, that I think there are few that delight in such a displeasing way. Our temptations to flattery and man-pleasing are too strong for that. But I beseech thee, consider, are these things true or are they not? If they were not true, I would heartily join with thee against any minister that should offer to preach them, and to affright poor people when there is no cause; and I should think such preachers did deserve death or banishment. But if every word of these threatenings be the words of God, and if they be as true as thou livest and readest this, what a wretch art thou that wouldst not hear it, or consider it! Why, what is the matter? If thou be sure that thou art one of the people of God, this doctrine will be a comfort to thee, and not a terror; but if thou be yet carnal and unregenerate, methinks thou shouldst be as afraid to hear of heaven as of hell, except the bare name of heaven or salvation be sufficient. Sure there is no doctrine concerning heaven in all the Scripture that can give thee any comfort, but upon the supposal of thy conversion. What comfort is it to thee, to hear that there is a rest remaining to the people of God except thou be one of them? Nay, what more terrible, than to read of Christ and salvation for others, when thou must be shut out? Therefore, except thou wouldst have a minister to preach a lie, it is all one to thee for any comfort thou hast in it, whether he preach of heaven or hell to thee. His preaching heaven and mercy to thee, can be nothing else but to entreat thee to seek them, and not neglect or reject them; but he can make thee no promise of it, but upon the condition of thy obeying the gospel; and his preaching hell, is but to persuade thee to avoid it. And is not this doctrine fit for thee to hear? Indeed, if thou wert quite past hope of escaping it, then it were in vain to tell thee of hell, but rather let thee take a few merry hours whilst thou mayst; but, as long as thou art alive, there is some hope of thy recovery, and therefore all means must be used to awake thee from thy lethargy. Oh that some Jonas had this point in hand to cry in your ears, "Yet a few days, and the rebellious shall be destroyed;" till you were brought down on your knees in sackcloth and in ashes! Oh if some John Baptist might cry it abroad, "Now is the axe laid to the root of the tree; every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire." Oh that some son of thunder, who could speak as Paul, till the hearers tremble, were now to preach this doctrine to thee! Alas! as terribly as you think I speak, yet is it not the thousandth part of what must be felt; for what heart can now possibly conceive, or what tongue can express, the dolours of those souls that are under the wrath of God? Ah, that ever blind sinners should wilfully bring themselves to such unspeakable misery! You will then be crying to Jesus Christ, Oh, mercy! oh, pity, pity, on a poor soul! Why, I do now in the name of the Lord Jesus cry to thee, Oh, have mercy, have pity, man, upon thine own soul! Shall God pity thee, who wilt not be entreated to pity thyself? If thy horse see but a pit before him, thou canst scarcely force him in. Balaam's ass would not be driven upon the drawn sword; and wilt thou so obstinately cast thyself into hell, when the danger is foretold thee? "Oh, who can stand before the Lord, and who can abide the fierceness of his anger?" Nahum i. 6. Methinks thou shouldst need no more words, but presently cast away thy soul-damning sins, and wholly deliver up thyself to Christ. Resolve on it immediately, man, and let it be done, that I may see thy face in rest among the saints. The Lord persuade thy heart to strike this covenant without any longer delay; but if thou be hardened unto death, and there be no remedy, yet do not say another day, but that thou wast faithfully warned, and that thou hadst a friend that would fain have prevented thy damnation.

CHAPTER V.

THE SECOND USE, REPREHENDING THE GENERAL NEGLECT OF THIS REST, AND EXCITING TO DILIGENCE IN SEEKING IT.

SECT. I. I come now to the second use which I shall raise from this doctrine of rest. If there be so certain and glorious rest for the saints, why is there no more industrious seeking after it in the world? One would think that a man that did but once hear of such unspeakable glory to be obtained, and did believe what he heareth to be true, should be transported with the vehemency of his desires after it, and should almost forget to eat or drink, and should mind and care for nothing else, and should speak of and inquire after nothing else, but how to get assurance and possession of this treasure![a] And yet people who hear it daily, and profess to believe it undoubted, as a fundamental article of their faith, do as little mind it, or care, or labour for it, and as much forget and disregard it, as if they had never heard of any such thing, or did not believe one word that they hear. And as a man that comes into America, and sees the natives regard more a piece of glass, or an old knife, than a piece of gold, may think, Sure these people never heard of the worth of gold, or else they would not exchange it for toys; so a man that looked only upon the lives of most men, and did not hear their contrary confessions, would think either these men never heard of heaven, or else they never heard of its excellency and glory: when, alas! they hear of it till they are weary of hearing; and it is offered to them so commonly, that they are tired with the tidings, and cry out as the Israelites, "Our soul is dried away, because there is nothing but this manna before our eyes," Numb. xi. 6. And as the Indians, who live among the golden mines, do little regard it, but are weary of the daily toil of getting it, when other nations will compass the world, and venture their lives, and sail through storms and waves to get it: so we that live where the gospel groweth, where heaven is urged upon us at our doors, and the manna falls upon our tents, do little regard it, and wish these mines of gold were further from us, that we might not be put upon the toil of getting it, when some that want it would be glad of it upon harder terms. Surely, though the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting, be the last article in their creed, it is not the least, nor therefore put last that it should be last in their desires and endeavours.

SECT. II. I shall apply this reproof more particu-

[a] Otiositas in Dei servitio est vorago, subtilius devorans otiantem. Wickliff. Trialog. lib. iii. c. 16. fol. 71.

larly yet to four several sorts of men. First, To the carnal, worldly-minded man, who is so taken up in seeking the things below, that he hath neither heart nor time to seek this rest.

May I not well say to these men, as Paul to the Galatians in another case, "Foolish sinners! who hath bewitched you?" It is not for nothing that divines use to call the world a witch; for as in witchcraft, men's lives, senses, goods, or cattle are destroyed by a strange, secret, unseen power of the devil, of which a man can give no natural reason; so here, men will destroy their own souls in a way quite against their own knowledge: and as witches will make a man dance naked, or do the most unseemly, unreasonable actions; so the world doth bewitch men into brute beasts, and draw them some degrees beyond madness.[b] Would not any man wonder, that is in his right wit, and hath but the spiritual use of reason, to see what riding and running, what scrambling and catching, there is for a thing of nought, while eternal rest lies by neglected! What contriving and caring, what fighting and bloodshed, to get a step higher in the world than their brethren, while they neglect the kingly dignity of the saints! What insatiable pursuit of fleshly pleasures, whilst they look upon the praises of God, which is the joy of angels, as a tiring burden! What unwearied diligence is there in raising their posterity, in enlarging their possessions, in gathering a little silver or gold; yea, perhaps for a poor living from hand to mouth; while, in the mean time, their judgment is drawing near; and yet how it shall go with them then, or how they shall live eternally, did never put them to the trouble of one hour's sober consideration.[c] What rising early, and sitting up late, and labouring and caring, year after year, to maintain themselves and their children in credit till they die! but what shall follow after, that they never think on; as if it were only their work to provide for their bodies, and only God's work to provide for their souls; whereas, God hath promised more to provide for their bodies without their care, than for their souls, though indeed they must painfully serve his providence for both; and yet these men cry to us, May not a man be saved without so much ado? And may we not say, with more reason, to them, May not a man have a little air or earth, a little credit or wealth, without so much ado? or, at least, May not a man have enough to bring him to his grave without so much ado? How early do they rouse up their servants to their labour! Up, come away to work, we have this to do, and that to do; but how seldom do they call them, Up, you have your souls to look to, you have everlasting life to provide for; up to prayer, to the reading of the Scripture. Alas, how rare is this language! What a gadding up and down the world is here, like a company of ants upon a hillock, taking uncessant pains to gather a treasure, which death, as the next passenger that comes by, will spurn abroad; as if it were such an excellent thing to die in the midst of wealth and honours! or, as if it would be such a comfort to a man at death, or in another world, to think that he was a lord, or a knight, or a gentleman, or a rich man on earth! For my part, whatever these men may profess or say to the contrary, I cannot but strongly suspect that, in heart, they are flat pagans, and do not believe that there is an eternal glory and misery, nor what the Scripture speaks of the way of obtaining it; or, at least, that they do but a little believe it, by the halves, and therefore think to make sure of earth, lest there be no such thing as heaven to be had; and to hold fast that which they have in hand, lest if they let go that, in hope of better in another world, they should play the fools, and lose all. I fear, though the christian faith be in their mouths, lest that this be the faith which is next their hearts; or else the lust of their senses doth overcome and suspend their reason, and prevail with their wills against the last practical conclusion of their understanding. What is the excellency of this earth, that it hath so many suitors and admirers? what hath this world done for its lovers and friends, that it is so eagerly followed, and painfully sought after, while Christ and heaven stand by, and few regard them; or, what will the world do for them for the time to come? The common entrance into it, is through anguish and sorrow. The passage through it, is with continual care, and labour, and grief. The passage out of it, is with the greatest sharpness and sadness of all. What, then, doth cause men so much to follow and affect it? O sinful, unreasonable, bewitched men! will mirth and pleasure stick close to you; will gold and worldly glory prove fast friends to you in the time of your greatest need; will they hear your cries in the day of your calamity? If a man should say to you at the hour of your death, as Elias did to Baal's priests, "Cry aloud," &c. O riches, or honour, now help us! will they either answer,[d] or relieve you; will they go along with you to another world, and bribe the Judge, and bring you off clear, or purchase you a room among the blessed? Why then did so rich a man want a drop of water for his tongue? Or are the sweet morsels of present delight and honour of more worth than the eternal rest; and will they recompense the loss of that enduring treasure; can there be the least hope of any of these? Why, what then is the matter; is it only a room for our dead bodies, that we are so much beholden to the world for? why, this is the last and longest courtesy that we shall receive from it. But we shall have this, whether we serve it or no; and even that homely, dusty dwelling, it will not afford us always neither: it shall possess our dust but till the great resurrection day. Why, how then doth the world deserve so well at men's hands, that they should part with Christ and their salvation to be its followers? Ah, vile, deceitful world! how oft have we heard thy faithfullest servants at last complaining, Oh, the world hath deceived me, and undone me! it flattered me in my prosperity, but now it turns me off at

[b] Sic errant aliqui, et in tantam oblivionem et spiritualem phrenesin devenerunt, ut tanquam mortui a corde, omnem insumunt operam suam circa carnem; sic intendentes tabernaculo suo ac si nunquam putent esse casurum. Veruntamen cadat necesse est, atque id quidem in brevi. Annon seipsos nescire videntur, qui sic dediti sunt carni et sanguini, ac si omnino nihil aliud quam carnem solam se esse reputent. Sic in vano accipientes animas suas, tanquam prorsus ignorent animas se habere? Bern. Serm. 137. Consider, man, thy own nobility; that thou art called to a kingly dignity, a chosen nation, a holy priesthood. For the mystery of christianity is strange from this world. The conspicuous glory of a king, and riches, are earthly things, corruptible, transitory, and perishing; but that kingdom and riches, are things divine, celestial, and glorious, which shall never perish, never be dissolved: for they reign with the heavenly King in the heavenly church; he is the first-begotten from the dead, and they also are the first-begotten.

[c] Macarius Homil. xxvii. Curas et cupiditates nostras, quæ nostrum non opprimunt, sed obruunt gaudium, novis curis et votis tueri et alleviare studemus. Nil aliud facimus quam integrum onus pristinum retinere, et pondera nobis nova imponere. Niremb. de Arte Volunt. lib. ii. c. 7. p. 112.

[d] Yet Christ's saying, that it is as hard for a rich man to be saved, as a camel to go through the eye of a needle, is not to be understood literally, it being a proverb which the Jews used of a thing very difficult. Vide Christoph. Cartwright, in Præfat. ante Annotat. in Gen.

death in my necessity! Ah, if I had as faithfully served Christ as I have served it, he would not thus have cast me off, nor have left me thus comfortless and hopeless in the depth of misery! Thus do the dearest friends and favourites of the world complain at last of its deceit, or rather of their own self-deluding folly, and yet succeeding sinners will take no warning. So this is the first sort of neglecters of heaven which fall under this reproof.

Sect. III. 2. The second sort here to be reproved are, the profane,[e] ungodly, presumptuous multitude, who will not be persuaded to be at so much pains for salvation as to perform the common, outward duties of religion: yea, though they are convinced that these duties are commanded by God, and see it before their eyes in the Scripture, yet will they not be brought to the constant practice of them. If they have the gospel preached in the town where they dwell, it may be they will give the hearing to it one part of the day, and stay at home the other; or if the master come to the congregation, yet part of his family must stay at home. If they want the plain and powerful preaching of the gospel, how few are they in a whole town that will either be at cost or pains to procure a minister, or travel a mile or two to hear abroad, though they will go many miles to the market for provisions for their bodies! The queen of the south shall rise up in judgment with this generation, and condemn them; for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold a greater than Solomon doth, by his messengers, preach to them. The king of Nineveh shall rise up in judgment with them, and shall condemn them, for he repented at the preaching of Jonas; but when Jesus Christ sendeth his ambassadors to these men, they will scarce go to hear them, Matt. xii. 41, 42. And though they know that the Scripture is the very law of God, by which they must live, and by which they must be acquit or condemned in judgment; and that it is the property of every blessed man to delight in this law, and to meditate in it day and night, Psal. i. 2; yet will they not be at the pains to read a chapter once in a day, nor to acquaint their families with this doctrine of salvation. But if they carry a Bible to church, and let it lie by them all the week, this is the most use that they make of it. And though they are commanded to pray without ceasing, 1 Thess. v. 17; and to pray always, and not to wax faint, Luke xviii. 1—3, &c.; to continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving, Col. iv. 2; yet will they not be brought to pray constantly with their families or in secret. Though Daniel would rather be cast to the lions than he would forbear for a while praying openly in his house, where his enemies might hear him three times a day; yet these men will rather venture to be an eternal prey to that roaring lion that seeks to devour them, than they will be at the pains thus to seek their safety.[f] You may hear, in their houses, two oaths for one prayer; or if they do any thing this way, it is usually but a running over a few formal words which they have got on their tongue's end, as if they came on purpose to make a jest of prayer, and to mock God and their own soul. If they be in distress, or want any thing for their bodies, they want no words to make known their mind; but to a physician when they are sick, to a griping landlord when they are oppressed, to a wealthy friend when they are in want, they can lay open their case in sad complaints, and have words at will to press home their requests; yea, every beggar at their door can crave relief, and make it their daily practice; and hold on with importunity, and take no denial: necessity filleth their mouths with words, and teacheth them the most natural, prevailing rhetoric. These beggars will rise up in judgment against them, and condemn them. Doubtless, if they felt but the misery and necessities of their souls, they would be as forward to beg relief of God, and as frequent, as fervent, as importunate, and as constant, till they were past their straits; but, alas! he that only reads in a book that he is miserable, and what his soul stands in need of, but never felt himself miserable, nor felt particularly his several wants, no wonder if he must also fetch his prayer from his book only,[g] or, at furthest, from the strength of his invention or memory. Solomon's request to God was, that what prayer or supplication soever should be made by any man, or by all the people, when every man shall know his own sore, and his own grief, and shall spread forth his hands before God, that God would then hear and forgive, &c. 2 Chron. vi. 29, 30. If these men did thus know and feel every one the sore and the grief of his own soul, we should neither need so much to urge them to prayer, nor to teach them how to perform it, and what to say: whereas now they do invite God to be backward in giving by their backwardness in asking, and to be weary of relieving them by their own being weary of begging, and to be seldom and short in his favours as they are in their prayers, and to give them but common and outward favours, as they put up but common and outside requests. Yea, their cold and heartless prayers do invite God to a flat denial: for among men it is taken for granted, that he who asks but slightly and seldom, cares not much for what he asks. Do not these men judge themselves unworthy of heaven, who think it not worth their more constant and earnest requests? If it be not worth asking for, it is worth nothing; and yet if one should go from house to house, through town and parish, and inquire at every house as you go, whether they do morning and evening call their family together, and earnestly and reverently seek the Lord in prayer, how few would you find that constantly and conscionably practise this duty! If every door were marked where they do not thus call upon the name of God, that his wrath might be poured out upon that family, our towns would be as places overthrown by the plague, the people being dead within, and the mark of judgment on the door without. I fear, where one house would escape, there are ten would be marked out for death; and then they might teach their doors to pray, Lord, have mercy upon

[e] Utinam et nos assequamur sanitatem qui dissoluti sumus ed ad omne bonum opus immobiles; neque habemus hominem, hoc est, humanam rationem, utpote comparati cum jumentis, ut portet nos in piscinam pœnitentiæ lachrymarum in quam qui primus ingreditur, sanatur. Nam qui pœnitentiam differt in tempora non festinat hic pœnitere; qui procrastinat, non assequitur sanitatem. Primus igitur festina ingredi, ne mors te præoccupet. Theophylact, in Joan. c. 5,

[f] Some think that God looks only to their hearts; and the doctrine of justification by faith alone, and not by works, misunderstood, doth make them go on in wickedness, and think they believe, and then all is safe. To these men, Tertullian hath an excellent saying: Sed aiunt quidam, satis Deum habere si corde et animo suspiciatur, licet actu minus fiat, itaque se salvo metu et fide peccare; hoc est, salva castitate, matrimonia violare; salva pietate, parenti venenum temperare; sic ergo et ipsi salva venia in gehennam detrudentur, dum salvo metu peccant. If they can sin, and yet believe, that is, violate matrimony, and keep chastity, &c. then they shall be thrust into hell, and yet be pardoned. Tertul. de Pœniten. c. 5.

[g] Concerning the lawfulness of forms and book-prayers, I make no doubt, but judge as Bishop Hall hath expressed himself piously and moderately in his Susurrium Solil. 73 called The Extremes of Devotion, p. 287.

us! because the people would not pray themselves. But especially if you could see what men do in their secret chambers, how few should you find in a whole town that spend one quarter of an hour, morning and night, in earnest supplication to God for their souls! Oh! how little do these men set by this eternal rest! Thus do they slothfully neglect all endeavours for their own welfare, except some public duty in the congregations, which custom or credit doth engage them to. Persuade them to read good books, and they will not be at so much pains. Persuade them to learn the grounds of religion in some catechism, and they think it a toilsome slavery, fitter for schoolboys, or little children, than for them. Persuade them to sanctify the Lord's day in holy exercise, and to spend it wholly in hearing the word, and repeating it with their families, and prayer and meditation, &c. and to forbear all their worldly thoughts and speeches; and what a tedious life do they take this to be! and how long may you preach to them before they will be brought to it, as if they thought that heaven were not worth all this ado! Christ hath been pleading with England these four-score years and more, by the word of his gospel, for his worship and his sabbaths, and yet the inhabitants are not persuaded; nay, he hath been pleading these six years, by threatenings, and fire, and sword, and yet can prevail but with very few. And though these bloody arguments have been spread abroad, and brought home to people from parish to parish, almost as far as the word hath gone, so that there is scarce a parish in many counties where blood hath not been shed, and the bodies of the slain have not been left, yet multitudes in England are no more persuaded than they were the first day of their warning; and they have not heard the voice of the rod, which hath cried up and down their streets: Yet, O England, will ye not sanctify my sabbaths, nor call upon my name, nor regard my word, nor turn from your worldliness and wickedness![h] God hath given them a lash and a reproof, a wound and warning; he hath, as it were, stood in their blood, with the sword in his hand, and among the heaps of the slain hath he pleaded with the living, and said, What say you? Will you yet worship me, and fear me, and take me for your Lord? And yet they will not: alas! yet to this day England will not! Let me here write it, and leave it upon record, that God may be justified, and England may be ashamed; and posterity may know, if God do spare us, how ill we deserved it; or, if he yet destroy us, how wilfully we procured it. And if they that pass by shall ask, Why has God done thus to a flourishing and prosperous land? you may give them this true though doleful answer, They would not hear, they would not regard. He smote them down, he wounded them, he hewed them as wood, and then he beseeched the remainder to consider and return, but they never would do it. They were weary of his ways; they polluted his sabbaths; they cast his word and worship out of their families; they would not be at the pains to learn and obey his will; nay, they abhorred his ministers, and servants, and holy paths, and all this to the last breath. When he had slain five thousand or eight thousand at a fight, the rest did no more reform, than if they had never heard of it. Nay, such a spirit of slumber has fallen upon them, that if God should proceed, and kill them all save one man, and ask that one man, Wilt thou yet seek me with all thy heart? he would rather slight it. Lord, have mercy upon us! What is done with men's understanding and sense? Have they renounced reason as well as faith? Are they dead naturally as well as spiritually? Can they not hear nor feel, though they cannot believe? That sad judgment is fallen upon them, mentioned in Isaiah, xlii. 24, 25, "Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel" (England) "to the robbers? Did not the Lord, he against whom we have sinned? For they would not walk in his ways, neither were they obedient to his laws. Therefore he hath poured upon them the fury of his anger, and the strength of battle, and it hath set them on fire round about, yet they knew it not; it burned them, yet they laid it not to heart." Yea, this much more let us leave upon record against England: they have been so far from reforming, and taking up the worship of God with delight, after all this, that multitudes have contrarily[i] abhorred it at the very heart; and to root out the sincere worshippers and worship of God, is their continued endeavour: and still, they that succeed them do the like. Lord, how hast thou deserved so much ill at these men's hands? What harm hath praying, and reading, and preaching painfully, and sanctifying the sabbath, and fearing to offend, done to England? Have they suffered for these, or for their enmity to these? What evil do these wretches discern in the everlasting kingdom, that they do not only refuse to labour for it, but do detest and resist the holy way that leads to it? It is well for them that they live in gospel times, when the patience of God doth wait on sinners; and not in those severe days, when fire from heaven destroyed the captains and their companies, that were commanded by the king to bring but one prophet before him; or, when the lions destroyed forty-two children, for calling a prophet of God "bald-head:" or rather, it had been better for these men to have lived in those times, that though their temporal judgments had been greater, yet their eternal plagues might have been the less. Yet this much more let me leave upon record to the shame of many, that all this is not merely through idleness, because they will not be at the pains to serve God, but it is out of a bitter enmity to his word and ways; for they will be at more pains than this in any way that is evil,[k] or in any worship truly so called, of man's devising. They are as zealous for these, as if eternal life consisted in them: and where God forbids them, there they are as forward as if they could never do enough; and where God commands them, they are as backward to it, yea, as much against it, as if they were the commands of the devil himself. The Lord grant that this hardened, wilful, malicious people, fall not under that heavy doom, "But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me," Luke xix. 27.

[h] How many of those twelve deplorable abuses, which are the pillars of Satan's kingdom, which (supposed) Cyprian mentioneth, are not common in England? 1. A man of knowledge without works. 2. An old man without religious devotion. 3. A young man without obedience. 4. A rich man without alms. 5. A woman without chastity. 6. A gentleman without virtue. 7. A christian contentious. 8. A beggar proud. 9. A bishop negligent. 10. A congregation without discipline. 11. A nation without law. 12. A king unjust. Read Jer. ix. 12—14; Lib. de xii. Abusib. vulgo, etsi non recte, Cypriano ascriptum.

[i] Pervicaces et obstinatos vocamus nos, non qui ab infirmitate carnis superati in peccatum aliquod prolapsi sunt; sed qui sibi placent in peccatis, in iisque toti volutantur; quos non pudor, non metus, non objurgatio, non ipsæ denique Dei comminationes, ipsa Dei judicia possunt a peccando revocare. Sadeel. in Psalm xxxii. p. 55. 2 Kings. i; ii. 23, 24.

[k] Deus non alienis assertionibus, sed suis æstimandus est vocibus. Ambros. de Pœnit. lib. i. c. 4. Deus diserte docet, ea tantum in Deo colendo adhibenda esse quæ ipse præcipit. Summe displicet omnis ἐθελοθρησκεία et simulata religio, et cultus ex inventione humana profectus. Doct. Sutlive advers. Bellarm. de Monast. c. 25. p. 130.

Sect. IV. 3. The third sort that fall under this reproof,[l] are those self-cozening, formal, lazy professors of religion, who will be brought to any outward duty, and take up the easier part of christianity; but to the inward work, and more difficult part, they will never be persuaded. They will preach, or hear, or read, or talk of heaven, or pray customarily and constantly in their families, and take part with the persons and causes that are good, and desire to be esteemed among the godly, but you can never bring them to the more spiritual and difficult duties, as to be constant and fervent in secret prayer, to be conscionable in the duty of self-examination, to be constant in that excellent duty of meditation, to be heavenly-minded, to watch constantly over his heart, words, and ways, to deny his bodily senses their delights, to mortify the flesh, and not make provision for it to fulfil its lusts, to love and heartily forgive an enemy, to prefer his brethren heartily before himself, and to think meanly of his own gifts and worth, and to take it well of others that think so too, and to love them that have low thoughts of him as well as those that have high, to bear easily the injuries or undervaluing words of others against him; to lay all that he hath at the feet of Christ, and to prefer his service and favour before all; to prepare to die, and willingly to leave all to come to Christ, &c. The outside hypocrites will never be persuaded to any of these. Above all other, two notable sorts there are of these hypocrites. First, The superficial, opinionative hypocrite. Secondly, The worldly hypocrite. First, The former entertaineth the doctrine of the gospel with joy, (Matt. xiii. 29,) but it is only into the surface of his soul, he never gives the seed any depth of earth. He changeth his opinion, and he thereupon engageth for religion as the right way, and sides with it as a party in a faction, but it never melted and new-moulded his heart, nor set up Christ there in full power and authority; but as his religion lies most in his opinion, so he usually runs from opinion to opinion, and is carried up and down with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive; and, as a child, is tossed to and fro, Eph. iv. 14: for as his religion is but opinion, so is his study, and conference, and chief business all about opinion. He is usually an ignorant, proud,[m] bold, irreverent inquirer and babbler about controversies, rather than a humble embracer of the known truth, with love and subjection: you may conjecture by his bold and forward tongue, and groundless conceitedness in his own opinions, and slighting of the judgments and persons of others, and seldom talking of the great things of Christ with seriousness and humility, that his religion dwelleth in the brain, and not in his heart: where the wind of temptation assaults him, he easily yieldeth, and it carrieth him away as a feather, because his heart is empty, and not balanced and established with Christ and grace. If the temptation of the times do assault men's understandings, and the sign be in the head, though the little religion that he hath lies there, yet a hundred to one but he turneth heretic, or catcheth the vertigo of some lesser errors, according to the nature and strength of the seducement. If the wind do better serve for a vicious conversation, a hundred to one but he turns a purveyor for the flesh, and then he can be a tippler, and yet religious; a gamester, a wanton, a neglecter of duties, and yet religious. If this man's judgment lead him in the ceremonious way,[n] then doth he employ his chiefest zeal for ceremonies, as if his religion lay in them. If his judgment be against ceremonies,[o] then his strongest zeal is employed against them, studying, talking, disputing against them, censuring the users of them, and perhaps fall into a contrary extreme, placing his chief religion in anabaptism, church combinations, and forms of polity, &c. For not having his soul taken up with the essentials of christianity, he hath only the mint and cummin, the smaller matters of the law, to lay out his zeal upon. You shall never hear in private conference any humble and hearty bewailings of his soul's imperfections, or any heart-bleeding acknowledgments of his unkindnesses to Christ, of any pantings and longings after him, from this man; but that he is of such a judgment, or such a religion, or party, or society, or a member of such a church. Hence doth he gather his greatest comforts; but the inward and spiritual labours of a christian, he will not be brought to.

Secondly: The like may be said of the worldly hypocrite, who choketh the doctrine of the gospel with the thorns of worldly cares and desires.[p] His judgment is convinced that he must be religious, he cannot be saved; and therefore he reads, and hears, and prays, and forsakes his former company and courses: but because his belief of the gospel doctrine is but wavering and shallow, he resolves to keep his hold of present things, lest the promise of rest should fail him; and yet to be religious, that so he may have heaven, when he can keep the world no longer, thinking it wisdom to have two strings to his bow, lest one should break. This man's judgment may say, God is the chief Good, but his heart and affections never said so, but look upon God as a kind of strange and disproportionate happiness, to be tolerated rather than the flames of hell, but not desired before the felicity on earth. In a word, the world hath more of his affections than God, and therefore is his god, and his

[l] It is one thing to discourse of bread and of the table, and another thing to take and eat the sweetness of the bread, that all the members may be strengthened by it. It is one thing to dispute by words of the most pleasant drink, and another to go and take it from the fountain, and to be satisfied with its delightful taste. It is one thing to discourse of war, and of stout champions and warriors, and another for a man to go into the midst of the battle, and to join hands with the enemy, to charge through and through, to take and give, to go away with the victory. So it is also in spirituals. It is one thing to explain sayings with a certain knowledge and understanding, and it is another thing in substance, and in deed, and in certainty of faith, and in the mind, and in the inner man to possess the treasure, the grace, the taste, and the efficacy of the Holy Ghost. Blessed Macarius, in Homil. 27. p. 367.

[m] Confidentia astra petimus, ruimus in præcipitia. Alber. Gent. de Jur. Interpret. lib. iv.

[n] Siquis volet facere voluntatem Dei cognoscet de voluntate; at cultus electitius non est voluntas Dei. Et timoris Dei fructus est, non cultum aliquem eligere quem Deo deferas, sed a Dei potius oraculis haurire quem ipsi tribuas: juxta illud prophetæ, Isa. l. 10, &c. Dr. Twisse contr. Corvinum, p. 367. a. Cruces etiam nec colimus nec optamus. Vos plane qui ligneos Deos consecratis, cruces ligneas ut Deorum vestrorum partes fortasse adornatis; nam et signa ipsa et cantebra, et vexilla castrorum, quid aliud quam inauratæ cruces sunt, et ornatæ? Minut. Fælix. Octav. p. (ut Arnob. edit. per Elmenhorst.) 389; where read further what he saith of the cross.

[o] Facile persuadeas senem ut sellam deserat, si baculum prius quo niti possit, in manum dederis; qui te alioquin nunquam auditurus est, sed insidiatorem potius judicaturus, ut qui cupias pronum ad silicem cranium frangere. Sic mentes humanæ ante omnia sunt ad infallibilem Dei cognitionem adducendæ, quam ubi attigerint, jam facile demittent fallacia, &c. Zuingl. de Vera et Falsa Relig. p. 406.

[p] Qui innocentiam colit, Domino supplicat; qui justitiam, Deo libat; qui fraudibus abstinet, propitiat Deum; qui hominem periculo surripit, opimam victimam cædit. Hæc nostra sacrificia, hæc Deo sacra sunt; sic apud nos religiosior est ille qui justior. Minut. Fælix. Octav. p. (mihi) 392.

covetousness idolatry. This he might easily know and feel if he would judge impartially, and were but faithful to himself. And though this man do not gad after opinions and novelties in his religion, as the former, yet will he set his sails to the wind of worldly advantage, and be of that opinion which will best serve his turn. And as a man whose spirits are seized on by some pestilential malignity, is feeble and faint and heartless in all that he does; so this man's spirits being possessed by the plague of this malignant, worldly disposition, oh how faint is he in secret prayer! oh how superficial in examination and meditation! how feeble in heart-watchings, and humbling, mortifying endeavours! how nothing at all in loving and walking with God, rejoicing in him, or desiring after him! So that both these and many other sorts of lazy [q] hypocrites there are, who, though they will trudge on with you in the easy outside of religion, yet will never be at the pains of inward and spiritual duties.

Sect. V. 4. And even the godly themselves deserve this reproof, for being too lazy seekers of their everlasting rest. Alas! what a disproportion is there betwixt our light and our heat, our professions and prosecution! Who makes that haste, as if it were for heaven? How still we stand! How idly we work! How we talk, and jest, and trifle away our time! How deceitfully we do the work of God! How we hear as if we heard not; and pray as if we prayed not; and confer, and examine, and meditate, and reprove sin, as if we did it not; and use the ordinances, as if we used them not; and enjoy Christ, as if we enjoyed him not; as if we had learned to use the things of heaven as the apostle teacheth us to use the world! 1 Cor. vii. 29—31. Who would think, that stood by us and heard us pray in private or public, that we were praying for no less than everlasting glory? Should heaven be sought no more earnestly than thus? Methinks we are none of us all in good sadness for our souls. We do but dally with the work of God, and play with Christ: as children, we play with our meat when we should eat it, and we play with our clothes, and look upon them, when we should put them on, and wear them: we hang upon ordinances from day to day,[r] but we stir not ourselves to seek the Lord. I see a great many very constant in hearing and praying, and give us some hopes that their hearts are honest, but they do not hear and pray as if it were for their lives. Oh what a frozen stupidity hath benumbed us! The judgment of Pharaoh is amongst us; we are turned into stones and rocks, that can neither feel nor stir. The plague of Lot's wife is upon us, as if we were changed into lifeless and immovable pillars: we are dying, and we know it, and yet we stir not; we are at the door of eternal happiness or misery, and yet we perceive it not; death knocks, and we hear it not; Christ calls and knocks, and we hear it not: God cries to us, "To-day if you will hear my voice, harden not your hearts. Work while it is day, for the night cometh when none shall work." Now ply your business, now labour for your lives, now lay out all your strength and time, now do it, now or never; and yet we stir no more than if we were half asleep. What haste doth death and judgment make! How fast do they come on! They are almost at us, and yet what little haste make we! What haste makes the sword to devour, from one part of the land to another! what haste doth plague and famine make! and all because we will not make haste. The spur of God is in our side; we bleed, we groan, and yet we do not mend our pace: the rod is on our backs, it speaks to the quick; our lashes are heard through the christian world, and yet we stir no faster than before. Lord, what a senseless, sottish, earthly, hellish thing is a hard heart! that we will not go roundly and cheerfully toward heaven without all this ado; no, nor with it neither. Where is the man that is serious in his christianity? Methinks men do every where make but a trifle of their eternal state. They look after it but a little upon the bye; they do not make it the task and business of their lives. To be plain with you, I think nothing undoes men so much as complimenting and jesting in religion. Oh, if I were not sick myself of the same disease, with what tears should I mix this ink; and with what groans should I express these sad complaints; and with what heart's grief should I mourn over this universal deadness! Do the magistrates among us seriously perform their portion of the work?[s] Are they zealous for God; do they build up his house; and are they tender of his honour? do they second the word; and encourage the godly; and relieve the oppressed; and compassionate the distressed; and let fly at the face of sin and sinners, as being the disturbers of our peace, and the only cause of all our miseries? Do they study how to do the utmost that they can for God; to improve their power, and parts, and wealth, and honour, and all their interests, for the greatest advantage to the kingdom of Christ, as men that must shortly give an account of their stewardship? Or do they build their own houses, and seek their advancements, and stand upon, and contest for, their own honours; and do no more for Christ than needs they must, or than lies in their

[q] Est autem tepiditas, parvus amor boni, amore Dei postposito; et est prima radix accidiæ, vel convertibilis cum eadem. Ex ista autem nascuntur species aliæ consequentes, ut creatura peccabilis inordinate afficitur creaturæ. Sic accidus quiescit in amore indebito creaturæ. Unde talis tepiditas cum sit, propinquo hypocrisi vomitum provocat spiritualem. Sicut enim sunt exhalationes calidæ commixtæ cum frigido aqueo in aqua tepida quæ provocant ad vomitum; sic sunt in hypocrisi quædam operationes bonæ de genere, commixta cum peccato hypocrisis. Omnis ergo accidus peccat in hypocrisi cum false simulat sanctitatem. Et ista tepiditate infecitur totus mundus. Wickliffe Trialog. lib. iii. c. 16. fol. 70.

[r] Read Mr. Whitfield's excellent sermon on this.

[s] It is a frivolous dream to think that a judge or lawyer hath one conscience as a judge, and another as a christian; for he hath but one soul, &c. And how can that seem just, according to law, which appeareth to a man's conscience to be unjust? Fulbeck's Direction, p. 33. Rara virtus est inter principes, non timori esse recte factis; h. e. non obsistere veritati, et his quæ se ad evangelii veritatem et normam componunt non odiosius imminere; et contra familiare est principibus quibusdam, pessimos quosque dignitatibus, honoribusque admovere, non alia causa quam ut inmanissime tractent veridicos. Zuing. de. Ver. et Fals. Relig. de Scandalo, p. 392. O beatum populum in quo uno ore et uno animo utraque administratio (ecclesiastica et civilis) ad sanctam communionem cum civili societate continuandam et augendam conspiraverit. Non minuit illam hæc administratio. Sed altera alteram stantem confirmat, labantem statuminat, collapsam erigit. Si homines quibus commissa est, cogitabunt serio, et volunt in Sparta sua quam nacti fuerint colenda incumbere. Quo magis admiror audaciam eorum hominum qui de duabus istis administrationibus perinde judicant, ac si ἄσπονδοι inter se essent infestissimæ et prorsus ἀσύσταται; et de hac sententia sua tam pertinaciter contendunt quam si (quod absit) alteram ab altera eversam cuperent, &c. Junius, Eccles. c. 5. Oper. tom. I. p. 1975. Exeat aula, qui vult esse pius; virtus et summa potestas, non eocunt. Lucan. lib. viii. A sad saying. See the Life of Cronenburg in vitis German. Medicor. per Melch. Adam. Inter leges ipsas delinquitur, inter jura peccatur. Innocentia nec illic ubi defenditur, reservatur. Sævit invicem discordantium rabies, et inter togas pace rupta forum litibus mugit insanum, &c. Quis inter hæc subveniet? Patronus? Sed prævaricatur et deripit judex? Sed sententiam vendit. Qui sedet crimina vindicaturus, admittit? Et ut reus innocens pereat, fit nocens judex. Cypr. Epist. I. ad Donatum.

way, or than is put by others into their hands, or than stands with the pleasing of their friends, or with their worldly interest? Which of these two courses do they take? And how thin are those ministers that are serious in their work! Nay, how mightily do the very best fail in this above all things! Do we cry out of men's disobedience to the gospel,[t] in the evidence and power of the Spirit, and deal with sin as that which is the fire in our towns and houses, and by force pull men out of this fire? Do we persuade our people, as those that know the terrors of the Lord should do? Do we press Christ, and regeneration, and faith, and holiness, as men that believe indeed that without these they shall never have life?[u] Do our bowels yearn over the ignorant, and the careless, and the obstinate multitude, and men that believe their own doctrine? That our dear people must be eternally damned, if they be not timely recovered? When we look them in the faces, do our hearts melt over them, lest we should never see their faces in rest? Do we, as Paul, tell them, weeping, of their fleshly and earthly disposition, Phil. iii. 18, 19; and teach them publicly,[x] and from house to house, night and day with tears; Acts x. 20, 21; and do we entreat them, as if it were indeed for their lives and salvation; that when we speak of the joys and miseries of another world, our people may see us affected accordingly, and perceive that we do indeed mean as we speak? Or rather do we not study words, and neat expressions, that we may approve ourselves able men in the judgment of critical hearers; and speak so formally and heartlessly of eternity, that our people can scarcely think that we believe ourselves; or put our tongues into some affected pace, and our language into some forced oratorical strain, as if a minister's business were of no more weight, but to tell them a smooth tale of an hour long, and so look no more after them till the next sermon? Seldom do we fit our sermons, either for matter or manner, to the great end, our people's salvation; but we sacrifice our studies to our own credit, or our people's content, or some such base, inferior end. Carnal discretion doth control our fervency; it maketh our sermons like beautiful pictures, which have much pains and cost bestowed upon them to make them comely and desirable to the eye; but life, or heat, or motion, there is none. Surely, as such a conversation is a hypocritical conversation, so such a sermon is as truly a hypocritical sermon. Oh the formal, frozen, lifeless sermons which we daily hear preached upon the most weighty, piercing subjects in the world! How gently do we handle those sins which will handle so cruelly our people's souls; and how tenderly do we deal with their careless hearts, not speaking to them as to men that must be wakened or damned! We tell them of heaven and hell in such a sleepy tone, and flighty way, as if we were but acting a part in a play; so that we usually preach our people asleep with those subjects, which one would think should rather endanger the driving of some beside themselves, if they were faithfully delivered. Not that I commend or excuse that real indiscretion, and unseemly language, and nauseous repetitions, and ridiculous gestures, whereby many do disgrace the word of God, and bring his ordinances into contempt with the people; nor think it fit that he should be an ambassador from God on so weighty a business, that is not able to speak sense or reason. But, in a word, our want of seriousness about the things of heaven, doth charm the souls of men into formality, and hath brought them to this customary careless hearing, which undoes them. The Lord pardon the great sin of the ministry in this thing, and, in particular, my own!

And are the people any more serious than magistrates and ministers? How can it be expected? Reader, look but to thyself, and resolve the question. Ask conscience, and suffer it to tell thee truly. Hast thou set thine eternal rest before thine eyes, as the great business which thou hast to do in this world? Hast thou studied and cared, watched and laboured, and laid about thee with all thy might, lest any should take thy crown from thee?[y] Hast thou made haste, lest thou shouldst come too late, and die before the work be done? Hath thy heart been set upon it, and thy desires and thoughts run out this way? Hast thou pressed on through crowds of opposition towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, still reaching forth unto those things which are before? Mark vi. 21; Phil. iii. 13, 14. When you have set your hand to the work of God, have you done it with all your might? Eccles. ix. 10. Can conscience witness your secret cries, and groans, and tears? Can your families witness that you have taught them the fear of the Lord, and warned them all with earnestness and unweariedness to remember God and their souls, and to provide for everlasting life? or that you have done but as much for them, as that damned glutton would have had Lazarus do for his brethren on earth, to warn them that they come not to that place of torment? Can your ministers witness that they have heard you cry out, What shall we do to be saved? and that you have followed them with complaints against your corruptions, and with earnest inquiries after the Lord? Can your neighbours about you witness, that you are still learning of them that are able to instruct you? and that you plainly and roundly reprove the ungodly, and take pains for the saving of your brethren's souls? Let all these witnesses judge this day between God and you, whether you are in good

[t] Isa. lviii. 1; Jude 23; 2 Cor. v. 11.

[u] Matt. ix. 36. Negligentes non sunt negligendi. Just. Martyr. ad Zenam.

[x] Longe graviori debito tenentur astricti, qui pro multis animabus redituri sunt rationem. Quid ego infelix, quo me vertam, si tantum thesaurum, si pretiosum depositum illud quod sibi Christus sanguine suo pretiosius judicavit, contigerit negligentius custodire? Si stillantem de cruce Domini sanguinem collegissem, essetque repositus penes me, in vase vitreo, quod et portari sæpius oporteret, quid animi habiturus essem in discrimine tanto? Et certe id servandum accepi pro quo mercator non insipiens, ipsa utique sapientia, sanguinem suum dedit. Accedit sane ad solicitudinis cumulum quod cum meam et proximi conscientiam servare necesse sit, neutra mihi satis est nota; utraque abyssus, utraque mihi nox est, at exigitur a me custodia utriusque. Bern. Serm. 3. de Tempore. I cannot better express my mind to my brethren than in Seneca's words: Non jejuna esse et arida volo, quæ de rebus tam magnis dicentur. Neque enim philos. (theologia) ingenio renunciat. Multum tamen operæ impendi verbis non oportet. Hæc sit propositi nostri summa; quod sentimus loquamur, quod loquimur sentiamus. Concordet sermo cum vita, ille promissum suum implevit, qui et cum videas illum, et cum audias, idem est. Videbimus qualis sit, quantus sit, unus sit. Non delectent verba nostra, sed prosint, &c. Non quærit æger medicum eloquentem, sed sanantem. Sed si ita competit, ut idem ille qui sanare potest, compte de his quæ facienda sunt disserat, boni consulet; non tamen erit quare gratuletur sibi quod inciderit in medicum etiam disertum. Hoc enim tale est, quale si peritus gubernator etiam formosus est. Quid aures meas scalpis? Quid oblectas? Aliud agitur; urendus, secandus, abstinendus sum. Ad hæc adhibitus es; curare debes morbum veterem, gravem, publicum. Tantum negotii habes quantum in pestilentia medicus. Circa verba occupatus es? Senec. Epist. 75. Vide reliqua.

[y] Nam et hoc nobis ut non olim per *visionem* probatum sciatis, quod dormitemus in precibus, nec vigilanter oremus excutiamus itaque et abrumpamus somni vincula, et instanter et vigilanter, oremus. Col. iv. 2; Luke vi. 12. Cyprian. Epist. 8. p. 23.

earnest about the affairs of eternal rest. But if yet you cannot discern your neglects, look but to yourselves, within you, to the work you have done: you can tell by his work, whether your servant hath loitered, though you did not see him; so you may by yourselves. Is your love to Christ, your faith, your zeal, and other graces, strong or weak? What are your joys; what is your assurance? Is all right, and strong, and in order within you? Are you ready to die, if this should be the day? Do the souls among whom you have conversed, bless you? Why, judge by this, and it will quickly appear whether you have been labourers or loiterers.

O blessed rest, how unworthily art thou neglected! O glorious kingdom, how art thou undervalued! Little know the careless sons of men, what a state they set so light by! If they once knew it, they would sure be of another mind.

CHAPTER VI.

AN EXHORTATION TO SERIOUSNESS IN SEEKING REST.

I hope, reader, by this time thou art somewhat sensible, what a desperate thing it is to trifle about our eternal rest; and how deeply thou hast been guilty of this thyself. And I hope, also, that thou darest not now suffer this conviction to die; but art resolved to be another man for the time to come: what sayest thou, is this thy resolution? If thou wert sick of some desperate disease, and the physician should tell thee, If you will observe but one thing, I doubt not to cure you, wouldst thou not observe it? Why, if thou wilt observe but this one thing for thy soul, I make no doubt of thy salvation: if thou wilt now but shake off thy sloth, and put to all thy strength, and ply the work of God unweariedly, and be a downright christian; I know not what can hinder thy happiness. As far as thou art gone from God, if thou wouldst but now return and seek him with all thy heart, no doubt but thou shalt find him. As unkindly as thou hast dealt with Jesus Christ, if thou didst but feel thyself sick and dead, and seek him heartily, and apply thyself in good earnest to the obedience of his laws, thy salvation were as sure as if thou hadst it already; but as full as the satisfaction of Christ is, as free as the promise is, as large as the mercy of God is, yet if thou do but look on these, and talk of them, when thou shouldst greedily entertain them, thou wilt be never the better for them; and if thou loiter when thou shouldst labour, thou wilt lose the crown.[a] Oh, fall to work then speedily and seriously, and bless God that thou hast yet time to do it; and though that which is past cannot be recalled, yet redeem the time now by doubling thy diligence. And because thou shalt see I urge thee not without cause, I will here adjoin a multitude of considerations to move thee; yet do I not here desire thee to take them by number, but by weight: their intent and use is, to drive thee from delaying and from loitering in seeking rest; and to all men do I propound them, both godly and ungodly: whoever thou art, therefore, I entreat thee to rouse up thy spirit, and read them deliberately, and give me a little while thy attention, as to a message from God; and, as Moses said to the people, "Set thy heart to all the words that I testify to thee this day; for it is not a vain thing, but it is for thy life," Deut. xxxii. 46. Weigh what I here write with the judgment of a man; and if I speak not reason, throw it back in my face; but if I do, see thou entertain and obey it accordingly: and the Lord open thy heart, and fasten his counsel effectually upon thee.

Sect. II. 1. Consider, Our affections and actions should be somewhat answerable to the greatness of the ends to which they are intended.[b] Now the ends of a christian's desires and endeavours are so great, that no human understanding on earth can comprehend them; whether you respect their proper excellency, their exceeding importance, or their absolute necessity.

These ends are, the glorifying of God, the salvation of our own and other men's souls, in our escaping the torments of hell, and possessing the glory of heaven. And can a man be too much affected with things of such moment? Can he desire them too earnestly, or love them too violently, or labour for them too diligently? When we know that if our prayers prevail not, and our labour succeeds not, we are undone for ever, I think it concerns us to seek and labour to the purpose. When it is put to the question, Whether we shall live for ever in heaven or in hell?[c] and the question must be resolved upon our obeying the gospel or our disobeying it, upon the painfulness or the slothfulness of our present endeavours; I think it is time for us to bestir ourselves, and to leave our trifling and complimenting with God.

Sect. III. 2. Consider, Our diligence should be somewhat answerable to the greatness of the work which we have to do, as well as to the ends of it.[d] Now the works of a christian here, are very many, and very great: the soul must be renewed; many and great corruptions must be mortified; custom, and temptations, and worldly interests, must be conquered; flesh must be mastered; self must be denied; life, and friends, and credit, and all must be slighted; conscience must be upon good grounds quieted; assurance of pardon and salvation must be attained. And though it is God that must give us these, and that freely, without our own merit; yet will he not give them so freely, as without our earnest seeking and labour. Besides, there is a deal of knowledge to be got, for the guiding ourselves, for the defending of the truth, for the direction of others, and a deal of skill for the right managing of our parts: many ordinances are to be used, and duties performed, ordinary and extraordinary; every age, and year, and day, doth require fresh succession of

[a] Oh, how then should every one of us believe, and strive, and lay out our utmost pains in all godly conversation, and hold on in much hope, and suffering, and patience; that at last we may be worthy or meet to obtain that heavenly virtue and glory of the Holy Ghost in the inward soul; that so when these bodies are dissolved, we may have that which may cover and quicken us! Macarius, Homil. 5.

[b] In quo quemque invenerit suus novissimus dies in hoc eum comprehendet mundi novissimus dies. Quoniam qualis in die isto quisque moritur, talis in die illo judicabitur. Aug. Epist. 80. tom. 1. Qualis exieris ex hac vita, talis redderis illa vita. Aug. in Psal. xxxvi. referente. Jac. Laurentio in Jacob. v. 8. Ubi hic purgatorium?

[c] Si quis diligenter perpendat quæ et qualis sit causa propter quam pugnandum est, is certe intelliget, minime dormiendum esse: sed sedulo, cordate, fortiter pugnandum. De summa rerum agitur. Pro aris et focis; pro gloria Dei Patris nostri tuenda; et pro salute nostra æterna defendenda. Zanch. tom. 3. lib. iv. c. 21. p. 214.

[d] Non cum vacaveris, philosophandum est: omnia alia negligenda, ut huic assideamus, cui nullum tempus satis magnum est; etiamsi a pueritia ad longissimos humani ævi terminos, vita protenditur. Non multum refert utrum omittas, an intermittas. Resistendum est occupationibus, nec explicandæ, sed submovendæ sunt. Senec. Epist. 72.

duty; every place we come in, every person that we have to deal with, every change of our condition, doth still require the renewing of our labour, and bringeth duty along with it; wives, children, servants, neighbours, friends, enemies, all of them call for duty from us; and all this of great importance too; so that for the most of it, if we miscarry in it, it would prove our undoing.

Judge, then, yourselves, whether men that have so much business lying upon their hands, should not bestir them; and whether it be their wisdom either to delay, or to loiter?

Sect. IV. 3. Consider, Our diligence should be somewhat quickened, because of the shortness and uncertainty of the time allotted us for the performing of all this work, and the many and great impediments which we meet with. Yet a few days, and we shall be here no more. Time passeth on: many hundred diseases are ready to assault us: we that now are preaching, and hearing, and talking, and walking, must very shortly be carried on men's shoulders, and laid in the dust, and there left to the worms in darkness and corruption; we are almost there already; it is but a few days, or months, or years, and what is that when once they are past? We know not whether we shall have another sermon, or sabbath, or hour. How then should those men bestir them for their everlasting rest, who know they have so short a space for so great a work! Besides, every step in the way hath its difficulties; the gate is strait, and the way narrow; the righteous themselves are scarcely saved; scandals and discouragements will be still cast before us: and can all these be overcome by slothful endeavours?

Sect. V. 4. Moreover, our diligence should be somewhat answerable to the diligence of our enemies in seeking our destruction.[e] For if we sit still while they are plotting and labouring; or if we be lazy in our defence, while they are diligent in assaulting us; you may easily conceive how we are likely to speed. How diligent is Satan in all kinds of temptations! therefore, "Be sober and vigilant, because your adversary the devil as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour; whom resist stedfast in the faith," 1 Pet. v. 8. How diligent are the ministers of Satan! false teachers, scorners at godliness, malicious persecutors, all unwearied; and our inward corruption the most busy and diligent of all; whatever we are about, it is still resisting us; depraving our duties, perverting our thoughts, dulling our affections to good, exciting them to evil; and will a feeble resistance then serve our turn? Should not we be more active for our own preservation, than our enemies for our ruin?

Sect. VI. 5. Our affections and endeavours should bear some proportion to the talents which we have received, and means which we have enjoyed.[f] It may well be expected that a horseman shall go faster than a footman; and he that hath a swift horse, faster than he that hath a slow one: more work will be expected from a sound man, than from the sick; and from a man at age, than from a child: and to whom men commit much, from them they will expect the more, Luke xii. 48. Now the talents which we have received are many and great; the means which we have enjoyed are very much, and very precious. What people breathing on earth, have had plainer instructions, or more forcible persuasions, or constant admonitions, in season and out of season? sermons, till we have been weary of them; and sabbaths, till we profaned them: excellent books in such plenty, that we knew not which to read; but loathing them through abundance, have thrown by all. What people have had God so near them, as we have had; or have seen Christ, as it were, crucified before their eyes, as we have done? What people have had heaven and hell, as it were, opened unto them, as we? scarce a day wherein we have not had some spur to put us on. What speed then should such a people make for heaven; and how should they fly that are thus winged; and how swiftly should they sail that have wind and tide to help them! Believe it, brethren, God looks for more from England, than from most nations in the world; and for more from you that enjoy these helps, than from the dark, untaught congregations of the land. A small measure of grace beseems not such a people; nor will an ordinary diligence in the work of God excuse them.

Sect. VII. 6. The vigour of our affections and actions should be somewhat answerable to the great cost bestowed upon us, and to the deep engaging mercies which we have received from God. Surely we owe more service to our master from whom we have our maintenance, than we do to a stranger to whom we were never beholden. Oh the cost that God hath been at for our sakes! the riches of sea and land, of heaven and earth, hath he poured out unto us! All our lives have been filled up with mercies: we cannot look back upon one hour of it, or one passage in it, but we may behold mercy. We feed upon mercy, we wear mercy on our backs, we tread upon mercy; mercy within us, common and special; mercy without us, for this life, and for that to come. Oh the rare deliverances that we have partaken of, both national and personal! How oft, how seasonably, how fully have our prayers been heard, and our fears removed! what large catalogues of particular mercies can every christian draw forth and rehearse! To offer to number them, would be an endless task, as to number the stars, or the sands of the shore. If there be any difference betwixt hell, where we should have been, and earth, where we now are, yea, or heaven, which is offered us, then certainly we have received mercy. Yea, if the blood of the Son of God be mercy, then are we engaged to God by mercy; for so much did it cost him to recover us to himself. And should a people of such deep engagements be lazy in their returns? shall God think nothing too much nor too good for us; and shall we think all too much that we do for him? Thou that art an observing, sensible man, who knowest how much thou art beholden to God; I appeal to thee, is not a loitering performance of a few heartless duties, an unworthy requital of such admirable kindness? For my own part, when I compare my slow and unprofitable life, with the frequent and wonderful mercies received, it shames me, it silenceth me, and leaves me unexcusable.

Sect. VIII. 7. Again, consider, All the relations which we stand in toward God, whether common or special, do call upon us for our utmost diligence. Should not the pot be wholly at the service of the

[e] If our enemy never cease assaulting, certainly we must never cease defending. What sottishness and madness then possesseth men, that will carelessly pass the time in feasting and drunkenness, as if they had made a truce with the devil! Brethren, is it present fighting or sleeping that beseems us? Zanch. tom. 3. lib. iv. c. 21. p. 214.

[f] Fides Scripturæ et vivax ratio dictant nobis, quod subducto otio debemus continue servire Deo; nam sicut avis nascitur ad volatum, sic homo ad laborem; et si beati angeli damnarentur etsi servirent continue et debite Deo suo; quod privilegium excusaret nos miseros, si subtrahamus servitium Dei nostri, cum terrenus Dominus instar Dei punit acute pro substractione sui servitii? Wickliff. Trialog. lib. iii. c. 16. fol. 71.

potter, and the creature at the service of his great Creator? are we his children, and do we not owe him our most tender affections and dutiful obedience? are we the spouse of Christ, and do we not owe him our observance and our love? "If he be our Father, where is his honour; and if he be our Master, where is his fear?" Mal. i. 6. "We call him Lord and Master, and we do well," John xiii. 13; but if our industry be not answerable to our assumed relations, we condemn ourselves, in saying we are his children, or his servants. How will the hard labour and daily toil that servants undergo to please their masters, judge and condemn those men who will not labour so hard for their great Master! Surely there is none have a better or more honourable Master than we, nor can any expect such fruit of their labours, 1 Cor. xv. *ult.*

Sect. IX. 8. Consider, What haste should they make who have such rods at their backs, as be at ours; and how painfully should they work, who are still driven on by such sharp afflictions! if either we wander out of the way, or loiter in it, how surely do we prepare for our own smart! Every creature is ready to be God's rod to reduce us, or to put us on: our sweetest mercies will become our sorrows; or, rather than he will want a rod, the Lord will make us a scourge to ourselves; our diseased bodies shall make us groan; our perplexed minds shall make us restless; our conscience shall be as a scorpion in our bosom. And is it not easier to endure the labour than the spur? had we rather be still thus afflicted, than to be up and going? Alas! how like are we to tired horses, that will lie down and groan, or stand still, and let you lay on them as long as you will, rather than they will freely travel on their journey! And thus we make our own lives miserable, and necessitate God, if he love us, to chastise us. It is true, those who do most, do meet with afflictions also: but surely, according to the measure of their peace of conscience, and faithfulness to Christ, so is the bitterness of their cup, for the most part, abated.

Sect. X. 9. How close should they ply their work, who have such great preparations attending them as we have! All the world are our servants, that we may be the servants of God. The sun, and moon, and stars, attend us with their light and influence; the earth, with all its furniture, is at our service. How many thousand plants, and flowers, and fruits, and birds, and beasts, do all attend us! The sea, with its inhabitants; the air, the wind, the frost and snow, the heat and fire, the clouds and rain, all wait upon us while we do our work; yea, the angels are ministering spirits for the service of the elect: and is it not an intolerable crime for us to trifle, while all these are employed to assist us? Nay more, the patience and goodness of God do wait upon us; the Lord Jesus waiteth in the offers of his blood; the Holy Ghost waiteth in striving with our backward hearts; besides all his servants, the ministers of his gospel, who study and wait, and preach and wait, and pray and wait, upon careless sinners: and shall angels and men, yea, the Lord himself, stand by and look on, and, as it were, hold thee the candle while thou dost nothing? O christians, I beseech you, whenever you are upon your knees in prayer, or reproving the transgressors, or exhorting the obstinate, or upon any duty, do but remember what attendants you have for this work; and then judge how it behoves you to perform it.

Sect. XI. 10. Should not our affections and endeavours be answerable to the acknowledged principles of our christian profession? Sure, if we are christians indeed, and mean as we speak, when we profess the faith of Christ, we shall show it in affections and actions, as well as expressions. Why, the very fundamental doctrines of our religion are: That God is the chief Good, and all our happiness consists in his love; and, therefore, it should be valued and sought above all things: that he is our only Lord, and, therefore, chiefly to be served; that we must love him with all our heart, and soul, and strength; that the very business that men have in the world, and the only errand that God sent them about, is to glorify God, and to obtain salvation, &c. And do men's duties and conversation second this profession? Are these doctrines seen in the painfulness of men's practice? or rather do not their works deny what their words do confess? One would think, by men's actions, that they did not believe a word of the gospel to be true. Oh, sad day, when men's own tongues and professions shall be brought in against them, and condemn them!

Sect. XII. 11. How forward and painful should we be in that work, where we are sure we can never do enough! If there were any danger in overdoing, then it might well cause men to moderate their endeavours; but we know, that if we could do all we were but unprofitable servants, Luke xvii. 10; much more when we are sure to fail in all. It is true, a man may possibly pray too much, or preach too much, or hear or reprove too much, though I have known few that ever did so; but yet no man can obey or serve God too much; for one duty may be said to be too long, when it shuts out another, and then it ceaseth, indeed, to be a duty.[g] So that, though all superstition, or worship of our devising, may be called righteousness over-much; yet, as long as you keep your service to the rule of the word, that so it might have the true nature of obedience, you never need to fear being righteous too much; for else, we should reproach the Lord and Lawgiver of the church, as if he commanded us to do too much. Ah, if the world were not mad with malice, they could never be so blind in this point as they are: to think, that faithful diligence in serving Christ, is folly and singularity; and that they who set themselves wholly to seek eternal life, are but precise puritans! The time is near, when they will easily confess that God could not be loved or served too much, and that no man can be too busy to save his soul: for the world you may easily do too much, but here, in God's way, you cannot.

Sect. XIII. 12. It is the nature of every grace to put on the soul to diligence and speed. If you loved God, you would make haste, and not delay or trifle; you would think nothing too much that you could possibly do; you would be ambitious to serve him and please him still more; love is quick and impatient, it is active and observant. If you loved Christ, you would keep his commandments, and not accuse them of too much strictness, John i. 4; xv. 23. So also, if you had faith, it would quicken and encourage you; if you had the hope of glory, it would, as the spring in the watch, set all the wheels of your souls agoing; if you had the fear of God, it would rouse you out of your slothfulness; if you had zeal, it would inflame you, and eat you up. God hath put all his graces in the soul, on purpose to be oil to the wheels, to be life to the dead, to mind men of their duty, and dispose them to it, and to carry them to himself; so that, in what degree soever thou art sanctified, in the same degree thou wilt be serious and laborious in the work of God.

Sect. XIV. 13. Consider, They that trifle in the

[g] Voluptas nocet nimia, in virtute non est verendum ne quid nimium sit, quia in ipsa est modus. Senec. de Vit. Beat. c. 13.

way to heaven, do but lose all their labour, when serious endeavours do obtain their end. The proverb is, "As good never a whit, as never the better." If two be running in a race, he that runs slowest had as good never run at all; for, now, he loseth the prize and his labour both. Many, who like Agrippa, are but almost christians, (Acts xxvi. 28,) will find, in the end, they shall be but almost saved. God hath set the rate at which the pearl must be bought; if you bid a penny less than that rate, you had as good bid nothing. As a man that is lifting at some weighty thing, if he put to almost strength enough, but yet not sufficient, it is as good he put to none at all; for he doth but lose all his labour. Oh how many professors of christianity will find this true, to their sorrow, who have had a mind to the ways of God, and have kept up a dull task of duty, and plodded on in a formal, lifeless profession, but never came to serious christianity! How many a duty have they lost, for want of doing them thoroughly, and to the purpose! Perhaps their place in hell may be the easier, and so their labour is not lost; but as to the obtaining of salvation, it is all lost. "Many shall seek to enter, and shall not be able," (Luke xiii. 24,) who, if they had striven, might have been able. O, therefore, put to a little more diligence and strength, that all be not in vain that you have done already.

Sect. XV. 14. Furthermore,[h] We have lost a great deal of precious time already, and therefore it is reason that we labour so much the harder. If a traveller do sleep or trifle out the most of the day, he must travel so much the faster in the evening, or else he is like to fall short of his journey's end. With some of us, our childhood and youth is gone; with some also their middle age is past; and the time before us is very uncertain and short. What a deal of time have we slept away, and talked away, and played away! what a deal have we spent in worldly thoughts and labours, or in mere idleness! Though in likelihood the most of our time is spent, yet how little of our work is done! and is it not time now to bestir ourselves in the evening of our days? The time which we have lost can never be recalled: should we not then redeem it by improving the little which remaineth? You may receive, indeed, an equal recompence with those that have borne the burden and heat of the day, though you came not in till the last hour; but then you must be sure to labour soundly that hour. It is enough sure that we have lost so much of our lives; let us not now be so foolish as to lose the rest, 1 Pet. iv. 2—4.

Sect. XVI. 15. Consider, The greater are your layings out, the greater will be your comings in. Though you may seem to lose your labour at the present, yet the hour cometh when you shall find it with advantage. The seed which is buried and dead, will bring forth a plentiful increase at the harvest. Whatever you do, and whatever you suffer, this everlasting rest will pay for all. There is no repenting of labours and sufferings in heaven; none says, Would I had spared my pains, and prayed less, or been less strict and precise, and did as the rest of my neighbours did! There is never such a thought in heaven as this. But, on the contrary, it will be their joy to look back upon their labours and tribulations, and to consider how the mighty power of God did bring them through all. Who ever complained that he came to heaven at too dear a rate, or that his salvation cost him more labour than it was worth? We may say of all our labours, as Paul of his sufferings, "For I reckon that the sufferings (and labours) of this present time, are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us," Rom. viii. 18. We labour but for a moment, but we shall rest for ever. Who would not put forth all his strength for one hour, when he may be a prince while he lives for that hour's work? O, what is the duty and suffering of a short frail life, which is almost at an end as soon as it begins, in respect of the endless joys with God? Will not all our tears then be wiped away, and all the sorrows of our duties forgotten? but yet the Lord will not forget them; "for he is not unjust to forget our work and labour of love," Heb. vi. 10.

Sect. XVII. 16. Consider, Violence and laborious striving for salvation, is the way that the wisdom of God hath directed us to as best, as his sovereign authority appointed us as necessary. Who knows the way to heaven better than the God of heaven? When men tell us that we are too strict and precise, whom do they accuse, God or us? If we do no more than what we are commanded, nor so much neither, (Luke xvii. 10,) they may as well say, God hath made laws which are too strict and precise. Surely, if it were a fault, it would lie in him that commands it, and not in us who are bound to obey. And dare these men think that they are wiser than God? Do they know better than he, what men must do to be saved? These are the men that ask us whether we are wiser than all the world besides, and yet they will pretend to be wiser than God. What do they less, when God bids us take the most diligent course, and they tell us it is more ado than needs? Mark well the language of the laws of God, and see how you can reconcile it with the language of the world: "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force," Matt. xi. 12; or, as it is in Luke xvi. 16, "every one presseth into it." "Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able," Luke xiii. 24. So Matt. vii. 13, 14. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might, for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave whither thou goest," Eccles. ix. 10. "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run that you may obtain," 1 Cor. ix. 24. "If a man strive for masteries, yet he is not crowned except he strive lawfully,"[i] 2 Tim. ii. 5, that is, powerfully and prevailingly. "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling," Phil. ii. 12. "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure," 2 Pet. i. 10. "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinners appear?" 1 Pet. iv. 18. So Phil. i. 27; iii. 14; 1 Tim. vi. 12, 18, 19; Deut. vi. 5, &c. This is the constant language of Christ: and which shall I follow, God or men; yea, and that the worst and most wicked men? Shall I think that every ignorant, worldly sot, that can only call a man puritan, knows more than Christ, and can teach him to make laws for his church, or can tell God how to mend the Scriptures? Let them bring all the seeming reasons that they can against the holy, violent striving of the saints, and this sufficeth me to confute them all, that God

[h] Agedum, ad computationem ætatem tuam revoca: dic quantum ex isto tempore creditor, quantum amica, quantum rex, quantum cliens abstulerit; quantum servorum coercitio, quantum officiosa per urbem discursatio? Adjice morbos quos manu facimus. Adjice quod et sine usu jacuit. Videbis te pauciores annos habere quam numeras. Senec. de Brev. Vit. c. 3. Quam multi vitam tuam diripuerint, te non sentiente quid perderes? Quantum vanus dolor, stulta lætitia, avida cupiditas, blanda conversatio, abstulerit? Quam exiguum tibi de tuo relictum est? Idem ibid.

[i] Non omnes dicuntur episcopi, sed qui graviter et strenue se gesserint. Sarcer. in loc.

is of another mind, and he hath commanded me to do much more than I do; and though I could see no reason for it, yet his will is reason enough to me. I am sure God is worthy to govern us, if we were better than we are. Who should make laws for us, but he that made us? And who should line out the way to heaven, but he that must bring us thither? And who should determine on what conditions we shall be saved, but he that bestows the gift of salvation? So that let world, or flesh, or devil, speak against a holy, laborious course, this is my answer, God hath commanded it.

Sect. XVIII. 17. Moreover, It is a course that all men in the world either do or will approve of. There is not a man that ever was, or is, or shall be, but shall one day justify the diligence of the saints, and give his verdict in the approbation of their wisdom. And who would not go that way which every man shall applaud? It is true, it is now a way every where spoken against, and hated: but let me tell you, 1. Most that speak against it, do in their judgments approve of it; only because the practice of godliness is against the pleasures of the flesh, therefore do they against their own judgments resist it. They have not one word of reason against it, but reproaches and railing are their best arguments. 2. Those that now are against it, whether in judgment or passion, will shortly be, every man, of another mind. If they come to heaven, their mind must be changed before they come there. If they go to hell, their judgment will then be altered, whether they will or no. If you could speak with every soul that suffereth those torments and ask their judgments, whether it be possible to be too diligent and serious in seeking salvation, you may easily conjecture what answer they would return. Take the most bitter derider or persecutor of godliness, even those that will venture their lives for to overthrow it, if those men do not shortly eat their own words, and wish a thousand times that they had been the most holy, diligent christians on earth, then let me bear the shame of a false prophet for ever.[k] Remember this, you that will be of the opinion and way that most are of. Why then will you not be of the opinion that all will be shortly of? Why will you be of a judgment which you are sure you shall all shortly change? Oh that you were but as wise in this as those in hell!

Sect. XIX. 18. Consider, They that have been the most serious, painful christians, when they come to die, do exceedingly lament their negligence. Those that have wholly addicted themselves to the work of God, and have made it the main business of their lives, and have slighted the world and mortified the flesh, and have been the wonders of the world for their heavenly conversations, yet when conscience is let loose upon them, and God withdraws the sense of his love, how do their failings wound them and disquiet them! What terrors do the souls of many undergo, who are generally admired for their godliness and innocency; even those that are hated and derided by the world for being so strict, and are thought to be almost beside themselves for their extraordinary diligence, yet commonly when they lie a dying, do wish, Oh that they had been a thousand times more holy, more heavenly, more laborious for their souls! What a case then will the negligent world be in, when their consciences are awaked, when they lie dying, and look behind them upon a lazy, negligent life, and look before them upon a severe and terrible judgment! what an esteem will they have of a holy life! For my own part, I may say, as Erasmus, *Accusant quod nimium fecerim; verum conscientia mea me accusat quod minus fecerim, quodque lentior fuerim*, They accuse me for doing too much, but my own conscience accuseth me for doing too little, and being too slow: and it is far easier bearing the scorns of the world than the scourges of conscience. The world speaks at a distance without me, so that though I hear their words, I can choose whether I will feel them; but my conscience speaks within me at the very heart, so that every check doth pierce me to the quick. Conscience, when it is reprehended justly, is the messenger of God; but ungodly revilers are but the voice of the devil. I had rather be reproached by the devil for seeking salvation, than to be reproved of God for neglecting it: I had rather the world should call me puritan in the devil's name, than conscience should call me loiterer in God's name. As God and conscience are more useful friends than Satan and the world, so are they more dreadful, irresistible enemies.

Sect. XX. 19. Consider, How far many a man goes, and what a deal of pains he takes for heaven, and yet misseth it for want of more! When every man that striveth is not crowned, 2 Tim. ii. 5; and many shall seek to enter in, and not be able, Luke xxiii. 24; and the very children of the kingdom shall be shut out, Matt. xiii. 41; and they that have heard the word, and received it with joy, Matt. xiii. 20, and have heard the preacher gladly, and done many things after him, shall yet perish, Mark vi. 20; it is time for us to look about us, and take heed of loitering. When they that seek God daily, and delight to know his ways, and ask of him the ordinances of justice, and take delight in approaching to God, and that in fasting and afflicting their souls, (Isa. lvi. 2, 3,) are yet shut out with hypocrites and unbelievers; when they that have been enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and of the good word of God, and of the powers of the world to come, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, may yet fall away beyond recovery, and crucify to themselves the Son of God, Heb. vi. 4—6; when they that have received the knowledge of the truth, and were sanctified by the blood of the covenant, may yet sin wilfully, and tread under foot the Son of God, and do despite to the Spirit of grace, till there is nothing left them but the fearful expectation of judgment, and fire that shall devour the adversaries, Heb. x. 26—29; should not this rouse us out of our laziness and security? How far hath many a man followed Christ, and yet forsaken him when it comes to the selling of all, to bearing the cross, to burning at the stake, or to the renouncing of all his worldly interests and hopes! What a deal of pains hath many a man taken for heaven, that never did obtain it! How many prayers, sermons, fasts, alms, good desires, confessions, sorrow and tears for sin, &c. have all been lost, and fallen short of the kingdom! Methinks this should affright us out of our sluggishness, and make us strive to outstrip the highest formalist.

Sect. XXI. 20. Consider, God hath resolved that heaven shall not be had on easier terms. He hath not only commanded it as a duty, but hath tied our salvation to the performance of it. Rest must always follow labour. He that hath ordained in his church on earth, that he that will not labour shall not eat, hath also decreed concerning the everlasting inheritance, that he that strives not shall not enter. They must now lay up a treasure in heaven, if they will find it there, Matt. xix. 20. They must seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness,

[k] Duty at last is sweet; it comes off with heaven, though hell dog it for a time; saith Lockier sweetly (as all). See him further of the good end of duty, on Col. i. 24. p. 300.

Matt. vi. 33. They must not labour for the food that perisheth, but for that food which endureth to everlasting life, John vi. 27. Some think that it is good to be holy, but yet not of such absolute necessity but that a man may be saved without it; but God hath determined on the contrary, that without it no man shall see his face, Heb. xii. 14. Seriousness is the very thing wherein consisteth our sincerity. If thou art not serious, thou art not a christian. It is not only a high degree in christianity, but of the very life and essence of it. As fencers upon a stage, who have all the skill at their weapons, and do eminently and industriously act their parts, but do not seriously intend the death of each other, do differ from soldiers or combatants, who fight in good sadness for their lives, just so do hypocrites differ from serious christians. If men could be saved without this serious diligence, they would never regard it; all the excellences of God's ways would never entice them. But when God hath resolved, that if you will have your ease here, you shall have none hereafter, is it not wisdom, then, to bestir ourselves to the utmost?

Sect. XXII. 21. And thus, reader, I dare confidently say, I have showed thee sufficient reason against thy slothfulness and negligence, if thou be not a man resolved to shut thine eyes, and to destroy thyself wilfully, in despite of reason. Yet, lest all this should not prevail, I will add somewhat more, if it be possible, to persuade thee to be serious in thy endeavours for heaven.

1. Consider, God is in good earnest with you, and why then should not you be so with him? In his commands, he means as he speaks, and will verily require your real obedience. In his threatenings he is serious, and will make them all good against the rebellious. In his promises he is serious, and will fulfil them to the obedient, even to the least tittle. In his judgments he is serious, as he will make his enemies know to their terror. Was not God in good earnest when he drowned the world, when he consumed Sodom and Gomorrah, when he scattered the Jews? Hath he not been in good sadness with us lately in England, and Ireland, and Germany? And very shortly will he lay hold on his enemies, particularly man by man, and make them know that he is in good earnest; especially when it comes to the great reckoning day. And is it time, then, for us to dally with God?

2. Jesus Christ was serious in purchasing our redemption. He was serious in teaching, when he neglected his meat and drink, John iv. 32. He was serious in praying, when he continued all night at it, Luke vi. 12. He was serious in doing good, when his kindred came and laid hands on him, thinking he had been beside himself, Mark iii. 20, 21. He was serious in suffering, when he fasted forty days, was tempted, betrayed, spit on, buffeted, crowned with thorns, sweat water and blood; was crucified, pierced, died. There was no jesting in all this; and should not we be serious in seeking our own salvation?

3. The Holy Ghost is serious in soliciting us for our happiness; his motions are frequent, and pressing, and importunate: he striveth with our hearts, Gen. vi. 3; he is grieved when we resist him, Eph. iv. 30: and should not we then be serious in obeying his motions, and yielding to his suit?

4. God is serious in hearing our prayers, and delivering us from our dangers, and removing our troubles, and bestowing his mercies.[l] When we are afflicted, he is afflicted with us, Isa. lxiii. 9. He regardeth every groan and sigh, he putteth every tear into his bottle; he condoleth their misery, when he is forced to chastise them; "How shall I give thee up, O Ephraim?" saith the Lord; "how shall I make thee as Admah, and as Zeboim? my heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together," Hos. xi. 8. He heareth even the rebellious ofttimes, when they call upon him in their misery; "when they cry to him in their trouble, he delivereth them out of their distress," Psal. lxxviii. 37, 38; cvii. 10—13, 19, 28. Yea, the next time thou art in trouble, thou wilt beg for a serious regard of thy prayers, and grant of thy desires. And shall we be so slight in the work of God, when we expect he should be so regardful of us? Shall we have real mercies down weight; and shall we return such superficial and frothy service?

5. Consider, The ministers of Christ are serious in instructing and exhorting you, and why should not you be as serious in obeying their instructions? They are serious in study; serious in prayer; serious in persuading your souls to the obedience of Christ; they beg of God, they beg of you, they hope, they wait, they long more for the conversion and salvation of your souls, than they do for any worldly good: "you are their boasting, their crown and joy," 1 Thess. ii. 19, 20. "Your stedfastness in Christ they value as their lives," 1 Thess. iii. 8. They are content to "be offered up in the service of your faith," Phil. ii. 17. If they kill themselves with study and preaching, or if they suffer martyrdom for preaching the gospel; they think their lives are well bestowed, if their preaching do but prevail for saving of your souls. And shall other men be so painful and careful for your salvation, and should you be so careless and negligent of your own? Is it not a serious charge that is given to ministers in 2 Tim. iv. 1? and a serious pattern that is given them in Acts xx. 30, 31? Surely no man can be bound to be more serious and painful for the welfare of another, than he is bound to be for himself.

6. How serious and diligent are all the creatures in their service to thee! What haste makes the sun to compass the world; and how truly doth it return at its appointed hour! So do the moon and other planets. The springs are always flowing for thy use; the rivers still running; the spring and harvest keep their times. How hard doth thy ox labour for thee from day to day; how painfully and speedily doth thy horse bear thee in travel! And shall all these be laborious, and thou only negligent? Shall they all be so serious in serving thee, and yet thou be so slight in thy service to God?[m]

7. Consider, The servants of the world and the devil are serious and diligent; they ply their work continually with unweariedness and delight, as if they could never do enough; they make haste, and march furiously, as if they were afraid of coming to hell too late. They bear down ministers, and sermons, and counsel, and all before them. And shall they do more for the devil, than thou wilt do for God; or be more diligent for damnation, than thou wilt be for salvation? Hast not thou a better Master, and sweeter employment, and greater encouragement, and a better reward?[n]

8. The time was when thou wast serious thyself in thy service to Satan and the flesh, if it be not so

[l] For my own part, my sorrows are so real and pressing, that if God be not serious in hearing and helping me, I shall perish immediately; nor would I be without his tender, regardful providence one day for a world: and should I then neglect him?

[m] Lege Fabritium in Destructorio Vitiorum, part v. c. 2. A. Ubi elegantem etiam historiam refert ex Linco de oculo morali, de Monacho episcopum ignavum reprehendente, inter eos colloquio; et ex Augustino solem ignavum exprobrantem infert.

[n] Accidiosi erubescere possunt qui non tam diligenter

still: dost thou not remember how eagerly thou didst follow thy sports; or how violently thou wast addicted to customs, or evil company, or sinful delights; or how earnestly thou wast bent after thy profits, or rising in the world? And wilt thou not now be more earnest and violent for God? "What profit hadst thou then in those things whereof thou art now ashamed? For the end of those things is death; but now being made free from sin, and become the servants of God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life," Rom. vi. 21, 22.

9. You are yet to this day in good earnest about the matters of this life; if you are sick, what serious groans and complaints do you utter! All the town shall quickly know it, if your pain be great. If you are poor, how hard do you labour for your living, lest your wife and children should starve or famish! If one fall down in a swoon in the house, or street, or in the congregation, how seriously will you run to relieve and recover them! And is not the business of our salvation of far greater moment? Are you not poor; and should you not then be labourers? Are you not in fight for your lives; and is it time to sleep? Are you not in a race; and is not the prize the crown of glory; and should you then sit still or take your ease?

10. There is no jesting in heaven, nor in hell. The saints have a real happiness, and the damned a real misery; the saints are serious and high in their joy and praise, and the damned are serious and deep in their sorrow and complaints. There are no remiss or sleepy praises in heaven, nor any remiss or sleepy lamentations in hell; all men there are in good earnest, and should we not then be serious now? Reader, I dare promise thee, the thoughts of these things will shortly be serious thoughts with thyself. When thou comest to death or judgment, oh what deep, heart-piercing thoughts wilt thou have of eternity! methinks I foresee thee already astonished to think how thou couldst possibly make so light of these things! methinks I even hear thee crying out of thy stupidity and madness!

Sect. XXIII. 22. And now, reader, having laid thee down these undeniable arguments, I do here, in the name of God, demand thy resolution: what sayest thou? wilt thou yield obedience or not? I am confident thy conscience is convinced of thy duty. Darest thou now go on in thy common careless course, against the plain evidence of reason and commands of God, and against the light of thy own conscience? Darest thou live as loosely, and sin as boldly, and pray as seldom and as coldly, as before? Darest thou now as carnally spend the sabbath, and slubber over the service of God as slightly, and think of thine everlasting state as carelessly, as before? or, dost thou not rather resolve to gird up the loins of thy mind, and to set thyself wholly about the work of thy salvation; and to do it with all thy strength and might; and to break over all the oppositions of the world, and to slight all their scorns and persecutions; "to cast off the weight that hangeth on thee, and the sin that doth so easily beset thee; and to run with patience and speed the race that is set before thee?" 1 Pet. i. 13; Heb. xii. 1, 2. I hope these are thy full resolutions: if thou be well in thy wits, I am sure they are.

Yet because I know the strange obstinacy and rockiness of the heart of man, and because I would fain drive this nail to the head, and leave these persuasions fastened in thy heart, that so if it be possible thou mightest be awakened to thy duty, and thy soul might live, I shall therefore proceed with thee yet a little further; and I once more entreat thee to stir up thy attention, and go along with me in the free and sober use of thy reason, while I propound to thee these following questions: and I command thee from God, that thou stifle not thy conscience, and resist not conviction, but answer them faithfully, and obey accordingly.

Quest. 1. If you could grow rich by religion, or get lands and lordships by being diligent in godliness; or if you could get honour or preferment by it in the world; or could be recovered from sickness by it, or could live for ever in prosperity on earth; what kind of lives would you then lead, and what pains would you take in the service of God! And is not the rest of the saints a more excellent happiness than all this?

Quest. 2. If the law of the land did punish every breach of the sabbath, or every omission of family duties or secret duties, or every cold and heartless prayer, with death; if it were felony or treason to be ungodly and negligent in worship, and loose in your lives; what manner of persons would you then be, and what lives would you lead! And is not eternal death more terrible than temporal?

Quest. 3. If it were God's ordinary course to punish every sin with some present judgment, so that every time a man swears, or is drunk, or speaks a lie, or backbiteth his neighbour, he should be struck dead, or blind, or lame in the place; if God did punish every cold prayer, or neglect of duty, with some remarkable plague; what manner of persons would you then be? If you should suddenly fall down dead like Ananias and Sapphira, with the sin in your hands, or the plague of God should seize upon you as upon the Israelites, while the sweet morsels were yet in their mouths, Psal. lxxviii. 30; if but a mark should be set in the forehead of every one that neglected a duty, or committed a sin; what kind of lives would you then lead? And is not eternal wrath more terrible than all this? Give but reason leave to speak.

Quest. 4. If one of your old acquaintance and companions in sin should come from the dead, and tell you, that he suffered the torments of hell for those sins that you are guilty of, and for neglecting those duties which you neglect, and for living such a careless, worldly, ungodly life, as you now live, and should therefore advise you to take another course; if you should meet such a one in your chamber when you are going to bed, and he should say to you, O, take heed of this carnal, unholy life! set yourself to seek the Lord with all your might; neglect not your soul; prepare for eternity, that you come not to the place of torment that I am in; how would this take with you, and what manner of persons would you afterwards be? It is written in the life of Bruno,[o] that a doctor of great note for learning and godliness being dead, and being brought to the church to be buried, while they were in their popish devotions, and came to the words *Responde mihi*, the corpse arose in the bier, and with a terrible voice cried out, *Justo Dei judicio accusatus sum*, I am accused at the just judgment of God; at which voice the people ran all out of the church affrighted. On the morrow when they came again to perform the obsequies, to the same words as before, the corpse arose again and cried with a hideous voice, *Justo Dei judicio judicatus sum*, I am judged at the righteous judgment of God; whereupon the people ran away again amazed. The third day almost all the city came together, and when they came to the same

laborant ad impetrandum gaudium cœli sicut multi impiorum laborant ad impetrandam pœnam inferni. Fabritius in Destructorio Vitiorum, part v. c. 2. B. Rom. vi. 21.

[o] Lege vitam Brunonis ante Commentar. in Epistolas, ut et Polydorum Virgil. lib. vii. de Invention. Rer. c. 3. p. (mihi) 428.

words as before, the corpse arose again, and cried with a more doleful voice than before, *Justo Dei judicio condemnatus sum*, I am condemned at the just judgment of God. The consideration whereof, that a man reputed so upright, should yet by his own confession be damned, caused Bruno, and the rest of his companions, to enter into the strict order of the Carthusians. If the voice of the dead man could affright them into superstition, should not the warnings of God affright thee into true devotion?

Quest. 5. If you knew that this were the last day you had to live in the world, how would you spend this day?[p] If you were sure when you go to bed, that you should never rise again, would not your thoughts of another life be more serious that night? If you knew when you are praying, that you should never pray more, would you not be more earnest and importunate in that prayer? Or if you knew when you are preaching, or hearing, or exhorting your sinful acquaintance, that this were the last opportunity you should have, would you not ply it more closely than usually you do? Why, you do not know but it may be the last: and you are sure your last is near at hand.

Quest. 6. If you had seen the general dissolution of the world, and all the pomp and glory of it consumed to ashes: if you saw all on a fire about you, sumptuous buildings, cities, kingdoms, land, water, earth, heaven, all flaming about your ears: if you had seen all that men laboured for, and sold their souls for, gone; friends gone; the place of your former abode gone; the history ended, and all come down; what would such a sight as this persuade you to do? Why, such a sight thou shalt certainly see. I put my question to thee in the words of the apostle: "Seeing all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?" 2 Pet. iii. 12. As if he should say, We cannot possibly conceive or express what manner of persons we should be in all holiness and godliness, when we do but think of the sudden, and certain, and terrible dissolution of all things below.

Quest. 7. What if you had seen the process of the judgment of the great day; if you had seen the judgment set, and the books opened, and the most stand trembling on the left hand of the Judge, and Christ himself accusing them of their rebellions and neglects, and remembering them of all their former slightings of his grace, and at last condemning them to perpetual perdition; if you had seen the godly standing on the right hand, and Jesus Christ acknowledging their faithful obedience, and adjudging them to the possession of the joy of their Lord; what manner of persons would you have been after such a sight as this? Why, this sight thou shalt one day see, as sure as thou livest. And why then should not the foreknowledge of such a day awake thee to thy duty?

Quest. 8. What if you had once seen hell open, and all the damned there in their easeless torments, and had heard them crying out of their slothfulness in the day of their visitation, and wishing that they had but another life to live, and that God would but try them once again; one crying out of his neglect of duty, and another of his loitering and trifling, when he should have been labouring for his life; what manner of persons would you have been after such a sight as this? What if you had seen heaven opened, as Stephen did, and all the saints there triumphing in glory, and enjoying the end of their labours and sufferings, what a life would you lead after such a sight as this! Why, you will see this with your eyes before it be long.

Quest. 9. What if you had lain in hell but one year, or one day, or hour, and there felt all those torments that now you do but hear of, and God should turn you into the world again, and try you with another life-time, and say, I will see whether thou wilt be yet any better, what manner of persons would you be? If you were to live a thousand years, would you not gladly live as strictly as the precisest saints, and spend all those years in prayer and duty, so you might but escape the torment which you suffered? How seriously then would you speak of hell, and pray against it, and hear, and read, and watch, and obey! How earnestly would you admonish the careless to take heed, and look about them to prevent their ruin! And will not you take God's word for the truth of this, except you feel it? Is it not your wisdom to do as much now to prevent it, as you would do to remove it when it is too late? Is it not more wisdom to spend this life in labouring for heaven, while ye have it, than to lie in torment, wishing for more time in vain?

Quest. 10. What if you had been possessed but one year of the glory of heaven, and there joined with the saints and angels in the beholding of God, and singing his praise, and afterwards should be turned into the world again, what a life would you lead; what pains would you take rather than to be deprived of such incomparable glory! Would you think any cost too great, or diligence too much? If one of those that are now in heaven, should come to live on the earth again, what persons would they be; what a stir would they make; how seriously would they drive on the business of their salvation! The country would ring of their exceeding holy and strict conversations. They would as far excel the holiest persons on earth, as they excel the careless world. Before they would lose that blessed estate, they would follow God with cries both day and night, and throw away all, and suffer every day a death. And should not we do as much to obtain it?

Sect. XXV. And thus I have said enough, if not to stir up the lazy sinner to a serious working out his salvation, yet at least to silence him, and leave him inexcusable at the judgment of God. If thou canst, after the reading of all this, go on in the same neglect of God and thy soul, and draw out the rest of thy life in the same dull and careless course, as thou hast hitherto done; and if thou hast so far conquered and stupified thy conscience, that it will quietly suffer thee to forget all this, and to trifle out the rest of thy time in the business of the world, when in the mean while thy salvation is in danger, and the Judge is at the door, I have then no more to say to thee; it is as good speak to a post or rock. Only as we do by our friends when they are dead, and our words and actions can do them no good, yet to testify our affections we weep and mourn for them; so will I also do for these deplorable souls. It makes my heart sad, and even tremble to think, how they will stand, sad and trembling, before the Lord! and how confounded and speechless they will be, when Christ shall reason with them concerning their negligence and sloth! when he shall say, as the Lord doth in

[p] Quid ergo in causa est? Tanquam semper victuri vivitis: nunquam vobis fragilitas vestra succurrit. Non observatis quantum jam temporis transierit. Velut ex pleno et abundanti perditis; cum interim fortasse ille ipse alicui vel homini, vel rei donatus, ultimus dies sit. Omnia tanquam mortales tenetis, omnia tanquam immortales concupiscitis. Senec. de Brev. Vit. c. 4.

Jer. ii. 5, 9, 11, 15, "What iniquity have your fathers (or you) found in me, that ye are gone far from me, and have walked after vanity?" &c. Did I ever wrong you, or do you any harm, or ever discourage you from following my service? was my way so bad that you could not endure it; or my service so base that you could not stoop to it? did I stoop to the fulfilling of the law for you, and could not you stoop to the fulfilling of the easy conditions of my gospel? was the world or Satan a better friend to you than I; or have they done for you more than I have? try now, whether they will save you, or whether they will recompense you for the loss of heaven, or whether they will be as good to you as I would have been. Oh, what will the wretched sinner answer to any of this? But though man will not hear, yet we may have hope in speaking to God. Lord, smite these rocks till they gush forth waters: though these ears are deaf, say to them, "Ephphatha, Be opened:" though these sinners be dead, let that power speak, which sometime said, "Lazarus, arise!" We know they will be awakened at the last resurrection: oh! but then it will be only to their sorrow. O thou that didst weep and groan in spirit over a dead Lazarus, pity these sad and senseless souls, till they are able to weep, and groan for, and pity themselves. As thou hast bid thy servants speak, so speak now thyself; they will hear thy voice speaking to their hearts, that will not hear mine speaking to their ears. Long hast thou knocked at these hearts in vain, now break the doors, and enter in, and pass by all their long resistance.

Sect. XXVI. Yet I will add a few more words to the godly in special, to show them why they, above all men, should be laborious for heaven; and that there is a great deal of reason, that though all the world besides do sit still, and be careless, yet they should abhor that laziness and negligence, and should lay out all their strength on the work of God. To this end, I desire them also to answer soberly to these few interrogatories.

Quest. 1. What manner of persons should those be, whom God hath chosen out to be vessels of mercy, and hath given them the very cream and quintessence of his blessings, when the rest of the world are passed by, and put off with common, and temporal, and left-hand mercies? They who have the blood of Christ given them, and the Spirit for sanctification, consolation, and preservation, and the pardon of sins, and adoption to sonship, and the guard of angels, and the mediation of the Son of God, and the special love of the Father, and the promise and seal of everlasting rest! do but tell me in good sadness, what kind of lives these men should live?

Quest. 2. What manner of persons should those be, who have felt the smart of their negligence so much as the godly have done; in the new birth, in their several wounds and trouble of conscience, in their doubts and fears, in their sharp afflictions on body and state? They that have groaned and cried out so oft, under the sense and effects of their negligence, and are like enough to feel it again, if they do not reform it, sure, one would think they should be slothful no more.

Quest. 3. What manner of persons should those be in holy diligence, who have been so long convinced of the evil of laziness; and have confessed it on their knees, a hundred and a hundred times, both in public and in private; and have told God in prayer how unexcusably they have therein offended; should they thus confess their sin, and yet commit it, as if they told God what they would do, as well as what they have done?

Quest. 4. What manner of persons should those be in painful godliness, who have bound themselves to God by so many covenants as we have done, and in special have covenanted so oft to be more painful and faithful in his service at every sacrament; on many days of humiliation and thanksgiving; in most of our deep distresses and dangerous sicknesses? We are still ready to bewail our neglects, and to engage ourselves, if God will but try us, and trust once again, how diligent and laborious we will be, and how we will improve our time, and reprove offenders, and watch over ourselves, and ply our work; and do him more service in a day than we did in a month. The Lord pardon our perfidious covenant-breaking; and grant that our engagements may not condemn us.

Quest. 5. What manner of persons should they be, who are so near to God as we; who are his children, in his family, still under his eye; the objects of his greatest jealousy, as well as love? Nadab and Abihu can tell you, that the flames of jealousy are hottest about his altar, Lev. x. 1, 2: and Uzza, and the fifty thousand and seventy Bethshemites, (1 Sam. vi. 19,) though dead, do yet tell you, that justice, as well as mercy, is most active about the ark. And Ananias and his wife can tell you, that profession is no cover for transgression, Acts v. 4, 5, &c. Judgment beginneth at the house of God, 1 Pet. iv. 17; and the destroying angel doth begin at the sanctuary, Ezek. ix. 5, 6.

Quest. 6. What manner of men should they be in duty, who have received so much encouragement, as we have done by our success? who have tasted such sweetness in diligent obedience, as doth much more than countervail all the pains; who have so oft had experience of the wide difference between lazy and laborious duty, by their different issues; who have found all our lazy duties unfruitful, and all our strivings and wrestlings with God successful, so that we were never importunate with God in vain. We who have had so many admirable national and personal deliverances upon urgent seeking; and have received almost all our solid comforts in a way of close and constant duty; how should we, above all men, ply our work!

Quest. 7. What manner of men should they be, who are yet at such great uncertainties, whether they are sanctified or justified, or whether they are the children of God or no, or what shall everlastingly become of their souls, as most of the godly that I meet with are? They that have discovered the excellency of the kingdom, and yet have not discovered their interest in it, but discern a danger of perishing or losing all, and have need of that advice, Heb. iv. 1, and have so many doubts to wrestle with daily as we have; how should such men bestir themselves in time!

Quest. 8. What manner of persons should they be in holiness, who have so much of the great work yet undone as we have;[q] so many sins in so great strength; graces weak, sanctification imperfect, corruption still working our ruin, and taking advantage of all our omissions? When we are as a boatman on the water, let him row never so hard a month together, yet if he do but slack his hand, and think to ease himself, his boat goes faster down the stream

[q] Ille certus est bonæ voluntatis profectus, si ea quæ accipit a Deo, ita vigilanter solicitcque custodiat, ut custodiæ divinæ adjutorium frequentia orationis et studio bonæ operationis exposcat. Ita fiet ut dum oranti auxilium tribuitur, laborans retributionc boni operis non privetur. Fulgentius de Ver. Præd. c. 17. Nemo est extra periculum malitiæ nisi qui totam eam excussit. Senec. Epist. 75.

than before it went up; so do our souls, when we think to ease ourselves by abating our pains in duty. Our time is short; our enemies mighty; our hinderances many; God seems yet at a great distance from many of us; our thoughts of him are dull, and strange, and unbelieving; our acquaintance and communion with Christ are small; and our desires to be with him are as small. And should men in our case stand still?

Quest. 9. What manner of men should they be in their diligence, whose lives and duties are of so great concernment to the saving or destroying of a multitude of souls? when, if we slip, so many are ready to stumble; and if we stumble, so many are ready to fall. If we pray hard for them, and admonish them daily, and faithfully, and plainly, and exhort them with bowels of pity and love, and go before them in a holy, inoffensive conversation, it is twenty to one but we may be instruments of saving many of them from everlasting perdition, and bringing them to the possession of the inheritance with us: on the contrary, if we silently neglect them, or sinfully offend them, we may be occasions of their perpetual torment: and what a sad thought is that to an honest and merciful heart! That we may not destroy the souls for whom Christ died, that we may not rob them of their everlasting happiness, and God of the praises that in heaven they would give him, what manner of persons should we be in our duties and examples?

Quest. 10. Lastly: What manner of persons should they be, on whom the glory of the great God doth so much depend? Men will judge of the father by the children, and of the master by the servants. We bear his image; and therefore men will measure him by his representation. He is no where in the world so lively represented as in his saints: and shall they set him forth as a patron of viciousness or idleness? All the world is not capable of honouring or dishonouring God so much as we: and the least of his honour is of more worth than all our lives. I have harped all this while upon the apostle's string, 2 Pet. iii. 11; and now let me give it the last touch. Seeing, then, that all these things forementioned are so, I charge thee, that art a christian, in my Master's name, to consider and resolve the question, What manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness? And let thy life answer the question as well as thy tongue.

Sect. XXVII. I have been larger upon this use than at first I intended; partly because of the general neglect of heaven, that all sorts are guilty of; partly because men's salvation depends upon their present striving and seeking;[r] partly because the doctrine of free grace, misunderstood, is lately so abused to the cherishing of sloth and security; partly because many eminent men of late do judge, that to work or labour for life and salvation is mercenary, legal, and dangerous; which doctrine, as I have said before, were it by the owners reduced into practice, would undoubtedly damn them; because they that seek not shall not find, and they that strive not to enter shall be shut out, and they that labour not shall not be crowned; and partly because it is grown the custom of this distracted age, instead of striving for the kingdom and contending for the faith, to strive with each other about uncertain controversies,[s] and to contend about the circumstantials of the faith, wherein the kingdom of God doth no more consist than in meats or drinks, or questions about the law, or genealogies. Sirs, shall we, who are brethren, fall out by the way home, and spend so much of our time about the smaller matters which thousands have been saved without, but never any one saved by them, while Christ and our eternal rest are almost forgotten? The Lord pardon and heal the folly of his people.

CHAPTER VII.

THE THIRD USE: PERSUADING ALL MEN TO TRY THEIR TITLE TO THIS REST; AND DIRECTING THEM HOW TO TRY THAT THEY MAY KNOW.

Sect. I. I now proceed to the third use which we shall raise hence; and because it is of very great importance to thy soul, I entreat thee to read it the more diligently, and weigh it the more seriously.

Is there such a glorious rest so near at hand; and shall none enjoy it but the people of God? What mean the most of the world, then, to live so contentedly without assurance of their interest in this rest, and to neglect the trying of their title to it, when the Lord hath so fully opened the blessedness of that kingdom, which none but a little flock of obedient believers shall possess, and so fully expressed those torments which all the rest of the world must eternally suffer? A man would think now, that they that believe this to be certainly true, should never be at any quiet in themselves till they knew which of these must be their own state, and were fully assured that they were heirs of the kingdom. Most men that I meet with, say, they believe this word of God to be true; how then can they sit still in such an utter uncertainty, whether ever they shall live in rest or not? One would think they should run up and down from minister to minister, inquiring, How shall I know whether I shall live in heaven or in hell? and that they should even think themselves half in hell, till they were sure to escape it, and to be possessed of rest. Lord, what a wonderful, strange madness is this, that men, who look daily when sickness summons them, and death calls them away, and know they must presently enter upon unchangeable joy or pain, should yet live as uncertain what should be their doom, as if they had never heard of any such state; yea, and live as quietly and as merrily in this uncertainty as if all were made sure, and nothing ailed them, and there were no danger! Are these men alive or dead? Are they waking, or are they asleep? What do they think on? Where are their hearts? If they have but a weighty suit at law, how careful are they to know whether it will go for them or against them! If they were to be tried for their lives at an earthly judicature, how careful would they be to know whether they should be saved or condemned, especially if their care might surely save them! If they

[r] The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom; but the law bringeth fear. Therefore the knowledge of the law is the beginning of wisdom, and no man is wise without the law. They, therefore, that refuse the law are fools, and consequently atheists and ungodly. How then do some heretics say, that the law is evil, because Paul saith, "By the law is the knowledge of sin?" To whom I answer, The law did not make sin, but show it. Is not the law good when it teacheth and chastiseth, and is given as a schoolmaster to Christ? that while we are guided by the fear of castigation, we may be converted to the perfection, which is through Christ? Clemen. Alex. Stromat. lib. ii.

[s] Quocirca imprudenter faciunt qui durissima et παραδοξότατα primo proponunt, &c. Vide Zuinglium De Vera et Falsa Relig. de Scandalo, p. 403. Rom. xiv. 17; Tit. iii. 19; 1 Tim. i. 4; vi. 5; Phil. ii. 14.

be dangerously sick, they will inquire of the physician, What think you, sir; shall I escape, or no? But for the business of their salvation, they are content to be uncertain. If you ask most men a reason of their hopes to be saved, they will say, It is because God is merciful, and Christ died for sinners; and the like general reasons, which any man in the world may give as well as they: but put them to prove their special interest in Christ, and the special saving mercy of God, and they can say nothing to the purpose at all; or, at least, nothing out of their hearts and experience, but only out of their reading or invention. Men are desirous to know all things, save God and themselves; they will travel over sea and land to know the situation of countries, and customs of the world; they will go to schools and universities, and turn over multitudes of books, and read and study from year to year, to know the creatures, and to be expert in the sciences; they will go apprentice seven years to learn a trade, which they may live by here; and yet they never read the book of conscience, nor study the state of their own souls, that they may make sure of living for ever. If God should ask them for their souls, as he did Cain for his brother Abel, they could return but such an answer as he did. If God or man should say to them, What case is thy soul in, man? Is it regenerate, and sanctified, and pardoned, or no? Is it in a state of life, or a state of death? He would be ready to say, I know not; am I my soul's keeper? I hope well, I trust God with my soul, and trouble not myself with any such thoughts: I shall speed as well as other men do, and so I will put it to the venture: I thank God I never made any doubt of my salvation. *Answ.* Thou hast the more cause to doubt a great deal, because thou never didst doubt; and yet more because thou hast been so careless in thy confidence. What do these expressions discover, but a wilful neglect of thy own salvation? As a shipmaster that should let his vessel alone, and mind other matters, and say, I will venture it among the rocks, and sands, and gulfs, and waves, and winds; I will never trouble myself to know whether it shall come safe to the harbour; I will trust God with it; it will speed as well as other men's vessels do?[a] Indeed, as well as other men's that are as careless and idle, but not so well as other men's that are diligent and watchful. What horrible abuse of God is this, for men to pretend that they trust God with their souls only to cloak their own wilful negligence! If thou didst truly trust God, thou wouldst also be ruled by him, and trust him in that way which he hath appointed thee, and upon those terms on which he hath promised thee help. He requires thee to give all diligence to make thy calling and election sure, and so to trust him, 2 Pet. i. 10. He hath lined thee out a way in Scripture, by which thou mayst come to be sure; and charged thee to search and try thyself, till thou certainly know. Were he not a foolish traveller that would hold on his way when he doth not know whether it be right or wrong, and say, I hope I am right; I will not doubt of it; I will go on, and trust God? Art not thou guilty of this folly in thy travels to eternity? Not considering that a little serious inquiry and trial, whether thy way be right, might save thee a great deal of labour which thou bestowest in vain, and must undo again, or else thou wilt miss of salvation, and undo thyself. If thou shouldst see a man in despair, or that were certain to be damned for ever when he is dead, wouldst thou not look upon such a man as a pitiful object? Why, thou that livest in wilful uncertainty, and dost not know whether thou shalt be saved or no, art in the next condition to such a person; for aught thou knowest to the contrary, thy case hereafter may be as bad as his. I know not what thou thinkest of thy own state; but, for my part, did I not know what a desperate, blind, dead piece a carnal heart is, I should wonder how thou dost to forget thy misery, and to keep off continual terrors from thy heart; and especially in these cases following:

1. I wonder how thou canst either think or speak of the dreadful God, without exceeding terror and astonishment, as long as thou art uncertain whether he be thy father or thy enemy, and knowest not but all his attributes may be employed against thee. If his saints must rejoice before him with trembling, and serve him in fear; if they that are sure to receive the immovable kingdom, must yet serve God "with reverence and godly fear," because he "is a consuming fire;" how then should the remembrance of him be terrible to them that know not but this fire may for ever consume them!

2. How dost thou think, without trembling, upon Jesus Christ, when thou knowest not whether his blood hath purged thy soul, or not; and whether he will condemn thee or acquit thee in judgment; nor whether he be set for thy rising or for thy fall, Luke ii. 34; nor whether he be the corner-stone and foundation of thy happiness, or a stone of stumbling to break thee, and grind thee to powder, Matt. xxi. 44. Methinks thou shouldst still be in that tune, as Job xxxi. 23, "Destruction from God is a terror to me, and by reason of his highness I cannot endure."

3. How canst thou open the Bible, and read a chapter, or hear a chapter read, but it should terrify thee? Methinks every leaf should be to thee as Belshazzar's writing upon the wall, except only that which draws thee to try and reform, Dan. v. 5, 6. If thou read the promises, thou knowest not whether ever they shall be fulfilled to thee, because thou art uncertain of thy performance of the condition. If thou read the threatenings, for any thing thou knowest, thou dost read thy own sentence. I do not wonder if thou art an enemy to plain preaching; and if thou say of it, and of the minister and Scripture itself, as Ahab of the prophet, "I hate him, for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil," 1 Kings xxii. 8.

4. I wonder how thou canst, without terror, approach God in prayer, or any duty. When thou callest him thy Father, thou knowest not whether thou speak true or false. When thou needest him in thy sickness, or other extremity, thou knowest not whether thou hast a friend to go to, or an enemy. When thou receivest the sacrament, thou knowest not whether thou takest thy blessing or thy bane. And who would wilfully live such a life as this?

5. What comfort canst thou find in any thing which thou possessest? Methinks, friends, and honours, and houses, and lands, should do thee little good, till thou know that thou hast the love of God withal, and shalt have rest with him when thou leavest these. Offer to a prisoner, before he know his sentence, either music, or clothes, or lands, or preferment, and what cares he for any of these, till

[a] It is not in external shape and figure that christians differ from other men: as if they were like the world in mind and thought, in disturbance and instability, in credulity, confusion, and perturbation, and fears, wherewith the minds of all others are distempered, as some think they are. These (that so think) do differ themselves from the world but in opinion and outside, and some external good deeds; but in heart and mind being entangled in earthly snares, they have not attained the divine rest, and heavenly peace, of the Spirit in their hearts; because they sought it not of God, nor approved themselves worthy or meet for it. Macar. Hom. 5. Psal. ii. 6—9; Heb. xii. 28, 29.

he know how he shall escape for his life? and then he will look after these comforts of life, and not before; for he knows if he must die the next day it will be small comfort to die rich or honourable. Methinks it should be so with thee, till thou know thine eternal state. Dost not thou, as Ezek. xii. 18, "eat thy bread with quaking, and drink thy drink with trembling and carefulness;" and say, Alas! though I have these to refresh my body now, yet I know not what I shall have hereafter? Even when thou liest down to take thy rest, methinks the uncertainty of thy salvation should keep thee waking, or amaze thee in thy dreams, and trouble thy sleep; and thou shouldst say, as Job in a smaller distress than thine, "When I say, My bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint; then thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me through visions," Job vii. 13, 14.

6. Doth it not grieve thee to see the people of God so comfortable, when thou hast none thyself; and to think of the glory which they shall inherit, when thou hast no assurance thyself of ever enjoying it?

7. What shift dost thou make to think of thy dying hour? Thou knowest it is near, and there is no avoiding it, nor any medicine found out that can prevent it. Thou knowest it is the "king of terrors," (Job xviii. 14,) and the very inlet to thine unchangeable state. The godly that have some assurance of their future welfare, have yet much ado to submit to it willingly, and find that to die comfortably is a very difficult work. How then canst thou think of it without astonishment, who hast got no assurance of the rest to come? If thou shouldst die this day, (and "who knows what a day may bring forth?" Prov. xxvii. 1,) thou dost not know whether thou shalt go straight to heaven or to hell: and canst thou be merry till thou art got out of this dangerous state? Methinks that in Deut. xxviii. 25—27, should be the looking-glass of thy heart.

8. What shift dost thou make to preserve thy heart from horror, when thou rememberest the great judgment day, and the everlasting flames? Dost thou not tremble as Felix, when thou hearest of it, Acts xxiv. 25; and as the elders of the town trembled when Samuel came in, saying, "Comest thou peaceably?" 1 Sam. xvi. 4. So methinks thou shouldst do when the minister comes into the pulpit; and thy heart, whenever thou meditatest of that day, should meditate terror, (Isa. xxxiii. 18,) and thou shouldst even be a terror to thyself, and all thy friends, Jer. xx. 4. If the keepers trembled and became as dead men, when they did but see the angels, (Matt. xxviii. 3, 4,) how canst thou think of living in hell with devils till thou hast got some sound assurance that thou shalt escape it? Or, if thou seldom think of these things, the wonder is as great, what shift thou makest to keep those thoughts from thy heart, and to live so quietly in so doleful a state? Thy bed is very soft, or thy heart is very hard, if thou canst sleep soundly in this uncertain case.

I have showed thee the danger, let me next proceed to show thee the remedy.

If this general uncertainty of the world about their salvation, were constrained or remediless, then must it be borne as other unavoidable miseries, and it were unmeet either to reprove them for it, or dissuade them from it; but, alas! the common cause is wilfulness and negligence. Men will not be persuaded to use the remedy, though it be easy, and at hand, prescribed to them by God himself, and all necessary helps thereunto provided for them. The great means to conquer this uncertainty, is self-examination, or the serious and diligent trying of a man's heart and state by the rule of Scripture. The Scripture tells us plainly who shall be saved, and who shall not: so that if men would but first search the word, to find out who be these men that shall have rest, and what be their properties by which they may be known; and then next search carefully their own hearts, till they find whether they are those men or not; how could they choose but come to some certainty?[b] But, alas! either men understand not the nature and use of this duty, or else they will not be at the pains to try. Go through a congregation of a thousand men, and how few of them shall you meet with, that ever bestowed one hour in all their lives in a close examination of their title to heaven! Ask thy own conscience, reader, when was the time, and where was the place, that ever thou solemnly tookest thy heart to task, as in the sight of God, and examinedst it by Scripture interrogatories, whether it be born again and renewed, or not; whether it be holy, or not; whether it be set most on God, or on creatures; on heaven, or on earth; and didst follow on this examination till thou hadst discovered thy condition, and so passed sentence on thyself accordingly.

But because this is a work of so high concernment, and so commonly neglected, and men's souls do so much languish every where under this neglect, I will, therefore, though it be digressive, 1. Show you that it is possible, by trying, to come to a certainty; 2. Show you the hinderances that keep men from trying, and from assurance; 3. I will lay down some motives to persuade you to it; 4. I will give you some directions how you should perform it; 5. And lastly, I will lay you down some marks out of Scripture, by which you may try, and so come to an infallible certainty, whether you are the people of God, for whom this rest remaineth, or not. And to prepare the way to these, I will, a little, first open to you, what examination is, and what that certainty is, which we may expect to attain to.

Sect. II. This self-examination is, an inquiry into the course of our lives, but more especially into the inward acts of our souls, and trying of their sincerity by the word of God, and accordingly judging of our real and relative estate. Definition of examination.

So that examination containeth several acts: 1. There must be the trial of the physical truth, or sincerity of our acts; that is, an inquiry after the very being of them; as whether there be such an act as belief, or desire, or love to God within us or no: this must be discovered by conscience, and the internal sense of the soul; whereby it is able to feel and perceive its own acts, and to know whether they be real or counterfeit.

2. The next is, the trial of the moral truth or sincerity of our acts; whether they are such as agree with the rule and the nature of their objects.[c] This is a

[b] The new creature, in all christians, doth differ from the men of this world, by the renovation of the mind, and the calmness of their thoughts, and the love of God, and the heavenly love. Macarius, Hom. lib. v.

[c] Some of our divines (beyond sea) are so foully mistaken in this, as to tell the papists confidently, that every man that hath true faith, doth know and feel it; not only that he hath faith, but that it is true and saving. Even judicious Testardus is peremptory here; and his learned neighbour Chamier avers: Hanc operationem Spiritus Sancti sentiri ab unoquoque in quo fiat, nec relinquere quenquam ignarum sui. De Fidei Objecto, tom. 3. lib. xiii. c. 2, 3. But our English divines in this point are the most sound of any in the world; being more exercised, I think, about doubting, tender consciences. You see practice discovereth some truth, which mere disputing loseth. Item Chamier. Pessime asserit, Ne-

discursive work of reason, comparing our acts with the rule; it implieth the former knowledge of the being of our acts, and it implieth the knowledge of Scripture in the point in question, and also the belief of the truth of Scripture. This moral, spiritual truth of our acts, is another thing, far different from the natural or physical truth; as far as a man's being differeth from his honesty. One man loveth his wife under the notion of a harlot, or only to satisfy his lust; another loveth his wife with a true, conjugal affection: the former is true, physical love, or true in point of being; but the latter only is true, moral love. The like may be said in regard of all the acts of the soul. There is a believing, loving, trusting, fearing, rejoicing, all true in point of being, and not counterfeit; which yet are false in point of morality and right being, and so no gracious acts at all.

3. The third thing contained in the work of self-examination, is, the judging or concluding of our real estate; that is, of the habitual temper or disposition of our hearts, by the quality of their acts; whether they are such acts as prove a habit of holiness, or only some slight disposition; or whether they are only, by some accident, enticed or enforced, and prove neither habit nor disposition. The like, also, of our evil acts. Now, the acts which prove a habit must be, 1. Free and cheerful; not constrained, or such as we had rather not do if we could help it. 2. Frequent; if there be opportunity. 3. Thorough and serious: where note also, that the trial of the soul's disposition by those acts, which make after the end, as desire, love, &c. to God, Christ, heaven, is always more necessary and more certain, than the trial of its disposition to the means only.

4. The last act in this examination, is to conclude or judge of our relative estate, from the former judgment of our acts and habits. As if we find sincere acts, we may conclude that we have the habits; so from both, we may conclude of our relation. So that our relations, or habits, are neither of them felt or known immediately, but must be gathered from the knowledge of our acts, which may be felt: as for example; 1. I inquire, whether I believe in Christ, or love God? 2. If I find that I do, then I inquire next, whether I do it sincerely, according to the rule and the nature of the object? 3. If I find that I do so, then I conclude that I am regenerate or sanctified. 4. And from both these, I conclude that I am pardoned, reconciled, justified, and adopted into sonship, and title to the inheritance. All this is done in a way of reasoning, thus:

1. He that believes in spiritual sincerity, or he that loves God in spiritual sincerity, is a regenerate man: but I do so believe and love; therefore, I am regenerate.

2. He that believes in sincerity, or he that is regenerate, for the conclusion will follow upon either, is also pardoned, justified, and adopted: but I do so believe, or I am regenerate; therefore, I am justified, &c.

Assurance what.

Sect. III. Thus you see what examination is. Now let us see what this certainty or assurance is; and indeed it is nothing else but the knowledge of the fore-mentioned conclusions, that we are sanctified, justified, shall be glorified, as they arise from the premises in the work of examination.

So that here you may observe, how immediately this assurance followeth the conclusion in examination, and so, how necessary examination is to the obtaining of assurance, and how conducible thereunto.

Also, that we are not speaking of the certainty of the object, or of the thing itself considered, but of the certainty of the subject, or of the thing to our knowledge.

Also you may observe, that before we can come to this certainty of the conclusion, That we are justified, and shall be glorified, there must be a certainty of the premises. And in respect of the major proposition, He that believeth sincerely, shall be justified and saved; there is requisite in us, 1. A certainty of knowledge; that such a proposition is written in Scripture. 2. A certainty of assent or faith; that this Scripture is the word of God, and true. Also, in respect of the minor proposition, But I do sincerely believe, or love, &c. there is requisite, 1. A certainty of the truth of our faith in point of being; 2. And a certainty of its truth in point of morality, or congruence with the rule, or its right being. And then followeth the assurance, which is the certainty that the conclusion, Therefore I am justified, &c. followeth necessarily upon the former premises.

Hereby also you must carefully distinguish betwixt the several degrees of assurance.[d] All assurance is not of the highest degree. It differs in strength, according to the different degrees of apprehension, in all the fore-mentioned points of certainty which are necessary thereunto. He that can truly raise the foresaid conclusion, that he is justified, &c. from the premises, hath some degree of assurance, though he do it with much weakness, and staggering, and doubting. The weakness of our assurance in any one point of the premises, will accordingly weaken our assurance in the conclusion.

Some, when they speak of certainty of salvation, do mean only such a certainty as excludeth all doubting, and think nothing else can be called certainty, but this high degree. Perhaps some papists mean this, when they deny a certainty. Some also maintain, that Saint Paul's plerophory, or full assurance, is the highest degree of assurance, and that some christians do in this life attain to it. But Paul calls it full assurance, in comparison of lower degrees, and not because it is perfect. For if assurance be perfect, then all our certainty of knowledge, faith and sense in the premises, must be perfect: and if some grace be perfect, why not all? And so we turn Novatians, Catharists, Perfectionists. Perhaps in some, their certainty may be so great that it may overcome all sensible doubting, or sensible stirrings of unbelief, by reason of the sweet and powerful acts and effects of that certainty; and yet it doth not overcome all unbelief and uncertainty, so as to expel or nullify them; but a certain measure of them remaineth still. Even as when you would heat cold water by the mixture

minem credere in Christum, qui non credat sibi remissa esse peccata, se esse justificatum. Ibid. c. 5, et pejus adhuc, tom. 3. lib. xiii. c. 6. sec. 14. Si plane cognoscere (nos esse prædestinatos) intelligas reminisci rem ita se habere, et certam esse, concedo. Hoc enim fides habet vera, nec est vera si non habet. When a papist discovers one or two such, oh how it hardens them against all our doctrine, and makes them read all the rest with invincible prejudice; even as we suspect the more all theirs, because of those errors that we palpably discern. Nec melius magnus Calvinus Institut. lib. iii. c. 2. sect. 16. Fidelis non est nisi qui suæ salutis securitati innixus, diabolo et morti confidenter insultet. Sic alibi passim, et ipse, et Lutherus, et alii plurimi. Vere fidelis non est nisi qui solida persuasione Deum sibi propitium benevolumque patrem esse persuasus, de ejus benignitate omnia sibi pollicetur: nisi qui divinæ erga se benevolentiæ promissionibus fretus, indubitatam salutis expectationem præsumit. Id. ib. At hæc in sect. 17. mollificat Calvinus, haud sane tamen judicans fidei naturam in certitudine hac positam esse, etsi concedit eam tentationibus et inquietudine aliquando esse impetitam.

[d] Vide Greg. De Valen. tom. ii. disp. 8. q. 4. punct. 4.

of hot, you may pour in the hot so long till no coldness is felt, and yet the water may be far from the highest degree of heat. So faith may suppress the sensible stirrings of unbelief, and certainty prevail against all the trouble of uncertainty, and yet be far from the highest degree.

So that by this which is said, you may answer the question, What certainty is to be attained in this life; and what certainty it is that we press men to labour for and expect?

Furthermore; you must be sure to distinguish betwixt assurance itself, and the joy, and strength, and other sweet effects which follow assurance, or which immediately accompany it.

It is possible that there may be assurance, and yet no comfort, or little. There are many unskilful, but self-conceited disputers of late, better to manage a club than an argument, who tell us, that it must be the Spirit that must assure us of salvation, and not our marks and evidences of grace; that our comfort must not be taken from any thing in ourselves; that our justification must be immediately believed, and not proved by our signs of sanctification,[e] &c. Of these in order. 1. It is as wise a question to ask, Whether our assurance come from the Spirit, or our evidence, or our faith, &c. as to ask, Whether it be our meat, or our stomach, our teeth, or our hands, that feed us? or whether it be our eye-sight, or the sun-light, by which we see things? They are distinct causes, all necessary to the producing of the same effect.

So that, by what hath been said, you may discern that the Spirit, and knowledge, and faith, and Scripture, and inward holiness and reason, and inward sense of conscience, have all several parts and necessary uses in producing our assurance; which I will show you distinctly.

1. To the Spirit belong these particulars. 1. He hath indited those Scriptures which contain the promise of our pardon and salvation. 2. He giveth us the habit or power of believing. 3. He helpeth us also to believe actually, that the word is true, and to receive Christ and the privileges offered in the promise. 4. He worketh in us those graces, and exciteth those gracious acts with us, which are the evidences[f] or marks of our interest to pardon and life: he helpeth us to perform those acts which God hath made to be the condition of pardon and glory. 5. He helpeth us to feel and discover these acts in ourselves. 6. He helpeth us to compare them with the rule, and finding out their qualifications, to judge of their sincerity and acceptation with God. 7. He helpeth our reason to conelude rightly of our state from our acts. He enliveneth and heighteneth our apprehension in these particulars, that our assurance may accordingly be strong and lively. 8. He exciteth our joy, and filleth with comfort (when he pleaseth) upon this assurance. None of all these could we perform well of ourselves.

2. The part which the Scripture hath in this work, is, 1. It affordeth us the major proposition, that whosoever believeth sincerely shall be saved. 2. It is the rule by which our acts must be tried, that we may judge of their moral truth.

3. The part that knowledge hath in it, is to know that the foresaid proposition is written in Scripture.

4. The work of faith is to believe the truth of that Scripture, and to be the matter of one of our chief evidences.

5. Our holiness, and true faith, as they are marks and evidences, are the very medium of our argument, from which we conclude.

6. Our conscience and internal sense do acquaint us with both the being and qualifications of our inward acts, which are this medium, and which are called marks.

7. Our reason, or discourse, is necessary to form the argument, and raise the conclusion from the premises; and to compare our acts with the rule, and judge of the sincerity, &c.

So that you see our assurance is not an effect of any one single cause alone.[g] And so neither merely of faith, by signs, nor by the Spirit.

From all this you may gather,[h] 1. What the seal of the Spirit is, to wit, the works or fruits of the Spirit in us. 2. What the testimony of the Spirit is (for if it be not some of the fore-mentioned acts, I yet know it not). 3. What the testimony of conscience is.

And, if I be not mistaken, the testimony of the Spirit, and the testimony of conscience, are two concurrent testimonies, or causes, to produce one and the same effect, and to afford the premises to the same conclusion, and then to raise our joy thereupon; so that they may well be said to witness together. Not one laying down the entire conclusion of itself, "that we are the children of God;" and then the other attesting the same entirely again of itself: but as concurrent causes to the same numerical conclusion.

But this with submission to better judgments and further search.

By this also you may see, that the common distinction of certainty of adherence, and certainty of evidence, must be taken with a grain or two of salt.[i] For there is no certainty without evidence, any more than there is a conclusion without a medium. A small degree of certainty hath some small glimpse of evidence. Indeed, 1. The assent to the truth of a promise, 2. And the acceptation of Christ offered with his benefits, are both before and without any sight or consideration of evidence, and are themselves our best evidence,[k] being that faith which is the con-

[e] That it is not properly any act of faith at all (much less the justifying act) to believe that my sins are pardoned, or that Christ died in a special sense for me, or that I am a believer, or that I shall be saved—besides what I have said in the Appendix to my Aphorisms of Justification, I refer you for satisfaction to judicious M. A. Wotton De Reconcil. part 1. lib. ii. c. 15. n. 3—8, p. 87—90, &c

[f] I use the word evidence all along in the vulgar sense as the same with signs, and not in the proper sense as the schools do.

[g] Therefore that saying of Cajetan is not so much to be valued, as by some of our divines it is. Certitudine fidei quilibet scit certo se habere donum infusum fidei, idque absque formidine alterius partis. Except he take *certitudo fidei* in a very large, improper sense.

[h] Read Gataker's Shadows without Substance, p. 83, 84, who opens this solidly, as he useth in other things. Sed cave de doctrina quam plurimorum theologorum, qui testimonium Spiritus Sancti intelligunt esse per specierum infusionem, et non per intellectus emendativam illuminationem. Ita vir alioquin magnus, Chamierus, tom. 3. lib. xiii. c. 17. s. 5. ait, haud tute, Hoc (Sp. testimonium) dico esse verbum Dei. Et ita appellari in Scripturis: in quibus revelationes illæ, quæ fiebant prophetis, per internum et arcanum motum Spiritus perpetuo appellantur nomine verbi Dei: nec differebat ab ista energia, nisi modo: quia, viz. in prophetis erat extraordinarius, at iu fidelibus ordinarius. But you may most clearly see the nature of the Spirit's testimony in the most excellent discourses of two learned men in another case, i. e. Rob. Baron. Apol. p. 733; and Amyraldus in Thes. Sal. vol. i. p. 122.

[i] The distinction used in the schools, of *certitudo fidei*, and *certitudo evidentiæ*, I deny not: but that hath a quite different sense from this as it is used.

[k] Therefore I say not that our first comfort, much less our justification, is procured by the sight of evidences; but our assurance is.

dition of our justification; but before any man can, in the least assurance, conclude that he is the child of God, and justified, he must have some assurance of that mark or evidence. For who can conclude absolutely that he will receive the thing contained in a conditional promise, till he know that he hath performed the condition? For those that say, There is no condition of the new covenant, I think them not worthy a word of confutation.

And for their assertion,[l] "that we are bound immediately to believe that we are justified, and in special favour with God;" it is such as no man of competent knowledge in the Scripture, and belief of its truth, can once imagine. For if every man must believe this, then most must believe a lie, for they shall never be justified, yea, all must at first believe a lie; for they are not justified till they believe; and the believing that they are justified, is not the faith that justifieth them. If only some men must believe this, how should it be known who they be? The truth is, that we are justified, is not properly to be believed at all; for nothing is to be believed which is not written: but it is no where written that you or I are justified: only one of these premises is written, from whence we may draw the conclusion, that we are justified, if so be that our own hearts do afford us the other of the premises. So that our actual justification is not a matter of mere faith, but a conclusion from faith and conscience together. If God have no where promised to any man justification immediately, without condition, then no man can believe it: but God hath no where promised it absolutely; therefore, &c. Nor hath he declared to any man, that is not first a believer, that he loveth him with any more than a common love; therefore, no more can be believed but a common love to any such. For the eternal love and election are manifest to no man before he is a believer.

Sect. IV. 2. Having thus showed you what examination is, and what assurance is, I come to the second thing promised, to show you, that such an infallible certainty of salvation may be attained, and ought to be laboured for, though a perfect certainty cannot here be attained: and that examination is the means to attain it. In which I shall be the briefer, because many writers against the papists on this point, have said enough already.[m] Yet somewhat I will say: 1. Because it is the common conceit of the ignorant vulgar, that an infallible certainty cannot be attained. 2. And many have taught and printed that it is only the testimony of the Spirit that can assure us; and that this proving our justification by our sanctification, and searching after marks and signs in ourselves for the procuring of assurance, is a dangerous and deceitful way. Thus we have the papists, the antinomians, and the ignorant vulgar, conspiring against this doctrine of assurance and examination. Which I maintain against them by these arguments.

1. Scripture tells us we may know, and that the saints before us have known their justification, and future salvation, 2 Cor. v. 1; Rom. viii. 36; John xxi. 15; 1 John v. 19; iv. 13; iii. 14—24; ii. 3—5; Rom. viii. 14, 19, 36; Eph. iii. 12. I refer you to the places for brevity.

2. If we may be certain of the premises, then may we also be certain of the undeniable conclusion of them. But here we may be certain of both the premises. For, 1. "That whosoever believeth in Christ shall not perish, but shall have everlasting life," is the voice of the gospel; and therefore that we may be sure of; that we are such believers, may be known by conscience and internal sense. I know all the question is this, whether the moral truth or sincerity of our faith, and other graces, can be known thus or not? And that it may, I prove thus:

1. From the natural use of this conscience, and internal sense, which is to acquaint us not only with the being, but the qualifications of the acts of our souls. All voluntary motions are sensible, and though the heart is so deceitful, that no man can certainly know the heart of another, and with much difficulty clearly know his own; yet, by diligent observation and examination, known they may be; for though our inward sense and conscience may be depraved, yet not extirpated, or quite extinguished.

2. The commands of believing, repenting, &c. were in vain, especially as the condition of the covenant, if we could not know whether we perform them or not.

3. The Scripture would never make such a wide difference between the godly and the wicked, the children of God and the children of the devil, and set forth the happiness of the one and the misery of the other so largely, and make this difference to run through all the veins of its doctrine, if a man cannot know which of these two estates he is in.

4. Much less would the Holy Ghost bid us "give all diligence to make our calling and election sure," if it could not be done, 2 Pet. i. 10. And that this is not meant of objective certainty, but of the subjective, appeareth in this; that the apostle mentioneth not salvation, or any thing to come, but calling and election, which to believers were objectively certain before, as being both past.

5. And to what purpose should we be so earnestly urged to examine, and prove, and try ourselves, whether we be in the faith, and whether Christ be in us, or we be reprobates? 1 Cor. xi. 28; 2 Cor. xiii. 5. Why should we search for that which cannot be found?

6. How can we obey those precepts which require us to rejoice always? 1 Thess. v. 16: to call God our Father, Luke xi. 12: to live in his praises, Psal. xlix. 1—5: and to long for Christ's coming, Rev. xxii. 17, 20; 1 Thess. i. 10; and to comfort ourselves with the mention of it, 2 Thess. iv. 18: which are all the consequents of assurance. Who can do any of these heartily, that is not in some measure sure that he is the child of God?

7. There are some duties that either the saints only, or chiefly, are commanded to perform; and how shall that be done, if we cannot know that we are saints? Psal. cxliv. 5; cxxxii. 9; xxx. 4; xxxi. 23, &c.

Thus I have proved that a certainty may be attained; an infallible, though not a perfect certainty;

[l] Their common error, that justifying faith is nothing else but a persuasion, more or less, of the love of God to us, is the root of this and many more mistakes. To justify us, and to assure us that we are justified, are quite different things, and procured by different ways, and at several times, usually. Pessime etiam doctiss. Keckerm. System. Theol. lib. iii. c. 7. s. 7. asserit, Quod statim eo momento quo absolutio ejusmodi sit, cordibus electorum Deus immittit Nuncium illum scientiæ latæ, viz. Spiritum Sanctum, qui eos de gratia Dei certos reddat, atque ita conscientiæ pacem ipsis conciliat. Ita et p. 417, seq. Et eodem modo plurimi transmarin. theolog. Vid. Aquin. ad 1. sent. dist. 15. art. 1—3. q. 112, et Scotum ad 3; sent. dist. 23. q. unica. Bonavent. 1. sent. q. 17. Biel in 2. sent. dist. 27. q. 3.

[m] Yet I believe that their divines have some of them made the difference betwixt us and the papists seem wider than it is, as do these words of one of them: Ex hoc unico articulo quantumvis minuto a plerisque reputari queat, universus papatus et Lutheranismus dependet. Martinus Eisengrenius initio Apol. de Cer. Salv. And so have some of our divines on the other side, as Luther in Gen. 41. Etiamsi nihil præterea peccatum esset in doctrina pontificia, justas habemus causas eur ab ecclesia infideli nos sejungeremus.

such as excludeth deceit, though it excludeth not all degrees of doubting. If Bellarmine, by his conjectural certainty, do mean this infallible though imperfect certainty, (as I doubt he doth not,) then I would not much contend with him: and I acknowledge that it is not properly a certainty of mere faith, but mixed.

Hinderances of examination.

Sect. V. 3. The third thing that I promised, is, to show you what are the hinderances which keep men from examination and assurance. I shall, 1. Show what hinders them from trying. And, 2. What hindereth them from knowing, when they do try: that so, when you see the impediments, you may avoid them.

1. Satan.

And, 1. We cannot doubt but Satan will do his part, to hinder us from such a necessary duty as this: if all the power he hath can do it, or all the means and instruments which he can raise up, he will be sure above all duties to keep you off from this. He is loth the godly should have that joy, and assurance, and advantage, against corruption, which the faithful performance of self examination would procure them. And for the ungodly, he knows, if they should once fall close to this examining task, they would find out his deceits, and their own danger, and so be very likely to escape him; if they did but faithfully perform this duty, he were likely to lose most of the subjects of his kingdom. How could he get so many millions to hell willingly, if they knew they went thither? And how could they choose but know, if they did thoroughly try, having such a clear light and sure rule in the Scripture, to discover it? If the beast did know that he is going to the slaughter, he would not be driven so easily to it, but would strive for his life before he comes to die, as well as he doth at the time of his death. If Balaam had seen as much of the danger as his ass, instead of his driving on so furiously, he would have been as loth to proceed as he. If the Syrians had known whither they were going, as well as Elisha did, they would have stopped before they found themselves in the hands of their enemies, 2 Kings vi. 19, 20. So, if sinners did but know whither they were hasting, they would stop before they are ingulfed in damnation. If every swearer, drunkard, whoremonger, lover of the world, or unregenerate person whatsoever, did certainly know that the way he is in will never bring him to heaven, and that if he die in it he shall undoubtedly perish, Satan could never get him to proceed so resolvedly. Alas! he would then think every day a year till he were out of the danger; and whether he were eating, drinking, working, or whatever he were doing, the thoughts of his danger would be still in his mind, and this voice would be still in his ears, "Except thou repent and be converted, thou shalt surely perish." The devil knows well enough, that if he cannot keep men from trying their states, and knowing their misery, he shall hardly be able to keep them from repentance and salvation. And, therefore, he deals with them as Jael with Sisera; she gives him fair words, and food, and layeth him to sleep, and covereth his face, and then she comes upon him softly and strikes the nail into his temples, Judges iv. 19. And as the Philistines with Samson, who first put out his eyes, and then made him grind in their mills, Judges xvi. 21. If the pit be not covered, who but the blind will fall into it? If the snare be not hid, the bird will escape it: Satan knows how to angle for souls better than to show them the hook or line, and to fright them away with a noise, or with his own appearance.

Therefore, he labours to keep them from a searching ministry; or to keep the minister from helping them to search; or to take off the edge of the word, that it may not pierce and divide; or to turn away their thoughts, or to possess them with prejudice. Satan is acquainted with all the preparations and studies of the minister; he knows when he hath provided a searching sermon, fitted to the state and necessity of a hearer; and therefore he will keep him away that day, if it be possible, above all, or else cast him asleep, or steal away the word by the cares and talk of the world, or some way prevent its operation, and the sinner's obedience.

This is the first hinderance.

Sect. VI. Wicked men also are great impediments to poor sinners when they should examine and discover their estates. 1. Their examples hinder much.[n] When an ignorant sinner seeth all his friends and neighbours do as he doth, and live quietly in the same state with himself, yea, the rich and learned as well as others, this is an exceeding great temptation to him to proceed in his security. 2. Also, the merry company and pleasant discourse of these men, doth take away the thoughts of his spiritual state, and doth make the understanding drunk with their sensual delight: so that if the Spirit had before put into them any jealousy of themselves, or any purpose to try themselves, this jovial company doth soon quench them all. 3. Also, their continual discourse of nothing but matters of the world, doth damp all these purposes for self-trying, and make them forgotten. 4. Their railings also, and scorning at godly persons, is a very great impediment to multitudes of souls, and possesseth them with such a prejudice and dislike of the way to heaven, that they settle resolvedly in the way that they are in.[o] 5. Also, their constant persuasions, allurements, threats, &c. hinder much. God doth scarce ever open the eyes of a poor sinner, to see that all is naught with him, and his way is wrong, but presently there is a multitude of Satan's apostles ready to flatter him, and daub, and deceive, and settle him again in the quiet possession of his former master. What, say they, do you make a doubt of your salvation, who have lived so well, and done nobody harm, and been beloved of all? God is merciful; and if such as you shall not be saved, God help a great many: what do you think is become of all your forefathers? and what will become of all your friends and neighbours that live as you do: will they all be damned; shall none be saved, think you, but a few strict precisians? Come, come, if ye hearken to these books or preachers, they will drive you to despair shortly, or drive you out of your wits: they must have something to say: they would have all like themselves: are not all men sinners; and did not Christ die to save sinners? Never trouble your head with these thoughts, but believe and you shall do well.[p] Thus

[n] At hic tritissima quæque via et celeberrima maxime decipit. Nihil ergo magis præstandum est, quam ne pecorum ritu sequamur antecedentium gregem, pergentes non qua eundum est, sed qua itur. Nulla res nos majoribus malis implicat, quam quod ad rumorem componimur; optima rati ea, quæ magno assensu recepta sunt, quorumcunque exempla multa sunt: nec ad rationem, sed ad similitudinem vivimus. Inde ista tanta coacervatio aliorum super alios ruentium. Quod in strage hominum magna evenit, cum ipse se populus premit, nemo ita cadit, ut non alium in se attrahat; primi exitio sequentibus sunt. Nemo sibi tantum errat, sed alieni erroris causa et autor est. Seneca de Vita Beat. c. 1.

[o] Read on this subject Mr. Young's books, which handle it fully.

[p] Omnem operam dedi, ut me multitudini educerem, et aliqua dote notabilem facerem. Quid aliud quam telis me opposui, et malevolentiæ quod morderet ostendi? Seneca de Vita Beat. c. 2. You see among the very heathens goodness had still the most enemies.

do they follow the soul that is escaping from Satan, with restless cries, till they have brought him back: oh, how many thousands have such charms kept asleep in deceit and security, till death and hell have awakened and better informed them! The Lord calls to the sinner, and tells him, "The gate is strait, the way is narrow, and few find it: try and examine whether thou be in faith or no: give all diligence to make sure in time," Luke xiii. 34; 2 Cor. xiii. 5; 2 Pet. i. 10. And the world cries out clean contrary; Never doubt, never trouble yourselves with these thoughts. I entreat the sinner that is in this strait to consider, that it is Christ, and not their fathers, or mothers, or neighbours, or friends, that must judge them at last; and if Christ condemn them, these cannot save them: and therefore common reason may tell them, that it is not from the words of ignorant men, but from the word of God, that they must fetch their comforts and hopes of salvation. When Ahab would inquire among the multitudes of flattering prophets, it was his death. They can flatter men into the snare, but they cannot tell how to bring them out. O, take the counsel of the Holy Ghost, "Let no man deceive you with vain words; for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience: be not ye therefore partakers with them," Ephes. v. 6, 7: and, "Save yourselves from this untoward generation," Acts ii. 40.

3. But the greatest hinderances are in men's own hearts.

Sect. VII. 1. Some are so ignorant that they know not what self-examination is, nor what a minister means when he persuadeth them to try themselves; or they know not that there is any necessity of it; but think every man is bound to believe[q] that God is his Father, and that his sins are pardoned, whether it be true or false; and that it were a great fault to make any question of it: or, they do not think that assurance can be attained, or that there is any such great difference betwixt one man and another; but that we are all christians, and therefore need not to trouble ourselves any further; or, at least, they know not wherein the difference lies, nor how to set upon the searching of their heart, nor to find out its secret motions, and to judge accordingly. They have as gross conceits of that regeneration, which they must search for, as Nicodemus had, John iii. 5. And when they should try whether the Spirit be in them, they are like those that "knew not whether there were a Holy Ghost to be reeeived or no," Acts xix. 2.

2. Some are such infidels that they will not believe that ever God will make such a difference betwixt men in the life to come, and therefore will not search themselves whether they differ here: though judgment and resurrection be in their creed, yet they are not in their faith.

3. Some are so dead-hearted, that they perceive not how nearly it doth concern them; let us say what we can to them, they lay it not to heart, but give us the hearing, and there is an end.

4. Some are so possessed with self-love and pride, that they will not so much as suspect any such danger to themselves. Like a proud tradesman, who scorns the motion when his friends desire him to cast up his books, because they are afraid he will break. As some fond parents, that have an overweening conceit of their own children, and therefore will not believe or hear any evil of them. Such a fond self-love doth hinder men from suspecting and trying their states.

5. Some are so guilty that they dare not try. They are so fearful that they shall find their states unsound, that they dare not search into them: and yet they dare venture them to a more dreadful trial.

6. Some are so far in love with their sin, and so far in dislike with the way of God, that they dare not fall on the trial of their ways, lest they be forced from the course which they love to that which they loathe.

7. Some are so resolved already never to change their present state, that they neglect examination as a useless thing. Before they will turn so precise, and seek a new way, when they have lived so long, and gone so far, they will put their eternal state to the venture, come of it what will. And when a man is fully resolved to hold on his way, and not to turn back, be it right or wrong, to what end should he inquire whether he be right or no?

8. Most men are so taken up with their worldly affairs, and are so busy in driving the trade of providing for the flesh, that they cannot set themselves to the trying of their title to heaven. They have another kind of happiness in their eye, which they are pursuing, which will not suffer them to make sure of heaven.

9. Most men are so clogged with a laziness and slothfulness of spirit, that they will not be persuaded to be at the pains of an hour's examination of their own hearts. It requireth some labour and diligence to accomplish it thoroughly, and they will rather venture all than set about it.

10. But the most common and dangerous impediment is that false faith and hope, commonly called presumption, which bears up the hearts of the most of the world, and so keeps them from suspecting their danger.

Thus you see what abundance of difficulties must be overcome before a man can closely set upon the examining of his heart. I do but name them for brevity sake.

Hinderances which keep many that do examine, from attaining strong assurance, and cause many to be deceived.

Sect. VIII. And if a man do break through all these impediments, and set upon the duty, yet assurance is not presently attained. Of those few who do inquire after marks and means of assurance, and bestow some pains to learn the difference between the sound christian and the unsound, and look often into their own hearts; yet divers are deceived, and do miscarry, especially through these following causes:

1. There is such a confusion and darkness in the soul of man, especially of an unregenerate man, that he can scarcely tell what he doth, or what is in him. As one can hardly find any thing in a house where nothing keeps his place, but all is cast on a heap together; so is it in the heart where all things are in disorder, especially when darkness is added to this disorder: so that the heart is like an obscure cave or dungeon, where there is but a little crevice of light, and a man must rather grope than see. No wonder if men mistake in searching such a heart, and so miscarry in judging of their estate.

2. And the rather, because most men do accustom themselves to be strangers at home, and are little taken up with observing the temper and motions of their own hearts. All their studies are employed without them, and they are no where less acquainted than in their own breasts.

[q] Or, as Mr. Saltmarsh saith, every man is bound to believe, but no man to question whether he believe or no. p. 92, 93. And this faith, he saith, is being persuaded more or less of Christ's love, p. 94. So that by this doctrine every man is bound to believe that Christ loveth him, and not to question his belief: if it were only Christ's common love, he might thus believe it, but a special love to him is no where written.

3. Besides, many come to the work with forestalling conclusions: they are resolved what to judge before they try: they use the duty but to strengthen their present conceits of themselves, and not find out the truth of their condition; like a bribed judge, who examines each party as if he would judge uprightly, when he is resolved which way the cause shall go beforehand; or, as perverse disputers, who argue only to maintain their present opinions rather than to try those opinions whether they are right or wrong. Just so do men examine their hearts.

4. Also, men are partial in their own cause. They are ready to think their great sins small, and their small sins to be none; their gifts of nature to be the work of grace, and their gifts of common grace to be the special grace of the saints. They are straightway ready to say, "All these have I kept from my youth; and I am rich and increased," &c. Matt. xix. 20; Rev. iii. 17. The first common excellency that they meet with in themselves, doth so dazzle their eyes, that they are presently satisfied that all is well, and look no further.

5. Besides, most men do search but by the halves.[r] If it will not easily and quickly be done, they are discouraged, and leave off. Few set to it, and follow it, as beseems them in a work of such moment. He must give all diligence that means to make sure.

6. Also, men try themselves by false marks and rules, not knowing wherein the truth of christianity doth consist; some looking beyond, and some short of the Scripture standard.

7. Moreover, there is so great likeness between the lowest degree of special grace, and the highest degree of common grace, that it is no wonder if the unskilful be mistaken. It is a great question, whether the main difference between special grace and common be not rather gradual than specifical. If it should be so, as some think, then the discovery will be much more difficult. However, to discern by what principle our affections are moved, and to what ends, and with what sincerity, is not very easy; there being so many wrong ends and motives, which may exeite the like acts. Every grace in the saints hath its counterfeit in the hypocrite.

8. Also, men use to try themselves by unsafe marks; either looking for a high degree of grace, instead of a lower degree in sincerity, as many doubting christians do; or else inquiring only into their outward actions, or into their inward affections, without their ends, motives, and other qualifications: the sure evidences are, faith, love, &c. that are essential parts of our christianity, and that be nearest to the heart.

9. Lastly: Men frequently miscarry in this working, by setting on it in their own strength. As some expect the Spirit should do it without them, so others attempt it themselves, without seeking or expecting the help of the Spirit. Both these will certainly miscarry in their assurance. How far the Spirit's assistance is necessary, is showed before, and the several acts which it must perform for us.

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[r] I doubt not but a protestant, upon a dogmatical faith or belief of his tenets and principles, might, among papists, die upon them, and yet come far short of salvation. How far would the name of Abraham have carried a Jew, in letter? Mr. Vines' Sermons, Numb. xiv. 24. p. 29.

[a] You sit poring and searching for pillars of hope within you, and bestow much pains to answer your own fears; but the ready way to make the business clear, is by going to Christ. Stand not so much upon this question, Whether you have believed in truth or not; but put all out of doubt by a present faith. The door is open, enter and live; you may more easily build a new fabric of comfort, by taking Christ, than repair your old dwelling, and clear all suits that are brought against your tenure. Simonds' Deserted Soul, p. 554.

CHAPTER VIII.

FURTHER CAUSES OF DOUBTING AMONG CHRISTIANS.

Some further hinderances which keep some christians without assurance and comfort.

SECT. I. Because the comfort of a christian's life doth so much consist in his assurance of God's special love, and because the right way of obtaining it is so much controverted of late, I will here proceed a little further in opening to you some other hinderances which keep true christians from comfortable certainty, besides the fore-mentioned errors in the work of examination: though I would still have you remember and be sensible, that the neglect or slighty performance of that great duty, and not following on the search with seriousness and constancy, is the most common hinderance for aught I have yet found.

I shall now add these ten more, which I find very ordinary impediments, and therefore desire christians more carefully to consider and beware of them.

1. One common and great cause of doubting and uncertainty, is, the weakness and small measure of our grace. A little grace is next to none: small things are hardly discerned. He that will see a small needle, a hair, a mote, or atom, must have clear light and good eyes; but houses, and towns, and mountains, are easily discerned. Most christians content themselves with a small measure of grace, and do not follow on to spiritual strength and manhood. They believe so weakly, and love God so little, that they can scarce find whether they believe and love at all; like a man in a swoon, whose pulse and breathing is so weak and obscure that it can hardly be perceived whether they move at all, and consequently whether the man be alive or dead.

Remedy.

The chief remedy for such, would be to follow on their duty, till their graces be increased. Ply your work; wait upon God in the use of his prescribed means, and he will undoubtedly bless you with increase and strength. Oh! that christians would bestow most of that time in getting more grace, which they bestow in anxious doubtings whether they have any or none; and that they would lay out those serious affections in praying, and seeking to Christ for more grace, which they bestow in fruitless complaints of their supposed gracelessness! I beseech thee, christian, take this advice as from God; and then, when thou believest strongly, and lovest fervently, thou canst not doubt whether thou do believe and love or not, any more than a man that is burning hot can doubt whether he be warm; or a man that is strong and lusty can doubt whether he be alive. Strong affections will make you feel them. Who loveth his friends, or wife, or child, or any thing strongly, and doth not know it? A great measure of grace is seldom doubted of; or, if it be, you may quickly find when you seek and try.

Sect. II. 2. Another cause of uncomfortable living is, that christians look more at their present cause of comfort or discomfort, than they do at their future happiness, and the way to attain at.[a] They look after signs which may tell them what they are, more than they do at precepts which tell them what they

should do. They are very desirous to know whether they are justified and beloved, or not; but they do not think what course they should take to be justified, if they be not; as if their present case must needs be their everlasting case, and if they be now unpardoned, there were no remedy. Why, I beseech thee, consider this, O doubting soul! What if all were as bad as thou dost fear, and none of thy sins were yet pardoned; is not the remedy at hand? May not all this be done in a moment? Dost thou not know that thou mayst have Christ and pardon whenever thou wilt? Call not this a loose or strange doctrine. Christ is willing if thou be willing. He offereth himself and all his benefits to thee: he presseth them on thee, and urgeth thee to accept them. He will condemn thee, and destroy thee, if thou wilt not accept them. Why dost thou, therefore, stand whining and complaining that thou art not pardoned and adopted, when thou shouldst take them, being offered thee? Were he not mad that would lie weeping, and wringing his hands, because he is not pardoned, when his prince stands by all the while offering him a pardon, and entreating, and threatening, and persuading, and correcting him, and all to make him take it? What would you say to such a man; would you not chide him for his folly, and say, If thou wouldst have pardon and life, why dost thou not take it? Why, then, do you not say the like to yourselves? Know ye not that pardon and adoption are offered you only on the condition of your believing? And this believing is nothing else but the accepting of Christ for thy Lord and Saviour, as he is offered to thee with his benefits in the gospel: and this accepting is principally, if not only, the act of thy will. So that if thou be willing to have Christ upon his own terms, that is, to save and rule thee, then thou art a believer: thy willingness is thy faith; and if thou have faith, thou hast the surest of all evidences. Justifying faith is not thy persuasion of God's special love to thee, or of thy justification, but thy accepting Christ to make thee just and lovely. It may be thou wilt say, I cannot believe; it is not so easy a matter to believe as you make it. *Answ.* Indeed, to those that are not willing, it is not easy, God only can make them willing. But to him that is willing to have Christ for King and Saviour, I will not say, believing is easy, but it is already performed; for this is believing. Let me, therefore, put this question to every doubting, complaining soul, What is it that thou art complaining and mourning for? What makes thee walk so sadly as thou dost? Because thou hast not Christ and his benefits? Why, art thou willing to have them on the fore-mentioned condition, or art thou not? If thou be willing, thou hast him: thy accepting is thy believing: "To as many as receive him, (that is, accept him,) to them he gives power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name," John i. 12. But if thou art not willing, why dost thou complain? Methinks the tongue should follow the bent of the heart or will, and they that would not have Christ should be speaking against him, at least, against his laws and ways, and not complaining because they do not enjoy him. Dost thou groan and make such moan for want of that which thou wouldst not have? If, indeed, thou wouldst not have Christ for thy King and Saviour, then have I nothing to say but to persuade thee to be willing. Is it not madness, then, to lie complaining that we have not Christ, when we may have him if we will? If thou have him not, take him, and cease thy complaints. Thou canst not be so forward and willing as he is: and if he be willing, and thou be willing, who shall break the match? I will not say, as Mr. Saltmarsh most horribly doth,[b] that we ought no more to question our faith, which is our first and foundation grace, than we ought to question Christ the foundation of our faith. But this I say, that it were a more wise and direct course to accept Christ offered, which is believing, than to spend so much time in doubting whether we have Christ and faith, or no.

Sect. III. 3. Another cause of many christians' trouble is, their mistaking assurance for the joy that sometimes accompanieth it; or, at least, confounding them together.[c] Therefore, when they want the joy of assurance, they are as much cast down as if they wanted assurance itself. Dr. Sibbs saith well, that as we cannot have grace but by the work of the Spirit, so must there be a further act to make us know that we have that grace: and when we know we have grace, yet must there be a further act of the Spirit to give us comfort in that knowledge. Some knowledge or assurance of our regenerate and justified state the Spirit gives more ordinarily, but that sensible joy is more seldom and extraordinary. We have cause enough to keep off doubtings and distress of spirit, upon the bare sight of our evidences, though we do not feel any further joys. These complaining souls understand not: and therefore, though they cannot deny their willingness to have Christ, nor many other the like graces, which are infallible signs of their justification and adoption; yet, because they do not feel their spirits replenished with comforts, they throw away all, as if they had nothing. As if a child should no longer take himself for a son than he sees the smiles of his father's face, or heareth the comfortable expressions of his mouth; and as if the father did cease to be a father whenever he ceaseth those smiles and speeches.

Sect. IV. 4. And yet further is the trouble of these poor souls increased, in that they know not the ordinary way of God's conveying these expected comforts.[d] When they hear that they are the free gifts of the Spirit, they presently conceive themselves to be merely passive therein, and that they have nothing to do but to wait when God will bestow them; not understanding that though these comforts are spiritual, yet are they rational; raised upon the understanding's apprehension of the excellency of God our happiness, and of our interest in him; and by the rolling of this blessed object in our frequent meditations. The Spirit doth advance, and not destroy our reason; it doth rectify it, and then use it as its ordinary instrument for the conveyance of things to our affections, and exciting them accordingly, and not lay it aside and affect us without it; therefore, our joys are raised discursively, and the Spirit first revealeth our cause of joy, and then helpeth us to rejoice upon those revealed grounds; so that he who rejoiceth groundedly, knoweth why he rejoiceth ordinarily. Now these mistaken christians lie waiting when the Spirit doth cast in these comforts into their hearts, while they sit still and labour not to excite their own affections; nay, while they reason against the comforts which they wait for. These men must be taught to know, that the matter of their comfort is in the promises; and thence they

[b] Flowing of Christ's Blood, &c. p. 95.

[c] Mr. Paul Bayn (I think one of the holiest, choicest men that ever England bred) yet deseribeth the temper of his spirit thus: I thank God in Christ, sustentation I have, but suavities spiritual I taste not any. In his Letters.

[d] In watchfulness and diligence, we sooner meet with comfort, than in idle complaining; our eare, therefore, should be to get sound evidence of a good estate, and then to keep those evidenees clear. Dr. Sibbs' Preface to Soul's Conflict.

must fetch it as oft as they expect it: and that if they set themselves daily and diligently to meditate of the truth of those promises, and of the real excellency contained in them, and of their own title thereto, in this way they may expect the Spirit's assistance for the raising of holy comfort in their souls.[e] But if they lie still, bewailing their want of joy, while the full and free promises lie by them, and never take them, and consider, and look into them, and apply them to their hearts by serious meditation, they may complain for want of comfort long enough before they have it, in God's ordinary way of conveyance. God worketh upon men as men, as reasonable creatures; the joy of the promises, and the joy of the Holy Ghost, are one joy.

And those seducers, who, in their ignorance, misguide poor souls in this point, do exceedingly wrong them while they persuade them so to expect their comforts from the Spirit, as not to be any authors of them themselves, not to raise up their own hearts by argumentative means; telling them that such comforts are but hammered by themselves, and not the genuine comforts of the Spirit. How contrary is this to the doctrine of Christ!

Sect. V. 5. Another cause of the trouble of their souls, is, their expecting a greater measure of assurance than God doth usually bestow upon his people.[f] Most think, as long as they have any doubting they have no assurance; they consider not that there are many degrees of infallible certainty below a perfect or an undoubting certainty. They must know, that while they are here they shall know but in part; they shall be imperfect in the knowledge of Scripture, which is their rule in trying; and imperfect in the knowledge of their own obscure, deceitful hearts: some strangeness to God and themselves there will still remain; some darkness will overspread the face of their souls; some unbelief will be making head against their faith; and some of their grievings of the Spirit will be grievous to themselves, and make a breach in their peace and joy. Yet, as long as their faith is prevailing, and their assurance doth tread down and subdue their doubtings, though not quite expel them, they may walk in comfort and maintain their peace; but as long as they are resolved to lie down in sorrow till their assurance be perfect, their days on earth must then be days of sorrow.

Sect. VI. 6. Again, many a soul lies long in trouble, by taking up his comforts in the beginning upon unsound or uncertain grounds.[g] This may be the case of a gracious soul, who hath better grounds and doth not see them; and then when they grow to more ripeness of understanding, and come to find out the insufficiency of their former grounds of comfort, they cast away their comfort wholly, when they should only cast away their rotten props of it, and search for better to support it with. As if their comfort and their safety were both of a nature, and both built on the same foundation, they conclude against their safety, because they have discovered the mistake of their former comfort. And there are many much-applauded books and teachers of late, who further the delusion of poor souls in this point, and make them believe that because their former comforts were too legal, and their persuasions of their good state were ill grounded, therefore themselves were under the covenant of works only, and their spiritual condition as unsound as their comforts. These men observe not, that while they deny us the use of marks to know our own state, yet they make use of them themselves, to know the states of others; yea, and of false and insufficient marks too: for to argue from the motive of our persuasion of a good state, to the goodness or badness of that state, is no sound arguing. It followeth not that a man is unregenerate because he judged himself regenerate upon wrong grounds: for perhaps he might have better grounds, and not know it; or else, not know which were good and which bad. Safety and comfort stand not always on the same bottom. Bad grounds do prove the assurance bad which was built upon them, but not always the state bad. These teachers do but toss poor souls up and down as the waves of the sea, making them believe that their state is altered as oft as their conceits of it alter. Alas! few christians do come to know either what are solid grounds of comfort, or whether they have any such grounds themselves, in the infancy of christianity. But as an infant hath life before he knoweth it; and as he hath misapprehensions of himself, and most other things, for certain years together, and yet it will not follow, that therefore he hath no life or reason; so it is in the case in hand. Yet this should persuade both ministers and believers themselves, to lay right grounds for their comfort, in the beginning, as far as may be; for else, usually when they find the flaw in their comforts and assurance, they will judge it to be a flaw in their safety and real states. Just as I observe most persons do, who turn to errors or heresies; they took up the truth in the beginning, upon either false or doubtful grounds, and then, when their grounds are overthrown or shaken, they think the doctrine is also overthrown; and so they let go both together, as if none had solid arguments because they had not, or none could manage them better than they. Even so when they perceive that their arguments for their good state were unsound, they think that their state must needs be as unsound.

Sect. VII. 7. Moreover, many a soul lieth long under doubting, through the great imperfection of their very reason, and exceeding weakness of their natural parts. Grace doth usually rather turn our parts to their most necessary use, and employ our faculties on better objects, than add to the degree of their natural strength. Many honest hearts have such weak heads, that they know not how to perform the work of self-trial; they are not able, rationally, to argue the case; they will acknowledge the premises, and yet deny the apparent conclusion: or, if they be brought to acknowledge the conclusion, yet they do but fluctuate and stagger in their concession, and hold it so weakly, that every assault may take it from them. If God do not some other way supply to these men the defect of their reason, I see not how they should have clear and settled peace.

Sect. VIII. 8. Another great and too common

[e] As if a poor man should complain for want of money, when a chest full stands by him, and he may take what he will; is it not better to take it out, than lie complaining for want?

[f] God will keep the rich store of consistent and abiding comforts till the great day, that when all the family shall come together, he may pour out the fulness of his hidden treasures on them: we are now in the morning of the day, the feast is to come; a breakfast must serve to stay the stomach, till the King of saints, with all his friends, sit down together. Simonds' Deserted Soul, p. 507.

[g] So some think they are God's people, because they are of such a party, or such a strict opinion; and when they change their opinion they change their comfort. Some that could have no comfort while they were among the orthodox, as soon as they have turned to such or such a sect, have comfort in abundance; partly through Satan's delusion, and partly because they think their change in opinion hath set them right with God, and therefore they rejoice. So many hypocrites whose religion lieth only in their opinions, have their comfort also only there.

cause of doubting and discomfort, is the secret maintaining of some known sin. When a man liveth in some unwarrantable practice, and God hath oft touched him for it, and conscience is galled, and yet he continueth it, it is no wonder if this person want both assurance and comfort.[h] One would think, that a soul that lieth under the fears of wrath, and is so tender as to tremble and complain, should be as tender of sinning, and scarcely adventure upon the appearance of evil. And yet, sad experience tells us that it is frequently otherwise: I have known too many such, that would complain, and yet sin; and accuse themselves, and yet sin still; yea, and despair, and proceed in sinning; and all arguments and means could not keep them from the wilful committing of that sin again and again, which yet they themselves did think would prove their destruction. Yea, some will be carried away with those sins which seem most contrary to their dejected temper. I have known them that would fill men's ears with the constant lamentations of their miserable state, and despairing accusations against themselves, as if they had been the most humble people in the world; and yet be as passionate in the maintaining their innocency, when another accuseth them; and as intolerably peevish, and tender of their own reputation in any thing they are blamed for, as if they were the proudest persons on earth; still denying or extenuating every disgraceful fault that they are charged with.

This cherishing of sin[i] doth hinder assurance these four ways: 1. It doth abate the degree of our graces, and so make them more undiscernible. 2. It obscureth that which it destroyeth not; for it beareth such sway, that grace is not in action, nor seen to stir, nor scarce heard to speak, for the noise of this corruption. 3. It putteth out or dimmeth the eye of the soul, that it cannot see its own condition; and it benumbeth and stupifieth, that it cannot feel its own case. 4. But especially, it provoketh God to withdraw himself, his comforts, and the assistance of the Spirit, without which, we may search long enough before we have assurance. God hath made a separation betwixt sin and peace; though they may consist together in remiss degrees, yet so much as sin prevaileth in the soul, so much will the peace of that soul be defective. As long as thou dost favour or cherish thy pride and self-esteem, thy aspiring projects and love of the world, thy secret lust, and pleasing the desires of the flesh, or any the like unchristian practice, thou expectest assurance and comfort in vain. God will not encourage thee, by his precious gifts, in a course of sinning. This worm will be crawling and gnawing upon thy conscience; it will be a fretting, devouring canker to thy consolations. Thou mayst steal a spark of false comfort from thy worldly prosperity or delight; or thou mayst have it from some false opinions, or from the delusions of Satan; but from God thou wilt have no more comfort, than thou makest conscience of sinning. However an antinomian may tell thee that thy comforts have no such dependence upon thy obedience, nor thy discomforts upon thy disobedience,[k] and therefore may speak as much peace to thee in the course of thy sinning as in thy most conscionable walking, yet thou shalt find by experience that God will not do so. If any man set up his idols in his heart, and put the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to a minister, or to God, to inquire for assurance and comfort, God will answer that man by himself, and instead of comforting him, he will set his face against him: "He will answer him according to the multitude of his idols." Read Ezek. xv. 3—9.

Sect. IX. 9. Another very great and common cause of want of assurance and comfort, is, when men grow lazy in the spiritual part of duty, and keep not up their graces in constant and lively action. As Dr. Sibbs saith truly, "It is the lazy christian commonly that lacketh assurance." The way of painful duty is the way of fullest comfort. Christ carrieth all our comforts in his hand: if we are out of that way where Christ is to be met, we are out of the way where comfort is to be had.

These three ways doth this laziness debar us of our comforts.

1. By stopping the fountain, and causing Christ to withhold this blessing from us.[l] Parents use not to smile upon children in their neglects and disobedience. So far as the Spirit is grieved, he will suspend his consolations. Assurance and peace are Christ's great encouragements to faithfulness and obedience: and, therefore, though our obedience do not merit them, yet they usually rise and fall with our diligence in duty. They that have entertained the antinomian dotages to cover their idleness and viciousness, may talk their nonsense against this at pleasure, but the laborious christian knows it by experience. As prayer must have faith and fervency to procure its success, besides the bloodshed and intercession of Christ, (James v. 15, 16,) so must all other parts of our obedience. He that will say to us in that triumphing day, "Well done, good and faithful servant, &c. enter thou into the joy of thy Lord," will also encourage his servants in their most affectionate and spiritual duties, and say, "Well done, good and faithful servant, take this foretaste of thy everlasting joy." If thou grow seldom, and customary, and cold in duty, especially in thy secret prayers to God, and yet findest no abatement in thy joys, I cannot but fear that thy joys are either carnal or diabolical.

2. Grace is never apparent and sensible to the soul, but while it is in action; therefore, want of action must needs cause want of assurance. Habits are not felt immediately, but by the freeness and facility of their acts: of the very being of the soul itself, nothing is felt or perceived but only its acts. The fire that lieth still in the flint is neither seen nor felt, but when you smite it, and force it into act, it is easily discerned. The greatest action doth force the greatest observation, whereas the dead and unactive are not remembered or taken notice of. Those that have long lain still in their graves, are out of

[h] Read Bishop Hall's Soliloquy, 61. p. 239, called "The Sting of Guiltiness." When men dally with sin, and will be playing with snares and baits, and allow a secret liberty in the heart to sin, conniving at many workings of it, and not setting upon mortification with earnest endeavours; though they be convinced, yet they are not persuaded to rise with all their might against the Lord's enemies, but do his work negligently, which is an accursed thing; for this God casteth them upon sore straits. Simonds' Deserted Soul, &c. p. 521, 522.

[i] Some have disputed whether it be possible for a godly man to be secure in sinning, and more willing to offend, because of God's gracious covenant, which will infallibly rescue him out of that sin! But what sin is not possible, except the sin against the Holy Ghost, even to a regenerate man? Mr. Burgess of Justific. lect. 28. pag. 256.

[k] Some would have men after the committing of gross sins to be presently comfortable, and believe without humbling themselves at all. Indeed when we are once in Christ, we ought not to question our state in him, &c. But yet a guilty conscience will be clamorous and full of objections, and God will not speak peace till it be humbled. God will let his children know what it is to be too bold with sin, &c. Dr. Sibbs' Soul's Conflict, Preface.

[l] See Dr. Sibbs' Soul's Conflict, p. 480, 481.

men's thoughts as well as their sight; but those that walk the streets, and bear rule among them, are noted by all: it is so with our graces. That you have a habit of love or faith, you can no otherwise know but as a consequence by reasoning; but that you have acts, you may know by feeling. If you see a man lie still in the way, what will you do to know whether he be drunk, or in a swoon, or dead? Will you not stir him, or speak to him, to see whether he can go; or feel his pulse, or observe his breath, knowing that where there is life, there is some kind of motion? I earnestly beseech thee, christian, observe and practise this excellent rule: thou now knowest not whether thou have repentance, or faith, or love, or joy; why, be more in the acting of these, and thou wilt easily know it. Draw forth an object for godly sorrow, or faith, or love, or joy, and lay thy heart flat unto it, and take pains to provoke it into suitable action, and then see whether thou have these graces or no. As Dr. Sibbs observeth,[m] "There is sometimes grief for sin in us when we think there is none." It wants but stirring up by some quickening word: the like he saith of love, and it may be said of every other grace. You may go seeking for the hare or partridge many hours, and never find them while they lie close and stir not; but when once the hare betakes himself to his legs, and the bird to her wings, then you see them presently. So long as a christian hath his graces in lively action, so long, for the most part, he is assured of them. How can you doubt whether you love God in the act of loving, or whether you believe in the very act of believing? If therefore you would be assured whether this sacred fire be kindled in your hearts, blow it up; get it into a flame, and then you will know: believe till you feel that you do believe, and love till you feel that you love.

3. The acting of the soul upon such excellent objects, doth naturally bring consolation with it.[n] The very act of loving God in Christ, doth bring unexpressible sweetness with it into the soul. The soul that is best furnished with grace, when it is not in action, is like a lute that is well stringed and tuned, which while it lieth still doth make no more music than a common piece of wood; but when it is taken up and handled by a skilful lutist, the melody is most delightful. "Some degree of comfort," saith that comfortable doctor, "follows every good action, as heat accompanies fire, and as beams and influence issue from the sun;"[o] which is so true,[p] that very heathens upon the discharge of a good conscience have found comfort and peace answerable: this is *præmium ante præmium*, a reward before the reward.[q]

As a man, therefore, that is cold, should not stand still and say, I am so cold that I have no mind to labour, but labour till his coldness be gone, and heat excited; so he that wants assurance of the truth of his grace, and the comfort of assurance, must not stand still and say, I am so doubtful and uncomfortable that I have no mind to duty, but ply his duty, and exercise his graces, till he find his doubts and discomforts to vanish.

Sect. X. Lastly: Another ordinary nurse of doubtings and discomfort, is the prevailing of melancholy in the body, whereby the brain is continually troubled and darkened, the fancy hindered, and reason perverted by the distempering of its instruments, and the soul is still clad in mourning weeds.[r] It is no more wonder for a conscientious man that is overcome with melancholy to doubt, and fear, and despair, than it is for a sick man to groan, or a child to cry when he is beaten. This is the case with most that I have known lie long in doubting and distress of spirit. With some, their melancholy being raised by crosses or distemper of body, or some other occasion, doth afterwards bring in trouble of conscience as its companion. With others,[s] trouble of mind is their first trouble, which long hanging on them, at last doth bring the body also into a melancholy habit; and then trouble increaseth melancholy, and melancholy again increaseth trouble, and so round. This is a most sad and pitiful state. For as the disease of the body is chronical and obstinate, and physic doth seldom succeed, where it hath far prevailed; so without the physician, the labours of the divine are usually in vain. You may silence them, but you cannot comfort them; you may make them confess that they have some grace, and yet cannot bring them to the comfortable conclusions. Or if you convince them of some work of the Spirit upon their souls, and a little at present abate their sadness, yet as soon as they are gone home, and look again upon their souls through this perturbing humour, all your convincing arguments are forgotten, and they are as far from comfort as ever they were. All the good thoughts of their state which you can possibly help them to, are seldom above a day or two old. As a man that looks through a black, or blue, or red glass, doth think things which he sees to be of the same colour; and if you would persuade him to the contrary he will not believe you, but wonder that you should offer to persuade him against his eye-sight; so a melancholy man sees all things in a sad and fearful plight, because his reason looketh on them through this black humour, with which his brain is darkened and distempered. And as a man's eyes which can see all things about him, yet cannot see any imperfection in themselves; so it is almost impossible to make many of these men to know that they are melancholy. But as those who are troubled with the ephialtes do cry out of some body that lieth heavy upon them, when the disease is in their own blood and humours; so these poor men cry out of sin and the wrath of God, when the main cause is in this bodily distemper. The chief part of the cure of these men must be upon the body, because there is the chief part of the disease.

And thus I have showed you the chief causes, why so many christians do enjoy so little assurance and consolation.

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[m] Soul's Conflict, p. 480, 481.

[n] Men experimentally feel that comfort in doing that which belongs unto them, which before they longed for, and went without. Dr. Sibbs' Soul's Conflict.

[o] Preface to Soul's Conflict, p. 45.

[p] Pro voluptatibus, et pro illis quæ parva et fragilia sunt, et in ipsis flagitiis noxia, ingens gaudium subit, inconcussum, et æquabile; tum pax et concordia animi, et magnitudo cum mansuetudine. Omnis enim ex imbecillitate feritas est. Senec. de Vit. Beat. c. 3.

[q] Perhaps you think that thé only comfort you can have, is by receiving some benefit, some mercy from God: you are much mistaken. The comfort of letting your hearts out to God, is a greater comfort than any comfort you have in receiving any thing from God. Mr. Burroughs on Hos. ii. 19. p. 606.

[r] Non est mirum si timent melancholici, quia causam timoris continuo secum portant; anima enim est involuta cum caligine tenebrosa, et quia anima sequitur corporis passiones seu complexiones, ideo timent, &c. Galen. in fine quartæ partic. de Morbo.

[s] Timor et pusillanimitas si multum tempus habuerint, melancholicum faciunt. Hippocr.

CHAPTER IX.

CONTAINING AN EXHORTATION, AND MOTIVES TO EXAMINE.

Sect. I. Having thus discovered the impediments to examination, I would presently proceed to direct you to the performance of it, but that I am yet jealous whether I have fully prevailed with your wills, and whether you are indeed resolved to set upon the duty. I have found by long experience, as well as from Scripture, that the main difficulty lieth in bringing men to be willing, and to set themselves in good earnest to the searching of their hearts.

Many love to hear and read of marks and signs by which they may try; but few will be brought to spend an hour in using them when they have them. They think they should have their doubts resolved as soon as they do but hear a minister name some of their signs; and if that would do the work, then assurance would be more common; but when they are informed that the work lies most upon their own hands, and what pains it must cost them to search their hearts faithfully, then they give up and will go no further.

This is not only the case of the ungodly, who commonly perish through this neglect; but multitudes of the godly themselves are like idle beggars, who will rather make a practice of begging and bewailing their misery, than they will set themselves to labour painfully for their relief; so do many spend days and years in sad complaints and doubtings, that will not be brought to spend a few hours in examination. I entreat all these persons, what condition soever they are of, to consider the weight of these following arguments, which I have propounded, in hope to persuade them to this duty.

Motive 1. Sect. II. 1. To be deceived about your title to heaven is exceeding easy; and not to be deceived, is exceeding difficult. This I make manifest to you thus:

1. Multitudes that never suspected any falsehood in their hearts, have yet proved unsound in the day of trial; and they that never feared any danger toward them, have perished for ever; yea, many that have been confident of their integrity and safety. I shall adjoin the proofs of what I say in the margin, for brevity sake.[a] How many poor souls are now in hell, that little thought of coming thither! and that were wont to despise their counsel that bid them try and make sure! and to say, they made no doubt of their salvation!

2. Yea, and many that have excelled in worldly wisdom, yet have been befooled in this great business; and they that had wit to deceive their neighbours, were yet deceived by Satan and their own hearts. Yea, men of strongest head-pieces, and profoundest learning, who knew much of the secrets of nature, of the courses of the planets, and motions of the spheres, have yet been utterly mistaken in their own hearts.

3. Yea, those that have lived in the clear light of the gospel, and heard the difference between the righteous and the wicked plainly laid open, and many a mark for trial laid down, and many a sermon pressing them to examine, and directing them how to do it, yet even these have been, and daily are, deceived.

4. Yea, those that have had a whole life-time to make sure in, and have been told over and over that they had their lives for no other end but to provide for everlasting rest, and make sure of it, have yet been deceived, and have wasted that life-time in forgetful security.

5. Yea, those that have preached against the negligence of others, and pressed them to try themselves, and showed them the danger of being mistaken, have yet proved mistaken themselves.[b]

And is it not then time for us to rifle our hearts, and search them to the very quick?

Sect. III. 2. To be mistaken in this great point is also very common, as well as easy; so common that it is the case of most in the world, Gal. vi. 3, 4, 7; Matt. vii. 21. In the old world we find none that were in any fear of judgment; and yet how few persons were not deceived! So in Sodom; so among the Jews; and I would it were not so in England! Almost all men amongst us do verily look to be saved. You shall scarce speak with one of a thousand that doth not; and yet Christ telleth us, "that few find the strait gate and narrow way that leads to life." Do but reckon up the several sorts of men that are mistaken in thinking they have title to heaven, as the Scripture doth enumerate them, and what a multitude will they prove! 1. All that are ignorant of the fundamentals of religion. 2. All heretics who maintain false doctrines against the foundation, or against the necessary means of life. 3. All that live in the practice of gross sin. 4. Or that love and regard the smallest sin. 5. All that harden themselves against frequent reproof, Prov. xxix. 1. 6. All that mind the flesh more than the Spirit, (Rom. viii. 6, 7, 13,) or the world more than God, Phil. iii. 18, 19; 1 John ii. 15, 16. 7. All that do as the most do, Luke xiii. 24—26; 1 John v. 19. 8. All that are deriders at the godly, and discourage others from the way of God by their reproaches, Prov. i. 22, &c. iii. 34, and xix. 29. 9. All that are unholy; and that never were regenerate and born anew. 10. All that have not their very hearts set upon heaven, Matt. vi. 21. 11. All that have a form of godliness without the power. 12. And all that love either parents, or wife, or children, or house, or lands, or life, more than Christ, Luke xiv. 26. Every one of these that thinketh he hath any title to heaven, is as surely mistaken as the Scripture is true.[c]

Motive 2.

And if such multitudes are deceived, should not we search the more diligently, lest we should be deceived as well as they?

Sect. IV. 3. Nothing more dangerous than to be thus mistaken. The consequents of it are lamentable and desperate. If the godly be mistaken in judging their state to be worse than it is, the consequents of this mistake will be very sad; but if the ungodly be mistaken, the danger and mischief that followeth is unspeakable.

1. It will exceedingly confirm them in the service of Satan, and fasten them in their present way of death. They will never seek to be recovered, as

[a] Matt. vii. 22, 26, 27, &c.; Prov. xiv. 11; Luke xiii. 25, 26; xviii. 1, 11; Rev. iii. 17. So Ananias and Sapphira, the rich man in Luke xvi. &c.; Ahithophel, Gehazi, Ananias and Sapphira, Pharisees, Jesuits, &c. Rom. i. 22. Judas and the Jews that heard Christ. Matt. vii. 22; Rom. ii. 21; 1 Cor. ix. 27.

[b] Omnium pene aliorum peccatorum conscii sunt sibi ipsis, qui iisdem sunt obnoxii: solam hypocrisin raro, et non nisi exquisitissimo instituto examine deprehendunt qui eadem sunt inebriati. Rupertus Meldenus, Paræn. Votiv. pro pace Eccl. fol. B. 2, 3. Loquitur ad verbi ministros.

[c] Ephes. iv. 18; Hos. iv. 6; Isaiah xxvii. 11; 2 Cor. iv. 3; Rev. ii. 6, 20; Titus ii. 10; 1 Cor. vi. 9; xv. 50; Ephes. v. 4—6; Psalm lxvi. 18; James iv. 4, 5; Heb. xii. 14; John iii. 3; 2 Tim. iii. 5; James i. 22; Mark xiii. 5, 6; Matt. x. 37; John xii. 25.

long as they think their present state may serve. As the prophet saith, "A deceived heart will turn them aside, that they cannot deliver their own soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?" Isa. xliv. 20.

2. It will take away the efficacy of means that should do them good; nay, it will turn the best means to their hardening and ruin. If a man mistake his bodily disease, and think it to be clean contrary to what it is, will he not apply contrary remedies which will increase it? So when a christian should apply the promises, his mistake will cause him to apply the threatenings; and when an ungodly man should apply the threatenings and terrors of the Lord, this mistake of his state will make him apply the promises; and there is no greater strengthener of sin, and destroyer of the soul, than Scripture misapplied. Worldly delights, and the deceiving words of sinners, may harden men most desperately in an unsafe way; but Scripture misapplied will do it far more effectually and dangerously.

3. It will keep a man from compassionating his own soul; though he be a sad object of pity to every understanding man that beholdeth him, yet will he not be able to pity himself, because he knoweth not his own misery. As I have seen a physician lament the case of his patient, when he hath discerned his certain death in some small beginning, when the patient himself feared nothing, because he knew not the mortal nature of his disease; so doth many a minister, or godly christian, lament the case of a carnal wretch, who is so far from lamenting it himself, that he scorns their pity, and biddeth them be sorry for themselves, they shall not answer for him; and taketh them for his enemies, because they tell him the truth of his danger, Acts vii. 54; xxii. 21. As a man that seeth a beast going to the slaughter, doth pity the poor creature, when it cannot pity itself, because it little thinketh that death is so near: so is it with these poor sinners; and all long of this mistaking their spiritual state. Is it not a pitiful sight to see a man laughing himself, when his understanding friends stand weeping for his misery? Paul mentioneth the voluptuous men of his time, and the worldlings, with weeping, Phil. iii. 17, 18; but we never read of their weeping for themselves. Christ standeth weeping over Jerusalem, when they knew not of any evil that was towards them, (Luke xix.) nor give him thanks for his pity or his tears.

4. It is a case of greatest moment, and therefore mistaking must needs be most dangerous. If it were in making an ill bargain, yet we might repair our loss in the next. Scipio was wont to say, "It was an unseemly, absurd thing in military cases to say, I had not thought; or, I was not aware."[d] The matter being of so great concernment, every danger should be thought of, that you may be aware. Sure, in this weighty case, where our everlasting salvation or damnation is in question, and to be determined, every mistake is insufferable and inexcusable which might have been prevented by any cost or pains! Therefore men will choose the most able lawyers and physicians, because the mistakes of one may lose them their estate, and the mistakes of the other may lose them their lives: but mistakes about their souls are of a higher nature.

5. If you should continue your mistakes till death, there will be no time after to correct them for your recovery. Mistake now, and you are undone for ever. Men think, to see a man die quietly or comfortably, is to see him die happily; but if his comfort proceed from this mistake of his condition, it is the most unhappy case and pitiful sight in the world. To live mistaken, in such a case, is lamentable; but, to die mistaken, is desperate.

Seeing then that the case is so dangerous, what wise man would not follow the search of his heart, both night and day, till he were assured of his safety?

Sect. V. 4. Consider how small the labour of this duty is, in comparison of the sorrow which followeth its neglect. A few hours' or days' work, if it be closely followed, and with good direction, may do much to resolve the question. There is no such trouble in searching our hearts, nor any such danger, as may deter men from it. What harm can it do to you to try or to know? It will take up no very long time, or if it did, yet you have your time given you for that end. One hour so spent, will comfort you more than many otherwise. If you cannot have while to make sure of heaven, how can you have while to eat, or drink, or live? You can endure to follow your callings at plough, and cart, and shop; to toil and sweat from day to day, and year to year, in the hardest labours: and cannot you endure to spend a little time in inquiring what shall be your everlasting state? What a deal of sorrow and after-complaining might this small labour prevent! How many miles' travel, besides the vexation, may a traveller save by inquiring of the way! Why, what a sad case are you in, while you live in such uncertainty! You can have no true comfort in any thing you see, or hear, or possess; you are not sure to be an hour out of hell, and if you come thither, you will do nothing but bewail the folly of this neglect: no excuse will then pervert justice, or quiet your conscience. If you say, I little thought of this day and place; God and conscience may reply, Why didst thou not think of it? Wast thou not warned? Hadst thou not time? Therefore must thou perish, because thou wouldst not think of it. As the commander answered his soldier, in Plutarch, when he said, *Non volens erravi*, I erred against my will; he beat him, and replied, *Non volens pœnas dato*, Thou shalt be punished also against thy will.

Sect. VI. 5. Thou canst scarce do Satan a greater pleasure, nor thyself a greater injury. It is the main scope of the devil, in all his temptations, to deceive thee, and keep thee ignorant of thy danger till thou feel the everlasting flames upon thy soul; and wilt thou join with him to deceive thyself? If it were not by this deceiving thee, he could not destroy thee: and if thou do this for him, thou dost the greatest part of his work, and art the chief destroyer and devil to thyself. And hath he deserved so well of thee, and thyself so ill, that thou shouldst assist him in such a design as thy damnation? To deceive another is a grievous sin, and such as perhaps thou wouldst scorn to be charged with; and yet thou thinkest it nothing to deceive thyself. Saith Solomon, "As a madman who casteth firebrands, arrows, and death, so is the man that deceiveth his neighbour, and saith, Am not I in sport?" Prov. xxvi. 18, 19. Surely, then, he that maketh but a sport, or a matter of nothing, to deceive his own soul, may well be thought a madman, casting firebrands and death at himself. "If any man think himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself," saith Paul, Gal. vi. 3. Certainly, among all the multitudes that perish, this is the commonest cause of their undoing, that they would not be brought to try their state in time. And is it not pity to think that so many thousands are merrily travelling to destruction, and do not know it, and all for want of this diligent search?

Sect. VII. 6. The time is near when God will

[d] Turpe est in re militari dicere, Non putarem.

search you, and that will be another kind of trial than this. If it be but in this life, by the fiery trial of affliction, it will make you wish again and again that you had spared God that work, and yourselves the sorrow; and that you had tried and judged yourselves, that so you might have escaped the trial and judgment of God,[e] 1 Cor. xi. 30, 31. He will examine you, then, as officers do offenders, with a word and a blow: and as they would have done by Paul, examine him by scourging, Acts xxii. 24. It was a terrible voice to Adam, when God called to him, "Adam, where art thou? Hast thou eaten," &c.? And to Cain, when God asked him, "Where is thy brother?" To have demanded this of himself had been easier. Men think God mindeth their state and ways no more than they do their own. "They consider not in their hearts" (saith the Lord) "that I remember all their wickedness; now their own doings have beset them about, they are before my face," Hos. vii. 2. Oh, what a happy preparation would it be to that last and great trial, if men had but thoroughly tried themselves, and made sure work beforehand! When a man doth but soberly and believingly think of that day, especially when he shall see the judgment-seat, what a joyful preparation is it, if he can truly say, I know the sentence shall pass on my side: I have examined myself by the same law of Christ which now must judge me, and I have found that I am quit from all my guilt, and am a justified person in law already. O sirs, if you knew but the comfort of such a preparation, you would fall close to the work of self-examining yet before you slept!

7. Lastly, I desire thee to consider what would be the sweet effects of this examining. If thou be upright and godly, it will lead thee straight towards assurance of God's love. If thou be not, though it will trouble thee at the present, yet doth it tend to thy happiness, and will lead thee to assurance of that happiness.

1. The very knowledge itself is naturally desirable. Every man would fain know things to come, especially concerning themselves. If there were a book written which would tell every man his destiny, what shall befall him to his last breath, how desirous would people be to procure it and read it! How did Nebuchadnezzar's thoughts run on things that after should come to pass, and he worshipped Daniel, and offered oblations to him, because he foretold them! When Christ had told his disciples "that one of them should betray him," how desirous are they to know who it was, though it were a matter of sorrow! How busily do they inquire when Christ's predictions should come to pass, and what were the signs of his coming! With what gladness doth the Samaritan woman run into the city, saying, Come and see a man that hath told me all that ever I did, though he told her of her faults! When Ahaziah lay sick, how desirous was he to know whether he should live or die! Daniel is called a man greatly beloved, therefore God would reveal to him things that long after must come to pass.[f] And is it so desirable a thing to hear prophecies, and to know what shall befall us hereafter? And is it not then most especially desirable to know what shall befall our souls; and what place and state we must be in for ever? Why, this you may know, if you will but faithfully try.

2. But the comforts of that certainty of salvation, which this trial doth conduce toward, are yet far greater. If ever God bestow this blessing of assurance on thee, thou wilt account thyself the happiest man on earth, and feel that it is not a notional or empty mercy. For,

1. What sweet thoughts wilt thou have of God! All that greatness, and jealousy, and justice, which is the terror of others, will be matter of encouragement and joy to thee. As the son of a king doth rejoice in his father's magnificence and power, which is the awe of subjects, and terror of rebels; when the thunder doth roar, and the lightning flash, and the earth quake, and the signs of dreadful omnipotency do appear, thou canst say, All this is the effect of my Father's power.

2. How sweet may every thought of Christ, and the blood which he hath shed, and the benefits he hath procured, be unto thee who hast got this assurance! Then will the name of a Saviour be a sweet name; and the thoughts of his gentle and loving nature, and of the gracious design which he hath carried on for our salvation, will be pleasing thoughts. Then will it do thee good to view his wounds by the eye of faith, and to put thy finger, as it were, into his side, when thou canst call him, as Thomas did, "My Lord and my God."

3. Every passage, also, in the word will then afford thee comfort. How sweet will be the promises when thou art sure they are thy own! The gospel will then be glad tidings indeed. The very threatenings will occasion thy comfort, to remember that thou hast escaped them. Then thou wilt cry, with David, "O how I love thy law! it is sweeter than honey, more precious than gold," &c.; and with Luther, that thou wilt "not take all the world for one leaf of the Bible." When thou wast in thy sin, this book was to thee as Micaiah to Ahab, "It never spoke good of thee, but evil;" and therefore no wonder if then thou didst hate it: but now it is the charter of thy everlasting rest, how welcome will it be to thee; and how beautiful the very feet of those that bring it! Rom. x. 15.

4. What boldness and comfort then mayst thou have in prayer, when thou canst say "Our Father" in full assurance; and knowest that thou art welcome and accepted through Christ; and that thou hast a promise to be heard whenever thou askest; and knowest that God is readier to grant thy requests than thou to move them! With what comfortable boldness mayst thou then approach the throne of grace, Heb. x. 22, 29; especially when the case is weighty, and thy necessity great! This assurance in prayer will be a sweet privilege indeed. A despairing soul, that feeleth the weight of sin and wrath, especially at a dying hour, would give a large price to be partaker of this privilege, and to be sure that he might have pardon and life for the asking for.

5. This assurance will give the sacrament a sweet relish to thy soul, and make it a refreshing feast indeed.

6. It will multiply the sweetness of every mercy thou receivest. When thou art sure that all proceeds from love, and are the beginnings and earnest of everlasting mercies; thou wilt then have more comfort in a morsel of bread than the world hath in the greatest abundance of all things.

7. How comfortably then mayst thou undergo all afflictions, when thou knowest that he meaneth thee no hurt in them, but hath promised, "that all shall work together for thy good;" when thou art sure that he chasteneth thee because he loveth thee, and scourgeth thee because thou art a son whom he will

[e] Quid profuerit reo, si soeiis et circumstantibus suam innocentiam probaverit, cum eum judex criminis convictum teneat? Quamobrem nos semper ad Christi tribunal sistamus; ea nos probemus, et operam demus ut nos ipsos pertentemus penitus, ne ut aliis, sic nobis imponamus. Cart. Harmon. vol. ii. p. 231.

[f] Dan. ii. 29, 46, 47; Matt. xxvi.; xxiv.; John iv. 29; 2 Kings i. 2; Dan. ix. 23; x. 11, 19.

receive, and that out of very faithfulness he doth afflict thee! Rom. viii. 28; Heb. xii. 6, 7; Psal. lxxv. What a support must this be to thy heart; and how will it abate the bitterness of the cup! Even the Son of God himself doth seem to take comfort from this assurance, when he was, in a manner, forsaken for our sins; and therefore he cries out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" And even the prodigal, under his guilt and misery, doth take some comfort in remembering that he hath a father.

8. This assurance will sweeten to thee the forethoughts of death, and make thy heart glad to forethink of that entrance into joy, Numb. xxiii. 10; when a man that is uncertain whither he is going must needs die in horror.[g]

9. It will sweeten also thy forethoughts of judgment, when thou art sure that it will be the day of thy absolution and coronation.

10. Yea, the very thoughts of the flames of hell, will administer matter of consolation to thee, when thou canst certainly conclude thou art saved from them.

11. The forethoughts of heaven also will be more incomparably delightful, when thou art certain that it is the place of thine everlasting abode.

12. It will make thee exceeding lively and strong in the work of the Lord. With what courage wilt thou run when thou knowest thou shalt have the prize; and fight, when thou knowest thou shalt conquer! It will make thee always abound in the work of the Lord, when thou knowest that thy labour is not in vain, 1 Cor. xv. 58.

13. It will also make thee more profitable to others. Thou wilt be a most cheerful encourager of them from thine own experience; thou wilt be able to refresh the weary, and to strengthen the weak, and to speak a word of comfort in season to a troubled soul; whereas now, without assurance, instead of comforting others, thou wilt rather have need of support thyself: so that others are losers by thy uncertainty as well as thyself.

14. Assurance will put life into all thy affections or graces. 1. It will help thee to repent, and melt over thy sins, when thou knowest how dearly God did love thee, whom thou hast abused. 2. It will inflame thy soul with love to God, when thou once knowest thy near relation to him, and how tenderly he is affected toward thee, Psal. cxvi. 1; xviii. 1, 2. 3. It will quicken thy desires after him, when thou art once sure of thy interest in him, 1 Thess. iv. 17, 18; Psal. cxviii. 28; Isa. xxv. 1. 4. It is the most excellent fountain of continual rejoicing, Hab. iii. 17—19. 5. It will confirm thy trust and confidence in God in the greatest straits, Psal. lxxxix. 26; xlvi. 1—3, &c. 6. It will fill thy heart with thankfulness. 7. It will raise thee in the high, delightful work of praise. 8. It will be the most excellent help to a heavenly mind. 9. It will exceedingly tend to thy perseverance in all this. He that is sure of the crown will hold on to the end, when others will be tired, and give up through discouragement.

All these sweet effects of assurance would make thy life a kind of heaven on earth. Seeing, then, that the examining of our state is the way to this assurance, and the means without which God doth not usually bestow it, doth it not concern us to fall close to this searching work?

Sect. IX. I would not have bestowed this time and labour in urging you with all these foregoing considerations, but that I know how backward man is to this duty. And though I am certain that these motives have weight of reason in them, yet experience of men's unreasonableness in things of this nature, doth make me jealous lest you should lay by the book, when you have read all this, as if you had done, and never set yourselves to the practice of the duty. Reader, thou seest the case in hand is of the greatest moment. It is to know whether thou shalt everlastingly live in heaven or hell. If thou hast lived hitherto in dark uncertainty, it is a pitiful case; but if thou wilfully continue so, thy madness is unexpressible: and is it not wilfully, when a thorough trial might help thee to be resolved, and thou wilt not be persuaded to be at so much pains? What sayest thou now? Art thou fully resolved to fall upon the work? Shall all this labour that I have bestowed in persuading thee, be lost, or no? If thou wilt not obey, I would thou hadst never read these lines, that they might not have aggravated thy guilt, and sileneed thee in judgment. I here put this special request to thee in behalf of thy soul; nay, I lay this charge upon thee in the name of the Lord; that thou defer no longer, but take the next opportunity that thou canst have, and take thy heart to task in good earnest, and think with thyself, Is it so easy, so common, and so dangerous, to be mistaken? Are there so many wrong ways? Is the heart so guileful? Why then do I not search into every corner, and ply this work tlll I know my state? Must I so shortly undergo the trial at the bar of Christ? And do I not presently fall on trying myself? Why, what a case were I in, if I should then miscarry! May I know by a little diligent inquiry now, and do I stiek at the labour? And here set thyself to the duty. *Object.* But it may be, thou wilt say, I know not how to do it. *Answ.* That is the next work that I come to, to give directions herein; but, alas! it will be in vain if thou be not resolved to practise them. Wilt thou, therefore, before thou goest any further, here promise before the Lord, to set thyself, to thy power, upon the speedy performing of the duty, according to these directions, which I shall lay down from the word? I demand nothing unreasonable or impossible of thee: it is but that thou wouldst presently bestow a few hours' time, to know what shall become of thee for ever. If a neighbour, or common friend, desires but an hour's time of thee, in conference, or in labour, or any thing that thou mayst help them in, thou wouldst not, sure, deny it. How much less shouldst thou deny this to thyself in so great a case! I pray thee take this request from me, as if upon my knees, in the name of Christ, I did prefer it to thee; and I will betake me upon my knees to Christ again, to beg that he will persuade thy heart to the duty: and, in hope that thou wilt practise them, I will here give thee some directions.[h]

[g] It is a terrible thing for the stoutest heart alive to look such a danger in the face, as, for aught he knows, may at one blow kill him, and damn him; or in a moment send him both to his grave and to hell. Mr. Vines' Sermon on Numb. xiv. 24. p. 9.

[h] I cannot but English (though I mar it) one passage in Seneca, to show some christians, to their shame, what heathens did: The soul is daily to be called to an account. It was the custom of Sextius, that when the day was past, and he betook himself to his rest at night, he would ask his soul, What evil of thine hast thou healed to-day? What vice hast thou resisted? In what part art thou better? Anger will cease and become more moderate, when it knows it must every day come before the judge. What practice is more excellent than thus to sift or examine over the whole day? How quiet, and sound, and sweet a sleep must needs follow this reckoning with ourselves; when the soul is either commended or admonished, and, as a secret observer and judge of itself, is acquainted with his own manners! I use this power myself, and daily accuse myself, or plead my cause before myself. When the candle is taken out of my sight, and my wife holds her tongue, then, according to my custom, I

CHAPTER X.

CONTAINING DIRECTIONS FOR EXAMINATION, AND SOME MARKS FOR TRIAL.

SECT. I. I will not stand here to lay down the directions necessary for preparation to this duty, because you may gather them from what is said concerning the hinderances; for the contraries of those hinderances will be most necessary helps. Only before you set upon it, I advise you moreover to the observation of these rules. 1. Come not with too peremptory conclusions of yourselves beforehand. Do not judge too confidently before you try. Many godly, dejected souls come with this prejudging to the work, concluding certainly that their state is miserable before they have tried it: and most wicked men, on the contrary side, do conclude most confidently that their state is good, or tolerable at the least: no wonder if these both miscarry in judging, when they pass the sentence before the trial.

2. Be sure to be so well acquainted with the Scripture, as to know what is the tenor of the covenant of grace, and what are the conditions of justification and glorification, and consequently what are sound marks to try thyself by, and wherein the truth of grace, and essence of christianity, do both consist.

3. And it will not be unuseful to write out some of the chief, and those scriptures withal which hold them forth, and so to bring this paper with you when you come to examination.

4. Be a constant observer of the temper and motions of thy heart; almost all the difficulty of the work doth lie in the true and clear discerning of it. Be watchful in observing the actings both of grace and corruption, and the circumstances of their actings; as, how frequent, how violent, how strong or weak were the outward incitements; how great or small the impediments; what delight, or loathing, or fear, or reluctancy, did go with those acts. By these and the like observations, you may come to a more infallible knowledge of yourselves.

5. Be sure you set upon the work with a serious, roused, awakened soul, apprehensive of how great concernment it is.

6. And lastly: Resolve to judge thyself impartially, neither better nor worse than thou art, but as the evidence shall prove thee.

SECT. II. Being thus provided, then set to the business, and therein observe these directions following, which I will mention briefly, that lying close together, you may be able to view and observe them the more easily:

1. Empty thy mind of all thy other cares and thoughts, that they do not distract or divide thy mind. This work will be enough at once of itself, without joining others with it.

2. Then fall down before God, and in hearty prayer desire the assistance of his Spirit, to discover to thee the plain truth of thy condition, and to enlighten thee in the whole progress of the work.

3. Make choice of the most convenient time and place. I shall not stand upon the particular directions about these, because I shall mention them more largely when I come to direct you in the duty of contemplation: only this in brief: 1. Let the place be the most private, that you may be free from distractions. 2. For the time thus, 1. When you are most solitary, and at leisure: you cannot cast accounts, especially of such a nature as these, either in a crowd of company or of employment. 2. Let it be a set and chosen time, when you have nothing to hinder you. 3. But if it may be, let it be the present time, especially if thou hast been a stranger hitherto to the work: there is no delaying in matters of such weight. 4. Especially when you have a more special call to search yourselves: as in public calamities, in time of sickness, before a sacrament, &c. 5. When God is trying you by some affliction, and, as Job saith, is searching after your sin, then set in with him, and search after them yourselves, Job x. 6. 6. Lastly: You should specially take such a time when you are most fit for the work; when you are not secure and stupid on the one hand, nor yet under deep desertions or melancholy on the other hand, for else you will be unfit judges of your own state.

4. When you have thus chosen the fittest time and place, then draw forth, either from thy memory, or in writing, the fore-mentioned marks, or gospel conditions, or descriptions of the saints. Try them by Scripture, and convince thy soul thoroughly of their infallible truth.

5. Proceed, then, to put the question to thyself, but be sure to state it right. Let it not be whether there be any good in thee at all, for so thou wilt err on the one hand; nor yet whether thou have such or such a degree and measure of grace, for so thou wilt err on the other hand; but whether such or such a saving grace be in thee at all in sincerity, or not?

6. If thy heart draw back, and be loth to the work, suffer it not so to give thee the slip, but force it on; lay thy command upon it; let reason interpose, and use its authority; look over the foregoing arguments, and press them home; yea, lay the command of God upon it, and charge it to obey upon pain of his displeasure. Set conscience at work also. Let it do its office, till thy lazy heart be spurred up to the work; for if thou suffer it to break away once and twice, &c. it will grow so headstrong, that thou canst not master it.

7. Let not thy heart trifle away the time, when it should be diligently at the work. Put the question to it seriously, Is it thus and thus with me, or no? Force it here to an answer. Suffer it not to be silent, nor to jangle and think of other matters. If the question be hard, through the darkness of thy heart, yet do not give it over so, but search the closer, and study the case the more exactly, and if it be possible, let not thy heart give over till it hath resolved the question, and told thee, off or on, in what case thou art. Ask it strictly, as Joseph examined his brethren, Gen. xliii. 7, how it stands affected. Do as David, Psal. lxxvii. 6, "My spirit made diligent search." If thy heart strive to break away before thou art resolved, wrestle with it till thou hast prevailed, and say, I will not let thee go till thou hast answered. He that can prevail with his own heart, shall also be a prevailer with God.

8. If thou find the work beyond thy strength, so

search over the whole day with myself; I measure over again my doings and my sayings; I hide nothing from myself; I overpass nothing: for why should I fear any of my errors, when I can say, See that thou do so no more; I now forgive thee: in such a disputation thou spakest too contentiously; engage not hereafter in disputes with them that are ignorant. They that have not learned will not learn. Such a man thou didst admonish more freely than thou oughtest; and therefore didst not amend him, but offend him. Hereafter see, not only whether it be truth which thou speakest, but whether he to whom it is spoken can bear the truth. Senec. de Ira, lib. iii. 36. If a heathen can keep a daily reckoning with his soul, methinks a christian might follow on the work of examination once till he know his condition; and when that is done, he shall find this daily reckoning, well managed, to be of unconceivable advantage, for subduing corruption, and for growth in grace.

that after all thy pains thou art never the more resolved, then seek out for help: go to some one that is godly, experienced, able, and faithful, and tell him thy case, and desire his best advice and help. Not that any man can know thy heart so well as thyself: but if thou deal faithfully, and tell him what thou knowest by thyself, he can tell thee whether they be sound evidence or not; and show thee Scripture how to prove them so; and direct thee in the right use of such evidences; and show thee how to conclude from them. Yea, when thou canst get no further, the very judgment of an able, godly man should take much with thee, as a probable argument: as the judgment of a physician, concerning the state of thy body. Though this can afford thee no full certainty, yet it may be a great help to stay and direct thee. But be sure thou do not make this a pretence to put off thy own duty of examining, but only use it as one of the last remedies, when thou findest thy own endeavours will not serve. Neither be thou forward to open thy case to every one, or to a carnal, flattering, and unskilful person; but to one that hath wisdom to conceal thy secrets, and tenderness to compassionate thee, and skill to direct thee, and faithfulness to deal truly and plainly with thee.

9. When by all this pains and means thou hast discovered the truth of thy state, then pass the sentence on thyself accordingly. A mere examination will do thee little good, if it proceed not to a judgment. Conclude as thou findest, either that thou art a true believer, or that thou art not. But pass not this sentenee rashly, nor with self-flattery, nor from melancholy terrors and fears, but do it groundedly, and deliberately, and truly, as thou findest according to thy conscience. Do not conclude, as some do, I am a good christian, or as others do, I am a reprobate, or a hypocrite, and shall be damned. When thou hast no ground for what thou sayest but thy own fancy, or hopes, or fears, nay, when thou art convinced by Scripture and reason of the contrary, and hast nothing to say against the arguments; let not thy judgment be any way biassed or bribed, and so forestalled from sentencing aright.

10. Labour to get thy heart kindly affected with its discovered condition, according to the sentence passed on it. Do not think it enough to know, but labour to feel what God hath made thee see. If thou find thyself undoubtedly graceless, oh! get this to thy heart, and think what a dolcful condition it is to be an enemy to God; to be unpardoned, unsanctified; and if thou shouldst so die, to be eternally damned! One would think such a thought should make a heart of stone to quake. On the contrary, if thou find thyself renewed and sanctificd indeed, oh! get this warm and close to thy heart; bethink thyself what a blessed state the Lord hath brought thee into; to be his child, his friend; to be pardoned, justified, and sure to be saved! Why, what needest thou fear but sinning against him? Come war, or plague, or sickness, or death, thou art sure they can but thrust thee into heaven.

Thus follow these meditations, till they have left their impression on thy heart.

11. Be sure to record this sentence so passed; write it down, or at least write it in thy memory, At such a time, upon thorough examination, I found my state to be thus or thus: this record will be very useful to thee hereafter. If thou be ungodly, what a damp will it be to thy presumption and security, to go and read the sentence of thy misery under thy own hand! If thou be godly, what a help will it be against the next temptation to doubting and fear, to go and read under thy hand this record! Mayst thou not think, If at such a time I found the truth of grace, is it not likely to be now the same, and these my doubts to come from the enemy of my peace?

12. Yet would I not have thee so trust to one discovery, as to try no more, especially if thou have made any foul defection from Christ, and played the backslider; see, then, that thou renew the search again.

13. Neither would I have this hinder thee in the daily search of thy ways, or of thy increase in grace and fellowship with Christ. It is an ill sign, and a desperate vile sin, for a man, when he thinks he hath found himself gracious, and in a happy state, to let down his watch, and grow negligent of his heart and ways, and scarce look after them any more.

14. Neither would I have thee give over in discouragement, if thou canst not at once, or twice, or ten times trying, discover thy case; but follow it on till thou hast discovered. If one hour's labour will not serve, take another; if one day, or month, or year, be too little, follow it still. If one minister cannot direct thee sufficiently, go to another. The issue will answer all thy pains. There is no sitting down discouraged in a work that must be done.

15. Lastly: Above all, take heed, if thou find thyself to be yet unregenerate, that thou do not conclude of thy future state by thy present; nor say, Because I am ungodly, I shall die so; or, Because I am a hypocrite, I shall continue so: no; thou hast another work to do; and that is, to resolve presently to cleave to Christ, and to break off thy hypocrisy and thy wickedness. If thou find that thou hast been all this while out of the way, do not sit down in despair; but make so much the more haste to turn into it: if thou hast been a hypocrite, or ungodly person, all thy life, yet is the promise offered thee by Christ; and he tendereth himself to be thy Lord and Saviour. Neither canst thou possibly be so willing to accept of him, as he is to accept thee. Nothing but thy own unwillingness can keep thy soul from Christ, though thou hast hitherto abused him, and dissembled with him.

Object. But if I have gone so far, and been a professor so long, and yet find myself a hypocrite now, after all, what hope is there that I should now become sincere? *Answ.* Dost thou heartily desire to be sincere; thy sincerity doth lie especially in thy will: as long as thou art unwilling, I confess, thy case is sad; but if thou be willing to receive Christ as he is offered to thee, and so to be a christian indeed, then thou art sincere. Neither hath Christ restrained his Spirit, or promises, to any set time; or said to thee, Thou shalt find grace, if thou sin but so much, or so long; but if thou be heartily willing at any time, I know not who can hinder thy happiness. Yet is this no diminution of the sin or danger of delaying.

Thus I have given you these directions for examination, which, conscionably practised, will be of singular advantage and use to discover your states; but it is not the bare reading of them that will do it. I fear, of many that will approve of this advice, there will but few be brought to use it; however, those that are willing, may find help by it, and the rest will be left most unexcusable in judgment.

Sect. III. I will not digress further, to warn you here of the false rules and marks of trial which you must beware, having opened them to you fullier when I preached on that subject; but I will briefly adjoin some marks to try your title to this rest, by referring you, for a fuller discovery, to the description of the people of God, in the first part of this book: but be sure you search thoroughly, and deal plainly, or else you will but lose your labour, and deceive yourselves.

Mark 1. Every soul that hath title to this rest, doth place his chiefest happiness in it, and make it the chief and ultimate end of his soul. This is the first mark; which is so plain a truth, that I need not stand to prove it: for this rest consisteth in the full and glorious enjoyment of God; and he that maketh not God his chief good, and ultimate end, is, in heart, a pagan, and vile idolater, and doth not take the Lord for his God truly.

Let me ask thee, then, Dost thou truly, in judgment and affection, account it thy chiefest happiness to enjoy the Lord in glory, or dost thou not? Canst thou say, with David, "The Lord is my portion," Psal. xvi. 5; and, as Psal. lxxiii. 15, "Whom have I in heaven but thee, and whom in earth that I desire in comparison of thee?" If thou be an heir of rest, it is thus with thee, Psal. cxix. 57; cxlii. 5; Lam. iii. 4. Though the flesh will be pleading for its own delights, and the world will be creeping into thine affection, and thou canst not be quite freed from the love of it, yet in thy ordinary, settled, prevailing judgment and affections, thou preferrest God before all things in the world.

1. Thou makest him the end of thy desires and endeavours.[a] The very reason why thou hearest and prayest, why thou desirest to live and breathe on earth, is chiefly this; that thou mayst seek the Lord, and make sure of thy rest: thou seekest first the kingdom of God and its righteousness. Though thou do not seek it so desirously and zealously as thou shouldst, yet hath it the chief of thy desires and endeavours, and nothing else is desired or preferred before it, Matt. vi. 33; so that thy very heart is thus far set upon it, Matt. vi. 21; Col. iii. 1—3.

2. Also thou wilt think no labour or suffering too great to obtain it;[b] and though the flesh may sometimes shrink, or draw back, yet art thou resolved and content to go through all,[c] Matt. vii. 13; 2 Tim. ii. 5, 12; Rom. viii. 17; Luke iv. 24; xiv. 26, 27.

3. Also, if thou be an heir of rest, thy valuation of it will be so high, and thy affection to it so great, that thou wouldst not exchange thy title to it, and hopes of it, for any worldly good whatsoever. Indeed, when the soul is in doubts of enjoying it, perhaps it may possibly desire rather the continuance of an earthly happiness, than to depart out of the body with fears of going to hell. But if he were sure that heaven should be his own, he would desire to depart, and to be with Christ, as being the best state of all. And if God would set before him an eternity of earthly pleasure and contents on one hand, and the rest of the saints on the other hand, and bid him take his choice, he would refuse the world, and choose this rest, Psal. xvi. 9, 10; Rom. viii. 23; 2 Cor. v. 2, 3; Phil. iii. 20. Thus, if thou be a christian indeed, thou takest God for thy chiefest good, and this rest for the most amiable and desirable state: and by the foresaid means thou mayst discover it.

But if thou be yet in the flesh, and an unsanctified wretch, then is it clean contrary with thee in all these respects. Then dost thou in thy heart prefer thy worldly happiness and fleshly delights before God; and though thy tongue may say that God is the chief good, yet thy heart doth not so esteem him. For, 1. The world is the chief end of thy desires and endeavours; thy very heart is set upon it; thy greatest care and labour is to maintain thy estate, or credit, or fleshly delights, but the life to come hath little of thy care or labour. Thou didst never perceive so much excellency in that unseen glory of another world, as to draw thy heart so after it, or set thee a labouring so heartily for it: but that little pains which thou bestowest that way, it is but in the second place, and not the first.[d] God hath but the world's leavings, and that time and labour which thou canst spare from the world, or those few cold and careless thoughts which follow thy constant, earnest, and delightful thoughts of earthly things. Neither wouldst thou do any thing at all for heaven, if thou knewest how to keep the world: but lest thou shouldst be turned into hell, when thou canst keep the world no longer, therefore thou wilt do something.

2. Therefore it is that thou thinkest the way of God too strict, and wilt not be persuaded to the constant labour of conscionable walking according to the gospel rule: and when it comes to trial, that thou must forsake Christ or thy worldly happiness, and the wind which was in thy back doth turn in thy face, then thou wilt venture heaven rather than earth, and, as desperate rebels use to say, thou wilt rather trust God's mercy for thy soul, than man's for thy body, and so wilfully deny thy obedience to God.

3. And certainly if God would but give thee leave to live in health and wealth for ever on earth, thou wouldst think it a better state than rest. Let them seek for heaven that would, thou wouldst think this thy chiefest happiness. This is thy case if thou be yet an unregenerate person, and hast no title to the saints' rest.

Sect. IV. The second mark which I shall give thee, to try whether thou be an heir of rest, is this:[e] As thou takest God for thy chief good, so thou dost

[a] Aversio a Deo in peccando, est a Deo et tanquam a principio, et tanquam a fine, ut optime Gibieuf, lib. ii. c. 20. s. 8. p. 427. Ideo conversio est ad Deum ut ad principium et ut ad finem.

[b] We renounced the world when we were baptized (in covenant and promise). But now we truly renounce the world, (in practice and performance of the covenant,) when being tried and proved by God, forsaking all that we have, we follow the Lord, and do stand fast and live in his belief and fear. Cypr. Epist. 7. ad Rogat. p. 20.

[c] The preferring God before all, and forsaking all in heart and resolution for him, is essential to our christianity, and no man can be saved without it; and therefore it was ever solemnly professed and promised in baptism in the primitive church, as you may see in Cypr. Ep. 7. et 54; et lib. de Hab. Virg. Const. Apost. Clem. lib. iv. c. 4. Tertul. de Coron. Milit.: Aquam adituri, ibidem, sed et aliquanto prius in ecclesia, sub antistitis manu contestamur nos renunciare diabolo et pompæ et angelis ejus. Ita in lib. de Spectac.: Ex hoc causatur quæcunque pigritia vel delectatio creaturæ rationalis indebita; quia si haberet amorem in Deum satis intensum, torporem illum excuteret, et perfecte amando Deum, sibi debite deserviret. Et cum peccatum quodcunque causatur in tepeditate dilectionis, patet quod incuria, h. e. parvi-pensio, vel non-curatio legis Dei, et peccatum quodcunque actuale, ad illum consequitur. Ubi quæso est major ingratitudo quam amorem terminare finaliter in creatura abjecta, et Deum quem debemus maxime omnes diligere, non diligere? Wickliffe Trialog. lib. ii. c. 16. f. 71.

[d] In one word, the sum of all is this: if he do embrace Christ (and God in Christ) as Christ is offered him in the gospel, and resigns himself to the regiment and government of Christ, and doth so esteem and prize him, that he counts all things as dung and dross in comparison of him, and can forsake father and mother, and all, to follow him; and can take up his cross, and undergo any affliction that shall be laid on him, rather than forsake and part with Christ; they that have thus brought him in their heart (to contract it in one word) to resign themselves to the government of the law of God, and set themselves in every thing to walk with him, and to approve themselves to him, have evidence that God hath brought them into covenant. D. Stoughton. Right. Man's Plea, serm. v. p. 14.

[e] Ut homines filii Dei fiant, filium Dei unicum per fidem recipiunt; et ipso donante, hanc accipiunt a Domino potestatem, ut et in eum credant, et ad numerum filiorum Dei pertineant. Fulgent. lib. de Incar. et Grat. c. 26. Quid enim eramus quando Christum nondum elegeramus? Et ideo non dilige-

heartily accept of Christ for thy only Saviour and Lord to bring thee to this rest. The former mark was the sum of the first and great command of the law of nature, "Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy heart," or above all. This second mark is the sum of the command or condition of the gospel, which saith, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved." And the performance of these two is the whole sum or essence of godliness and christianity. Observe, therefore, the parts of this mark, which is but a definition of faith.

1. Dost thou find that thou art naturally a lost, condemned man for thy breach of the first covenant? and dost believe that Jesus Christ is the Mediator, who hath made a sufficient satisfaction to the law; and hearing in the gospel that he is offered without exception unto all, dost heartily consent that he alone shall be thy Saviour; and dost no further trust to thy duties and works, than as conditions required by him, and means appointed in subordination to him, not looking at them as in the least measure able to satisfy the course of the law, or as a legal righteousness, nor any part of it, but art content to trust thy salvation on the redemption made by Christ?

2. Art thou also content to take him for thy only Lord and King,[f] to govern and guide thee by his laws and Spirit? and to obey him even when he commandeth the hardest duties, and those which most cross the desires of the flesh? Is it thy sorrow when thou breakest thy resolution herein; and thy joy when thou keepest closest in obedience to him? And though the world and flesh do sometimes entice and overreach thee, yet is it thy ordinary desire and resolution to obey, so that thou wouldst not change thy Lord and Master for all the world? Thus it is with every true christian. But if thou be a hypocrite, it is far otherwise. Thou mayst call Christ thy Lord and thy Saviour, but thou never foundest thyself so lost without him, as to drive thee to seek him, and trust him, and lay thy salvation on him alone. Or, at least, thou didst never heartily consent that he should govern thee as thy Lord;[g] nor didst resign up thy soul and life to be ruled by him; nor take his word for the law of thy thoughts and actions. It is like thou art content to be saved from hell by Christ when thou diest, but, in the mean time, he shall command thee no further than will stand with thy credit, or pleasure, or worldly estate and ends. And if he would give thee leave, thou hadst far rather live after the world and flesh, than after the word and Spirit. And though thou mayst now and then have a motion or purpose to the contrary, yet this that I have mentioned is the ordinary desire and choice of thy heart; and so thou art no true believer in Christ, for though thou confess him in words, yet in works thou dost deny him, being disobedient, and to every good work a disapprover and a reprobate, Tit. i. 17. This is the case of those that shall be shut out of the saints' rest.

But especially I would here have you observe, that it is in all this the consent of your hearts, or wills, which I lay down in this mark to be inquired after; for that is the most essential act of justifying faith:[h] therefore, I do not ask whether thou be assured of salvation; nor yet whether thou canst believe that thy sins are pardoned, and that thou art beloved of God in Christ. These are no parts of justifying faith, but excellent fruits and consequents, which they that do receive are comforted by them; but perhaps thou mayst never receive them while thou livest, and yet be a true heir of rest. Do not say, then, I cannot believe that my sin is pardoned, or that I am in God's favour, and therefore I am no true believer. This is a most mistaking conclusion: the question is, whether thou canst heartily accept of Christ, that thou mayst be pardoned, reconciled to God, and so saved? Dost thou consent that he shall be thy Lord, who hath bought thee, and take his own course to bring thee to heaven? This is justifying, saving faith; and this is the mark that thou must try thyself by: yet, still observe, that all this consent must be hearty and real; not feigned or with reservations.[i] It is not saying, as that dissembling son, Matt. xxi. 30, "I go, sir," when he went not; to say, Christ shall be my Lord, and yet let corruption ordinarily rule thee, or be unwilling that his commands should encroach upon the interest of the world or flesh. If any have more of the government of thee than Christ, or if thou hadst rather live after any other laws than his, if it were at thy choice, thou art not his disciple. Thus I have laid you down these two marks, which, I am sure, are such as every christian hath, and no other but sincere christians. I will add no more, seeing the substance of christianity is contained in these. Oh that the Lord would now persuade thee to the close performance of this self-trying task! that thou mayst not tremble with horror of soul, when the Judge of all the world shall try thee, but have thy evidence and assurance so ready at hand, and be so able to prove thy title to rest, that the thoughts and approaching of death and judgment may revive thy spirits, and fill thee with joy; and not appal thee, and fill thee with amazement!

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bamus; nam qui eum non elegit, quomodo diligit? Aug. Tract. 86. in Johan.

[f] Christ, in the latter days, shall be fully honoured in his kingly power. Hitherto Christ hath been much honoured in his prophetical and priestly office, but not so much in his kingly, &c. Burroughs on Hos. p. 131.

[g] Est enim fœderis obligatio mutua. Sed principium est a Deo. Paræ. in Gen. vi. 18. p. (mihi) 735. Sed integrum fœdus tum demum a Deo fuit constitutum quum utrinque intercessit sponsio inter partes contrahentes. Jun. Orat. de Promis. et Fœdere.

[h] Itaque velle credere est credere: non quia credere sit actus imperatus, sed quia in voluntate est; ut scribit Augustinus ad Marcel. de spirit. et liter. Etiam velle resipiscere est resipiscentiam agere: fundatur enim resipiscentia in ipsius voluntatis immutatione, quæ a malo convertitur ad bonum. D. Twiss Tileno contr. Corvinum, p. 355. a. Vide nunc utrum quisque credat si noluerit, aut non credat si voluerit? quod absurdum est: quid est enim credere nisi consentire verum esse quod dicitur? Consensio autem utique voluntis est, profecto fides in voluntate est. Aug. Retract. lib. i. c. 31. Fides in potestate est, quoniam cum vult quisque credit, et cum credit volens credit. Ibid. c. 32.

[i] Hereby you may know whether your conversion be right, yea or no: as that which is Christ's cometh to be thine, so that which is thine cometh again to be Christ's: "My beloved is mine, and I am his." Burroughs on Hos. lect. 17. p. 601. Ut eligatur gratia, ipsa prius eligit; neque suscipitur aut diligitur, nisi hoc ipsa in corde hominis operetur. Istam gratiam nullus hominum desiderare vel poscere, sed nec cognoscere poterit, nisi eam prius ab illo accipiat, qui eam nullis præcedentibus operibus bonis largitur, &c. Fulgen. de Verit. Prædest. c. 14, 16. Even the Jesuits confess that it is ex Christi gratia non solum esse sanum, sed et sanari velle, et precari ut credere velimus et purgari. Dion. Petavius de Lege et Gratia, lib. ii. c. 3 sect. 1, 2, &c. But they see not that ipsa sanitas consistit maxima ex parte in ipso velle.

CHAPTER XI.

A MORE EXACT INQUIRY INTO THE NUMBER AND USE OF MARKS; THE NATURE OF SINCERITY; WITH OTHER THINGS OF GREAT MOMENT IN THE WORK OF SELF-EXAMINATION.

Sect. I. It is a matter of such inexpressible consequence for every man to make sure work in the great business of his salvation, it being so easy, so ordinary, and so dangerous to be mistaken, that I think fit yet to add some further advice, to help men in the trial of their own states. There is no christian that hath any eare of his soul, or any belief and true sense of the matters of eternity, but must needs be very solicitous in inquiring, How he may know what will become of him for ever and ever? and be glad of a clear, undeceiving direction for the discovery of this. As I lay under seven years' doubting and perplexity of spirit myself, much through my ignorance in the managing of this work, so was I very inquisitive still after signs of sincerity, and I got all the books that ever I could buy, which laid down evidences and marks of true grace, and tended to discover the difference betwixt the true christian and the hypocrite or unsound; I liked no sermon so well as that which contained most of these marks; and afterward, when I was called to the ministry myself, I preached in this way as much as most. I have heard as many complaints of doubting, distressed souls as most: and had as many that have opened their hearts to me in this point; of whom many have proved the most humble, self-denying, mortified christians; and many that were deepest in doubtings and distress, upon trial of their lives, I found also deepest in pride, peevishness, unmortified lusts, and unfaithful walking, which did feed their troubles. Upon this long experience of myself and others, and most serious study of this point, and prayer to God for his direction, I think it but my duty to open yet more fully, for the benefit of others, what I have herein discovered, which is necessary for them to understand in this weighty work: for one error here may put the hearts and lives of godly people quite out of frame, and may do much to the confirming of the wicked in their presumption and self-deceit. I shall therefore lay down what I conceive to be the truth, in certain propositions.

Sect. II. *Prop.* 1. A sincere christian may attain to an infallible knowledge of his own sincerity in grace, or his performance of the conditions of the covenant of life, and consequently of his justification, adoption, and title to glory; and this without any extraordinary revelation.

This proposition I have proved before, and therefore need to say no more to it now. I lay it down here by way of caution to prevent mistakes; lest any should think that I am against an attainment of assurance here, because of some passages following.

Sect. III. *Prop.* 2. This infallible knowledge is not properly a certainty of faith, as too many divines affirm.[a]

This also I have proved before in opening the nature of assurance, and in the appendix of my Aphorisms of Justification; and Mr. Wotton de Reconcil. and very many learned divines of late, have confirmed it fully. Proper certainty of faith is, when a man by mere believing is sure of the truth of the thing believed: this, therefore, leaneth fully on a divine testimony. But there is no divine testimony revealing, that such or such a man's sins are pardoned, or he justified. The testimony of the Spirit is but partly by giving us the conditions of the promise, which is our evidence, and partly helping us to see them, and conclude from them, and take comfort therein: and so it witnesseth with our conscienees, by causing our consciences spiritually and effectually to witness. But this testimony is not the object of faith; it is only God's testimony in Scripture which affords us a certainty of faith, properly divine, in this point.[b] Though in other cases natural discoveries may be truly called a divine testimony in a larger sense; yet this is above nature: now, God's word doth only say, he that repenteth and believeth shall be pardoned, and justified, and saved; but no where saith, that you or I shall be saved. *Object.* But, you will say, as long as we may know that we believe, is it not all one? *Answ.* No: for God's word tells me not that I believe; therefore this must be known by reflection and internal sense, and not by believing. He that believeth he doth believe, believeth himself and not God; for God no where telleth him so: so then it is beyond doubt, that assurance, as I said before, ariseth from the conclusion; one of whose premises is in the word of God, and must be believed; the other is in our own hearts, and must be felt or known; and therefore the conclusion is mixed, and to be deduced by reason, and is not an object properly of divine faith, or of any faith at all. There is but one objection that seems to me to have any appearance of strength, to take with any reasonable man; and that, some think, cannot be answered. And thus they argue: Whatsoever we ask of God through Christ, according to his will, we must believe we shall receive: but we ask justification and glory of God according to his will, through Christ; therefore we must believe we shall receive them. *Answ.* This makes not our justification and salvation to be upon certainty of faith. For, 1. The major proposition doth only express a conditional promise of justification and salvation, and no absolute promise. Now, a conditional promise puts nothing in being till the performance of the condition, nor gives any certainty but on such performance. The condition here expressed is, that we ask, and that we ask according to God's will; which implies many other conditions; for it must be in faith and repentance, and to right ends, not "to consume it on our lusts," saith James; and we must be certain that we are sincere in all this, before we can, upon this conditional promise, have a certainty. 2. So that the minor proposition here, that we thus ask according to God's will in true faith, &c. this no scripture speaks; and therefore must be known otherwise than by believing. 3. Yet we may be said to believe we shall receive, in reference to the major proposition or promise in Scripture, which is an object of our belief.

Sect. IV. *Prop.* 3. Though infallible assurance, as aforesaid, may be here attained, yet perfect certainty

[a] Lege Amesii Coron. de art. v. cap. 1. corol. vi. vii. p. (mihi) 88. eadem quæ Theolog. in Synodo Dord.

[b] Supposing that other ways of revelation are ceased. Assensum quippe nostrum afficiunt fidei catholicæ articuli, ut principia immediata, ac prima. Fides autem subjungitur per modum assumptionis. Illius ergo quæ hanc persuasionem facit, conclusionis non potest esse firmitudo major, quam quæ præmissarum debiliori inest. Subsumptio illa autem experimentalibus nititur judiciis, per privatam hominis conscientiam pensitatis. Quæ cum nonnunquam in dubium vocentur, an sint signa genuina, et sæpe tentationum nube occultentur, ne ad præsens solatium effulgeant, quid mirum si non, &c.—Theolog. Britan. in Synod. Dord. Suffrag. ad art. v. thes. 3, &c.

in degree cannot, nor may lawfully be by any man expected.[c]

This also I have proved before. For if we may be perfect in the degree of assurance, why not of all grace as well; and so have no sin? nay, there are so many graces exercised in producing our assurance, besides reason itself, that if they be not first perfect, it is impossible that assurance should be perfect. For example: He that believeth not in perfection the truth of Scripture, and of that promise, that "Whosoever believeth shall be saved;" 2. And he that knoweth not in perfection the sincerity of his own faith, neither of which any man breathing doth do; cannot possibly be perfectly certain that he is justified, and shall be saved: for who can be perfectly certain of the conclusion, who is but imperfectly certain of the premises? And yet I have met with some men that think themselves very learned and spiritual, that confidently dispute for a perfection in assurance. If any man say, that Bellarmine meant as much as this imperfect certainty, when he grants a conjectural certainty; and be sure that he speaks truly; I will like Bellarmine the better, and his opposers in this the worse, but I will like a plain, necessary truth of God never the worse. Sure I am that our great divines affirming, that we are sure of salvation by a certainty of faith, hath given the papists fearful ground to baffle them and play upon us, and triumph over them. And when their own students and followers find it so, it hardens them against us fearfully. And as sure I am that no man is perfect gradually in this life in any grace, much less in so high a point as his assurance. Among all those consciences that I have had opened to me, I never met with a humble, heavenly, upright christian, that would say he was perfectly certain; nay, and but few, that durst call their persuasion a certainty, but rather a strong hope: but some licentious, fantastical disputers, I have heard plead for such a perfect certainty; whose pride, and loose living, and unmortified passions and corruptions, told the standers-by, that they were the farthest from true certainty of any.

Sect. V. *Prop.* 4. Though in some cases it may be useful to name several marks; yet the true, infallible marks of sincerity, which a man may gather assurance from, are very few, and lie in a narrower room than most have thought.

As I would not pick quarrels with the most godly divines, who lay down many marks of sincerity in their sermons and books; so would I not, in foolish tenderness of any man's reputation, be so cruel to the souls of poor christians, as to hide the truth from them in so weighty a point: and I speak against no man more than myself heretofore. I know ordinary christians cannot discern how these multitudes of marks do lie open to exceptions; but the judicious may easily perceive it. I shall therefore here tell you the truth, how far these many marks are commendable and convenient, and how far they are condemnable and dangerous. And, 1. When we are only discovering the nature of some sin, rather than the certainty of the unholiness of the sinner, it is both easy and useful to give many signs, as from the effects, &c. by which it may be known what that sin is: and so men may know how far they are guilty of it. But to know certainly whether that sin will prove the damnable state of the sinner, is neither easy, in most cases, nor to be done by many marks.

2. When we are discovering the nature of some duty or grace, and not the very point wherein the soul's sincerity in that grace or duty lieth, it is both easy and useful to give many marks of them. But by these no man can gather assurance of his sincerity.

3. When we are describing a high degree of wickedness, which is far from the best state of an unregenerate man, it is both easy and useful to give plain marks of such a state. But to discover just how much sin will stand with true grace, is another matter.

4. When we are describing the state of the strongest christians, it is easy and useful to mark them out, and to give many marks of their strength; but to give many of their truth, and to discover the least degree of true grace, is not easy. So I have shown you wherein marks may commendably be multiplied; but to lay down many marks of sincerity, and say, By these you may certainly know whether you shall be saved or not; this I dare not do.

Sect. VI. *Prop.* 5. There is a threefold truth to be inquired after in examination: 1. The truth of the act or habit; 2. The moral truth of it as a grace or duty; 3. The moral truth of it as a saving or justifying grace or duty, or as the condition of justification and salvation. It is the last of these three only that the great business in self-examination lieth on, and which we are now searching after; the two first being presupposed as more easily discernible, and less controvertible.[d]

I will not here trouble plain readers, for whose sakes I write, with any scholastic inquiries into the nature of truth, but only look into so much as is of flat necessity to a right managing of the work of self-examination; for it is unconceivable how a man should rationally judge of his own condition, when he knows not what to inquire after; or that he should clearly know his sincerity, who knows not what sincerity is. Yet I doubt not but, by an internal feeling, a strong, sound christian, who hath his faith and love and other graces in action, may comfortably perceive the sincerity of his graces, though he be so ignorant as not clearly and distinctly to know the nature of sincerity, or to give any just description of it; even as an unlearned man, that is of a sound and healthful body, may feel what health is when he cannot describe it, nor tell distinctly wherein it doth consist. But yet, as he hath a general knowledge of it, so hath this ignorant, sincere christian, of the nature of sincerity. And, withal, this is a more dangerous ground to stand on, because our sense is so uncertain in this case, more than in the welfare of the body; and the assurance of such a soul will be more defective and imperfect, and very unconstant, who goes by mere feeling, without knowing the nature of what he feeleth, even as the forementioned unlearned man, in case of bodily health, if he have no knowledge, but mere feeling of the nature of health, he will be cast down with a tooth-ache, or some harmless disease, if it be painful, as if he should presently die, when a knowing man could tell that there is no danger; and he would make light of a hectic, or other mortal disease, till it be uncurable, because he feels no great pain in it. It is, therefore, a matter of necessity to open, most clearly and distinctly, the nature of sincerity or truth, so far as concerns the case in hand. I told you before, that there is a metaphysical truth of being, and a moral; I now add further, that here are three things to be inquired

[c] Read of this our British divines in the Synod of Dort. in suffrag. ad art. v. thes. 2, 3; excellently and moderately, as they did in all. The conclusion follows the weaker part of the premises, say logicians. Vide Smigletii Logicam Disp. xiii. quæst. 8, 12, 13. Ubi strenue probatur, præmissæ alterius debilitatem, semper et in omni materia, redundare in conclusionem.

[d] Lege Aquin. Sum. de Veritate, c. 1, 2, &c. accuratissime de veri et veritatis definitione.

after: 1. The truth of the act; 2. The truth of the virtuousness of the act; 3. The truth of the justifying or saving nature of the act. The first is of natural, the two last of moral consideration: as, for example, if you be trying the sincerity of your love to God, you must first know that you do love him indeed, without dissembling; 2. That this love is such as is a duty or good, which God requireth; 3. That this love is such as will certainly prove you in a state of salvation. The first of these (whether you believe and love Christ or not) must needs be first known; and this must be known by internal feeling, joined with a consideration of the effects of real love. And to this end many marks may be useful, though, indeed, inward feeling must do almost all; no man else can tell me whether I believe and love, if I cannot tell myself. It is no hard matter to a solid, knowing christian, to discern this ordinarily; but when they do know this, they are far enough from true assurance, except they go to the rest. A man may be a true man, and not an image, or a shadow, or a corpse, and yet be a false thief, or a liar, and no true man in a moral sense: this I lay down to these uses.[e]

First, That you take heed when you hear or read marks of grace, how you receive and apply them; and inquire whether it be not only the truth of the being of the act or habit that those marks discover, rather than the virtuous or the saving being or force.

Secondly, That you take heed, in examination, of taking up at this first step, as if, when you have found that you believe, and love, and repent, you had found all, when yet you have not found that you do it savingly.

Thirdly, To take heed of the doctrine of many in this, who tell you, that every man that hath faith, knows he hath it; and it is impossible to believe, and not to know we believe. This may, ordinarily, but not always, be true about this first truth, of the mere being of the act; but is it no wonder that they should not consider that this is but a presupposed matter, and not the great thing that we have to inquire after in point of sincerity? and that they may know they believe long enough, and yet not know their faith to be saving? It is our beyond-sea divines that so mistake in this point: our English divines are sounder in it than any in the world, generally: I think because they are more practical, and have had more wounded, tender consciences under cure, and less empty speculation and dispute. The second truth to be inquired after is, that this act is truly good, or a virtue, or grace; for every act is not a virtue, nor every act that may seem so. I will not stand here curiously to open to you, wherein the goodness of an action doth consist. Somewhat will be said in the following propositions: only thus much at present. To denominate an action properly and fully good, it must be fully agreeable to God's will of precept, both in the matter, end, measure, and all circumstances; but, improperly and imperfectly, it may be called good or virtuous, though there be evil mixed, if the good be most eminent, as if the substance of the action be good, though the circumstances be evil; and thus we ordinarily call actions good: but if the evil be so predominant as that the good lie only in ends or circumstances, and the substance, as it were, of the action be forbidden, then we may not call it a good action, or a grace, or duty. So that it is not perfect, proper goodness that I here speak of, but the second, that is imperfect; when the action is commanded and good in itself, and the good more eminent than the evil; yet it may not be saving for all that.

For there is a common grace which is not saving, yet real, and so true and good, and so true grace; as well as a special grace, which is saving: and there are common duties commanded by God, as almsdeeds, fasting, prayer, &c. which, though they are necessary, yet salvation doth not certainly accompany them, or follow them. A man that finds any moral virtue to be in himself truly, and to be truly a virtue, cannot thence conclude that he shall be saved, nor a man that doth a duty truly good in itself. Many did that which was good in the sight of the Lord, but not with an upright heart; and even an Ahab's humiliation may have some moral goodness, and so some acceptance with God, and bring some benefit to himself, and yet not be saving nor justifying.

And some actions again may be so depraved by the end and manner, that they deserve not the name of good or duty. As to repent of a sinful attempt is, in itself, considered a duty and good; but if a man repent of it only because it did not succeed, or because he missed of the gain, or pleasure, or honour, which he expected by it, thus he makes it a greater sin: and if he repent but because his pleasure is gone, or because he is brought to poverty or disgrace by his sin, this is but a natural thing, and deserves not the name of a virtue. So to love God is in itself good, and the highest duty; but if a man love God as one that he thinks hath prospered him in his sin, and helped and succeeded him in his revenge, unjust bloodshed, robbery, sinful rising and thriving, thanking God and loving him for his pleasure in lust, drunkenness, gluttony, or the like, as the most men that idolize their flesh-pleasure do, when they have ease and honour, and all at will, that they may offer a full sacrifice to their flesh, and say, Soul, take thine ease, then they thank God for it, and may really love him under this notion.[f] This is to make God a pander or servant to our flesh, and so to love him for serving and humouring it; and this is so far from being a virtue, that it is one of the greatest of all sins; and if another man love God in a better notion a little, and love his lusts more, this is no saving love, as I shall more fully show you. So that you see a man hath more to look after than the mere honesty, virtue, or moral goodness of his action; or else all actions that are virtuous would be saving.

The third thing to be inquired after is, the sincerity of grace considered as saving. This is much more than the two former, and, indeed, is the great matter in self-examination to be looked after: here is the work; here is the difficulty; here it is that we are now inquiring, how far marks may be multiplied, how far they may be useful, and wherein this sincerity doth consist. The

[e] Lege Rivet. Disput. de Certitud. salutis, sect. xxxiii. p. 248, 249. Even learned Testardus is thus mistaken, (De Natura et Grat. p. 142, thes. 180,) whose words I will give you, that you may see what way others go, in him. "If any man feel that he believeth, for felt it is, and that most certainly of him that believeth, and be persuaded of the veraeity of God and Christ, that man cannot choose but certainly conclude with himself, that his sins are pardoned, and life eternal shall be given him. He, therefore, that professeth himself uncertain of the pardon of his sins, and of his salvation, doth in vain boast that he is a believer. Certainly, he that is not certain of the pardon of his sins and of his salvation, which is the conclusion of the syllogism of faith, is either ignorant of what is contained in the major; or else doth not take it for certain, which yet is the word of God and Christ; or else it must needs be, that he doth not feel that he believes: and how then can he be called a believer?" Thus Testardus erreth, with too many more.

[f] Πρόσκαιροι saneti dieuntur, et quodammodo sunt, sed sine radice et soliditate, ut Rivet. Disp. de Persev. Sanct. sect. iii. p. 203.

two former will not denominate a man a sincere christian, nor prove him justified, and in a state of salvation, without this. Wherein this consisteth, I shall show you in the following propositions: now, I have first showed you what it is that you must inquire after; and I hope no wise christian will judge me too curious and exact here, seeing it is a work that nearly concerns us, and is not fit to be done in the dark: our cause must be thoroughly sifted at judgment, and our game then must be played aboveboard; and therefore it is desperate to juggle and cheat ourselves now: only, before I proceed, let me tell you, that according to this threefold truth or sincerity, so there is a threefold self-delusion or hypocrisy; taking hypocrisy for a seeming to be what we are not, either to ourselves or others, though, perhaps, we have no direct dissembling intent.

1. To take on us to repent, believe, love Christ, &c. when we do not at all: this is the grossest kind of hypocrisy, as wanting the very natural truth of the act.

2. To seem to believe, repent, love God, &c. virtuously, according to the former description, and yet to do it but in subserviency to our lusts and wicked ends, this is another sort of gross hypocrisy; yea, to do it in mere respect to fleshly prosperity, as to repent because sin hath brought us to sickness and poverty, to love God merely because he keeps up our flesh's prosperity, &c. this is still gross hypocrisy.

It may be a great question, which of these is the greater sin; to repent and love God in subserviency to our sin, or not to do it at all?

Answ. It is not much worth the thinking on, they are both so desperately wicked; therefore I will not trouble the reader with a curious resolution of this question, only thus: Though to deny God's being, be a blasphemous denial of his natural excellency, and so of his attributes, which are the first platform of that which we call morality in the creature; yet to deny these his attributes, and, withal, to ascribe sin and positive wickedness to the blessed, holy God, seems to me the greater sin; *Sicut esse diabolum est pejus (quoad ipsum) quam non esse.*

3. The next kind of hypocrisy, and the most common, is, when men want the sincerity of grace as saving only, but have both the truth of it as an act or habit, and as a virtue. When men have some repentance, faith, hope, love, &c. which is undissembled and hath good ends, but yet is not saving; this is the unsoundness which most among us in the church perish by, that do perish, and which every christian should look most to his heart in.[g] This, I think, is discerned by few that are guilty of it, though they might all discern it, if they were willing and diligent.

Sect. VII. *Prop.* 6. As it is only the precepts of Christ that can assure us that one action is virtuous, or a duty, more than another; so it is only the tenor of the covenant of grace, bestowing justification or salvation upon any act, which makes that act, or grace, justifying or saving, and can assure us that it is so.

By the precepts, I mean any divine determination concerning our duty, what we ought to do or avoid. It is the same sacred instrument which is called God's testament, his covenant, and his new law, the several names being taken from several respects, as I have opened elsewhere, and cannot now stand to prove: this law of God hath two parts, the precept and the sanction. The precept may be considered either as by itself, Do this or that, and so it maketh duty: this constitutes the virtue of actions, regulating them; and so the second kind of sincerity, whether an action be good or bad, must be tried by the precepts as precepts. What God requireth, is a virtue: what he forbiddeth, is a vice: what he neither requireth nor forbiddeth, is indifferent, as being not of moral consideration; for the popish doctrine of divine counsels is vain.

2. And then these precepts must be considered not only as they stand by themselves, and constitute duty simply, saying, Do this; but also as they stand in conjunction with the sanction, and say, Do this or that, and be saved, or else perish, as, Believe and be saved, else not. And in this respect and sense, they constitute the conditions of the covenant; and so they are the only rule by which to know what is saving grace, and what not: and only in this respect it is that they justify or condemn men. They may justify or condemn the action, as bare precepts and prohibitions; but they justify not, nor condemn, the person himself, but as precepts conjoined with the sanction; that is, with the promise or threatening.

So that it is hence evident, that no human conjecture can gather what is a saving grace or duty, and what not, either from a bare precept, considered disjunct from the promise, or from any thing in the mere nature and use of the gracious act itself. The nature of the act is but its aptitude to its office; but the consequents, (for I will not call them effects,) justification and salvation, proceed from or upon them only as conditions on which the free promise bestoweth those benefits directly. Those, therefore, which make the formal reason of faith's justifying to lie in its apprehension, which they call its instrumentality, being indeed the very nature and being of the act, do little know what they say, nor how derogatory to Christ, and arrogating to themselves, their doctrine is, as I have elsewhere manifested.

I conclude, then, that it is only the Scripture that can tell you what is justifying or saving grace, by promising and annexing salvation thereto.

Sect. VIII. *Prop.* 7. Whatsoever therefore is the condition which the covenant of grace requireth of man, for the attaining of justification and salvation, and upon which it doth bestow them, that only is a justifying and saving act. And inferior duties are no further marks to try by, nor are justifying and saving, than as they are reducible to that condition.

This is it which I have asserted in the last foregoing chapter, and this is the reason why I laid down but two marks there. Though, in the first part, in the description of God's people, I laid down the whole description, which must needs contain some things common, and not only special properties, yet now I am to give you the true points of difference, I dare not number so many particulars. The performance of the proper condition of the new covenant, promising justification or salvation, then, is the only mark of justification or salvation, direct and infallible; or is the only justifying and saving grace properly so called. Now, you must understand that the covenant of life hath two parts, as the condition for man to perform, if he will receive the benefits. The first is, the natural part concerning the pure Godhead, who is the first and the last, the principal, efficient, and ultimate end of all; who is our Creator, Preserver, Governor, happiness, or rest. This is the taking the Lord only for our God, in opposition to all idols visible or invisible. As the end, as such, is before and above all the means, and the Father, or mere Godhead, is above Christ the Mediator as such, (as he saith, John xiv. 28, "The Father is greater than I,") so this is the first and greater part of the condition of the covenant: and so idolatry and atheism are the greatest

[g] Ita sincere, tam resipiscentiam quam fidem, conditionem ad salutem adipiscendam prorsus necessariam statuimus. Friglandius de Grat. p. 997.

and first condemning sins. The second part of the condition is, That we take Jesus Christ only for the Mediator and our Redeemer, and so as our only Saviour and supreme Lord, by the right of redemption. This is the second part, consisting in the choice of the right and only way and means to God, as he is the end: for Christ, as Mediator, is not the ultimate end, but the way to the Father. These two parts of the condition are most evident in the word, both in their distinction and necessity. The former was part of that covenant made with Adam, which is not repealed, nor ever will be, though the rest of that covenant may be laid by. It was afterwards still fully expressed to the church before Christ's coming in the flesh: in all the people's covenanting, this was still the sum, that they took the Lord only to be their God. But the latter part was not in the covenant with Adam: nor was it openly and in full plainness put into the covenant of grace in the beginning, but still implied, and more darkly intimated, the light and clearness of revelation still increasing till Christ's coming. Yet so, as that at the utmost they had but the discovery of a Saviour to be born of a virgin, of the tribe of Judah, at such a time, but never that this Jesus was the Christ. And so it was only in a Saviour so to be revealed that they were to believe before; but after Christ's coming, and his miracles, and resurrection, at utmost, he tells them, "If ye believe not that I am he, you shall die in your sins." So that to them to whom he was revealed, at least it was of necessity to believe that this Jesus is he, and not to look for another. Now, to us christians under the New Testament, this latter part of the covenant (concerning the Mediator) is most fully expressed, and most frequently inculcated: not as if the former part (concerning God the Creator and end) were become less necessary than before, or ever the less to be studied by christians, or preached by the ministers of the gospel; but on the contrary, it is still implied, as being fully revealed before, and a thing generally received by the church; yea, and confirmed and established by the adding of the gospel, and preaching of Christ; for the end is still supposed and implied, when we determine of the means; and the means confirm and not deny the excellency and necessity of the end. Therefore, when Paul (Acts xvii. &c.) was to preach to the Athenians or other heathens, he first preacheth to them the Godhead, and seeks to bring them from their idols, and then preacheth Christ. And therefore it is said, "He that comes to God, (as the end and his happiness, or Creator and Preserver,) must (first) believe that God is, and that he is (in the Redeemer) a rewarder of them that diligently seek him," Heb. xi. And, therefore, the apostles preached "repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ," Acts xx. 21. The first is, "the turning from idols to the true God;" and so repentance is in order of nature before faith in the Mediator, and more excellent in its nature, as the end is than the way; but not before faith in the Godhead. The second is the only highway to God. Therefore, Paul was by preaching to turn men from darkness to light, both from the darkness of atheism and idolatry, and the darkness of infidelity; but first from the power of Satan, and worshipping devils, to God; that so next, by faith in Christ, they might receive remission of sin, and inheritance among them that are sanctified, Acts xxvi. 28. And Christ himself took the same course, and preached these two parts of the condition of the covenant distinctly. "This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and (then) Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent," John xvii. 3. Words of knowledge in Scripture commands, import affection. And, "The Father is greater than I," John xiv. 28. And, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh to the Father but by me," John xiv. 6. And, "Ye believe in God, (there is the first part,) believe also in me," John xiv. 1; (there is the second part.) But intended brevity forbids me to heap up more proof in so plain a case.

To this last part of the condition is opposed infidelity, or not believing in Christ, being the chiefest condemning sin, next to atheism and idolatry, which are opposite to the first part. On these two parts of the condition of the covenant, hath God laid all our salvation, as much as concerns our part; still supposing that God and the Mediator have done and will do all their part.

The first part of the condition I call the natural part, being from the beginning, and written in the nature of every reasonable creature, and by an eminency and excellency it is of natural morality above all other laws whatsoever. The second I call the supernatural part of the condition; as being not known to any man by the mere light of nature, but is supernaturally revealed to the world by the gospel. The first part also is the basis or great command of the decalogue, "Thou shalt have none other god but me;" or in other terms, "Thou shalt love God above all." The second is the great command of the gospel, "Believe in the Lord Jesus;" or in other terms, "Love Christ above all." For, as I said, words of knowledge in Scripture imply affection, especially will, where all acts of the soul are complete, which in the intellect are but incomplete, imperfect, and preparatory, the understanding being but the entrance to the will, and the will being an extended understanding. Therefore, sometimes Christ saith, "He that believeth not, is condemned." Sometimes, "He that loveth any thing more than me, is not worthy of me, and cannot be my disciple." And he joineth them together in John xvi. 27, Therefore hath the Father loved you, "because ye have loved me, and have believed," &c. Intellectual belief, or assent, therefore, wherever you read it commanded, implieth the will's consent and love.

And thus I have showed you what the conditions of the covenant are, which I have done the fullier, that you might know what is a saving grace or act, and what not. For you may easily conceive that it must needs be safer trying by these than by any lower act or duty: and as all other are no further saving, than as they belong to these, or are reducible to them, so you can no further try yourselves by them, but as they are reduced to these. And now you see the reason why I mentioned but only two marks in the foregoing chapter, and why I say that true marks are so few by which a man may safely try his title to heaven. And yet you shall see that we must yet reduce them to a narrower room, when we come to open the nature of sincerity. In preparation to which I must tell you, that in the terms of these two marks, or two parts of the condition of the covenant, there is contained somewhat common, which an unregenerate man may perform, and somewhat special and proper to the saints. Though all must go together and be found in those that will be saved, yet the specifical form, or constitutive difference, by which, as saving, the act of a true believer is discerned from the act of an unsound person, doth lie but in a part of it, and I think but in one point: as a man is defined to be a reasonable living creature; but to be a creature will not prove him a man, nor to be a living creature neither, because that there are other creatures, and living creatures, or animate, besides himself. But to be a reasonable animal, or living creature, will prove him a man, be-

cause reason contains his specific form and constitutive difference. Other inferior creatures may have bodies, and fleshly bodies, as well as man, and others may have life, which we call a soul, and yet man must have these two; but others with these have not reason, or a soul endued with a power of reasoning. So in these marks of grace, or conditions of the covenant. To love, is common to every man; to love God and Christ, is common to a christian with a hypocrite or wicked man; but to love Christ savingly, that is, as I shall show you presently, sovereignly, or chiefly, this is the form or constitutive difference of love which is saving. To take or accept, is common to every man; to take or accept of God and Christ, is common to a true christian and a false; but to take or accept of God and his Christ sincerely and savingly, is proper to a sound believer; so that even in these two marks, the sincerity of both lieth in one point. For, supposing the truth of the act, and the truth of the virtue in general, (which are both common, as I have told you,) the truth or sincerity of them as saving, is the only thing to be inquired after. And in this sense, I know but one infallible mark of sincerity; seeing sincerity lieth in this one point. But before I come to open it more fully, I will premise, and but briefly name, two more propositions.

Sect. IX. *Prop.* 8. God hath not in the covenant promised justification or salvation upon any mere act or acts, considered without that degree and suitableness to their objects, wherein the sincerity of them, as saving, doth consist.

It is said, indeed, "that he that believeth shall be saved," but then it is supposed that it be sincere believing; for any believing is not here meant. For many that believed, and that without gross dissimulation, shall perish, as not believing sincerely. And, therefore, Christ would not trust himself with those that yet believed in him, because he knew their hearts, that they did it not in faithfulness and sincerity, John ii. 23, 24. But I shall confirm this more fully afterwards.

Sect. X. *Prop.* 9. There is no one act, considered in its mere nature and kind, without its measure and suitableness to its object, which a true christian may perform, but an unsound christian may perform it also.

I have great reason to add this, that you may take heed of trying and judging of yourselves by any mere act, considered in itself. If any doubt of this, we might soon prove it by producing the most excellent acts, and showing it of them in particular. Believing is as proper to the saved as any thing for the act. And yet, as for the assenting act, James tells us the devils believe. And as for resting on Christ by affiance, and expecting pardon and salvation from him, we see beyond question, that many thousand wicked men have no other way to quiet them in sinning, but that they are confident Christ will pardon and save them, and they undissemblingly quiet or rest their souls in this persuasion, and undissemblingly expect salvation from him when they have sinned as long as they can. And, indeed, herein lieth the nature of presumption: and so real are they in this faith, that all our preaching cannot beat them from it. If the question be, whether a wicked man can pray, or meditate, or forbear the act of this or that sin, I think none will deny it. But yet all this will be opened fullier anon.

Sect. XI. *Prop.* 10. The supremacy of God and the Mediator in the soul, or the precedency and prevalency of his interest in us, above the interest of the flesh, or of inferior good, is the very point wherein materially[h] the sincerity of our graces, as saving, doth consist; and so is the one mark by which those must judge of their state that would not be deceived.

Prop. 11. For the saving object being resolved of in the gospel, here the sincerity of the act, as saving, consisteth formally[i] in being suited to its adequate object, considered in those respects which are essential to it as such an object. And so to believe in, accept, and love God as God, and Christ as Christ, is the sincerity of these acts. But this lieth in believing, accepting, and loving God, as the only supreme Authority, or Ruler, and God and Christ as the only Redeemer, and so our Lord, our sovereign Saviour, our Husband and our Head.

I join both these propositions together, because the explication of both will be best joined together. And first, I will tell you what I mean by some of these terms in these propositions.

1. When I speak of the interest of God and the Mediator in the soul, I do not mean a mere right to us, which we call *jus ad rem*, for so God and the Mediator, God-man, have interest in all men, as being undoubtedly rightful Lord of all, whether they obey him or not; but I mean Christ's actual interest in us, and possession of us, which we call *jus in re*, and that as it consisteth in a voluntary entertainment of him into all the powers of the soul, according to the several capacities and offices. As we use to say of men in respect of their friends, Such a man hath so much interest in his friend, that he can prevail with him before any other. So, when God's interest in us is greater than the interest of the flesh, that he hath the precedency and supremacy in our understandings, wills, and affections, this is the sincerity of all our graces as saving; and so the discovery of our soul's sincerity. I shall yet fullier open this anon.

2. I here include the interest of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, both as they are conjunct, and as they are distinct. As considered in the essence and unity of the Godhead, so their interest is conjunct; both Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, being our Creator, Ruler, and ultimate end, and chief good. But in the distinction of persons, as it was the Son in a proper sense that redeemed us, and thereby purchased a peculiar interest in us, and dominion over us, as he is Redeemer, so doth he carry on this interest in a peculiar way. And so the interest of the Holy Ghost as our Sanctifier, is specially advanced by our yielding to his motions, &c.

3. By the supremacy of God, and the prevalency of Christ's interest, I do not mean,[k] that it always prevaileth for actual obedience against the suggestions and allurements of the flesh. A man may possibly pleasure a lesser friend, or stranger, before a greater friend, for once or more, and then it proves not that the stranger hath the greatest interest in him. But I mean, that God hath really more of his esteem, and will, and rational, though not passionate,

[h] Mark, I say but materially.

[i] Formally, what this sincerity is. When I say as such, I mean only with a bare notion or opinion that God is the chief good; for that will not make him our chief end: but, 1. With a sound, effectual belief that he is such: 2. With a predominant will or love, which shall give him a most prevalent interest in our hearts. These two propositions must be remembered for the understanding of the next.

[k] Renati quantumvis alacriter militent adversus peccata, tamen et multa et magna carnis imbecillitate laborant; cui, spiritu divinitus excitato, obluctantur: crebro tamen a cupiditatibus carnis se vinci patiuntur, &c. Suffrag. Theolog. Bremensium in Synodo Dord. in art. v. thes. 9. Vid. thes. 10—13.

love, and desire, and authority, and rule, in his heart and life.

4. When I speak of the interest of the flesh, I chiefly intend and include that inferior good which is the flesh's delight. For here are considerable distinctly, 1. The part which would be pleased in opposition to Christ; and that, with the Scripture, I call the flesh. 2. The thing which this flesh desires as its happiness; and that is, its own pleasure, delight, and full content. 3. The objects from whence it expecteth this delight and content; and that is, all inferior good which it apprehendeth to conduce most to that end, as being most suitable to itself. By the flesh, then, I mean, the soul as sensitive, as it is now since the fall become unruly, by the strengthening of its raging desires, and the weakening of reason that should rule it, and consequently the rational part thereby seduced; or if the rational (misinformed and ill-disposed) be the leader in any sin, before or without the sensitive; so that I mean, that which inordinately inclineth us to any inferior good. This inferior good consisteth in the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and pride of life, as John distinguisheth them; or as commonly they are distributed, in pleasure, profits, and honour; all which are concentred and terminated in the sin we call flesh-pleasing in the general; for that pleasure is it which is sought in all: or it is the pursuit of an inferior, fleshly happiness, preferred before the superior, spiritual, everlasting happiness. Though most commonly this pleasure be sought in honour, riches, eating, drinking, pleasant dwellings, company, sports, and recreations, clothes, wantonness, or lustful uncleanness, the satisfying of passions and malicious desires, or the like; yet sometimes it riseth higher, and the sinner seeketh his happiness and content in largeness of knowledge, much learning and curious speculations about the nature of the creatures, yea, and about God himself. But perhaps it will be found that these are nearly of the same nature with the former sensitive delights. For it is not the excellency or goodness of God himself that delighteth them, but the novelty of the thing, and the agitation of their own imagination, fancy, and intellect, thereupon, which is naturally desirous to be actuated, and employed, as receiving thereby some seeming addition to its own perfection; and that not as from God, who is the object of their knowledge, but as from the mere enlargement of knowledge in itself; or which is far worse, they make the study of God and divine things which they delight in, but subservient to some base, inferior object: and so though they delight in studying and knowing God, and heaven, and Scripture, yet not in God as God, or the chief good, nor in heaven as heaven, nor out of any true saving love to God; but either, because, as some preachers, they make a gainful trade of it, by teaching others; or because it is an honour to know these things, and be able to discourse of them, and a dishonour to be ignorant; or at best, as I said before, they desire to know God and divine truths, out of a delight in the novelty, and actuating, and natural elevation of the understanding hereby: it is one thing to delight in knowing, and another to delight in the thing known. An ungodly man may delight in studying and knowing several axioms or truths concerning God, but he never chiefly delighteth in God himself. As a studious man desires to know what hell is, and where, and many truths concerning it; but he desireth not hell itself, nor delighteth in it. A godly man desireth to know the nature and danger of sin, and Satan's way and wiles in temptations; but he doth not therefore desire sin and temptation itself. So a wicked man may desire to know the nature of grace, and Christ, and glory, and yet not desire grace, and Christ, and glory. It is one thing to terminate a man's desire and delight in bare knowledge, or the esteem, or self-advancement, that accrues thereby; and another thing to terminate it in the thing which we desire to know; making knowledge but a means to its fruition. So that, though the virtuousness or viciousness of our willing, and several affections, do receive its denomination and specification very much from the object, as in loving God, and loving sinful pleasure, &c. because there is a proper and ultimate *terminus* of the soul's motion, yet the acts of the understanding may be exercised about the best of objects, without any virtuousness at all; it being but the truth and not the goodness that is its object; and that truth may be in the best object and in the worst. And so it is the same kind of delight that such a man hath in knowing God, and knowing other things; for it is the same kind of truth that he seeks in both. And, indeed, truth is not the ultimate object terminating the soul's motion, not as it is truth, but an intermediate prerequisite to good, which is the ultimately terminating object; and accordingly the acts of the mere understanding are but preparatory to the act of the will, and so are but imperfect initial acts of the soul, as having a further end than their own proper object: and therefore it is that all philosophers place no moral habits in the understanding, but all in the will; for till they come to the will, though they may be in a large sense morally good or evil, virtuous or vicious, yet they are but so in an imperfect kind and sense, and therefore they call such habits only intellectual.

The sum of all this is, that it is but the flesh's pleasure and interest which an ungodly man chiefly pursueth, even in his delightful studying of holy things; for he studieth holy things and profane alike. Or if any think it too narrow a phrase, to call this flesh-pleasing, or preferring the interest of the flesh, it being the soul as rational, and not only as sensitive, which turneth from God to inferior things; I do not gainsay this: I know that man apostatized from God to himself; and that in regeneration he is turned again from himself to God. Yet this must be very cautelously understood; for God forbiddeth not man to seek himself duly, but commandeth it: man may and must seek his own happiness. The chief good is desired as good to us. But to state this case rightly, and determine the many great difficulties that here rise in the way, is no fit work for this place: I will not therefore so much as name them. The easiest and safest way therefore to clear the present difficulty to us is, to look chiefly at the different objects and ends: God, who is the supreme good, presenteth and offereth himself to us to be enjoyed. Inferior good stands up in competition with him, and would insinuate itself into our hearts, as if it were more amiable and desirable than God. Now, if God's interest prevail, it is a certain sign of grace; if inferior good prevail, and have more actual interest or possession than God, it is a certain sign of an unhappy condition, or that the person is not yet in a state of salvation.

And as you thus see what I mean by the interest of the flesh, or inferior good in us; so in all this I include the interest of the world and the devil: for the world is, at least, the greatest part of this inferior good, which stands in competition with God. And Satan is but the envious agent to present this bait before us; to put a false gloss on it in his presentation; to weaken all God's arguments that should restrain us; to disgrace God himself to our souls; and so to press and urge us to a sinful choice

and prosecution. He shows us the forbidden fruit as pleasant, and as a means to our greater advancement and happiness, and draweth us to unbelief for the hiding of the danger. He takes us up in our imagination, and shows us the kingdoms of the world and their glory, to steal our hearts from the glorious kingdom of God. So that the interest of the flesh, the interest of the world, and the interest of Satan, in us, is all one in effect. For they are but several causes to carry the soul from God, to a false, deluding, miserable end.

Again, in the proposition, I say, It is the prevalency of the interest of God or Christ, above inferior good, putting inferior good as the competitor with God, who is the greatest good; because the will cannot incline to any thing under the notion of evil, or of indifferent, but only as good. No man can will evil as evil; he must first cease to be rational, and to be man. If evil appeared only as evil, there were no danger in it. The force of the temptation lies in making evil seem good, either to the senses, or imagination, or reason, or all. Here lies the danger of a pleasing condition in regard of credit, delights, riches, friends, habitation, health, or any inferior thing; the more good appeareth or seemeth to be in them, as disjunct from God, the more dangerous; for they are the liker to stand up in competition with him, and to carry it with our partial, blinded souls in the competition. Remember this, if you love yourselves, when you would have all things about you more pleasing and lovely. Here lies the unknown danger of a prosperous state; and on the contrary lies the precious benefit of adversity, which, if men were not brutish and unbelieving, they would heartily welcome as the safest condition.

Matt. ix. How hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Again, observe here, that I mention inferior good, and not truth, as that which stands in competition with God. For of two truths, both are equally true, though not equally evident; and, therefore, though Satan would persuade the soul that inferior good is better for us than God, yet he sets not truth against truth in competition. He would indeed make us believe that God's word is not true at all, or the truth not certain. But with the understanding there is no competition between truth and truth, if known so to be. For the understanding can know and believe several truths at once, though about never so different matters, as that there is a heaven and a hell, that there is a God, a Christ, a world, a devil, &c. But the will cannot embrace and choose all different good at once; for God hath made the enjoyment of them incompatible; much less can it will two things as the chiefest good, when there is but one such; or God and the creature equally good, and both in the highest degree.

Here, then, you further see the meaning of the proposition; when I speak of the prevalency of Christ's interest, I mean it directly and principally in the will of man, and not in the understanding. For though I doubt not but there is true grace in the understanding as well as in the will, yet, as I shall further show anon, as it is in the intellect, it is not certainly and fully discernible, but only as the force of the intellective acts appear in the motions and resolutions of the will. And, therefore, men must not try their state directly by any graces or marks in the understanding. And also if it were possible to discern their sincerity immediately in the understanding, yet it must not be there by this way of competition of different objects in regard of the degree of verity, as if one were more true, and the other less; as it is with the will about the degrees of goodness in the objects which stand in competition. Though yet a kind of competition there is with the intellect too;[1] as, 1. Between God and the creature, who is to be believed rather; and, 2. Between two contradictory or opposite propositions, which is true, and which false. As between these, God is the chief good, and God is not the chief good; or these, God is the chief good, and pleasure is the chief good. But though the truth be here believed, yet that is no certain evidence of sincerity; except it be so believed, as may be prevalent with the will; which is not discernible in the bare act of believing, but in the act of willing. So that it is the prevalency of Christ's interest in the will that we here speak of; and consequently in the affections and conversation. And indeed, as is before hinted, all human acts, as they are in the mere understanding, are but crude and imperfect; for it is but the first digestion, as it were, that is there performed, as of meat in the stomach, but in the will they are more perfectly concocted, as the chyle is sanguified in the liver, spleen, and veins; and in the affections they are yet further raised and concocted, as the vital spirits are begotten in the heart: though many here take mere flatulency for spirits; and so they do common passion for spiritual affections: and then in the conversation, as the food in the habit of the body, the concoction is finished; so that the sincerity of grace cannot, I think, be discerned by any mere intellectual act: as you may find judicious Dr. Stoughton asserting in his "Righteous Man's Plea to Happiness." But yet do not misunderstand it, as if saving grace did not reside in the understanding.

Now, as the apostle saith, "The flesh warreth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary one to the other," (Gal. v. 17,) a christian's life is a continual combat between these two contrary interests. God will be taken for our portion and happiness, and so be our ultimate end, or else we shall never enjoy him to make us happy: the flesh suggesteth to us the sweetness and delight of carnal contentments, and would have us glut ourselves with these. God will rule, and that in supremacy, or he will never save us: the flesh would fain be pleased, and have its desire, whether God be obeyed and pleased or not. There is no hope of reconciling these contrary interests. God hath already made his laws, containing the conditions of our salvation or damnation: these laws do limit the desires of the flesh, and contradict its delights: the flesh cannot love that which is against it. It hates them, because they speak not good of it, but evil, because it so mightily crosseth its contents. It was meet it should be so; for if God had suffered no competitors to set up their interest against his, how would the faithfulness of his subjects be tried; how would his providences and graces be manifested? Even to Adam, that yet had no sin, this way of trial was judged necessary: and when he would please his eye and his taste, and desire to be higher, it was just with God to displease him, and to bring him lower. God will not change these, his holy and righteous laws, to please the flesh, nor conform himself to its will. The flesh will not conform itself to God; and so here is the christian combat. Christ, who has purchased us, expecteth the first or chief room in our affections, or else he will effectively be no Saviour for us. The flesh doth importunately solicit the affections to give the chief room and entertainment to its contents. Christ, who hath so dearly bought the dominion over us all, will either rule us as our sovereign, or condemn us for

[1] The sincerity of grace in the intellect, is most observable in its estimation of God above the creature, viz. as better in himself and to us.

our rebellion, Luke xix. 27. The flesh would be free, and is still soliciting us to treason. For as easy as Christ's yoke is, and light as is his burden, yet is it no more suited with the flesh's interest, than the heavier and more grievous law was: the law of liberty is not a law of carnal liberty. Now, in this combat, the word and ministry are solicitors for Christ; so is reason itself, so far as it is rectified and well guided: but because reason is naturally weakened and blind; yea, and the word alone is not sufficient to illuminate and rectify it; therefore Christ sends his Spirit into the souls of his people, to make that word effectual to open their eyes: here is the great help that the soul hath for the maintaining or carrying on the interest of Christ. But yet once illuminating is not enough. For the will doth not necessarily choose that which the understanding concludeth to be best (even *hic et nunc, et consideratis considerandis*). A drunkard's understanding may tell him, that it is far better, all things laid together, to forbear a cup of wine, than to drink it: and that the good of virtue and duty is to be preferred before the good of pleasure, this experience assures us of, though all the philosophers in the world should contradict it; and I am not disputing now, and therefore I will not stand to meddle with men's contrary opinions. And yet the violence of his sensual appetite may cause him to lay hands on the cup and pour it in. And, indeed, so far it is a brutish act; and it is no such wonder to have sinful acts termed and proved brutish, if we knew that all true reason is against them. Reason is on God's side, and that which is against him is not reason. We may by discourse proceed to sin; but the arguments are all fallacious that draw us. There is no necessity to the committing of a sin, that reason or the understanding should first conclude it best: so great is the power of sense upon the fancy and imagination, and of these on the passions, and the choosing power, especially as to the exciting of the locomotive, that if reason be but silent and suspended, sin will be committed, as a man hath lustful, and revengeful, and covetous desires in his dream, and that very violent. Reason is oft asleep when the senses are awake, and then they may easily play their game; even as the godliest man cannot restrain a sinful thought or desire in his dream, as he can waking; so neither when he is waking, if reason be asleep: although reason never take part with sin, yet if it stand neuter, the sin will be committed. Yea, that is not all; but if reason do conclude for duty and against sin, and stand to that conclusion; yet, I think, the sensitive sinful appetite and imagination may prevail with the will, unless you will say that this appetite is the will itself, man having but one will, and so may itself command the locomotive, against, as well as without, the conclusion of reason, as in the example before mentioned.

To understand this, you must know, that to the motion of the will effectually, especially where there are violent contrary motions and inducements, it is not only necessary that the understanding say, This is a duty, or, This is a sin; or, It is better to let it alone: but this must be concluded of as a matter of great importance and concernment; and the understanding must express the weight as well as the truth of what it utters concerning good or evil; and this must especially be by a strong and forcible act; or else, though it conclude rightly, yet it will not prevail. Many men may have their understanding informed of the same duty, and all at the very exercise conclude it good and necessary; and so concerning the evil of sin. And yet though they all pass the same conclusion, they shall not all alike prevail with the will; but one more, and another less: because one passeth this conclusion seriously, vigorously, importunately; and the other, slightly, and sleepily, and remissly. If you be busy, writing or reading, and one friend comes to you to call you away to some great business, and useth very weighty arguments, yet if he speak them coldly and sleepily, you may perhaps not be moved by him; but if another come and call you but upon a lesser business, and speak loud and earnestly, and will take no denial, though his reasons be weaker, he may sooner prevail. Do we not feel that the words of a preacher do take more with our wills and affections, from the moving, pathetical manner of expression, than from the strength of argument, except with very wise men; at least, how much that furthers it; when the best arguments in the mouth of a sleepy preacher, or unseasonably and ill-favouredly delivered, will not take? And why should we think that there is so great difference between other men's reasonings prevailing with our wills, and our own reason's way of prevailing?

Now, all this being so, that there must be a strong, lively, loud, pressing, importunate reasoning, and not only a true reasoning and concluding; hence it is that there is necessary to the soul, not only so much illumination as may discover the truth, but so much as may discover it clearly and fully, and may show us the weight of the matter, as well as the truth, and especially as may be still an exciter of the understanding to do its duty, and may quicken it up to do it vigorously; and therefore to this end Christ giveth his Spirit to his people, to strive against the flesh. The soul is seated in all the body, but we certainly and sensibly perceive that it doth not exercise or act alike in all; but it understandeth in and by the brain, or animal spirits; and it willeth, and desireth, and loveth, and feareth, and rejoiceth, in and by the heart; and doubtless the vital spirits, or those in the heart, are the soul's instrument in this work. Now, to procure a motion of the spirits in the heart, by the foremotion of the spirits in the brain, requires some strength in the first motion; and the more forcible it is, likely the more forcible will the motion in the heart be. This order and instrumentality in acting, is no disparagement to the soul; but is a sweet discovery of God's admirable and orderly works. Now, therefore, besides a bare act of understanding, there is necessary to this effectual prevailing with the will, that there be added that which we call consideration, which is a dwelling upon the subject, and is a serious, fixed, constant acting of the understanding, which therefore is likely to attain the effect: the use of this, and its power on the will and affections, and the reasons, I have showed you in the Fourth Part of this book. Hence it is, that let their wit be never so great, yet inconsiderate men are ever wicked men; and men of sober, frequent consideration, are usually the most godly, and prevail most against any temptation; there being no more effectual means against any temptation, indeed, whether it be to omission or commission, than this setting reason forcibly a-work by consideration. The most considerate men are the most resolved and confirmed. So that besides a bare, cold conclusion of the understanding, though you call it practical, this consideration must give that force, and fixedness, and importunity, to your conclusions, which may make them stronger than all the sensitive solicitations to the contrary, or else the soul will still follow the flesh. Now Christ will have his Spirit to excite this consideration; and to enable us to perform it more powerfully, and successfully, than else we should ever do. And thus

the Spirit is Christ's solicitor in and to our souls; and by them it advanceth Christ's interest, and maintaineth it in the saints, and causeth it to prevail against the interest of the flesh. Where he prevaileth not in the main, as well as striveth, there is yet no saving grace in that soul. Whatever pleadings, or strivings, or reasonings, or concludings, there may be in and by the soul on Christ's side, yet if the flesh's interest be still greater and stronger in the soul than Christ's, that soul is in a state of wrath: he may be in a hopeful way to come to a safer condition, and not far from the kingdom of God, and almost persuaded to be a christian; but if he die in that state, no doubt he shall be damned. He may be a christian by common profession; but, in a saving sense, no man is a christian, in whose soul any thing hath a greater and higher interest than God the Father, and the Mediator.

Sect. XII. *Prop.* 12. Therefore the sincerity of saving grace, as saving, lieth materially, not in the bare nature of it, but in the degree; not in the degree, considered absolutely in itself, but comparatively, as it is prevalent against its contrary.[m]

I cannot expect that the reader should suddenly receive this truth, though of so great consequence that many men's salvation are concerned in it, as I shall show anon, till I have first made it plain. Long have I been poring on this doubt, whether the sincerity of grace, and so the difference between a hypocrite and a true christian, do materially consist in the nature, or only in the degree; whether it be physically considered a gradual or specifical difference: and I never durst conclude that it lay but in the physical degree; 1. Beeausc of the seeming force of the objections, which I shall anon answer; and, 2. Because of the contrary judgment of those divines whom I highliest valued. For though I am ashamed of my own ignorance, yet I do not repent that I received some things upon trust from the learned, while I was learning and studying them, or that I took them by a human faith, when I could not reach to take them by a divine faith. Only, I then must hold them but as opinions; but not absolutely as articles of my creed. But I am now convinced of my former mistake; and shall therefore endcavour to rectify others, being in a matter of such moment.

You must remember, therefore, that I have showed you already, that God hath not made an act, considered in its mere nature, without considering it as in this prevailing degree, to be the condition of salvation; and that a wieked man may perform an act for the naturc of it, which a true christian may. But let us yet consider the proposition more distinctly.

Divines use to give the title of saving grace to four things.

The first is, God's purpose of saving us, and the special love and favour which he beareth to us, and so his will to do special good. This is, indeed, most principally, properly, and by an excellency, called saving grace. It is the fountain from which all other grace doth proceed; and by this grace we are elected, redeemed, justified, and saved. Now, the question in hand, is not concerning this grace which is immanent in God, where no doubt there is no specifical difference, when divines accord that there is no diversity or multiplicity at all, but perfect unity, allowing still the unsearchable mystery of the Trinity; therefore, I rest confident that no solid divine will say, that God's common love or grace to the unsanctified, doth by a natural specification differ from his special love and grace to his chosen, as they are in God.

The second thing which is commonly called saving grace is, the act of God, by which the Spirit infuseth or worketh the special, habitual, saving gifts in the soul; not the effect, for that I shall next mention, but the act of the Holy Ghost, which worketh this effect. This is called *gratia operans*, working grace; as the effect in us is called *gratia operata*, grace wrought in us. Now,

1. This is none of it we inquire after in the question in hand, when we ask, Whether the truth of grace lie only in the comparative or prevailing degree?

2. If it were, yet there is here no place for such a doubt. 1. Because no man can prove such a natural, specific difference in the acts of God, nor will, I think, affirm them. 2. Especially, because in the judgment of great divines, there is no such act of God at all distinct from his essence and immanent, eternal acts; so that this is the same with the former. God doth not need, as man, to put forth any act, but his mere willing it for the producing of any effect. If man will have a stone moved, his will cannot stir it, but it must be the strength of his arm; but God doth but will it, and it is done: as Dr. Twisse once or twice saith, but Bradwardine and the Thomists peremptorily maintain. Now, God's will is his essence, and he never did begin or cease to will any thing, though he will the beginning or ceasing of things. He willed the creation of the world and the dissolution of it at once from eternity; though he willed from eternity, that it should be created and dissolved in time; and so the effect only doth begin and end, but not the cause. This is our ordinary metaphysical divinity. If any vulgar reader think it beyond his capacity, I am content that he move in a lower orb. But we must not feign a natural, specific difference of acts in God.

The third thing which we commonly call saving grace is, the special effects of this work of the Spirit on the soul, commonly called habitual grace, or the Spirit in us, or the seed of God abiding in us, or our real holiness, or our new nature.

Now, 1. Our question is not directly and immediately of this, Whether common and special grace do differ more than by the fore-mentioned degree? for this is not it which a christian searcheth after immediately, or directly, in his self-examination. For habits, as Suarez and others conclude, are not to be felt in themselves, but only by their acts. We cannot know that we are disposed to love God, but by feeling the stirrings of love to him. So that it is the act that we must directly look for, and thence discern the habit.

2. But if any man will needs put the question of this habitual grace only, though it be not that I speak of principally, yet I answer him, that no man doubteth but that common grace containeth good dispositions, as special grace containeth habits. Now, who knoweth not that a disposition and a habit do differ but in degree? A carnal man, by the help of common grace, hath a weak inclination to good, and a strong inclination to evil; or, if you will speak properly, (for the will cannot choose evil as evil, but as a seeming good,) he hath a weak inclination to spiritual and heavenly, superior good, and a strong inclination to fleshly, earthly, inferior good; whereupon the stronger bears down the weaker. But the regenerate have stronger inclinations to superior, spiritual good, than to inferior, fleshly good; and so the stronger in most temptations prevaileth. Now, what natural difference is here, but only in degree?

[m] This proposition being so much misunderstood by many, as since the writing of it I perceive, I desire the reader to look to the addition at the end of the book for a further explication of it, and also to the two last propositions.

The fourth thing which we call saving grace, is, the exercise or acts which, from these habits or effectual inclinations, do proceed; and this is the grace which the soul must inquire after directly in its self-examination; and therefore this is it of which we raise the question, wherein the truth or sincerity of it doth consist? There are, indeed, other things without us which may yet be called saving grace, as redemption and donation (commonly called the imputation) of Christ's righteousness, and so remission, justification, &c.; but because every one may see that our question is not of these, I will not stand to make more mention of them. Now, for these acts of grace, who can produce any natural, specific difference between them, when they are special and saving, and when they are common and not saving? Is not common knowledge and special knowledge, common belief and special belief, all knowledge and belief; and is not belief the same thing in one and in another, supposing both to be real, though but one saving? Our understandings and wills are all, physically, of the like substance; and an act and an act, are accidents of the same kind; and we suppose the object to be the same: common love to God, and special saving love to God, be both acts of the will upon an object physically the same.

But here, before I proceed further, I must tell you, that you must still distinguish between a physical or natural specification, and a moral; and remember, that our question is only of a physical difference, which I deny; and not of a moral, which I make no doubt of. And you must know, that a mere difference in degrees, in the natural respect, doth ordinarily constitute a specifical difference in morality; and the moral good or evil of all our actions lieth much in the degree, to wit, that they be kept in the mean between the two extreme degrees: and so a little anger, and a great deal, and little love to creatures, and a great deal, though they differ but gradually in their natures, yet they differ specifically in morality; so that one may be an excellent virtue, and the other an odious vice; so, between speaking too much and too little, eating or drinking too much or too little, the middle between these is a virtue, and both extremes are vices; and yet, naturally, they differ but in degree. Virtue, as virtue, consisteth not in the bare nature of an act; but formally it consisteth in the agreement or conformity of our actions or dispositions to the rule or law, which determineth of their dueness; which law, or rule, prescribeth the mean, or middle degree, and forbiddeth and condemneth both the extremes, in degree, where such extremes are possible, and we capable of them. So that there is a very great moral difference, such as may be termed specific, between those acts which naturally do differ only in degree. I say a moral, specifical difference is usually founded in a natural, gradual difference: if you confound these two specifications, you will lose yourselves in this point, and injuriously understand me.

Furthermore, observe that I say, that sincerity of grace, as saving, lieth in the degree, not formally, but, as it were, materially only; for I told you before, the form of it consisteth in their being the condition on which salvation is promised. The form which we inquire after, is a relation. As the relation of our actions to the precept is the form of their virtuousness, viz. when they are such as are commanded; so the relation of them to the promise, is the form of them, as saving, and so as justifying: but because this promise giveth not salvation to the act considered in its mere being, and natural sincerity, but to the act as suited to its object, in its essential respects; and that suitableness of the act to the form of its object consisteth only in a certain degree of the act, seeing the lowest degree cannot be so suited; therefore I say that sincerity lieth, as it were, materially, only in the degree of those acts, and not in the bare and natural being of it.

Lastly, consider, especially, that I say not that sincerity lieth in the degree of any act in itself considered, as if God had promised salvation to us, if we love him so much, or up to such a height, considered absolutely; but it is, in the degree, considered comparatively, as to God compared with other things, and as other objects or commanders stand in competition with him; and so it is in the prevalency of the act or habit against all contraries.

Sect. XIII. Having thus explained my meaning herein, the clearing of all this to you, and fuller confirmation, will be best despatched these three ways: 1. By exemplifying in each particular grace, and trying this rule upon them severally; 2. By examining some of the most ordinary marks, which have been hitherto delivered, and christians use to take comfort in; 3. By inquiring what Scripture saith in the point. And, after these, I shall answer the objections that are against it, and then show you the usefulness and necessity of it, and danger of the contrary.

1. The graces of the Spirit in man's soul, are either in the understanding, or in the will and affections. Those in the understanding, as knowledge, prudence, assent to God's word, called faith, &c. I make no question, are as truly grace, and as proper to the saints, as those in the will and affections. Divers err here on both extremes: some say that there is no special grace in the understanding, but in the will only; others say that all special grace is in the understanding, and that the will is capable of nothing but freedom to choose or refuse, and that it ever follows the last dictate of the practical understanding, and therefore no more is needful but to inform the understanding; others say, both understanding and will are the subject of special, sanctifying grace, and that in both it must be sought after, and may be discerned. Between these extremes, I conceive this is the truth: both understanding and will, that is, the whole soul, which both understandeth and willeth, is truly sanctified where either is truly sanctified; and the several acts of this sanctified soul, are called several actual graces. But though grace be in both faculties, as they are called, yet is it certainly discernible only in the will, and not in the understanding; for all acts, as they are merely in the understanding, are but imperfectly virtuous, being but preparatory and introductory to the will, where they are digested and perfected, as I said before. Dr. Stoughton's words are these: "As, for my own part, I could never comprehend that which divines have gone about, to be able to put a characteristical difference in the nature of knowledge, that a man may be able to say such a knowledge is, and such a knowledge is not, a saving knowledge; but only as I use to express it, The sun is the greater light, but the moon hath greater influence on waterish bodies; so knowledge, let it be what it will, if it be good and saving, it hath an influence on the soul. There may be a great deal of knowledge, which is not vital and practical, which carrieth not the heart and affections along with it; and they that have it, have not saving knowledge. But they that have the least degree of knowledge, so it be such as hath an influence to draw the heart and affections along with it, love God, and obey God, it is solid and saving knowledge." So Dr. Stoughton, in his "Righteous Man's Plea to Happiness," p. 38, 39.

And, for my part, I know no mark, drawn from

the mere nature of knowledge, or belief, or any mere intellectual act, by which we can discern it from what may be in an unholy person. Those that think otherwise, use to say that the knowledge and belief which is saving, is deep, lively, operative, &c. I doubt not but this is true: but how, by the depth, we shall discern the saving sincerity directly, I know not; or how to discern it in the liveliness or operativeness, but only in its operations and effects on the will and affections, I know not. Whether it be so deep and lively as to be saving, must not be discerned immediately in itself, but in its vital, prevalent operations on the will; so that I shall dismiss all the mere acts of the understanding out of this inquiry, as being not such as a christian can try himself immediately by: and for them that say otherwise, they place the sincerity of them in the depth and liveliness, that is, in the degree of knowledge and belief; for, no doubt, a wicked man may know and believe every particular truth which a christian doth believe. Some learned men, I have heard, affirm, indeed, that no wicked man can believe Scripture to be the word of God; but that is a fancy that I think needs no confutation: the devils believe it, no doubt. If any say that saving knowledge is experimental, and other is not,

I answer: 1. Of matters of mere faith, we have no experience; as, that Christ is the second Person, was incarnate, crucified, buried, rose again, &c.

2. Of common practicals, wicked men have experience; as, that the world is deceitful, that man is prone to sin, that Satan must be resisted, &c.

3. For those other special, internal experiences, which denominate a christian's knowledge experimental, the mark of sincerity lieth in the experienced thing itself, rather than the knowledge of it: for example, a christian knows experimentally what the new birth is, what it is to love God, to delight in him, &c. Now, the mark lieth not properly in his knowledge of these, but in that love, delight, and renovation, which he possesseth, and so knoweth.

It follows, therefore, that we inquire into the acts of the will, and see wherein their saving sincerity doth consist; for, except the acts of the understanding, all that may be called saving is reducible to those two words of St. Paul, to will, and to do. For all the other acts of the soul are nothing but *velle et nolle;* either exercised on the object as variously presented and apprehended, as absent or present, facile or difficult, &c. or exercised with that vigour as moveth the spirits in the heart, and denominates them affections or passions.

First, therefore, to begin with the proper act of willing, though of ourselves, without grace, no man ever willeth God in Christ; yet on this willing hath God laid our salvation, more than on any other qualification or act in ourselves whatsoever. And yet simply to will God, to will Christ, to will heaven, is not a saving act; but when God and the creature stand in competition, to will God above all, and to will Christ above all, and heaven before earth, this is to will savingly; that is, to will God as God, the chief good, and cause of good; to will Christ as Christ, the only Saviour and chief Ruler of us; and to will heaven as the state of our chief happiness in the glorifying enjoyment of God. Not that all the sincerity of these acts lieth in the understanding's apprehending God to be the chief good and cause of it, and Christ to be the only Redeemer, &c.; for a man may will that God, and that Christ, who is thus apprehended by the understanding, and yet not will him as he is thus apprehended. The understanding may overgo the will, and the will not follow the understanding; and this is no saving willing. If a man do know and believe never so much that God is the chief good, and do not chiefly will him, as the devils may so believe, it is not saving; yea, it is a great question whether many do not will God (not only who is apprehended to be the supreme good, but also) *as* he is apprehended to be the supreme good, and yet love something else more than him, which they know *not* to be the chief good, but, against their knowledge, are drawn to it by the force of sensuality, and so these men perish for all their willing; for, certainly, if God have not ordinarily the prevailing part of the will, that man's state is not good. When I say such men will God, as apprehended to be the chief good, I mean, they will him under such a notion, but not with an act of will answering that notion. I refer the term as to the understanding's apprehension, but not to the will's action, as if it loved him as the chief good should be loved or willed; for that is it that is wanting, for which they perish. I propound this to the consideration of the judicious; for it is certainly worth our consideration. It depends on the common question, whether the will always follow the last dictate of the practical intellect, which I shall handle elsewhere. What I have said of willing, you may easily perceive, may be said of desire and love, which are nothing but willing. Love is an intense, absolute willing of good, as good; desire, also, is a willing it as a good not yet enjoyed: therefore the saving sincerity of both lieth in the same point. Many that perish, desire God, and Christ, and heaven; and love God, and Christ, and heaven; but they desire and love some inferior good more. He that desireth and loveth God sincerely and savingly, desireth him and loveth him above all things else; and there lieth his sincerity.

I need not instance in hope, fear, hatred, or any of the acts or passions of the irascible; for they are therefore good, because they set against the difficulty which is in the way of their attainment to that good which they will and love; and so their chief virtuousness lieth in that will or love which is contained in them, or supposed to them. A wicked man may fear God, but the fear of men or temporal evils is more prevalent in the trial. He may have an aversation of his mind from sin, or some low degree of hatred; it is known to him to be evil, and to hurt him; but his love to it is greater, and prevaileth against his hatred. If any doubt whether a wicked man may have the least hatred of sin, yea, as sin, or as displeasing to God, we are sure of it two ways.

1. By daily experience of some drunkards, that when they are considering how much they sin against God, and wrong themselves, their hearts rise against their own sin, (especially if the temptation be out of sight,) and they will weep, and be ready to tear their own flesh; and yet yield to the next temptation, and live weekly in committing of the sin.

2. By the experience of our own hearts before our sanctification (those that were not sanctified in infancy). Many have felt that their hearts had some weak degree of dislike and hatred to the sin that captivated them. And I know divers swearers and drunkards that do so hate the same sins in their children, that they are ready to fall on them violently if they commit them.

3. And we may know it by reason too. For whatsoever a man may know to be evil, that his will may have some hatred or aversation towards, though not enough; but a wicked man may know sin to be evil; therefore he may have some hatred to it. The will may sure follow the understanding a little way, though it do not far enough. But me-

thinks those should not contradict this, that are for the will's constant determination by the understanding.

The like I may say also of repentance, so much of it as lieth in the will; that is, the will's turning from inferior good (which it formerly chose) to God, the supreme good, whom it now chooseth: the sincerity of this lieth in the prevailing degree, for if it be not such a change as carrieth the will more now to God than the creature, but to God a little, and the creature still more, it is not saving. And if it be not a choosing of God before the creature, though it be a choosing of God in the second place, it will not serve turn. And for that repentance which consisteth in sorrow for sin: 1. If it be not to such a degree that it prevail over our delight in sin and love to it, it is not saving. Many wicked men do daily repent and sin. I have known men that would be drunk almost daily, and some seven or eight days continue in one fit of drunkenness before ever they were sober, and yet lament it with tears, and pray daily against it; and being men of much knowledge and able parts, would confess it, and condemn themselves in very moving language, and yet no means could keep them from it, but they have lived in it some ten, some twenty years. Who dare think that this was true repentance, when the apostle concludes, "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die?" Rom. viii. 6; xiii. 2. Yet I must tell you, that all these graces which are expressed by passions of sorrow, fear, joy, hope, love, are not so certainly to be tried by the passion that is in them, as by the will that is either contained in them, or supposed in them; not as acts of the sensitive, but of the rational appetite. I will not here stand on the question whether grace be in the sensitive or rational appetite, as its subject, or both. Burgersdicius and others say, that moral virtue is in the sensitive only, but something like it in the will, but theological virtues are in the will. But, doubtless, if he do prove moral virtue to be in the sensitive, he will prove a proportionable measure of theological virtue to be there too. For there is no virtue, truly so called, which is not theological as well as moral.

But if there be any doubt whether an unregenerate man may perform the same act as a true christian, it will be especially about the two great and principal graces of faith and love. And for that of faith, I have said enough before. It consisteth, according to the judgment of most reformed divines, partly in the understanding, partly in the will. As it is in the understanding, it is called assent or belief: and for this I have showed before, that a wicked man may have it in some degree; and that grace, as it is in the understanding, cannot be discerned directly; but only as it thence produceth those acts in the will wherein it may be discerned. There is no one truth which a true christian may know, but a wicked man may also know it, though not with that lively degree of knowledge which will overrule the heart and life.[n] Nor is there any one truth which a true christian may believe, but a wicked man may also believe it. If any deny this, let them name me one. And do not our divines confess as much against the papists, who place faith in bare assent? And do they not expound James's "the devils believe" of such an assent? If this were not so, it were an easy matter to try and know one's own sincerity, and so to have assurance of salvation; for we might presently name such or such an axiom, (as, that the Scripture is the word of God, or the like,) and ask whether we do know or believe this to be true, and so might quickly be resolved. For it is the heart, or will, that is deceitful above all things, but the bare acts of the understanding may more easily be discerned, as whether we know or assent to such an axiom or not; though I know also that even the understanding participateth of the guilefulness, and may be somewhat strange to itself.

But some will say that no wicked man can believe the pardon of his own sins,[o] or assent to the truth of this axiom, My sins are pardoned. *Answ.* I confess, so many have harped on this string heretofore, that I am ashamed that the papists should read it in our writings, and thereby have that occasion of hardening them in their errors, and of insulting over the reformed doctrine. I confess, no wicked man *(in sensu composito)* can believe for the pardon of sin, or hath such a faith as pardon is promised to; but that they may believe their sins are pardoned, and seriously believe it, did not error make it necessary, I should be ashamed to bestow any words to prove it. 1. A wicked man may (in my judgment, without any great difficulty) believe an untruth, especially which he would fain have to be true, though every untruth he cannot believe. But this is an untruth to every wicked man, that his sins are pardoned; or, even by the antinomians' confession, it is untrue of all wicked men not elected; and an untruth which he would fain have to be true, (for what man is so perverse in his fancy as to doubt whether a wicked man would have his sins pardoned,) therefore he may believe it. 2. That which is one of the chief pillars in the kingdom of the devil, and the master, deceiving, damning sin, is not sure inconsistent with a wicked man's condition: but even such is the ungrounded belief that his sins are pardoned, (commonly called presumption, and false faith,) therefore, &c. 3. If it be the main work of a skilful, faithful ministry, to beat wicked men from such an ungrounded belief, and experience tells us that all means will hardly do it, and yet that God doth it on all before he bring them by the ministry to true conversion, then sure it is more than possible for a wicked man to have such a belief. But Scripture, and a world of lamentable experience, prove the antecedent; what do such writings as Hooker's, Bolton's, Whately's, &c. else drive at? therefore, &c. 4. Yea, that the actual pardon of our sins is not properly *credendum*, or a material object of faith, I have proved elsewhere, and therefore need not stand on it now.

2. And for those acts of faith which are directly in and by the will, I know not one of them, considered in the nature of the act, without the prevalent degree, which a wicked man may not perform. For the most proper and immediate act, willing, which containeth a choice of Christ, and a consent that he shall be ours, together with his benefits, this I have before made manifest to be consistent with an unregenerate state. If any will affirm, that a wicked man cannot be willing to have pardon of all his sins, justification, and salvation from hell, I think it not worthy my writing six lines to confute them; sense will do it sufficiently. That this man cannot desire, or choose, or will, holiness, and glory with Christ, more heartily, strongly, and prevailingly, than his pleasures or inferior good, I easily acknowledge; for in that gradual defect consisteth his unsoundness.[p]

[n] Quamvis quis non habet veram et salvificam in Christo fidem, potest tamen in professione et doctrina veritatis bonam habere conscientiam, ita ut sciat veram esse illam doctrinam quam profitetur et docet, &c. Trigl. de Trina Gratia, p. 943.

[o] I know, *fide vere divina*, he cannot believe it because God never spake it; no more hath he told any of us in his word, that our sins are actually pardoned.

[p] Notitiam et assensum quendam non Calvinus tantum, sed et remonstr. ipsi tribuunt etiam dæmonibus. Fiducia male fundata, electionis opinio, et fructus evanidi, qui sine bono et

But that he may will, choose, accept, or desire, holiness and glory in a second place, next to his carnal delights or inferior good, is to me beyond doubt. And, accordingly, for the obtaining of these, he may will or accept of Christ himself that gives them. This I shall prove anon, when we speak of love.

And for that act of faith, which most affirm to be peculiarly the justifying act, that is, affiance, resting on Christ, recumbency, adherence, apprehension of him, &c. these, almost all metaphorical terms, contain, not one, but many acts, all which are most frequently found in the ungodly. For we undoubtedly know it; 1. By experience of ourselves whilst we were in their state; 2. And by constant experience of the vilest sinners, that they not only undissemblingly rest on Christ, (that is, trust verily to be pardoned and saved by him, and expect it from him,) but also that this is the strongest encouragement to them in sinning; and we have need to lay all our batteries against this bulwark of presumption. Alas! to the grief of my soul, my frequent and almost daily experience forceth me to know this, whatsoever men write from their speculations to the contrary. I labour with my utmost skill to convince common drunkards, swearers, worldlings, &c. of their misery, and I cannot do it for my life; and this false faith is the main reason. They tell me, I know I am a sinner, and so are you, and all, as well as I. But if any man sin, "we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:" I put my whole trust in him, and cast my salvation on him; for "he that believeth in him, shall not perish, but have everlasting life." If I tell them of the nature of true faith, and the necessity of obedience, they answer me that they know their own hearts better than I, and are sure they do really rest on Christ, and trust him with their souls. And for obedience, they will mend as well as they can, and as God will give them grace; and, in the mean time, they will not boast as the Pharisee, but cry, "Lord, be merciful to me a sinner;" and that I shall never drive them from believing and trusting in Christ for mercy, because they be not so good as others, when Christ tells them that men are not justified by works, but by faith, and he that believeth shall be saved. This is the case of the most notorious sinners, many of them, and I am most confident they speak as they think: and from this ungrounded confidence in Christ, I cannot remove them. Where now is any difference in the nature of this affiance, and that of true believers? If you say that it brings not forth fruit, and therefore is unsound, that is true: but that is only an extrinsical difference in the effects, and speaks not the difference in the nature of the act itself.[q] But I have spoken of this more fully elsewhere.

But the greatest doubt is, whether, in loving God and Christ as Mediator, there be not more than a gradual difference between the regenerate and unregenerate; and I shall show you that there is not: for it is undeniable that an unholy person may love God and the Mediator, and as undeniable that they cannot love God above all, till they are regenerate. The latter I take for granted. The former, if any deny, is thus proved: 1. That which the understanding apprehendeth to be good, both in itself and to the person, that the will may in some measure love. But an unregenerate man's understanding may apprehend God to be good, both in himself and to his person; therefore, he may in some measure love him. That wicked men may believe that God is good, is no more to be doubted of, than that they may believe there is a God. For he that believeth there is a God, must needs believe that he is good. And that he may believe that God is good to him also, is evident, thus: 1. Men know that they have all their temporal, corporal mercies from God, (which are to them the sweetest of all,) and therefore for these, and the continuance of them, they may apprehend God to be good to them, and so love him. 2. And Scripture and constant experience tell us, that it is usual with wicked men, not only to apprehend the goodness of prosperity, but thence mistakingly to gather, that God doth specially favour and love them as his people to salvation. 3. Also, nothing is more common with them almost, than from the thoughts of God's mercifulness and goodness, and from mistaken seeming evidences in themselves, to conclude most confidently that their sins are pardoned, and that God will not condemn them, but will save them as certainly as any other. Also, that Christ having died in their stead, and made satisfaction for all their sins, they shall, through him, be pardoned, justified, and saved. Many a wicked man doth as confidently believe that God loveth him through Christ, and doth as confidently thank God daily in his prayers for vocation, adoption, justification, and assured hope of glory, as if they were all his own indeed. Nay, out of the apprehensions of some extraordinary love and mercy of God to him above others, he oft giveth thanks as the Pharisee, "Lord, I thank thee that I am not as this publican." And, doubtless, all their apprehensions of love may produce some love to God again. As the grounded faith and hope of the godly produceth a solid saving love, so the ungrounded faith and hope of the wicked produceth a slight and common love, agreeable to the cause of it. As Christ hath a common love to the better sort of wicked men, more than to the worst; he looked on the young man, (Mark xiii. 21, 22,) and loved him, and said, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God;" so may such men have a common love to Christ, and that above the ordinary sort of the ungodly. For I am persuaded there is no man so wicked among us, who believeth, indeed, that Christ is the Son of God and the Saviour, but he hath some love to Christ, more or less. For, 4. God hath been pleased to give those advantages to the christian religion, above all other religions among us, which may easily procure some love to Christ from ungodly men. It is the religion of our country; it is a credit to be a christian; it is the religion of our ancestors, of our parents, and dearest friends; it is that which princes favour, and all men speak well of. Christ is in credit among us; every man acknowledgeth him to be God, and the Redeemer of the world; and therefore on the same grounds, or better, as a Turk doth love and honour Mahomet, and a Jew, Moses, may a wicked christian in some kind love and honour Christ, yea, and venture his life against that man that will speak against him, as Dr. Jackson and Mr. Pink have largely manifested.

honesto corde existunt, non magis arguunt temporarios esse vere fideles, quam similitudo probat simiam esse ex genere humano. Amesius Antisynod. in art. v. c. 3. p. (mihi) 354.

[q] Learned Rivet saith the very same as I, of the difference between a temporary and true believer. Discrimen ergo inter eos et vere fideles hoc est, quod quamvis utrique ex animo verbum amplectantur, non tamen utrique ex tali animo, quo aliis omnibus verbum præferatur. Nam πρόσκαιροι leviter et perfunctorie credunt, &c. unde est quod vitam suam amant plus quam Christum; fiatque ut securi sint, nec sibi caveant ab insidiis diaboli, deinde ut in precibus gratiarum actione, et omnibus erga proximum officiis languidi fiant, et remissi: cum justificans fides etiam imbecilla, sollicita sit, nec credentem animo claro esse sinat; studiumque precum excitet, illudque anxium et intentum. Rivet. Disp. de Persev. sect. vi. p. 210, 211.

Sect. XIV. If any object that it is not God or Jesus Christ that these men love, but his benefits, I answer, it is God and the Redeemer for his benefits. Only here is the unsoundness, which undoes them: they love his inferior, earthly blessings better than him; and for this they perish.

Having thus viewed these several graces, and found that it is the prevalent degree wherein their sincerity, as they are saving, doth consist, I will next briefly try this point upon some of the ordinary marks of sincerity besides, that are given by divines; in which I shall not speak a word in quarrelling at other men's judgments, for I shall speak but of those that I was wont to make use of myself; but only what I conceive necessary to prevent the delusion and destruction of souls.

1. One mark of sincerity, commonly delivered, is this: to love the children of God because they are such. I the rather name this, because many a soul hath been deluded about it. Multitudes of those that since are turned haters and persecutors of the godly, did once, without dissembling, love them; yea, multitudes that are killing them by thousands, when they differ from them in opinion, or stand in the way of their carnal interest, did once love them, and do love others of them still. I have proved before, that a wicked man may have some love to Christ, and then no doubt but he may have some love to a christian, and that for his sake. *Quest.* But may he love a godly man for his godliness? *Answ.* Yes, no doubt; those before mentioned did so. If a wicked man may have some degree of love to godliness, then he may have some degree of love to the godly for it; but that he may have some degree of love to godliness, is evident: 1. By experience of others, and of the godly before conversion, who know this was their own case; 2. The understanding of an ungodly man may know that grace and godliness is good, and therefore his will may in some degree choose and affect it; 3. That which drew moral heathens so strongly to love men for their virtue and devotion, the same principle may as well draw a man that is bred among christians to love a christian for his virtues and devotion to Christ.

Object. But doth not the Scripture say, "that we know we are translated from death to life, because we love the brethren?"

Answ. Yes; but then you may easily know it speaks of sincere love. So it saith, "Whoever believeth shall be saved;" and yet (Matt. xiii.) Christ showeth that many believe, who yet fall away and perish, for want of deep rooting: so that the sincerity of this love also lieth in the degree; and, therefore, when the promise is made to it, or it made a mark of true christians, you must still understand it of that degree which may be called sincere and saving. The difference lieth plainly here. An unsound christian, as he hath some love to Christ, and grace, and godliness, but more to his profits, or pleasures, or credit in the world, so he hath some love to the godly, as such, being convinced that the righteous is more excellent than his neighbour; but not so much as he hath to these carnal things. Whereas the sound christian, as he loves Christ and grace above all worldly things, so it is Christ in a christian that he so loves, and the christian for Christ's sake above all such things: so that when a carnal professor will think it enough to wish them well,[r] but will not hazard his worldly happiness for them, if he were called to it; the sincere believer will not only love them, but relieve them, and value them so highly, that, if he were called to it, he would part with his profits, or pleasures, for their sakes. For example, in Queen Mary's days, when the martyrs were condemned to the fire, there were many great men that really loved them, and wished them well, and their hearts grieved in pity for them, as knowing them to be in the right; but yet they loved their honour, and wealth, and safety, so much better, that they would sit on the bench, yea, and give sentence for their burning, for fear of hazarding their worldly happiness. Was this sincere, saving love to the brethren? Who dares think so, especially in them that went on to do thus? Yet, what did it want but a more intense degree, which might have prevailed over their love to carnal things? Therefore, Christ will not, at the last judgment, inquire after the bare act of love; but, whether it so far prevailed over our love to carnal interest as to bring us to relieve, clothe, visit them, &c. and Christ in them; that is, to part with these things for them when we are called to it. Not that every man that loves the godly is bound to give them all he hath in their necessity; for God hath directed us in what order to bestow and lay out our estates; and we must begin at ourselves, and so to our families, &c.; so that God may call for our estates some other ways. But mark it, you false-hearted worldlings, he that doth not so much love the ordinary sort of the godly, and Christ in them, as that he can find in his heart to bestow all his worldly substance for their relief, if God did not require him otherwise to expend it, this man hath no saving love to the godly. If, therefore, you would not cheat yourselves, as multitudes in this age have done, about your love to the brethren, try not by the bare act, but by the radicated, prevalent degree of your love.

2. Another ordinary mark of sincerity is this: when a man is the same in secret before God alone as he is in public before men, making conscience of secret as well as open duties. But, no doubt, as many a godly man may be the more restrained from sin, and incited to good, from public, and perhaps carnal, motives, and so may be better, in appearance, publicly than he is in secret; for all men have some hypocrisy in them; so many an unregenerate man may make conscience of secret duties as well as open; yea, even of the thoughts of his heart. But, still, both secret duties and open are at the disposal of his carnal interest; for he will follow them no further than is consistent with that: so that this mark doth but show a man's sincerity in opposition to gross hypocrisy or dissembling, but not the sincerity of grace as it is saving.

3. Another ordinary mark of sincerity is thus delivered: when a man loves the closest and most searching preaching of the word, and that which putteth on to the highest degree of holiness. If he therefore love it because it putteth himself on to the highest degree of holiness, and so far love it as that he is willing to be searched and put on by it; and if he therefore come to this light, that he may know his evil thereby, that he may mortify it, and may get Christ and his interest advanced in his soul; then it is a sign that he hath that degree which I have mentioned, wherein sincerity of saving grace doth consist: but many a wicked man doth love a

[r] "If a brother or sister be naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you say to them, Depart in peace, be you warmed and filled; but give them not those things which are needful to the body," &c. James ii. 15, 16. "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? Let us not love in word and tongue, but in deed and in truth," 1 John iii. 16—18.

searching preacher in other respects, and one that draweth men to the highest strain, partly because he may love to have other men searched, and their hypocrisy discovered, and be put on to the highest, and partly because himself may be of and delight in the highest strain of opinion, though his heart will not be true to his principles; nay, many a man thinks that he may the more safely be a little more indulgent to his carnal interest in heart and life, because he is of the strictest opinion, and therefore may love to hear the strictest preachers. His conscience is so blind and dull in the application, that he can easily overlook the inconsistency of his judgment, and his heart and practice. Oh how glad is he when he hears a rousing sermon, because, thinks he, this meets with such a man or such a man; this fits the profane and lower sort of professors. So that, in these respects, he may love a searching preacher.

4. Another common mark of sincerity is, when a man hath no known sin which he is not willing to part with. This is a true and sound mark indeed; for it signifieth not only a dislike, nor only a hatred of sin, but such a degree as is prevalent in the will, as I have before described; that Christ's interest in the will is prevalent over all the interest of the flesh. So that this is but, in effect, the same mark that I have before delivered. Except this willingness to part with all sin should be but a cold, unconstant wish, which is accompanied with a greater and more prevalent love to it, and desire to enjoy it; and then who dare think that it is any mark of saving sincerity? The like I might say of hatred to sin, love to good, and many the like marks, that the sincerity lieth in the prevalent degree: so also of the spirit of prayer, which is another mark. The spirit of prayer, so far as it is proper to the saints, lieth in desire after the things prayed for, with the other graces which in prayer are exercised; for a hypocrite may have as excellent words as the best, and as many of them. Now these desires must be such prevalent desires as is aforesaid.

I think, if I could stand to mention all the other marks of grace, so far as I remember, it would appear that the life and truth of them all lieth in this one, as being the very point wherein saving sincerity doth consist, viz. in the prevalency of Christ's interest in the soul, above the interest of inferior good; and so in the degree, not in the bare nature of any act.

Sect. XV. 3. To this end, let us, but briefly, inquire further into the Scripture way of discovering sincerity, and see whether it do not fully confirm what I say. Christ saith, "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me," &c. Matt. x. 37. So Luke xiv. 26, "If any man come to me, and hate not" (that is, love not less) "his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, and his own life, he cannot be my disciple: and whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple." So ver. 33, "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." Here, you see, sincerity is plainly laid, not in mere love to Christ, but in the prevalent degree of love, as Christ is compared to other things. And for obedience, Christ shows it, Matt. xxv.; Luke xix. 20, &c. Therefore Christ saith, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many shall seek to enter, and not be able," Luke xiii. 24. Seeking comes short of striving, in the degree. And Paul saith, "They which run in a race, run all, but one receiveth the prize: so run that ye may obtain," 1 Cor. ix. 24. So ver. 26, 27, and Heb. xii. 1. And Christ commandeth, "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness," Matt. vi. 33. Showing plainly, that the saving sincerity of our seeking lieth in this comparative degree; in preferring God's kingdom before the things below. So he saith, "Labour not for the meat that perisheth," (not in comparison,) "but for the meat that endureth to everlasting life, which the Son will give you," John vi. 27. So Heb. xi. 6, 14, 16, 25, 26, 35; xiii. 14; Col. iii. 1; Rom. ii. 7; Luke xvii. 33; xii. 30, 31; Amos v. 4, 8, 14; Isa. lviii. 2, 3; i. 17; Prov. viii. 17; Psal. cxix. 2. Also, a hundred places might be produced, wherein Christ sets himself still against the world as his competitor, and promiseth life on the condition that we prefer Him before it. To this end are all those precepts for suffering, and bearing the cross, and denying ourselves, and forsaking all. The merchant that buyeth this pearl, must sell all that he hath to buy it, though he give nothing for it. All the beginning of Rom. viii. as ver. 1—14, do fully show that our work and warfare lieth in a perpetual combat between the flesh and Spirit, between their several interests, motives, ends, and desires; and that which prevaileth shows what we are. When the flesh prevaileth, finally, it is certain death; and where the Spirit prevaileth, it is certain life. What can be more plain than that sincerity of grace, as saving, is here placed in the comparative or prevailing degree? So also Gal. v. 17, 24, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary one to the other. But they that are Christ's, have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts thereof." Therefore are we charged, to make no provision for the flesh to satisfy its lusts, Rom. xiii. 14. So 1 John ii. 16; Ephes. ii. 3; Gal. v. 16—19; John i. 13; iii. 6. And Christ shows fully, Matt. xiii. 5, 23, &c. that the difference between those that fall away, and those that persevere, proceedeth hence, that one giveth deep rooting to the gospel, and the other doth not. The seed is rooted in both, or else it would not bring forth a blade and imperfect fruit; but the stony ground gives it not deep rooting, which the good ground doth. Doth not this make it as plain as can be spoken, that sincerity lieth in degree, and not in any physical difference either of habits or acts? The like may be gathered from all those texts of Scripture, where salvation is promised to those that overcome, or on condition of overcoming; not to all that fight, but to all that overcome; as Rev. ii. 7, 11, 17, 26; iii. 5, 12, 13; xxi. 7, "He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." So 1 John v. 4, 5, "He that is born of God, overcometh the world." And they overcame the wicked one, 1 John ii. 13; iv. 4. So Luke xi. 22. And the state of wicked men is described by their being overcome by sin and the world. 2 Pet. ii. 19, 20. Fighting is the same action naturally in both; but the valiant, strong, and constant, conquer; when the feeble, faint, and cowardly, and impatient, do turn their backs, and are overcome. So Christ saith, "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." Now violence is not any distinct action, but a different degree of action. Nor can you say that all these places speak only of outward action. For no doubt but it is inward violence more than outward, and the inward actions of the soul intended, more than the motions of the body, which lay hold on the kingdom, and make us conquerors. So the saints are described in Scripture by such gradual and prevalent different acts. As David, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none in earth that I desire in comparison of thee," Psal. lxxiii. 26, 27. "Thy loving-kindness is better

than life," Psal. lxiii. 3. "The Lord is my portion," &c. A wicked man may esteem God and his loving-kindness; but not as his portion, nor better than life. So the wicked are called "lovers of pleasure more than God," 2 Tim. iii. 4. The godly may love pleasure, but not more than God. The Pharisees loved the praise of men more than the honour which is from God, John xii. 43. A godly man may love the praise of men, but not more, &e. See also, Job iii. 21; xxiii. 12; Psal. xlvii.; xix. 10; lii. 3; cxix. 72. Very many more texts might be produced which prove this point, but these may suffice.

Sect. XVI. 5. The next thing which I have to do is, to answer those objections which may be brought against it, and which, I confess, have sometime seemed of some weight to myself.

Object. 1. Do not all divines say that it is not the measure of grace, but the truth; not the quantity, but the quality, that we must judge ourselves by? And doth not Christ say that he despiseth not the day of small things, and that he will not quench the smoking flax; and if we had faith which is as a grain of mustard-seed, we may do wonders, &c.

Answ. All this is true of sincere grace, but not of unsincere. Now I have showed you that except it be of a prevalent degree, it is not savingly sincere. If you love God a little, and the world a deal more, will any man dare to think that it is a sincere saving love, when the Scripture saith, "He that loveth the world, the love of the Father is not in him?" that is, there is no sincere saving love in him; for no doubt the young man had some love to Christ, that yet forsook him because he loved the world more: or else, 1. Christ would not have loved him; 2. Nor would the man have gone away from him in sorrow. But if you love Christ ever so little more than the world or inferior good, though it be but as a grain of mustard-seed, it will be saving, and Christ will accept it. Cicero can tell you that friendship, or the sincerity of love to a friend, consisteth not in every act and degree of undissembled love. If a man love you a little, and a thousand men much more, or if he love his wealth so much better than you, that he cannot find in his heart to be at any loss for your sake, this man is not your friend; he doth truly love you, but he hath no true, sincere friendship or friendly love to you; for that consisteth in such a degree as will enable a man to do and suffer for his friend. If a woman love her husband without dissembling, but yet loves twenty men better, and prostitutes herself to them, she hath true love, but no true conjugal love to her husband; for that consisteth in a higher degree. In a word, lay Christ, as it were, in one end of the balance in your estimation, and all your carnal interest, and all inferior good, in the other, and see which you love most; and every grain of love which Christ hath from you more than the world and inferior things, he will accept it as sincere: and in this sense you must not judge of yourselves by the measure of your grace, but by the truth; that is, not by any higher degree, if you have once that degree which makes it true and saving. And I do not think that you will meet with any sober divine that will tell you, that if you will love God ever so little without dissembling, yet he will accept it, though you love your lusts before him. Nor will any sober man tell you that if you love the godly without dissembling, God will accept it, though you love your carnal interest so much better; that if they hunger, or thirst, or are naked, or in want, you cannot find in your heart to relieve them; or if they be in prison for a good cause, you dare not be seen to visit them.

Object. 2. But, perhaps you will say, if this be so, then there is no specific difference between saving grace and common.

Answ. I told you before that you must distinguish betwixt a physical specification, and a moral. The confounding of our physics and ethics in divinity, hath made and continued abundance of controversies, and much confusion. In a word, there is a moral, specific difference grounded but in a physical, gradual difference, both of habits and acts, as is already more fully opened.

Object. 3. But, you may say, if there be such a difference in degrees, then how can a man know the truth of his grace, or ever get assurance; for who can discern just the parting point? Who can say, Just such a degree of love or faith is sincere and saving, and the next degree short of it is not?

Answ. This objection being of most weight, I shall answer it in these propositions:

1. Where the prevailing degree is not discernible, there no true assurance can be had, in an ordinary way; and where it is very hard to discern the degree, there it will be as hard to get assurance.

2. Therefore, those that have the smallest degree of saving grace, do not use to have any assurance of salvation. Assurance is the privilege of stronger christians, and not of weak ones, or of all that shall be saved. A little is hardly discernible from none in nature.

3. And it seemeth that the reason of God's disposal herein is very evident: for if God should let men clearly see the least measure of love, faith, fear, or obedience, that is saving; and the greatest measure of sin that will stand with sincerity, and say, Just so far thou mayst sin, or mayst deny me thy love, and yet be saved and sincere, then it might have been a strong temptation to men to sin as far as ever they may, and to neglect their graces. I know some will say that assurance breeds not security. But that great measure of corruption which liveth with our small measure of grace, will make assurance an occasion of security and boldness in sinning. A strong christian may bear and improve assurance, but so cannot the weakest; and therefore God useth not to give assurance to weakest christians.

But, then, mistake me not, but remember that by weak christians I do not mean those that are weak in gifts, and common parts and expressions; nor by strong christians, those that excel in these. Those are weak christians that have no more love to God, nor desire after Christ, than will just stand with sincerity; and that have as much love to the world and flesh, and take as much liberty to sin, as ever will stand with salvation. And those are strong christians who strongly love God, and have mortified and mastered their corruptions.

4. Where grace is thus strong and in a great degree, there it is easily discernible, and therefore to such, assurance is ordinary, except in a fit of temptation, revolting, or desertion.

5. But the chief part of my answer is this: It is not the degree of grace absolutely in itself considered, wherein sincerity doth consist, nor which we must inquire after in trial, but it is the degree in a comparative sense; as when we compare God and the creature, and consider which we desire, love, fear, &c. more: and, therefore, here it is far easier to try by the degree. You know that gold is not current except it be weight as well as pure metal. Now, if you put your gold in one end of the scales, and nothing in the other, you cannot judge whether it be weight or no; but if you put the weights against it, then you may discern it. If it be downright weight, you may discern it without either

difficulty or doubt. If it be but a grain over-weight, you may yet discern it; though it is possible it may be so little, that the scales will scarce turn, and then you will not discern so easily which is the heavier end. But if it want much, then you will as easily on the other side discern the defectiveness. So thus here: if God had said absolutely, So much love you must have to me, or you cannot be saved, then it were hard to know when we reach the degree. But you must, as I said, put Christ and heaven in one end, and all things below in the other, and then you may well find out the sincerity in the degree. Every grain that Christ hath more than the creature, is sincere and saving.

Sect. XVII. 6. Lastly, having thus given you my judgment in this great point, I will give you some hint of the necessity of it, and the danger of mistaking in this case.

And, 1. I am certain that the misunderstanding of this point hath occasioned the delusion of multitudes of men: even common profane men, (much more those that are not far from the kingdom of God,) when they hear that it is not the quantity or measure of grace, that we must try by, but the quality, and that the least seed or spark is saving as well as the greatest degree, they are presently confident of the soundness of their state. Alas, how many have I known thus deceived! When they have heard that the least true desire is accepted with God for the deed, they knew that they had desires that were not counterfeit, and therefore doubted not but God did accept them, when in the mean time their desire to pleasure, and profits, and honour, was so much stronger, that it overcame their weak desires after God and goodness, and made them live in the daily practice of gross sin: and they knew not that the sincerity of their desire did lie in the prevailing degree. God doth indeed accept the will for the deed, and the best are fain to cry out with Paul, "To will is present with me, but to do I find not," in regard of those higher parts of spiritual duty, and in the avoiding of divers infirmities and passions; but then it is only the prevailing bent and act of the will which is thus accepted.

So have, I know, multitudes been deceived by their small degree of love to the godly, hearing that the least was a certain sign of grace, and knowing themselves to love them without counterfeiting, who yet have since been carried to be their constant persecutors, and shed their blood: the like I may say of other marks. And doth it not concern people, then, to be better grounded in this?

2. And, doubtless, the mistake of this hath caused many sincere christians to take up their comforts on deceitful grounds, which accordingly prove deceitful comforts, and leave them oft in a sorrowful case, (though not in a damnable,) when they come to make use of them. Satan knows how to shake such ill-grounded comforts, and he usually doth it in a man's greatest agonies, letting them stand till then, that he may have advantage by their fall for our greater terror. When he can put a poor christian to a loss many times that hath the soundest evidences, what may he do by those that either have none but unsound ones, or know them not at least?

3. Moreover, the ignorance of this truth hath caused some ministers to wrong the holy God, and abuse poor souls, and misapply the promises; absolving those whom God condemneth, by mistaking the meaning of that saying, That the least degree is saving as well as the greatest; which is true only of the least prevailing degree, but not of the greatest that is overmastered by the prevalency of its contrary.

4. And to my knowledge this hath been no small hinderance to many to keep them from fruitfulness and growth in grace. They have been more securely contented with their low degree: whereas if they had known that their very sincerity lieth in the prevalency of the degree, they would have looked more after it. For them that say that assurance will make men strive for increase, I answered before:[s] If there were no contrary corruption in strength in us, then I confess it would be as they say.

5. And lastly, the ignorance of this hath been no small cause of keeping the godly in low degrees of assurance and comfort, by keeping them from the right way of attaining them. If they had considered, that both the saving sincerity of their graces lieth in the prevailing degree, and also that the higher degree they attain the clearer and more unquestionable will be their evidence, and consequently the easier and more infallible will be their assurance; this would have taught them to have spent those thoughts and hours in labouring after growth in grace, which they spent in inquiring after the lowest degree which may stand with sincerity, and in seeking for that in themselves which was almost undiscernible.

To conclude, this doctrine is exceeding comfortable to the poor soul that groans, and mourns, and longs for Christ, and knows that though he be not what he should and would be, yet he would be what he should be, and had rather have Christ than all the world. God hath the prevailing degree of this man's will, desire, and love.

And as necessary is this doctrine for caution to all, that as they love their souls, they take heed how they try and judge of their condition by the bare nature of any dispositions or actions, without regard to the prevalency of degree.

I advise all christians, therefore, in the fear of God, as ever they would have assurance and comforts that will not deceive them, that they make it the main work of their lives to grow in grace, to strengthen and advance Christ's interest in their souls, and to weaken and get down the interest of the flesh. And take heed of those pestilent principles of presumption, which would deceive you by the bare name and specious title of free grace; which make Christ, as justifier only, to be the object of justifying faith, and not Christ as your Head, Husband, or King: which tell you, that you have fulfilled the law, and satisfied it fully in Christ; and so need no more than to get the sense of pardon, or show your thankfulness: which tell you that if you do but believe that you are pardoned, and shall be saved, it shall be so indeed; as if this were the faith that must justify and save you. Deceivers may persuade you that Christ hath done all, and left you nothing to do for your justification or salvation; but you may easily see, from what I have said, that to mortify the flesh, to overcome Satan and the world, and to this end to stand always armed upon our watch, and valiantly and patiently to fight it out, is a matter of more concernment, both to our assurance and salvation, than many do consider. Indeed, it is so great a part of our very baptismal vow, and covenant of christianity, that he that performeth it not, is yet no more than a nominal christian, whatsoever

[s] I unfeignedly acknowledge with the Synod of Dort, (Act. de Art. v. thes. 12. p. 260,) that to those christians that God judgeth fit to enjoy assurance, it is no inlet to security or licentiousness, but a great exciter of their graces. But I think it would be far otherwise to those that are unfit to enjoy and use it; that is, to the lower and worse sort of sincere christians.

his parts and profession may be; and, therefore, that Christ whom they trusted in, and whose free grace they boasted of, will profess to these professors, "I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity," Matt. vii. 23. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth who are his; but let him that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity," 2 Tim. ii. 19; or else he shall never find himself among the sealed. "Know you not, that to whom you yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants you are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience to righteousness?" Rom. vi. 16. Not every one that seeketh, or runneth, or fighteth, much less that presumptuously believeth and trusteth, but he that overcometh, shall have the hidden manna, the white stone, the new name, the white raiment, and power over the nations; he shall eat of the tree of life in the midst of God's paradise, and shall not be hurt of the second death; he shall be confessed by Christ before his Father and the angels; yea, he will make him a pillar in the temple of God, and he shall go out no more: he will write on him the name of his God, and the name of the city of his God, new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from his God; and his new name. Yea, he will grant him to sit with him in his throne, as himself overcame, and is set down with his Father in his throne. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches," Rev. ii. 7, 11, 17, 26; iii. 5, 12, 21, 22.

CHAPTER XII.

THE FOURTH USE. THE REASON OF THE SAINTS' AFFLICTIONS HERE.

SECT. I. A further necessary use we must make of the present doctrine is this:[a] to inform us why the people of God do suffer so much in this life. What wonder, when you see their rest doth yet remain? They are not yet come to their resting-place. We would all fain have continual prosperity, because it is easy and pleasing to the flesh; but we consider not the unreasonableness of such desires. We are like children, who, if they see any thing which their appetite desireth, do cry for it: and if you tell them that it is unwholesome, or hurtful for them, they are never the more quieted; or if you go about to heal any sore that they have, they will not endure you to hurt them, though you tell them that they cannot otherwise be healed: their sense is too strong for their reason, and therefore reason doth little persuade them. Even so it is with us when God is afflicting us. He giveth us reasons why we must bear them, so that our reason is oft convinced and satisfied; and yet we cry and complain still, and we rest satisfied never the more. It is not reason, but ease that we must have. What cares the flesh for Scripture and argument, if it still suffer and smart? These be but wind and words, which do not move or abate its pain. Spiritual remedies may cure the spirit's maladies; but that will not content the flesh. But, methinks, christians should have another palate than that of the flesh, to try and relish providences by: God hath purposely given them the Spirit to subdue and overrule the flesh. And therefore I shall here give them some reasons of God's dealing in their present sufferings, whereby the equity and mercy therein may appear: and they shall be only such as are drawn from the reference that these afflictions have to our rest, which being a christian's happiness, and ultimate end, will direct him in judging of all estates and means. Though if we intended the full handling of this subject, abundance more considerations, very useful, might be added. Especially, we should direct christians to remember the sin that procured them, the blood and mercy which sanctifieth them,[b] the fatherly love that ordereth them, and the far greater sufferings that are naturally our due. But I shall now chiefly tell you, how they further the saints in the way to their rest.

Sect. II. 1. Consider, then, that labour and trouble are the common way to rest, both in the course of nature and of grace. Can there possibly be rest, without motion and weariness? Do you not travel and toil first, and then rest you afterwards? The day for labour goes first, and then the night for rest doth follow. Why should we desire the course of grace to be perverted, any more than we would do the course of nature; seeing this is as perfect and regular as the other? God did once dry up the sea to make a passage for his people; and once made the sun in the firmament to stand still; but must he do so always, or as oft as we would have him? It is his established decree, "that through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of heaven," Acts xiv. 22; and "that if we suffer with him, we shall also be glorified with him," 2 Tim. ii. 22. And what are we, that God's statutes should be reversed for our pleasure?[c] As Bildad said to Job, "Shall the earth be forsaken for thee, or the rock be removed out of his place?" Job xviii. 4; so, must God pervert his established order for thee?

Sect. III. 2. Consider, also, that afflictions are exceeding useful to us, to keep us from mistaking our resting-place, and so taking up short of it.[d] A christian's motion heavenwards is voluntary, and not

[a] Read Dr. Stoughton's Love-sick Spouse.

[b] Non mutat legem (Adamo) Deus, sed mitigat rigorem, et justitiam temperat misericordia: remittens peccatum resipiscentibus, et pœnas æternas in temporales convertens, propter filium mediatorem, quem modo promiserat. Hic primus est fructus quem trepidi parentes in summis illis angustiis, ex fide evangelii percipiunt, quod non percutiuntur maledictione, et morte, juxta meritum, &c. Deinde quod non impune quidem dimittuntur: pœna vero eis irrogatur tolerabilis, immo pro pœna tantum castigatio. D. Paræus in Gen. iii. 16. p. (mihi) 555. Non enim inflixit ei mala, nisi quæ ei fucrat minatus. Paræus in Gen. ii. p. 362. So then even castigatory penalties are the effects of the threatening of the first law or covenant. De afflictionibus quibuscunque quod sint peccati pœnæ, loquuntur plurima dicta. Lev. xxvi. 18; Dan. ix. 11; John v. 14, &c. Paræus, ibid. p. 363. Separatio animæ a corpore per mortem, est pœna peccati, per se: fidelibus autem fit transitus in fœlicitatem, per accidens. Idem, p. 370. Mors sic est a Satanæ et hominis peccato invecta, ut interim sit justissimum Dei flagellum quo punit peccatum, et justitiam suam exequitur. Proinde mors conjuncta est cum sensu iræ divinæ in omnibus quibus peccata non sunt remissa per Christum. Paræus, ib. p. 404. This is the sound meaning, about the nature and causes of chastisement. See him, p. 371—373, 383, reconciling this with full pardon, most solidly of any man that I have read.

[c] On this consideration the true christian endureth labours, and torments, and afflictions; not as the valiant sort of the philosophers, in hope that his present suffering will cease, or that they shall yet partake of delights here again: but knowledge hath begot in him a most firm persuasion of hope that he shall receive the things that are to come. Therefore he doth not only despise the sufferings, but all the delights also that are here below. Clemen. Alex. Stromat. lib. vii.

[d] They say those stones are happy of which they make temples: but what pebble-stone would not bless itself to see how those precious stones are knocked and hewed with the hammer? But all this is before we come to the temple; but there is no noise of hammer. Ut ibi solo amoris glutino copulemur, ut Greg. Mor. Dr. Stoughton's Love-sick Spouse, p. 113. Psal. xxx. 6, 7.

constrained. Those means, therefore, are most profitable to him, which help his understanding and will in this prosecution. The most dangerous mistake that our souls are capable of, is, to take the creature for God, and earth for heaven. And yet, alas, how common is this! and in how great a degree are the best guilty of it! Though we are ashamed to speak so much with our tongues, yet how oft do our hearts say, It is best being here; and how contented are we with an earthly portion! So that I fear, God would displease most of us more to afflict us here, and promise us rest hereafter, than to give us our heart's desire on earth, though he had never made us a promise of heaven: as if the creature without God, were better than God without the creature. Alas, how apt are we, like foolish children, when we are busy at our sports and worldly employments, to forget both our Father and our home! Therefore is it a hard thing for a rich man to enter into heaven, because it is hard for him to value it more than earth, and not to think he is well already. Come to a man that hath the world at will, and tell him, This is not your happiness; you have higher things to look after; and how little will he regard you! But when affliction comes, it speaks convincingly, and will be heard when preachers cannot. What warm, affectionate, eager thoughts, have we of the world, till afflictions cool them and moderate them! How few and cold would our thoughts of heaven be, how little should we care for coming thither, if God would give us rest on earth! Our thoughts are with God, as Noah's dove was in the ark, kept up to him a little against their inclinations and desire; but when once they can break away, they fly up and down, over all the world, to see if it were possible to find any rest out of God; but when we find that we seek in vain, and that the world is all covered with the waters of unstable vanity, and bitter vexation, and that there is no rest for the sole of our foot, or for the foot of our soul; no wonder, then, if we return to the ark again. Many a poor christian, whom God will not suffer to be drowned in worldliness, nor to take up short of his rest, is sometimes bending his thoughts to thrive in wealth; sometimes he is enticed to some flesh-pleasing sin; sometimes he begins to be lifted up with applause; and sometimes, being in health and prosperity, he hath lost his relish of Christ, and the joys above; till God break in upon his riches, and scatter them abroad, or upon his children, or upon his conscience, or upon the health of his body, and break down his mount, which he thought so strong; and then, when he lieth in Manasseh's fetters, or is fastened to his bed with pining sickness, oh what an opportunity hath the Spirit to plead with his soul! When the world is worth nothing, then heaven is worth something. I leave every christian to judge by his own experience, whether we do not overlove the world more in prosperity than in adversity; and whether we be not lother to come away to God, when we have what the flesh desireth here? How oft are we sitting down on earth, as if we were loth to go any further, till affliction calls to us, as the angel to Elijah, "Up, thou hast a great way to go!" How oft have I been ready to think myself at home, till sickness hath roundly told me I was mistaken! and how apt yet to fall into the same disease, which prevaileth till it be removed by the same cure! If our dear Lord did not put these thorns into our bed, we should sleep out our lives, and lose our glory: therefore doth the Lord sometimes deny us an inheritance on earth with our brethren, because he hath separated us to stand before him, and minister to him, and the Lord himself will be our inheritance, as he hath promised; as it is said of the tribe of Levi, Deut. x. 8, 9.

Sect. IV. 3. Consider, also, that afflictions be God's most effectual means to keep us from straggling out of the way of our rest. If he had not set a hedge of thorns on the right hand, and another on the left, we should hardly keep the way to heaven. If there be but one gap open, without these thorns, how ready are we to find it, and turn out at it! but when we cannot go astray, but these thorns will prick us, perhaps we will be content to hold the way.[e] When we grow fleshly, and wanton, and worldly, and proud, what a notable means is sickness, or other affliction, to reduce us! It is every christian, as well as Luther, that may call affliction one of his best schoolmasters. Many a one, as well as David, may say by experience, "Before I was afflicted, I went astray; but now have I (sincerely) kept thy precepts," Psal. cxix. 76. As physicians say of bodily destruction, so may we of spiritual, "that peace killeth more than war." Read Nehem. ix. Their case is ours. When we have prosperity, we grow secure and sinful; then God afflicteth us, and we cry for mercy, and purpose reformation; but after we have a little rest, we do evil again, (ver. 22,) till God take up the rod again, that he may bring us back to his law, ver. 29. And thus, prosperity, and sinning, and suffering, and repenting, and deliverance, and sinning again, do run all in a round; even as peace breeds contention, and that breeds war, and that, by its bitterness, breeds peace again. Many a thousand poor recovered sinners may cry, O healthful sickness! O comfortable sorrows! O gainful losses! O enriching poverty! O blessed day that ever I was afflicted![f] It is not only the pleasant streams, and the green pastures, but his rod and staff also, that are our comfort, Psal. xxiii. Though I know it is the word and Spirit that do the main work; yet certainly the time of suffering is so opportune a season, that the same word will take then, which before was scarce observed. It doth so unbolt the door of the heart, that a minister, or a godly man, may then be heard, and the word may have easier entrance to the affections. Even the threats of judgment will bring an Ahab, or a Nineveh, into their sackcloth and ashes, and make them cry mightily unto God. Something, then, will the feeling of those judgments do.

Sect. V. 4. Consider, also, that afflictions are God's most effectual means to make us mend our pace in the way to our rest.[g] They are his rod, and his spur; what sluggard will not awake and stir when he feeleth them? It were well, if mere love would prevail with us, and that we were rather drawn to heaven than driven; but seeing our hearts are so bad that mercy will not do it, it is better be put on with the sharpest scourge, than loiter out our

[e] Itaque statuimus eos in media et vegeta valetudine ægrotare, qui valetudine abutuntur. Contra, eos ægrotos bene habere, qui ad Deum ex animo convertuntur, et ab ipsis morbis petunt adversus peccata medicinam. Sadeel in Psalm xxxii. p. 27.

[f] The Lacedemonian disliked not his friend's limping, because, saith he, it will make you think of virtue every step. And so, perhaps, Jacob remembered the angel. When adversity hath laid us flat on our backs, we cannot choose but look up to heaven. Dr. Stoughton in his Love-sick Spouse, p. 108. Most christians can unfold Mr. Herbert's riddle by experience—

"A poor man's rod, when thou dost ride,
Is both a weapon and a guide." Psalm cxix. 71, 75.

[g] Marcet sine adversario virtus. Tunc apparet quanta sit, quantum valeat, polleatque, cum quid possit patientia ostendit. Sciat licet idem viris bonis esse faciendum, ut dura et difficilia non reformident, nec de fato querantur. Quicquid accidit, boni consulant, in bonum vertant. Non quid sed quemadmodum feras interest. Sen. de Provid. lib. i. c. 2.

time till the doors are shut, Matt. xxv. 3, 5, 10. Oh what a difference is there betwixt our prayers in health and in sickness; betwixt our prosperity and our adversity repentings! He that before had not a tear to shed, or a groan to utter, now can sob, and sigh, and weep his fill; he that was wont to lie like a block in prayer, and scarce minded what he said to God, now, when affliction presseth him down, how earnestly can he beg! how doth he mingle his prayers and his tears! how doth he purpose and promise reformation! and cry out, what a person he will be, if God will but hear him, and deliver him! Alas! if we did not sometimes feel the spur, what a slow pace would most of us hold towards heaven! and if we did not sometimes smart by affliction, how dead and blockish would be the best men's hearts! Even innocent Adam is liker to forget God in a paradise, than Joseph in a prison, or Job upon a dunghill; even as Solomon is like enough to fall in the midst of pleasure and prosperity, when the most wicked Manasses in his irons may be recovered. As Dr. Stoughton saith, "We are like to children's tops, that will go but little longer than they are whipped." Seeing, then, that our own vile natures do thus require it, why should we be unwilling that God should do us good by so sharp a means? Sure that is the best dealing for us, which surest and soonest doth further us for heaven. I leave thee, christian, to judge by thy own experience, whether thou dost not go more watchfully, and lively, and speedily, in thy way to rest, in thy sufferings, than thou dost in thy more pleasing and prosperous state. If you go to the vilest sinner on his dying bed, and ask him, Will you now drink, and whore, and scorn at the godly, as you were wont to do? you shall find him quite in another mind. Much more then will affliction work on a gracious soul.

Sect. VI. 5. Consider, further, it is but this flesh which is troubled and grieved, for the most part, by affliction:[h] and what reason have we to be so tender of it? In most of our sufferings the soul is free, further than we do wilfully afflict it ourselves. Suppose thou be pinched by poverty, it is thy flesh only that is pinched. If thou have sores or sicknesses, it is but the flesh that they assault; if thou die, it is but that flesh that must rot in the grave. Indeed, it useth also to reach our hearts and souls, when the body suffereth; but that is, because we pore upon our evils, and too much pity and condole the flesh; and so we open the door, and let in the pain to the heart ourselves, which else could have gone no further than the flesh; God smites the flesh, and therefore we will grieve our spirits; and so multiply our grief, as if we had not enough before. Oh if I could but have let my body have suffered alone in all the pining and paining sicknesses which God laid upon it, and not have foolishly added my own self-tormenting fears, and cares, and sorrows, and discontents; but have quieted and comforted my soul in the Lord, my rock and rest; I had escaped the far greater part of the afflictions. Why is this flesh so precious in our eyes; why are we so tender of these dusty carcasses? is flesh so excellent a thing; is it not our prison? and what if it be broken down, is it not our enemy; yea, and the greatest that we ever had? and are we so fearful lest it be overthrown; is it not it that hath so long hampered and clogged our souls, and tied them to earth; and enticed them to forbidden lusts and pleasures; and stolen away our hearts from God? was it not it, that longed for the first forbidden fruit; and must needs be tasting, whatever it cost? And still it is of the same temper; it must be pleased, though God be displeased by it, and ourselves destroyed. It maketh all God's mercies the occasion of our transgressing, and draweth poison from the most excellent objects. If we behold our food, it enticeth to gluttony; if drink, to drunkenness; if apparel, or any thing of worth, to pride; if we look upon beauty, it enticeth to lust; if upon money or possessions, to covetousness. It causeth our very spiritual love to the godly, to degenerate into carnal; and our spiritual zeal, and joy, and other graces, it would make all carnal like itself. What are we beholden to this flesh for, that we are so loth that any thing should ail it? Indeed, we must not wrong it ourselves, for that is forbidden us; nor may we deny it any thing that is fit for a servant, that so it may be useful to us, while we are forced to use it. But if God chastise it for rebelling against him and the Spirit, and it begin to cry and complain under this chastisement, shall we make the suffering greater than it is, and take its part against God? Indeed, the flesh is very near to us, we cannot choose but condole its sufferings, and feel somewhat of that which it feeleth. But is it so near as to be our chiefest part; or can it not be sore, but we must be sorry; or cannot it consume and pine away, but our peace and comfort must consume with it? What if it be undone, are we therefore undone? or if it perish and be destroyed, do we therefore perish? O fie upon this carnality and unbelief, which are so contradictory to the principles of christianity! surely God dealeth the worse with this flesh, because we so overvalue and idolize it. We make it the greatest part of our care and labour to provide for it, and to satisfy its desires; and we would have God to be of our mind, and to do so too. But as he hath commanded us "to make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the desires or lusts thereof," Rom. xiii. 14; so will he follow the same rule himself in his dealings with us; and will not much stick at the displeasing of the flesh, when it may honour himself, or profit our souls. The flesh is aware of this, and perceives that the word and works of God are much against its desires and delights, and therefore is it also against the word and works of God:[i] it saith of the word, as Ahab of Micaiah, "I hate it, for it doth not speak good concerning me, but evil," 1 Kings xxii. 8. There is such an enmity betwixt this flesh and God, "that they that are in the flesh cannot please him, and the carnal mind is enmity against him; for it is not subject to his law, nor indeed can be:" so inconsistent is the pleasing of the flesh and the pleasing of God, that he hath concluded, "that to mind the things of the flesh, or to be carnally-minded, is death; and if we live after the flesh, we shall die: but if by the Spirit we mortify the deeds of the body, we shall live," Rom. viii. 4—8, 13.

So that there is no likelihood that ever God's dealings should be pleasing to the flesh; no more than its works are pleasing to God. Why then, O my soul, dost thou side with this flesh, and say as it saith, and complain as it complaineth? It should be part of thine own work to keep it down, and bring it in subjection, 1 Cor. ix. 26, 27; and if God do it for thee, shouldst thou be discontented? Hath not

[h] Not only the carnal, corrupt inclination of the will, but the very misleading, unruly, sensitive appetite is our enemy, and our most desperate enemy, viz. drawing us still to particular inferior good from the supreme: which is the cause, nature, and end, of all sin, as Gibieuf hath proved, lib. ii. de Libert. c. 20. s. 3. p. 424. et passim, viz. quod bonum particulare causa est mali in genere causæ efficientis, finalis et subjectivæ.

[i] Quis mortalium cui ullum superest hominis vestigium, per diem noctemque titillari velit, et de certo animo corpori operam dare? Senec. de Vita Beat. c. 5.

the pleasing of it been the cause of almost all thy spiritual sorrows? Why, then, may not the displeasing of it further thy joys? Should not Paul and Silas sing, because their feet were in the stocks, and their flesh yet sore with the last day's scourgings? Acts xvi. Why, their spirits were not imprisoned, not scourged! Ah, unworthy soul, is this thy thanks to God for his tenderness of thy good, and for his preferring thee so far before the body! Art thou turned into flesh thyself by thy dwelling a few years in flesh, that thy joys and thy sorrows are most of them so fleshly? Rom. viii. 12. Art thou so much a debtor to the flesh, that thou shouldst so much live to it, and value its prosperity? Hath it been so good a friend to thee, and to thy peace; or, is it not thy enemy as well as God's? Why dost thou look so sadly on those withered limbs and on that pining body? Do not so far mistake thyself as to think its joys and thine are all one, or that its prosperity and thine are all one, or that they must needs stand or fall together. When it is rotting and consuming in the grave, then shalt thou be a companion of the perfected spirits of the just, Heb. xii. 23; and when those bones are scattered about the churchyard, then shalt thou be praising God in rest. And in the mean time, hast not thou food of consolation which the flesh knoweth not of; and a joy which this stranger meddleth not with? And do not think that, when thou art turned out of this body, that thou shalt have no habitation: art thou afraid thou shalt wander destitute of a resting-place? Is it better resting in flesh than in God? Dost thou not know, that when this house of earth is dissolved, "thou hast a building with God, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," 2 Cor. v. 1, 2. It would, therefore, better become thee earnestly to groan, desiring to be clothed upon with that, ver. 3, 4. Is thy flesh any better than the flesh of Noah was? and yet, though God saved him from the common deluge, he would not save him from common death. Or, is it any better than the flesh of Abraham, or Job, or David, or all the saints that ever lived? yet did they all suffer and die. Dost thou think that those souls which are now with Christ do so much pity their rotten or dusty corpse, or lament that their ancient habitation is ruined, and their once comely bodies turned into earth? Oh! what a thing is strangeness and disacquaintance! It maketh us afraid of our dearest friends, and to draw back from the place of our only happiness: so was it with thee towards thy chiefest friends on earth: while thou wast unacquainted with them, thou didst withdraw from their society; but when thou didst once know them thoroughly, thou wouldst have been loth again to be deprived of their fellowship. And even so, though thy strangeness to God and another world do make thee loth to leave this flesh; yet, when thou hast been but one day or hour there, if we may so speak of that eternity, where is neither day nor hour, thou wouldst be full loth to return into this flesh again. Doubtless, when God, for the glory of his Son, did send back the soul of Lazarus into its body, he caused it quite to forget the glory which it had enjoyed, and to leave behind it the remembrance of that happiness, together with the happiness itself; or else it might have made his life a burden to him to think of the blessedness that he was fetched from, and have made him ready to break down the prison doors of his flesh, that he might return to that happy state again. O, then, impatient soul, murmur not at God's dealings with that body; but let him alone with his work and way. He knows what he doth; but so dost not thou: he seeth the end; but thou seest but the beginning. If it were for want of love to thee, that he did thus chastise thy body, then would he not have dealt so by all his saints. Dost thou think he did not love David and Paul, or Christ himself? or, rather, doth he not chasten because he loveth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth? Heb. xii. 4—8, 10, 11; Matt. vi. 23; Rom. viii. 6—8; 1 Cor. ii. 2, 10—14. Believe not the flesh's reports of God, nor its commentaries upon his providences. It hath neither will nor skill to interpret them aright: not will; for it is an enemy to them. They are against it, and it is against them. Not skill; for it is darkness: it savoureth only the things of the flesh; but the things of the Spirit it cannot understand, because they are spiritually discerned. Never expect then that the flesh should truly expound the meaning of the rod. It will call love, hatred; and say, God is destroying, when he is saving; and murmur, as if he did thee wrong, and used thee hardly, when he is showing thee the greatest mercy of all. Are not the foul steps the way to rest, as well as the fair? yea, are not thy sufferings the most necessary passages of his providence? And though, for the present, they are not joyous, but grievous; yet, in the end, do they bring forth the quiet fruits of righteousness to all those that are exercised thereby, Heb. xii. 11. Hast thou not found it so by former experience, when yet this flesh would have persuaded thee otherwise? Believe it then no more, which hath misinformed thee so oft; for, indeed, there is no believing the words of a wicked and ignorant enemy. Ill-will never speaks well; but when malice, viciousness, and ignorance, are combined, what actions can expect a true and fair interpretation? This flesh will call love, anger; and anger, hatred; and chastisements, judgments. It will tell thee, that no man's case is like thine; and if God did love thee, he would never so use thee, Psal. cxvi. 11. It will tell thee, that the promises are but deceiving words, and all thy prayers and uprightness are vain, Psal. lxxiii. 13—15. If it find thee sitting among the ashes, it will say to thee, as Job's wife, "Dost thou yet retain thine integrity?" Job ii. 8—10. Thus will it draw thee to offend against God, and the generation of his children. It is a party, and a suffering party, and therefore not fit to be the judge. If your child should be the judge when and how oft you should chastise him, and whether your chastisement be a token of fatherly love, you may easily imagine what would be his judgment. If we could once believe God, and judge of his dealings by what he speaks in his word, and by their usefulness to our souls, and reference to our rest, and could stop our ears against all the clamours of the flesh, then we should have a truer judgment of our afflictions.

Sect. VII. 6. Lastly, consider, God doth seldom give his people so sweet a foretaste of their future rest as in their deep afflictions.[k] He keepeth his most precious cordials for the time of our greatest faintings and dangers. To give them to such men that are well and need them not, is but to cast them away: they are not capable of discerning their working or their worth. A few drops of divine consolation in the midst of a world of pleasure and contents, will be but lost and neglected, as some precious spirits cast into a vessel or river of common waters. The joys of heaven are of unspeakable sweetness; but a man

[k] Cum videris bonos viros acceptosque Deo laborare, sudare, per arduum ascendere; malos autem lascivire, et voluptatibus fluere; cogita, filiorum nos modestia delectari, vernularum licentia; illos disciplina tristiori contineri, horum ali audaciam. Idem tibi de Deo liqueat. Bonum virum in deliciis non habet, experitur, indurat, sibi illum præparat. Senec. de Provid. c. 1; John xiv.—xvii. xx.

that overflows with earthly delights is scarce capable of tasting their sweetness. They may easilier comfort the most dejected soul, than him that feeleth not any need of comfort, as being full of other comforts already. Even the best of saints do seldom taste of the delights of God, and pure, spiritual, unmixed joys, in the time of their prosperity, as they do in their deepest troubles and distress. God is not so lavish of his choice favours as to bestow them unseasonably. Even to his own will he give them at the fittest time, when he knoweth that they are needful, and will be valued, and when he is sure to be thanked for them, and his people rejoiced by them. Especially, when our sufferings are more directly for his cause, then doth he seldom fail of sweetening the bitter cup. Therefore have the martyrs been possessors of the highest joys, and therefore were they in former times so ambitious of martyrdom. I do not think that Paul and Silas did ever sing more joyfully, than when they were sore with scourgings, and were fast in the inner prison, with their feet in the stocks, Acts xvi. 24, 25. When did Christ preach such comforts to his disciples, and leave them his peace, and assure them of his providing them mansions with himself, but when he was ready to leave them, and their hearts to be sorrowful because of his departure? When did he appear among them, and say, "Peace be unto you," but when they were shut up together for fear of the persecuting Jews? When did the room shake where they were, and the Holy Ghost come down upon them, and they lift up their voices in praising God, but when they were imprisoned, convented, and threatened for the name of Christ?[l] Acts iv. 24, 31. When did Stephen see heaven opened, but when he was giving up his life for the testimony of Jesus? Acts vii. 55. And though we be never put to the suffering of martyrdom, yet God knoweth that in our natural sufferings we need support. Many a christian that hath waited for Christ, with Simeon in the temple, in duty and holiness all his days, yet never finds him in his arms till he is dying, though his love was fixed in their hearts before; and they that wondered they tasted not of his comforts, have then, when it was needful, received abundance. And, indeed, in time of prosperity, that comfort which we have is so mixed, according to the mixed causes of it, that we can very hardly discern what of it is carnal and what is spiritual. But when all worldly comforts and hopes are gone, then that which is left is most likely to be spiritual. And the Spirit never worketh more sensibly and sweetly than when it worketh alone. Seeing, then, that the time of affliction is the time of our most pure, spiritual, heavenly joy, for the most part, why should a christian think it so sad a time? Is not that our best estate wherein we have most of God? Why else do we desire to come to heaven? If we look for a heaven of fleshly delights, we shall find ourselves mistaken. Conclude, then, that affliction is not so bad a state for a saint in his way to rest as the flesh would make it. Are we wiser than God? Doth not he know what is good for us better than we? Or is he not as careful of our good as we are of our own? Ah! woe to us if he were not much more; and if he did not love us better than we love either him or ourselves!

Sect. VIII. But let us hear a little what it is that the flesh can object.

1. Oh! saith one, I could bear any other affliction save this: if God had touched me in any thing else, I could have undergone it patiently; but it is my dearest friend, or child, or wife, or my health itself,[m] &c.

I answer, It seemeth God hath hit the right vein, where thy most inflamed, distempered blood did lie: it is his constant course to pull down men's idols, and take away that which is dearer to them than himself. There it is that his jealousy is kindled; and there it is that thy soul is most endangered. If God should have taken from thee that which thou canst let go for him, and not that which thou canst not; or have afflicted thee where thou canst bear it, and not where thou canst not; thy idol would neither have been discovered nor removed. This would neither have been a sufficient trial to thee, nor a cure; but have confirmed thee in thy soul-deceit and idolatry.

Object. 2. Oh! but, saith another, if God would but deliver me out of it yet, I could be content to bear it: but I have an uncurable sickness; or I am like to live and die in poverty, or disgrace, or the like distress.

I answer, 1. Is it nothing that he hath promised, it shall work for thy good,[n] Rom. viii. 28; and that, with the affliction, he will make a way to escape: that he will be with thee in it; and deliver thee in the fittest manner and season? 2. Is it not enough that thou art sure to be delivered at death, and that with so full an advancing deliverance? Oh! what cursed unbelief doth this discover in our hearts! that we would be more thankful to be turned back again into the stormy, tumultuous sea of the world, than to be safely and speedily landed at our rest; and would be gladder of a few years' inferior mercies at a distance, than to enter upon the eternal inheritance with Christ. Do we call God our chief good, and heaven our happiness; and yet is it no mercy or deliverance to be taken hence, and put into that possession?

Object. 3. Oh! but, saith another, if my affliction did not disable me for duty, I could bear it; but it maketh me useless, and utterly unprofitable.

Answ. 1. For that duty which tendeth to thy own personal benefit, it doth not disable thee, but is the greatest quickening help that thou canst expect. Thou usest to complain of coldness, and dulness, and worldliness, and security: if affliction will not help thee against all these, by warning, quickening, rousing thy spirit, I know not what will. Sure thou wilt repent thoroughly, and pray fervently, and mind God and heaven more seriously, either now or never. 2. And for duty to others, and for thy service to the church, it is not thy duty when God doth disable thee. He may call thee out of the vineyard in this respect, even before he call thee by death. If he lay thee in the grave, and put others in thy place to do the service, is this any wrong to thee, or doth it beseem thee to repine at it? Why so, if he call thee out before thy death, and let thee stand by, and

[l] Spectat militem suum Christus ubicunque pugnantem; et persecutionis causa pro nominis sui honore morienti præmium reddit, quod daturum se in persecutione promisit. Nec minor est martyrii gloria nos publice, et inter multos periisse, cum pereundi causa sit propter Christum perire. Cypr. Ep. 56. (edit. Goulartii) p. 154.

[m] Hear a heathen, and be ashamed: If you will believe me when I open the very secrets of my heart to you, in all things that seem adverse and hard, I am thus composed; I obey not God, but I assent to him. I follow him from my very heart, and not because I must needs do it. I entertain nothing that befalls me sadly, or with a sour countenance. Senec. epist. xevii. p. 796. And as he, so more fully Pet. Martyr. on Rom. viii. p. 499, rehearseth the strange examples of very many heathens' fortitude in voluntary sufferings, enough to shame faint-hearted christians.

[n] He that prayeth for the good things of the world which he hath not, doth not seek for that which is good, but for that which only seems to be good, (Clem. Alexand. Strom. lib. vii.) because that is the best for us which God ordereth.

set others to do the work in thy stead, shouldst thou not be as well content? Must God do all the work by thee? Hath he not many others as dear to him, and as fit for the employment? But, alas! what deceitfulness lieth in these hearts! When we have time, and health, and opportunity to work, then we loiter, and do our Master but very poor service; but when he layeth affliction upon us, then we complain that he disableth us for his work, and yet perhaps we are still negligent in that part of the work which we can do: so, when we are in health and prosperity, we forget the public, and are careless of other men's miseries and wants, and mind almost nothing but ourselves. But when God afflicteth us, though he excite us more to duty for ourselves, yet we complain that he disableth us for our duty to others; as if, on the sudden, we were grown so charitable that we regard other men's souls far more than our own. But is not the hand of the flesh, in all this dissimulation, secretly thus pleading its own cause? What pride of heart is this, to think that other men cannot do the work as well as we; or, that God cannot see to his church, and provide for his people, without us!

Object. 4. Oh! but, saith another, it is the godly that are my afflicters: they disclaim me, and will scarce look at me; they censure me, and backbite me, and slander me,[o] and look upon me with a disdainful eye. If it were ungodly men, I could bear it easily; I look for no better at their hands: but when those that were my delight, and that I looked for daily comfort and refreshing from; when these shall be my grief, and as thorns in my sides; who can bear it?

Answ. 1. Whoever is the instrument, the affliction is from God, and the provoking cause from thyself; and were it not fitter then that thou look more to God and thyself? 2. Dost thou not know that the best men are still sinful in part, and that their hearts are naturally deceitful, and desperately wicked, as well as others? And this being but imperfectly cured, so far as they are fleshly the fruits of the flesh will appear in them; which are, strife, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, seditions, heresies, envyings, &c. Gal. v. 19—21. So far, the best is a brier, and the most upright of them sharper than a thorny hedge: learn, therefore, a better use from the prophet: "Trust not too much in a friend, nor put confidence in a guide; keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom, &c. But look rather for the Lord, and wait for the God of thy salvation," Micah vii. 4—7. It is likely thou hast given that love and trust to saints, which were due only to God, or which thou hast denied him, and then no wonder if he chastise thee by them. If we would use our friends as friends, God would make them our helps and comforts; but when once we make them our gods, by excessive love, delight, and trust, then he suffers them to prove Satans to us, and to be our accusers and tormentors. It is more safe to me to have any creature a Satan than a god; to be tormented by them, than to idolize them.[p] Or perhaps the observation of the excellency of grace hath made thee forget the vileness of nature; and therefore God will have thee take notice of both. Many are tender of giving too much to the dead saints, that yet give too much to the living without scruple. Till thou hast learned to suffer from a saint as well as from the wicked, and to be abused by the godly as well as the ungodly, never look to live a contented or comfortable life, nor ever think thou hast truly learned the art of suffering. Do not think that I vilify the saints too much in so saying: I confess, it is pity that saints should suffer from saints; and it is quite contrary to their holy nature, and their Master's laws, who hath left them his peace, and made love to be the character of his disciples, and to be the first and great and new commandment; and I know that there is much difference between them and the world in this point: but yet, as I said, they are saints but in part, and therefore Paul and Barnabas may so fall out, as to part asunder, and upright Asa may imprison the prophet, call it persecution or what you please: Joseph's brethren, that cast him into a pit, and sold him to strangers for a slave, I hope were not all ungodly; Job's wife and friends were sad comforters; David's enemy was his familiar friend, with whom he had taken sweet counsel, and they had gone up together to the house of God. And know also that thy own nature is as bad as theirs, and thou art as likely thyself to be a grief to others. Can such ulcerous, leprous sinners, as the best are, live together, and not infect and molest each other with the smell of their sores?[q] Why, if thou be a christian, thou art a daily trouble to thyself, and art molested more with thy own corruptions than with any man's else; and dost thou take it so heinously to be molested with the frailties of others, when thou canst not forbear doing more against thyself? For my part, for all our graces, I rather admire at that wisdom and goodness of God, that maintains the order and union we have amongst us; and that he suffereth us not to be still one another's executioners, and to lay violent hands on ourselves and each other. I dare not think that there is no one gracious that hath laboured to destroy others that were so in these late dissensions. Sirs, you do not half know yet the mortal wickedness of depraved nature. If the best were not more beholden to the grace of God without them, than to the habitual grace within them, you should soon see "that men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie; to be put in the balance, they are lighter than vanity itself," Psal. lxii. 7—9. "For what is man, that he should be clean; and he that is born of a woman, that he should be righteous? Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints, and the heavens are not clean in his sight: how much more abominable and filthy is man, that drinketh up iniquity like water!" Job xv. 14—16.

Object. 5. Oh, but if I had that consolation which you say God reserveth for our suffering times, I should suffer more contentedly; but I do not perceive any such thing.

Answ. 1. The more you suffer for righteousness' sake, the more of this blessing you may expect; and

[o] Grave est, inquis, injuriam sustinere: Mentiris. Quis enim injuriam non potest ferre, qui potest iram? Adjice nunc, quod id agis, ut et iram feras et injuriam. Quare fers ægri rabiem et phrenetici verba? Nempe quia videntur nescire quid faciunt. Quid interest, quo quisque vitio fiat imprudens? Seneca de Ira, lib. iii. c. 26.

[p] Si amici omnes te desererent, memento, solus non est cui Christus in fuga comes. Solus non est qui templum Dei servans, ubicumque fuerit, sine Deo non est; ut Cypr. Epist. lvi. p. (mihi) 154. John xiv. 27; xiii. 34, 35; xv. 12, 17; Matt. xxii. 37, 39; 1 John iii. 11, 14, 17, 18, 23; iv. 7, 11, 12, 20, 21, &c.; Acts xv. 38, 39; 2 Chron. xvi. 10; xv. 17; Psal. xli. 8, 9. Read Psal. lv. 12—14.

[q] Iniquus est qui commune vitium singulis objicit. Non est Æthiopis inter suos insignitus color. Nihil in uno judicabis notabile, aut fœdum, quod genti suæ publicum est. Quanto in his justior venia est, quæ per totum genus humanum vulgata sunt? Omnes inconsulti et improvidi sumus, omnes incerti, queruli, ambitiosi. Quid lenioribus verbis ulcus publicum abscondo? Omnes mali sumus. Quicquid itaque in alio reprehenditur, id unusquisque in suo sinu invenit. Mali inter malos vivimus. Una res nos facere potest quietos, mutuæ facilitatis conventio. Senec. de Ira, lib. iii. c. 26. Multum temporis ultio absumit. Multis se injuriis objicit, dum una dolet. Diutius irascimur omnes quam lædimur. Quanto melius est, abire in diversum, nec vitia vitiis componere? Numquis satis constare sibi videatur, si mulam calcibus repetat, et canem morsu? Senec. ibid. c. 27.

the more you suffer for your own evil doing, the longer you must look to stay till that sweetness come.[r] When we have by our folly provoked God to chastise us, shall we presently look that he should fill us with comfort? That were, as Mr. Paul Bayn saith, "to make affliction to be no affliction." What good would the bitterness do us if it be presently drowned in that sweetness? It is well in such sufferings if you have but supporting grace, and your sufferings sanctified to work out your sin, and bring you to God.

2. Do you not neglect or resist the comforts which you desire? God hath filled precepts, and promises, and other of his providences, with matter of comfort; if you will overlook all these, and make nothing of them, and pore all upon your sufferings, and observe one cross more than a thousand mercies, who maketh you uncomfortable but yourselves? If you resolve that you will not be comfortable as long as any thing aileth your flesh, you may stay till death before you have comfort.

3. Have your afflictions wrought kindly with you, and fitted you for comfort?[s] Have they humbled you, and brought you to a faithful confession and reformation of your beloved sins; and made you set close to your neglected duties; and weaned your hearts from their former idols; and brought them unfeignedly to take God for their portion and their rest? If this be not done, how can you expect comfort? Should God bind up the sore while it festereth at the bottom? It is not mere suffering that prepares you for comfort, but the success and fruit of suffering upon your hearts.

I shall say no more on this subject of afflictions, because so many have written on it already; among which I desire you especially to read Mr. Bayn's Letters, and Mr. Hughes' Dry Rod Blooming and Fruit-bearing, and Young's Counterpoison.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE FIFTH USE. AN EXHORTATION TO THOSE THAT HAVE GOT ASSURANCE OF THIS REST, OR TITLE TO IT, THAT THEY WOULD DO ALL THAT POSSIBLY THEY CAN TO HELP OTHERS TO IT ALSO.

SECT. I. Hath God set before us such a glorious prize as this everlasting rest of the saints is, and hath he made man capable of such an unconceivable happiness? Why then do not all the children of this kingdom bestir themselves more to help others to the enjoyment of it? Alas, how little are poor souls about us beholden to the most of us! We see the glory of the kingdom, and they do not; we see the misery and torment of those that miss of it, and they do not; we see them wandering quite out of the way, and know if they hold on they can never come there, and they discern not this themselves.[a] And yet we will not set upon them seriously, and show them their danger and error, and help to bring them into the way that they may live. Alas, how few christians are there to be found that live as men that are made to do good, and that set themselves with all their might to the saving of souls! No thanks to us if heaven be not empty, and if the souls of our brethren perish not for ever.

But because this is a duty which so many neglect, and so few are convinced that God doth expect it at their hands, and yet a duty of so high concernment to the glory of God, and the happiness of men, I will speak of it somewhat the more largely, and show you, 1. Wherein it doth consist, and how to be done. 2. What is the cause that it is so neglected. 3. And then give some considerations, to persuade you to the performance of it, and others to the bearing of it. 4. And lastly, apply this more particularly to some persons whom it doth nearly concern. Of all these in order.

SECT. II. 1. I would have you, therefore, well understand what is this work which I am persuading you to: know, then, on the negative, 1. It is not to invade the office of the ministry, and every man to turn a public preacher: I would not have you go beyond the bounds of your callings. We see, by daily experience, what fruits those men's teaching doth bring forth, who run uncalled and thrust themselves into the place of public teachers, thinking themselves the fittest for the work, in the pride of their hearts, while they had need to be taught the very first principles of religion. How little doth God bless the labours of these self-conceited intruders![b]

Neither do I persuade you to a zealous promoting of factions and parties, and venting of uncertain opinions, which men's salvation is little concerned in. Alas, what advantage hath the devil lately got in the church by this imposture! The time that should be employed in drawing men's souls from sin to Christ, is employed in drawing them to opinions and parties. When men are fallen in love with their own conceits,[c] and proudly think themselves the wisest, how diligently do they labour to get them followers! as if to make a man a proselyte to their opinions, were as happy a work as to convert him to Christ: and when they fall among the lighter, ignorant, unsounder sort of professors, whose religion is all in their brain, and on their tongues, they seldom fail of their desired success. These men shall shortly know, that to bring a man to the knowledge and love of Christ, is another kind of work, than to bring him to be baptized again; or to be of such a church, or such a side.[d] Unhappy are the souls that are taken in their snare! who, when they

[r] Nemo illic (viz. inter maleficos) christianus nisi plane tantum christianus. Aut si et aliud, jam non christianus. Tert. Apol. c. 44.

[s] We lengthen our miseries by shortening of our duties; and the Lord keeps aloof from us, because we lie aloof from him. Mr. Vines on Numb. xiv. 24. p. 23.

[a] Read Mr. Al. Lapthorn's book called Spiritual Alms.

[b] Si quis dicat quia infirmi hi sunt ergo tolerandi; resp. cum Augustino. Non negligendum esse Christum propter infirmum, cum infirmus diligendus sit propter Christum; danda potius est opera ut proficiant et firmiores evadant in Domino; muniendi sunt ne seducantur; monendi nequis prætextu infirmitatis superbiæ carnis indulgeat; denique et ecclesiæ interest, ut infirmi bene sentiant de suis doctoribus et pastoribus. Boger. in Epist. ante Annot. in Grotii Piet.

[c] Beatus qui venas susurri divini percipit in silentio; quam bonum utique est homini Dominum expectare?—Unum cave; ne abundare incipias in sensu tuo, et velis plus sapere quam oportet sapere; ne forte dum lucem sectaris, impingas in tenebras; illudente tibi dæmonio meridiano. Bern. Serm. 90.

[d] *Object.* But why then do the most faithful, prudent, skilful members of the church turn to that side? *Answ.* Who is it that thus speaks, that may not answer himself? that they are to be esteemed neither prudent, nor faithful, nor skilful, whom heresies were able to change. And is that a wonder, that an approved man should after fall back? Saul, who was better than others, was after by envy overturned. David, a good man after God's own heart, was after guilty of adultery and murder. Solomon, who was furnished with all grace and wisdom from God, was by women enticed to idolatry. It was reserved only for the Son of God to be without sin. What, therefore, if a bishop, a deacon, a widow, a virgin, a teacher, a martyr, shall fall from the rule? Shall we, therefore, judge heresies to be truth? Do we judge of our belief by persons, or of persons by their belief? No man is a wise man but the faithful; and no man is greater than others, but

have spent their lives in studying and contending for the circumstantials of religion, which should have been spent in studying and loving the Lord Jesus, do in the end reap an empty harvest suitable to their empty profession.

3. Nor do I persuade you to speak against men's faults behind their backs, and be silent before their faces, as the common custom of the world is. To tell other men of their faults, tendeth little to their reformation, if they hear it not themselves. To whisper out men's faults to others, as it cometh not from love, or from any honest principle, so usually doth it produce no good effect; for if the party hear not of it, it cannot better him; if he do, he will take it but as the reproach of an enemy, tending to disgrace him, and not as the faithful counsel of a friend, tending to recover him; and as that which is spoken to make him odious, and not to make him virtuous. It tendeth not to provoke to godliness, but to raise contention; for "a whisperer separateth the chiefest friends," Prov. xvi. 28. And how few shall we find that make conscience of this horrible sin, or that will confess it, and bewail it, when they are reprehended for it! especially if men are speaking of their enemies, or those that have wronged them, or whom they suppose to have wronged them; or if it be of one that eclipseth their glory, (Gen. xxxi. 1; Psal. xli. 7,) or that standeth in the way of their gain or esteem; or if it be one that differeth from them in judgment; or of one that is commonly spoken against by others; who is it that maketh any conscience of backbiting such as these? And you shall ever observe, that the forwarder they are to backbiting, the more backward always to faithful admonishing; and none speak less of a man's faults to his face for his reformation, than those that speak most of them behind his back, to his defamation. If ill-will or envy lie at the heart, it maketh them cast forth disgracing speeches as oft as they can meet with such as themselves, who will hear and entertain them. Even as a corrupt humour in the stomach provoketh a man to vomit up all that he taketh, while itself remaineth, and continueth the disease, 1 Sam. xxii. 9; Dan. vi. 3; Rom. i. 29, 30; John vii. 51. It is Chrysostom's similitude.[e]

So far am I from persuading, therefore, to this preposterous course, that I would advise you to oppose it wherever you meet with it. See that you never hear a man speaking against his neighbour behind his back, without some special cause or call, but presently rebuke him; ask him, whether he hath spoke those things in a way of love to his face? if he have not, ask him, how he dare to pervert God's prescribed order, who commandeth to rebuke our neighbour plainly, and to tell him his fault first in private, and then before witness, till he see whether he will be won or not, Lev. xix. 17; Matt. xviii. 15, 17; and how he dare do as he would not be done by?

Sect. III. The duty therefore that I would press you to, is of another nature, and it consisteth in these things following. 1. That you get your hearts affected with the misery of your brethren's souls; be compassionate towards them; yearn after their recovery to salvation: if you did earnestly long after their conversion, and your hearts were fully set to do them good, it would set you a-work, and God would usually bless it.[f]

2. Take all opportunities that possibly you can, to confer with them privately about their states, and to instruct and help them to the attaining of salvation. And lest you should not know how to manage this work, let me tell you more particularly what you are herein to do. 1. If it be an ignorant, carnal person that you have to deal with, who is an utter stranger to the mysteries of religion, and to the work of regeneration on his own soul, the first thing you have to do is, to acquaint him with these doctrines: labour to make him understand wherein man's chief happiness doth consist, and how far he was once possessed of it, and what law and covenant God then made with him, and how he broke it, and what penalty he incurred, and what misery he brought himself into thereby; teach him what need men had of a Redeemer, and how Christ in mercy did interpose and bear the penalty, and what covenant now he hath made with man, and on what terms only salvation is now to be attained, and what course Christ taketh to draw men to himself, and what are the riches and privileges that believers have in him.

If, when he understandeth these things, he be not moved by them, or if you find that the stop lieth in his will and affections, and in the hardness of his heart, and in the interest that the flesh and the world have got in him, then show him the excellency of the glory which he neglecteth, and the intolerableness of the loss of it, and the extremity and eternity of the torments of the damned, and how certainly they must endure them, and how just it is for their wilful refusals of grace, and how heinous a sin it is to rejeet such free and abundant mercy, and to tread under foot the blood of the covenant; show him the certainty, nearness, and terrors of death and judgment, and the vanity of all things below which now he is taken up with, and how little they will bestead him in that time of his extremity; show him that by nature he himself is a child of wrath, an enemy to God, and by actual sin much more; show him the vile and heinous nature of sin, the absolute necessity he standeth in of a Saviour, the freeness of the promise, the fulness of Christ, the sufficiency of his satisfaction, his readiness to receive all that are willing to be his, the authority and dominion which he hath purchased over us; show him also the absolute necessity of regeneration, faith, and holiness of life, how impossible it is to have salvation by Christ without these, and what they are, and the true nature of them. If, when he understandeth all this, you find his soul enthralled in presumption and false hopes, persuading himself that he is a true believer, and pardoned, and reconciled, and shall be saved by Christ; and all this upon false grounds, or merely because he would have it so, which is a common case; then urge him hard to examine his state; show him the necessity of trying, the danger of be-

a christian; and no man is a christian but he that persevereth to the end. Thou, as a man, knowest men's outside, and judgest what thou seest; and seest so far as thou hast eyes, &c.; but God's eyes are high: the Lord knoweth who are his. Tertul. de Præscript. c. 3.

[e] Notandum est quod arguendi verbum exigit delicti explicationem et declarationem. Non dicit, Vade et vitupera illum, sed (Argue). Muse. in Matt. xviii. p. (mihi) 420. Most of us are very ready to snarl at the faults that are in another man's house, or, at least, secretly in our hearts to censure them; but they that will well instruct and order their own families, are very few. Muse. in Matt. vii. tom. i. p. 154; Prov. xxv. 23.

[f] There is more knowledge and diligence requisite to reduce an erroneous man to the truth, than a sinner to righteousness. For you may easily convince a sinner, because he cannot deny his sin; but it is a most difficult thing to convince the erroneous, because he will not acknowledge his error, nor endure to be taught, as we see in this our age. For here are many hinderances, to which is added a bitterness of spirit, which, while it continueth, will stop up the passage against all teaching. For who will suffer himself to be taught of that man whom he believes not, and whom he hateth and contemneth in his heart? Muse. in Matt. vii. p. 156. See next in him directions how to deal with the erroneous.

ing deceived, the commonness and easiness of mistaking through the deceitfulness of the heart, the extreme madness of putting it to a blind adventure, or of resting in negligent or wilful uncertainty; help him in trying himself; produce some undeniable evidences from Scripture; ask him, whether these be in him or not? whether ever he found such workings or dispositions in his heart? urge him to a rational answer; do not leave him till you have convinced him of his misery, and then seasonably and wisely show him the remedy. If he produce some common gifts, or duties, or work, know to what end he doth produce them; if to join with Christ in composing him a righteousness, show him how vain and destructive they are; if it be by way of evidence to prove his title to Christ, show him how far a common work may reach, and wherein the life of christianity doth consist, and how far he must go further, if he will be Christ's disciple. In the mean time, that he be not discouraged with hearing of so high a measure, show him the way by which he must attain it; be sure to draw him to the use of all means; set him a hearing and reading the word, calling upon God, accompanying the godly; persuade him to leave his actual sin, and to get out of all ways of temptation, especially to forsake ungodly company, and to wait patiently on God in the use of means; and show him the strong hopes that in so doing he may have of a blessing, this being the way that God will be found in.

If you perceive him possessed with any prejudicate conceits against the godly, and the way of holiness, show him their falsehood, and with wisdom and meekness answer his objections.

If he be addicted to delay the duties he is convinced of, or laziness and stupidity do endanger his soul, then lay it on the more powerfully, and set home upon his heart the most piercing considerations, and labour to fasten them as thorns in his conscience, that he may find no ease or rest till he change his state.

Sect. IV. But because in all works the manner of doing them is of greatest moment, and the right performance doth much further the success,[g] I will here adjoin a few directions, which you must be sure to observe in this work of exhortation, for it is not every advice that useth to succeed, nor any manner of doing it that will serve the turn. Observe, therefore, these rules:

1. Set upon the work sincerely, and with right intentions. Let thy ends be the glory of God in the party's salvation. Do it not to get a name or esteem to thyself, or to bring men to depend upon thee, or to get thee followers; do not, as many carnal parents and masters will do, viz. rebuke their children and servants for those sins that displease them, and are against their profit, or their humours, as disobedience, unthriftiness, unmannerliness, &c. and labour much to reform them in these, but never seek in the right way that God hath appointed to save their souls; but be sure the main end be to recover them from misery, and bring them into the way of eternal rest. We have many reprovers, but the manner shows too plainly that there are few sincere. Pride bids men reprove others, to manifest a high estimation of themselves; and they obey; and proudly, censoriously, and contemptuously they do it. Passion bids them reprove, and passionately they do it. But it is those that do it in compassion and tender love to men's souls, who do it in obedience to Christ, the most tender, compassionate lover of souls, and who imitate him in their measure and place, who came to seek and to save that which was lost.

Sect. V. 2. Do it speedily: as you would not have them delay their returning, so do not you delay to seek their return. You are purposing long to speak to such an ignorant neighbour, and to deal with such a scandalous sinner, and yet you have never done it. Alas! he runs on the score all this while; he goes deeper in debt; wrath is heaping up; sin taketh rooting; custom doth more fasten him; engagements to sin grow stronger and more numerous; conscience grows seared; the heart grows hardened: while you delay, the devil rules and rejoiceth; Christ is shut out; the Spirit is repulsed; God is daily dishonoured, his law is violated, he is without a servant, and that service from him which he should have; the soul continues in a doleful state; time runs on; the day of visitation hasteth away; death and judgment are even at the door; and what if the man die and miss of heaven, while you are purposing to teach him and help him to it? what if he drop into hell while you are purposing to prevent it? If in case of his bodily distress, you must not bid him go, and come again to-morrow, when you have it by you, and he is in want, (Prov. iii. 27, 28,) how much less may you delay the succour of his soul! If once death snatch him away, he is then out of the reach of your charity. That physician is no better than a murderer, that negligently delayeth till his patient be dead or past cure. Delay in duty is a great degree of disobedience, though you afterwards perform it; it shows an ill heart, that is undisposed to the work. Oh how many a poor sinner perisheth, or grows rooted and next to incurable in sin, while we are proposing to seek their recovery! Opportunities last not always. When thou hearest that the sinner is dead, or removed, or grown obstinate, will not conscience say to thee, How knowest thou but thou mightest have prevented the damnation of a soul? Lay by excuses then, and all lesser business, and obey God's command, "Exhort one another daily, while it is called to-day, lest any be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin," Heb. iii. 13.

Sect. VI. 3. Let thy exhortation proceed from compassion and love, and let the manner of it clearly show the person thou dealest with, that it hence proceedeth.[h] It is not jeering, or scorning, or reproaching a man for his faults, that is a likely way to work his reformation; nor is it the right way to convert him to God, to rail at him, and vilify him with words of disgrace. Men will take them for their enemies that thus deal with them: and the

[g] Sicut scopus medicorum est sanitas corporum; ita christianorum sanitas animarum. Musc. in Matt. vii. tom. i. p. 155.

[h] That we must deal gently with sinners, you may discern in the nature of true righteousness, which hath compassion in it, and not disdain. Of which we have no such clear and potent example as in Christ, who dealt with sinners so very gently, that the Pharisees called him, "a companion of sinners." Musc. in Matt. vii. p. 156. Est enim generosus hominis animus magisque ducitur quam trahitur; ex quo in promptu est cognoscere, qua sint alii mansuetudine tractandi, si quidem salutem eorum ex animo quæramus. Musc. ibid. He that will instruct an erroneous man, must above all see that he win his heart by much mildness, and by good turns; and when his heart is appeased, he will begin to lend his ear to be taught; which if it be not done, all your labour to open his understanding by disputation is in vain; for he will not only not hear you, but what he doth hear he will interpret the wrong way, according to the corruption of his own heart. For if disputations would serve to cure the erroneous, and to their perceiving of the truth, who can deny but there is so much writing long ago of most points, that no man could now be ignorant of the truth? But the reason that most are in error, is, because that in bitterness of their hearts they either weigh not what is said and written, or take them in the wrong way. Musc. in Matt. vii. p. 157.

words of an enemy are little persuading. Lay by your passion, therefore, and take up compassion, and go to poor sinners with tears in your eyes, that they may see you indeed believe them to be miserable, and that you do unfeignedly pity their case; deal with them with earnest, humble entreatings; let them see that your very bowels do yearn over them, and that it is the very desire of your hearts to do them good; let them perceive that you have no other end but the procuring of their everlasting happiness; and that it is your sense of their danger, and your love to their souls, that forced you to speak, even because you know the terrors of the Lord, and for fear lest you should see them in eternal torments: say to them, Why, friend, you know it is no advantage of my own that I seek. The way to please you, and to keep your friendship, were to soothe you in your way, or to speak well of you, or to let you alone, but love will not suffer me to see you perish, and be silent: I seek nothing at your hands, but that which is neeessary to your own happiness; it is yourself that will have the gain and comfort if you come in to Christ, &c. If men would thus go to every ignorant, wicked neighbour they have, and thus deal with them, oh what blessed fruit should we quickly see! I am ashamed to hear some lazy, hypocritical wretches, to revile their poor, ignorant neighbours, and separate from their company and communion, and proudly to judge them unfit for their society, before ever they once tried with them this compassionate exhortation. Oh, you little know what a prevailing course this were like to prove! and how few of the vilest drunkards or swearers would prove so obstinate, as wholly to reject or despise the exhortations of love! I know it must be God that must change men's hearts, but I know also that God worketh by means, and when he meaneth to prevail with men, he usually fitteth the means accordingly, and stirreth up men to plead with them in a prevailing way, and so setteth in with his grace, and maketh it successful. Certainly, those that have tried, can tell you by experience, that there is no way so prevailing with men as the way of compassion and love. So much of these as they discern in your exhortation, usually, so much doth it succeed with their heart; and, therefore, I beseech those that are faithful to practise this course. Alas! we see the most godly people among us, or at least those that would seem most godly, cannot bear a reproof that comes not in meekness and love; if there be the least bitterness of passion, or relish of disgraee in it, they are ready to spit it out in your face; yea, if you do not so sugar your reproof with fair words, that it be liker to flattery than plain dealing, or liker a commendation than a reproof, they cannot well digest it, but their heart will rise up against you, instead of a thankful submission and a reformation; if it savour not liker to food than physic, it will hardly down with them, or they will soon vomit it up. What should we flatter one another for? It is now no time to flatter professors, when their sins have broke forth more shamefully than ever in the world; for my part, the most of them that I have been acquainted with yet are such. I meet not with one of a multitude that seem the most godly, but this is their very case; such heinous pride remaineth in the best. And do you expect, then, that poor, ignorant, carnal sinners, should take that well that professors cannot endure; and should drink in those bitter reproofs as a pleasant draught, which you can scarcely pour into professors as a drench? Can you look that the same dealing should be saving to them, which you find to be exasperating and distempering to yourselves? Oh that it were not too evident that the Pharisee is yet alive in the breasts of many thousands, that seem most religious, even in this one point of bearing plain and sharp reproof! They bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders, but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers, Matt. xxiii. 4. So far are they from doing, in this, as they would be done by.

Sect. VII. 4. Another direction I would give you, is this: Do it with all possible plainness and faithfulness;[1] do not daub with men, and hide from them their misery or danger, or any part of it; do not make their sins less than they are, nor speak of them in an extenuating language; do not encourage them in a false hope or faith, any more than you would discourage the sound hopes of the righteous. If you see his case dangerous, tell him plainly of it: Neighbour, I am afraid God hath not yet renewed your soul, and that it is yet a stranger to the great work of regeneration and sanctification: I doubt you are not yet recovered from the power of Satan to God, nor brought out of the state of wrath, which you were born in, and have lived in: I doubt you have not chosen Christ above all, nor set your heart upon him, nor unfeignedly taken him for your sovereign Lord. If you had, sure you durst not so easily disobey him; you could not so neglect him and his worship in your family and in public; you could not so eagerly follow the world, and talk of almost nothing but the things of this world, while Christ is seldom mentioned or sought after by you. If you were in Christ, you would be a new ereature; old things would be passed away, and all things would beeome new; you would have new thoughts, and new talk, and new company, and new endeavours, and a new conversation: certainly, without these you can never be saved. You may think otherwise, and hope better, as long as you will, but your hopes will deceive you, and perish with you. Alas! it is not as you will, nor as I will, who shall be saved, but it is as God will; and God hath told us, "that without holiness none shall see him;" and "except we be born again, we eannot enter into his kingdom;" and "that all that would not have Christ reign over them, shall be brought forth and destroyed before him," Heb. xii. 14; John iii. 3; Luke xix. 27. Oh! therefore, look to your state in time. Thus must you deal roundly and faithfully with men, if ever you intend to do them good; it is not hovering at a distance in a general discourse, that will serve the turn; it is not in curing men's souls, as in curing their bodies, where they must not know their danger, lest it sadden them, and hinder the cure. They are here agents in their own cure, and if they know not their misery, they will never bewail it, nor know how much need they have of a Saviour. If they know not the worst, they will not labour to prevent it, but will sit still, or loiter till they drop into perdition, and will trifle out their time in delays till it be too late; and, therefore, speak to men, as Christ to the Pharisees, till they knew that he meant them: deal plainly, or you do but deceive and destroy them.

Sect. VIII. 5. And as you must do it plainly, so, also, seriously, zealously, and effectually. The exceeding stupidity and deadness of men's hearts is such, that no other dealing will ordinarily work. You must call loud to awaken a man in a swoon or lethargy. If you speak to the common sort of men

[1] Charity hath its sharpness or austerity too, as appears in Christ himself. For it was hard which he said to Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan; for thou savourest not the things of God, but of men." But this was only then, and to those, where he knew austerity was profitable and necessary. Musc. in Matt. vii. p. 156.

of the evil of their sin, of their need of Christ, of the danger of their souls, and of the necessity of regeneration, they will wearily and unwillingly give you the hearing, and put off all with a sigh, or a few good wishes, and say, God forgive us, we are all sinners, and there is an end.[k] If ever you will do them good, therefore, you must sharpen your exhortation, and set it home, and follow it with their hearts, till you have roused them up, and made them begin to look about them. Let them know that thou speakest not to them of indifferent things, nor about children's games, or worldlings' vanities, or matters of a few days' or years' continuance, nor yet about matters of uncertainty, which perhaps may never come to pass: but it is about the saving and damning of their souls and bodies; and whether they shall be blessed with Christ, or tormented with devils, and that for ever and ever without any change; it is, how to stand before God in judgment, and what answer to give, and how they are like to speed. And this judgment and eternal state they shall very shortly see, they are almost at it; yet a few more nights and days, and they shall presently be at that last day; a few more breaths they have to breathe, and they shall breathe out their last: and then as certainly shall they see that mighty change, as the heaven is over their heads, and the earth under their feet. O labour to make men know, that it is mad jesting about salvation or damnation; and that heaven and hell be not matters to be played with, or passed over with a few careless thoughts! It is most certain that one of these days thou shalt be either in everlasting, unchangeable joy or torments; and doth it not awake thee? Is there so few that find the way of life, so many that go the way of death? Is it so hard to escape, so easy to miscarry? and that while we fear nothing, but think all is well? and yet you sit still and trifle! Why, what do you mean? what do you think on? The world is passing away; its pleasures are fading; its honours are leaving you; its profits will prove unprofitable to you; heaven or hell are a little before you; God is just, and jealous; his threatenings are true; the great day of his judgment will be terrible; your time runs on; your lives are uncertain; you are far behindhand; you have loitered long; your case is dangerous; your souls are far gone in sin; you are strange to God; you are hardened in evil customs; you have no assurance of pardon to show; if you die to-morrow, how unready are you, and with what terror will your souls go out of your bodies! and do you yet loiter for all this? Why, consider with yourselves: God standeth all this while waiting your leisure: his patience beareth, his justice forbeareth; his mercy entreateth you; Christ standeth offering you his blood and merits; you may have him freely, and life with him; the Spirit is persuading you; conscience is accusing and urging you; ministers are praying for you, and calling upon you; Satan stands waiting, when justice will cut off your lives, that he may have you: this is your time; now or never. What! had you rather lose heaven than your profits or pleasures? Had you rather burn in hell than repent on earth? Had you rather howl and roar there, than pray day and night for mercy here? Or to have devils your tormentors, than to have Christ your governor? Will you renounce your part in God and glory, rather than renounce your cursed sins? Do you think a holy life too much for heaven, or too dear a course to prevent an endless misery? O friends, what do you think of these things? God hath made you men, and endued you with reason; do you renounce your reason where you should chiefly use it? In this manner you must deal roundly and seriously with men. Alas! it is not a few dull words, between jest and earnest, between sleep and waking, as it were, that will waken an ignorant, dead-hearted sinner. When a dull hearer and a dull speaker meet together, a dead heart and a dead exhortation, it is far unlike to have a lively effect. If a man fall down in a swoon, you will not stand trifling with him, but lay hands on him presently, and snatch him up, and rub him, and call aloud to him; if a house be on fire, you will not in a cold affected strain go tell your neighbour of it, nor go make an oration of the nature and danger of fire; but you will run out, and cry, Fire, fire. Matters of moment must be seriously dealt with. To tell a man of his sins so softly as Eli did his sons, reprove him so gently as Jehoshaphat did Ahab, "Let not the king say so," doth usually as much harm as good, 1 Sam. xxiii.; 1 Kings xxii. 8. I am persuaded the very manner of some men's reproof and exhortation hath hardened many a sinner in the way of destruction. To tell them of sin, or of heaven, or hell, in a dull, easy, careless language, doth make men think you are not in good sadness, nor do mean as you speak; but either you scarce think yourselves such things are true, or else you take them in such a slight and indifferent manner. O sirs, deal with sin as sin, and speak of heaven and hell as they are, and not as if you were in jest. I confess, I have failed much in this myself; the Lord lay it not to my charge. Lothness to displease men, makes us undo them.

Sect. IX. 6. Yet, lest you run into extremes, I advise you to do it with prudence and discretion. Be as serious as you can; but yet with wisdom. And especially, you must be wise in these things following:

1. In choosing the fittest season for your exhortation, not to deal with men when they are in passion, or drink, or in public where they will take it for a disgrace. Men should observe when sinners are fittest to hear instructions. Physic must not be given at all times, but in season. Opportunity advantageth every work. It is an excellent example that Paul giveth us, Gal. ii. 2. He communicateth the gospel to them, yet privately to them of reputation, lest he should run in vain. Some men would take this to be a sinful complying with their corruption, to yield so far to their pride and bashfulness, as to teach them only in private, because they would be ashamed to own the truth in public. But Paul knew how great a hinderance men's reputation is to their entertaining of the truth, and that the remedy must not only be fitted to the disease, but also to the strength of the patient, and that in so doing, the physician is not guilty of favouring the disease, but is praiseworthy for taking the right way to cure it; and that learners and young beginners must not be dealt with as open professors. Moreover, means will work easily if you take the oppor-

[k] How zealously should we deal with open wicked ones, when Paul did so openly reprehend even Peter himself for dissimulation, and leave his sin and the reproof on sacred record! I know what Jerom saith of this against Augustine, as all that know their works know. But that Augustine had the better cause, not only the former exposition of Ambros. in Gal. ii. and Cyprian. Epist. 71. ad Quintum, Tert. i. de Præscript. c. 23. et cont. Marcion. lib. iv. c. 3, &c. show, but the plain text itself; as even Suarez himself is forced to confess, and most of the moderns with him, as he there saith, though in partiality to Peter he maketh a long stir to excuse him, even from all fault; which I dare say Peter would not do himself, if he were to speak his own ease. See Suarez de Legibus, lib. ix. de Lege Divin. posit. cap. xx. p. 792—794, &c.

tunity; when the earth is soft, the plough will enter. Take a man when he is under affliction, or in the house of mourning, or newly stirred by some moving sermon, and then set it home, and you may do him good. Christian faithfulness doth require us, not only to do good when it falls in our way, but to watch for opportunities for doing good.[l]

2. Be wise also in suiting your exhortation to the quality and temper of the person. All meats are not for all stomachs: one man will vomit that up again in your face, which another will digest. 1. If it be a learned, or ingenious, rational man, you must deal more by convincing arguments, and less by passionate persuasions. 2. If it be one that is both ignorant and stupid, there is need of both. 3. If one that is convinced, but yet is not converted, you must use most those means that rouse up the affections. 4. If they be obstinate and secure, you must reprove them sharply. 5. If they be of timorous, tender natures, and apt to dejections or distractions, they must be tenderly dealt with. All cannot bear that rough dealing as some can. Love, and plainness, and seriousness, take with all; but words of terror some can scarce bear. This is (as we say of stronger physic, *hellebore, colloquintida, &c. nec puero, nec seni, nec imbecillo, sed robusto, &c.)* not fit for every complexion and state.[m]

3. You must be wise also in using the aptest expressions. Many a minister doth deliver most excellent, necessary matter in such unsavoury, harsh, and unseeming language, that it makes the hearers loathe the food that they should live by, and laugh at a sermon that might make them quake: especially if they be men of curious ears and carnal hearts, and have more common wit and parts than the speaker. And so it is in private exhortation as well as public: if you clothe the most amiable, beautiful truth in the sordid rags of unbeseeming language, you will make men disdain it as monstrous and deformed, though it be the offspring of God, and of the highest nature.

Sect. X. 7. Let all your reproofs and exhortations be backed with the authority of God. Let the sinner be convinced that you speak not from yourselves, or of your own head. Show them the very words of Scripture for what you say.[n] Turn them to the very chapter and verse where the sin is condemned and where the duty is commanded. Press them with the truth and authority of God. Ask them whether they believe that this is his word, and that his word is true. So much of God as appeareth in our words, so much will they take. The voice of man is contemptible, but the voice of God is awful and terrible. They can and may reject your words, they cannot nor dare reject the words of the Almighty. Be sure, therefore, to make them know that you speak nothing but what God hath spoken first.

Sect. XI. 8. You must also be frequent with men in this duty of exhortation; it is not once or twice that usually will prevail. If God himself must be constantly solicited, as if importunity could prevail with him when nothing else can, and therefore requires us always to pray, and not to wax faint, the same course, no doubt, will be most prevailing with men. Therefore, we are commanded "to exhort one another daily, and with all long-suffering." As Lipsius saith, "The fire is not always brought out of the flint at one stroke; nor men's affections kindled at the first exhortation."[o] And if they were, yet if they be not followed, they will soon grow cold again. Weary out sinners with your loving and earnest entreaties; follow them, and give them no rest in their sin. This is true charity, and this is the way to save men's souls; and a course that will afford you comfort upon review.

Sect. XII. 9. Strive to bring all your exhortation to an issue; stick not in the work done, but look after the success, and aim at the end in all your speeches.[p] I have long observed it in ministers and private men, that if they speak never so convincing and powerful words, and yet their hearts do not long after the success of them with the hearers, but all their care is over when they have done their speech, pretending that having done their duty, they leave the issue to God, these men do seldom prosper in their labours; but those whose very heart is set upon the work, and that long to see it take for the hearer's conversion, and use to inquire how it speeds, God usually blesseth their labours, though more weak. Labour, therefore, to drive all your speeches to the desired issue. If you are reproving a sin, cease not till (if it may be) you have got the sinner to promise you to leave it, and to avoid the occasions of it: if you are exhorting to a duty, urge the party to promise you presently to set upon it. If you would draw them to Christ, leave not till you have made them confess that their present unregenerate state is miserable, and not to be rested in; and till they have subscribed to the necessity of Christ, and of a change, and till they have promised you to fall close to the use of means. Oh that all christians would be persuaded to take this course with all their neighbours that are yet in the flesh, that are enslaved to sin, and strangers to Christ!

Sect. XIII. 10. Lastly, Be sure that your examples may exhort as well as your words.[q] Let them see you constant in all the duties that you persuade them to: let them see in your lives that difference from sinners, and that excellency above the world, which you persuade them to in your speeches. Let

[l] Junius writes, in the history of his own life, how his father, seeing him infected with atheism, did not chide him, or dispute against him, but repressed his rashness with holy, grave, reverent speeches, and laid open the Bible in his chamber; and he addeth, Sciebat enim vir sapientissimus non intrudi pietatem, sed instillari mentibus; non impingi, sed infundi: non imperari, sed doceri: non cogi, sed suaderi velle.

[m] Siquis de scripturæ, mente non satis informatus, bono tamen animo ad Deum contenderit, etiam de eo lætandum est, quod procurat bono animo, quamvis non procuret bonum. Foveri oportet quod bonum est, errorem tolli; at siquis in medium producatur fretus sola naturæ luce, qui Deum requirat simplice animo: non temere depellendus de gradu, sed sollicite appellandus est, et omni officio ac potius pietate ad pietatis notitiam perducendus: lætitia spiritualis de hoc homine capienda: neque solum ore et sermone testanda foris, sed ex corde et veritate intrinsecus effundenda. Junius Irenic. tom. i. in Psalm cxii. p. 690.

[n] Ut drachmam auri sine imagine principis, sic verba hortantis sine authoritate Dei, contemnunt homines, &c. Lipsius. I conceive it much conducing that whatsoever touching the settlement of the church shall pass your hands, may, in the main parts thereof, go forth into the world seconded with the reasons and grounds of it: for, doubtless, the reason which moved you to set the stamp of authority on it, will avail much to make it pass currently with others. Though men will willingly be subjects to your authority; yet also, as they are men, they will be slaves to reason. Mr. Vines' Sermon on January 28, 1645, p. 29, 30.

[o] Luke xviii. 1; Heb. iii. 13; 2 Tim. iv. 3. Ut ignis e silice non uno ictu, &c. Si fieri posset, etiam ab ipsis inferis extrahendi nobis sunt homines. Calvin, in Acts viii. 22.

[p] Hence we may gather that those men seek not the edification of their brother, who, when they have spoken to him once or twice, do think they have fully done their duty. Muscul. in Matt. vii. tom. i. p. 155.

[q] Nec sic inflectere sensus humanos edicta valent quam vita regentis. Primus jussa subi; tunc observantior æqui. Fit populus. Loripidem rectus derideat, Æthiopem albus. Quis tulerit Gracchus de seditione querentes? Si fur displiceat Verri, homicida Miloni, &c. Si quis opprobriis dignum latraverit integer ipse, &c.

them see by your constant labours for heaven, that you do indeed believe that which you would have them to believe. If you tell others of the admirable joys of heaven, and yourselves do nothing but drudge for the world, and are as much taken up in striving to be rich, or as quarrelsome with your neighbours in a case of commodity, as any others, who will then believe you; or who will be persuaded by you to seek the everlasting riches? Will they not rather think, that you persuade them to look after another world, and to neglect this, that so you might have the more of it to yourself? Let not men see you proud, while you exhort them to be humble; nor to have a seared conscience in one thing, while you would have theirs tender in another. An innocent life is a continual powerful reproof to the wicked; and the constant practice of a holy and heavenly life is a constant disquietment to the conscience of a worldling, and a constant solicitation of him to change his course.

And thus I have opened to you the first and great part of this duty, consisting in private, familiar exhortation, for the helping of poor souls to this rest, that are out of the way, and have yet no title to it; and I have showed you also the manner how to perform it that you may succeed. I will now speak a little of the next part.

Sect. XIV. Besides the duty of private admonition, you must do your utmost endeavours to help men to profit by the public ordinances. And to that end you must do these things. First, Do your endeavours for the procuring of faithful ministers where they are wanting.[r] This is God's ordinary means of converting and saving. How shall they hear without a preacher? Not only for your own sakes therefore, but for the poor miserable ones about you, do all you can to bring this to pass. If the gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost. Where vision faileth, the people perish. Improve, therefore, all your interest and diligence to this end. Ride, and go, and seek, and make friends, till you do prevail; if means be wanting to maintain a minister, extend your purses to the utmost, rather than the means of men's salvation should be wanting. Who knoweth how many souls may bless you, who have been converted and saved by the ministry which you have procured? It is a higher and nobler work of charity, than if you gave all that you have to relieve their bodies: though both must be regarded, yet the soul in the first place. What abundance of good might great men do in this, if they were faithful improvers of their interests and estates, as men that believe God hath the chief interest, and will shortly call them to an account for their stewardship! What unhappy reformers hath the church still met withal, that instead of taking away the corruptions in the church, do diminish that maintenance which should further the work! If our ignorant forefathers gave it for the service of the church, and their more knowing posterity do take it away, without the least pretence of right to it; I doubt not but the pious intent of progenitors will more extenuate the fault of their ignorance, than the knowledge of their posterity will excuse their sacrilege. Alas, that the sad example of King Henry the Eighth's reformation, and the almost miraculous consumption of the estates of the impropriators,[s] and the many hundred congregations that live in woeful darkness for want of maintenance for a ministry, should yet be no more effectual a warning to this age! If they take away most, and give back a little, we are beholden to their bounty. If a corrupt officer lose his interest, the church doth not lose hers. Here is a great talk of reducing the church to the primitive pattern: if so, I dare affirm that every church must have many ministers. And they that know wherein the work of the ministry doth consist, will no more wonder at that, than that a regiment of soldiers should have many officers. And how will that be, when they will scarcely afford maintenance for one?[t] They are likelier to bring the church to the primitive poverty, than to the primitive pattern. If I were not known to be quite beyond their exceptions myself, I might not say so much, lest I were thought to plead my own interest; especially a dying man should be out of the reach of such accusations. But the Lord knoweth that it is not a desire that ministers should be rich, that maketh me speak this; but earnest desire of the happiness of the church; nor do I mean the ministry only by the word "church." It is the people that are robbed and bear the loss, more than the ministers: ministers must and will have maintenance, or else men will set their children to other studies; when there is no other, the people must allow it themselves, or be without. What minister can well oversee and watch over more than a thousand souls? Nor I think so many. Many congregations have four thousand, ten thousand, twenty thousand, some fifty thousand, yea, seventy thousand. How many officers will the state maintain in an army of thirty thousand? I had almost said, the work of governing the church is greater, and hath need of as many. I would all Scripture and primitive patterns were well viewed in this. O happy reformation, if able godly men were put in places, or in right offices, without such diminution of the number or the maintenance! Or if a supply at present could not be had, yet should they not have overthrown the hopes of posterity. But to leave this digression, I hope those that God hath called to this work, will labour, nevertheless, for the shortness of their maintenance: and those of the people that can do no more, can yet pray the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth labourers. And he that hath put that petition into our mouths, I hope will put the answer into our hands.

[r] Rom. x. 14; 2 Cor. iv. 3; Prov. xxix. 18. By sleight or by force they so muzzle the poor labouring ox that they make an ass of him. Thomas Scott, in his Projector, p. 31. Sacrilegio pœna est; neque ei soli qui e sacro abstulerit, sed etiam ei qui sacro commendatum. Cicero, lib. xii. de leg. Cum diis pugnant sacrilegi. Qu. Curtius, lib. vii.

[s] Hath not England already been as the eagle's nest that was set on fire with a coal that stuck to the flesh which was stolen from the altar? De ecclesia qui aliquid furatur Judæ proditori comparatur. Aug. in Johan. · The arguments used of late to excuse this heinous sin, are much of the nature of those which Dionysius was wont to use in the like case. Vid. in Valerii Maximi, lib. i. c. 2; et Justin. lib. xxii.

[t] To make up that number of ministers that the church should have, now the maintenance is taken away, I would rich men would study and enter into the ministry who can maintain themselves, and so do the work freely. Let them know to their faces, that it is a work that the greatest lord in the land is not too good for. See what Hierom saith ad Damasum: Clericos illos convenit ecclesiæ stipendiis sustentari, quibus parentum et amicorum nulla suffragantur stipendia. Qui autem bonis parentum et opibus sustineri possunt, si quod pauperum est, accipiunt, sacrilegium profecto incurrunt, et committunt. And, besides, it would bear up the credit of the office, and take off much prejudice from the people. But our gentlemen generally have their pleasure, wealth, and honour, in such high esteem, and Christ and his gospel and church in such disesteem, that they would take it for a disgrace to turn ministers, or to fit and devote themselves, or children to it, and so to serve Christ freely. Where is the gentleman in England that hath done thus? They will rail at ministers for covetousness, because they will not serve at the altar, and not live on the altar, who have no other maintenance; but when will themselves that have more, devote themselves freely to this work? Will they not rather increase their great estates with robbing God?

Sect. XV. 2. Yet it is not enough that you seek after teachers, but especially you must seek after such as are fitted for the work. An ignorant empiric that killeth more than he cureth, doth not so much differ from an able physician, as an unskilful minister from one that is able. Alas; this is the great defect among us: men that are fitted for the work indeed, are most wonders; one, or two, or three, or four in some counties is much.[u] How few that have dived into the mysteries of divinity; or have thoroughly studied the most needful controversies; or are able to explain or maintain the truth! But only they store their memories with the opinions and phrases of those teachers that are in most credit, in common cases; and then they think they are divines: and every man that steps out of their common road, they can say that he is erroneous or heretical; but how to confute him they cannot tell. And almost as few that are well skilled in managing known truths upon the conscience. Alas! whence cometh this misery to the church? There is not a choice made of the most excellent wits, and those youths that are ripest in learning and religion: but some of them are so rich, that the ministry is too mean for them; and some so poor, that they have no maintenance to subsist on at the universities. And so every one that is best furnished to make a trade of the ministry, or whose parents have best affection to it, how unfit soever the child is, must be a minister: and those few, very few, choice wits that would be fittest, are diverted.

How small a matter were it, and yet how excellent a work, for every knight or gentleman of means in England, to cull out some one or two, or more, poor boys in the country schools, who are of the choicest wits and most pious dispositions, who are poor and unable to proceed in learning, and to maintain them a few years in the universities, till they were fit for the ministry! It were but keeping a few superfluous attendants the less, or a few horses or dogs the less: if they had hearts to it, it were easily spared out of their sports, or rich apparel, or superfluous diet; or, what if it were out of more useful costs, or out of their children's larger portions? I dare say they would not be sorry for it when they come to their reckoning. One sumptuous feast, or one costly suit of apparel, would maintain a poor boy a year or two at the university, who, perhaps, might come to have more true worth in him than many a glittering, sensual lord, and to do God more service in his church than ever they did with all their estates and power.

Sect. XVI. 3. And when you do enjoy the blessing of the gospel, you must yet use your utmost diligence to help poor souls to receive the fruit of it. To which end you must draw them constantly to hear and attend it. Mind them often of what they have heard; draw them, if it be possible, to repeat it in their families. If that cannot be, then draw them to come to others that do repeat it, that so it may not die in the hearing. The very drawing of men into the company and acquaintance of the godly,[x] besides the benefit they have by their endeavours, is of singular use to the recovery of their souls. Association breedeth familiarity, and familiarity breedeth love; and familiarity and love to the godly, doth lead to familiarity and love to God and godliness. It is also a means to take off prejudice, by confuting the world's slanders of the ways and people of God. Use, therefore, often to meet together, besides the more public meeting in the congregation: not to vent any unsound opinions, nor yet in distaste of the public meeting, nor in opposition to it, nor at the time of public worship, nor yet to make a groundless schism, or to separate from the church whereof you are members; nor to destroy the old that you may gather a new church out of its ruins, as long as it hath the essentials, and there is hope of reforming it; nor yet would I have you forward to vent your own supposed gifts and parts in teaching, where there is no necessity of it; nor to attempt that in the interpretation of difficult scriptures, or explication of difficult controversies, which is beyond your ability, though, perhaps, pride will tell you that you are as able as any. But the work which I would have you meet about, is this, to repeat together the word which you have heard in public; to pour out your joint prayers for the church and yourselves; to join in cheerful singing the praises of God; to open your scruples, and doubts, and fears, and get resolution; to quicken each other in love, and heavenliness, and holy walking: and all this, not as a separated church, but as a part of the church more diligent than the rest in redeeming time, and helping the souls of each other heavenward.

I know some careless ones think this course needless; and I know some formalists do think it schismatical, who have nothing of any moment to say against it. Against both these, if I durst so far digress, I could easily prove it warrantable and useful. I know also that many of late do abuse private meetings to schism, and to vilify God's ordinances, and vent the windy issue of their empty brains. But betwixt these extremes, I advise you to walk, and neither to "forsake the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhort one another," Heb. x. 25. Nor yet to be "carried about with divers and strange doctrines:" but let all your private meetings be in subordination to the public, and by the approbation and consent of your spiritual guides, and not without them of your own heads, where such guides are men of knowledge and godliness; remembering them which have the rule over you, which speak to you the word of God, following their faith, and as men whose hearts are stablished with grace, considering the whole end of a christian's conversation, Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever, Heb. xiii. 7—9, 17. "And I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause di-

[u] Præsident nobis probati quique seniores, honorem istum non pretio sed testimonio adepti. Tertul. Apolog. c. 29. He mentioneth not two sorts of elders, but one, whose office lay chiefly in ruling or guiding, though all had authority to teach also. For God's sake, and the sake of poor souls, gentlemen, put this in practice presently. You will hardly lay out your estates in a way that will afford you more comfort at your accounting time? If you will not part with a little for God, you shall part with more to men; and with all shortly, but less to your comfort. And be sure you choose the fittest, and not the most befriended. How far doth our charity come short of the primitive christians, though our riches be far greater! Tertullian saith to heathens, Plus nostri misericordia insumit vicatim, quam religio vestra templatim. Apolog. adv. Gentes, c. 42. See Capel's Epistle Dedicatory before Mr. Pemble on the Sacrament.

[x] This coming together of christians is, indeed, unlawful, if to unlawful ends, and, accordingly, to be condemned. If any complain of it, as of faction, to whose hurt did we ever meet? We are the same together as we are asunder; the same all in a body as we are singularly; hurting no man, grieving no man. When honest and good men come together, when godly and chaste people are assembled, it is not to be called a faction, but a court. But, on the contrary, the name of faction is to be given to them who conspire together in hatred of good and honest men; that cry out against the blood of the innocent; pretending this vanity in defence of their hatred, that they think the christians are the cause of every public calamity, and every loss of the people. Tertul. Apolog. adv. Gentes, c. 39, 40.

visions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which you have learned, and avoid them: for they that are such, serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple," Rom. xvi. 17, 18. I would you would ponder every one of these words, for they are the precious advice of the Spirit of God, and necessary now, as well as then.

4. Keep ordinances and ministry in esteem.

Sect. XVII. 4. One thing more I advise you concerning this. If you would have souls converted and saved by the ordinances, labour still to keep the ordinances and ministry in esteem. No man will be much wrought on by that which he despiseth. The great causes of this contempt are, a perverted judgment, and a graceless heart. It is no more wonder for a soul to loathe the ordinances, that savoureth not their spiritual nature, nor seeth God in them, nor is thoroughly wrought on by them, than it is for a sick man to loathe his food. Nor is it any wonder for a perverted understanding to make a jest of God himself, much less to set light by his ordinances. Oh! what a rare blessing is a clear, sound, sanctified judgment! Where this is wanting, the most hellish vice may seem a virtue, and the most sacred ordinance of divine institution may seem as the waters of Jordan to Naaman. If any enemies to God's ordinances assault you, I refer you to the reading of Mr. Henry Lawrence's late book for ordinances.

The profane scorners of the ministry and worship heretofore, were the means of keeping many a soul from heaven; but the late generation of proud, ignorant sectaries amongst us, have quite outstripped in this the vile persecutors.[y] Oh how many souls may curse these wretches in hell for ever, that have by them been brought to contemn the means that should save them! By many years' experience in my conversing with these men, I can speak it knowingly, that the chiefest of their zeal is let out against the faithful ministers of Christ. He is the ablest of their preachers that can rail at them in the most devilish language. It is their most common discourse in all companies, both godly and profane, to vilify the ministry, and make them odious to all, partly by slanders, and partly by scorns. Is this the way to win souls? Whereas, formerly, they thought that if a man were won to a love of the ministry and ordinances, he was in a hopeful way of being won to God. Now these men are diligent to bring all men to scorn them, as if this were all that were necessary to the saving of their souls, and he only shall be happy that can deride at ministers and discipline.[z] If any man doubt of the truth of what I say, he is a stranger in England, and for his satisfaction, let him read all the books of Martin Mar-priest, and tell me whether the devil ever spoke so with a tongue of flesh before. For you, my dear friends, I acknowledge to God's praise, that you are as far from the contempt of ordinances or ministry, as any people I know in the land. I shall confirm you herein, not in my own words, but in his that I know you dare not disregard: 1 Thess. v. 11—13, "Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as ye also do. And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you; and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake, and be at peace among yourselves." "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as those that must give an account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you," Heb. xiii. 17.

Thus you see part of your duty for the salvation of others.

Sect. XVIII. And now, christian reader, seeing it is a duty that God hath laid upon every man according to his ability, thus to exhort and reprove, and with all possible diligence to labour after the salvation of all about him, judge then whether this work be conscionably performed. Where shall we find the man almost among us, that setteth himself to it with all his might, and that hath set his heart upon the souls of his brethren, that they may be saved?

Let us here, therefore, a little inquire what may be the causes of the gross neglect of this duty, that the hinderances being discovered may the more easily be overcome.

1. One hinderance is, men's own gracelessness and guiltiness. They have not been ravished themselves with the heavenly delights. How, then, should they draw others so earnestly to seek them? They have not felt the wickedness of their own natures, nor their lost condition, nor their need of Christ, nor felt the transforming, renewing work of the Spirit. How, then, can they discover these to others? Ah! that this were not the case of many a learned preacher in England! and the cause why they preach so frozenly and generally! Men also are guilty themselves of the sins they should reprove, and this stops their mouth, and maketh them ashamed to reprove.

2. Another hinderance is, a secret infidelity prevailing in men's hearts; whereof even the best have so great a measure, that it causeth this duty to be done by the halves. Alas! sirs, we do not, sure, believe men's misery; we do not believe, sure, that the threatenings of God are true. Did we verily believe that all the unregenerate and unholy shall be eternally tormented, as God hath said, oh, how could we hold our tongues when we are among the unregenerate? How could we choose but burst out into tears when we look them in the face, as the prophet did when he looked upon Hazael? especially when they are our kindred or friends, that are near and dear to us? Thus doth secret unbelief of the truth of Scripture consume the vigour of each grace and duty. O christians, if you did verily believe that

[y] To them that think I speak too harshly, I say as Dr. Sutlive, in Præfat. de Monachis contra Bellarminum: Res est plane ardua, de hominum genere impudentissimo modeste; de turpissimo et scelcratissimo modice et sine acerbitate loqui. Moderatus tamen sum ipse mihi, quantum licuit; et non quid ipsi de nobis meruerint, sed quid nostros homines deceat, spectavi. And let the greatest that are guilty read Cyprian's words, and tremble. What greater crime can there be, than to have stood up against Christ, in his officers and discipline; than to have scattered the church of Christ, which he hath purchased with his blood and built; than to have fought, by the fury of hostile discord, against the unanimous and agreeing people of God? Who, though themselves should repent and return to the church, yet can they not recover and bring back with them those whom they have seduced, or those that, being by death prevented, are dead and perished without the church, without being absolved and restored to communion; whose souls at the day of judgment shall be required at their hands, who were the authors and leaders of them to perdition. It is enough, therefore, that they are pardoned that return; but perfidiousness must not be promoted in the house of faith. For what privilege do we reserve for good men and innocent, and that separate not, or depart not from the church, if we honour them that have separated or departed from us, and have stood against the church. Cyprian. Epist. 72. ad Steph. Thus this blessed martyr of separatists.

[z] Let those that are the chaff of light belief fly away as much as they will whithersoever the wind of temptation drives them, the heap of corn in the Lord's floor shall be laid up so much the cleaner. Tertullian. de Præscrip. c. 3.

your poor, carnal, ungodly neighbour, or wife, or husband, or child, should certainly lie for ever in the flames of hell, except they be thoroughly recovered and changed, and that quickly, before death doth snatch them from hence, would not this make you cast off all discouragements, and lay at them day and night till they were persuaded, and give them no rest in their carnal state? How could you hold your tongue, or let them alone another day, if this were soundly believed? If you were sure that any of your dear friends, that are dead, were now in hell, and persuading to repentance would get him out again, would not you persuade him day and night, if he were in hearing? And why should you not do as much then to prevent it, while he is in your hearing, but that you do not believe God's word that speaks the danger? Why did Noah prepare an ark so long before, and persuade the world to save themselves, but because he believed God, that the flood should come? And, therefore, saith the Holy Ghost, "By faith Noah prepared the ark," Heb. xi. 7. And why did not the world hearken to his persuasion, and seek to save themselves as well as Noah, but because they did not believe there would be any such deluge? They see all fair and well, and therefore they thought that threatenings were but wind. The rich man in hell cries out, "Send to my brethren to warn them, that they come not to this place of torment," Luke xvi. 13: he felt it, and therefore, being convinced of its truth, would have them prevent it; but his brethren on earth, they did not see and feel as he, and therefore they did not believe, nor would have been persuaded, "though one had risen from the dead." I am afraid most of us do believe the predictions of Scripture but as we believe the predictions of an almanack, which telleth you that such a day will be rain, and such a day wind; you think it may come to pass, and it may not: and so you think of the predictions of the damnation of the wicked. Oh! were it not for this cursed unbelief, our own souls, and our neighbours', would gain more by us than they do.

3. This faithful dealing with men for their salvation, is much hindered also by our want of charity and compassion to men's souls.[a] We are hard-hearted and cruel towards the miserable; and therefore, as the priest and the Levite did by the wounded man, we look on them, and pass by. Oh! what tender heart could endure to look upon a poor, blind, forlorn sinner, wounded by sin, and captivated by Satan, and never once open our mouths for his recovery? What though he be silent, and do not desire thy help himself, yet his very misery cries aloud: misery is the most effectual suitor to one that is compassionate. If God had not heard the cry of our miseries before he heard the cry of our prayers, and been moved by his own pity, before he was moved by our importunity, we might have long enough continued the slaves of Satan. Is it not the strongest way of arguing that a poor Lazarus hath, to unlap his sores, and show them the passengers? All his words will not move them so much as such a pitiful sight. Alas! what pitiful sights do we daily see! the ignorant, the profane, the neglecters of Christ and their souls; their sores are open and visible to all that know them, and yet do we not pity them! You will pray to God for them, in customary duties, that God would open the eyes and turn the hearts of your ignorant, carnal friends and neighbours. And why do you not endeavour their conversion, if you desire it? And if you do not desire it, why do you ask it? Doth not your negligence convince you of hypocrisy in your prayers, and of abusing the high God with your deceitful words? Your neighbours are near you, your friends are in the house with you; you eat, and drink, and work, and walk, and talk with them, and yet you say little or nothing to them. Why do you not pray them to consider and return, as well as pray God to convert and turn them? Have you as oft and as earnestly begged of them to think on their ways, and to reform, as you have taken on you to beg of God that they may so do? What if you should see your neighbour fallen into a pit, and you should presently fall down on your knees, and pray God to help him out, but would neither put forth your hand to help, nor once persuade or direct him to help himself, would not any man censure you to be cruel and hypocritical? What the Holy Ghost saith of men's bodily miseries, I may say much more of the misery of their souls: "If any man seeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" 1 John iii. 17. Or, what love hath he to his brother's soul? Sure, if you saw your friend in hell, you would persuade him hard to come thence, if that would serve; and why do you not now persuade him to prevent it? The charity of our ignorant forefathers may rise up in judgment against us, and condemn us. They would give all their estates almost, for so many masses, or pardons, to deliver the souls of their friends from a feigned purgatory, and we will not so much as importunately admonish, and entreat them, to save them from the certain flames of hell; though this may be effectual to do them good, and the other will do none.

4. Another hinderance is, a base, man-pleasing disposition that is in us. We are so loth to displease men, and so desirous to keep in credit and favour with them, that it makes us most unconscionably neglect our known duty. A foolish physician he is, and a most unfaithful friend, that will let a sick man die for fear of troubling him; and cruel wretches are we to our friends, that will rather suffer them to go quietly to hell, than we will anger them, or hazard our reputation with them. If they did but fall in a swoon, we would rub them and pinch them, and never stick at hurting them. If they were distracted we would bind them with chains, and we would please them in nothing that tended to their hurt; and yet, when they are beside themselves in point of salvation, and in their madness posting on to damnation we will not stop them, for fear of displeasing them. How can these men be christians, that love the praise and favour of men more than the favour of God? John xii. 43. For if they yet seek to please men, they are no longer the servants of Christ, Gal. i. 10. To win them indeed, they must become all things to all men; but to please them to their destruction, and let them perish, that we may keep our credit with them, is a course so base and barbarously cruel, that he that hath the face of a christian should abhor it, 1 Cor. ix. 20—24; Prov. xi. 36.

5. Another common hinderance is, a sinful bashfulness. When we should labour to make men ashamed of their sins, we are ourselves ashamed of

[a] Et per Deum immortalem, quid est quod nos impediat, ne miseris illis ex morbo et errore animi laborantibus accelamemus ad bonum, et a malefaciendo abstineamus quam fidelissime? Nam si illi cæci sunt; at nos fuimus. Si oberrant cæcitate; at nos oberravimus. Si denique impedimento sunt; at impedimentum habent, ut nos habuimus; quo magis nostra commiseratione et allevatione digni sunt. Junius Irenic. tom. i. operum, p. 690. Charitatem quia non habent, nec ex charitate fratrem corrigunt, fit ut mox illum relinquant: quam si haberent, non adeo confestim deficerent, et quod pejus est, deficiendi causas prætexerent, quatenus merito defecisse videantur. Muscul. in Matt. vii. tom. i. p. 155.

our duties. May not these sinners condemn us, when they will not blush to swear, or be drunk, or neglect the worship of God, and we will blush to tell them of it, and persuade them from it?[b] Elisha looked on Hazael till he was ashamed; and we are ashamed to look on, or speak to the offender, 2 Kings viii. 11; Jer. vi. 15; viii. 12; Luke ix. 26. Sinners will rather boast of their sins, and impudently show them in the open streets, and shall not we be as bold in drawing them from it? Not that I approve of impudence in any; for, as one saith, I take him for a lost man that hath lost his modesty.[c] Nor would I have inferiors forget their distance in admonishing their superiors; but do it with all humility, and submission, and respect. But yet I would much less have them forget their duty to God and their friends, be they never so much their superiors: it is a thing that must be done. Bashfulness is unseemly in cases of flat necessity. And, indeed, it is not a work to be ashamed of; to obey God in persuading men from their sins to Christ, and helping to save their souls, is not a business for a man to blush at; and yet, alas! what abundance of souls have been neglected through the prevailing of this sin! even the most of us are heinously guilty in this point. Reader, is not this thy own case? Hath not thy conscience told thee of thy duty many a time, and put thee on to speak to poor sinners, lest they perish, and yet thou hast been ashamed to open thy mouth to them, and so let them alone to sink or swim? believe me, thou wilt ere long be ashamed of this shame. O read those words of Christ, and tremble: "He that is ashamed of me and of my words before this adulterous generation, of him will the Son of man be ashamed before his Father and the angels," Luke ix. 26; Mark viii. 38.

6. Another hinderance is, impatience, laziness, and favouring of the flesh. It is an ungrateful work, and for the most part maketh those our enemies that were our friends; and men cannot bear the reproaches and unthankful returns of sinners. It may be they are their chief friends, on whom is all their dependence, so that it may be their undoing to displease them. Besides, it is a work that seldom succeedeth at the first, except it be followed on with wisdom and unweariedness. You must be a great while teaching an ignorant person, before he will be brought to know the very fundamentals; and a great while persuading an obstinate sinner, before he will come to a full resolution to return.[d] Now, this is a tedious course to the flesh, and few will bear it. Not considering what patience God used towards us when we were in our sins, and how long he followed us with the importunities of his Spirit, holding out Christ and life, and beseeching us to accept them. Woe to us if God had been as impatient with us as we are with others! If Christ be not weary, nor give over to invite them, we have little reason to be weary of doing the message. See 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25.

7. Another hinderance is, self-seeking and self-minding. Men are all for themselves, and all mind their own things, but few the things of Christ and their brethren.[e] Hence is that Cainish voice, "Am I my brother's keeper?" Every man must answer for himself. Hence also it is that a multitude of ignorant professors do think only where they may enjoy the purest ordinances, and thither they will go over sea and land; or what way of discipline will be sweetest to themselves, and therefore are prone to groundless separation: but where they have the fairest opportunity to win the souls of others, or in what place or way they may do most good, these things they little or nothing regard, as if we had learned of the monks, and were setting up their principles and practice when we seem to oppose them.

If these men had tried what some of their brethren have done, they would know that all the purest ordinances and churches will not afford that solid comfort, as the converting of a few sinners by our unwearied, compassionate exhortations. Two men in a frosty season come where a company of people are ready to starve; the one of them laps himself, and taketh shelter, for fear lest he should perish with them; the other, in pity, falls to rub them that he may recover heat in them, and while he laboureth hard to help them, he getteth far better heat to himself than his unprofitable companion doth.

8. With many, also, pride is a great impediment. If it were to speak to a great man, they would do it, so it would not displease him. But to go among the poor multitude, and to take pains with a company of ignorant beggars, or mean persons, and to sit with them in a smoky, nasty cottage, and there to instruct them and exhort them from day to day, where is the person almost that will do it? Many will much rejoice if they have been instruments of converting a gentleman, (and they have good cause,) but for the common multitude, they look not after them: as if God were a respecter of the persons of the rich, or the souls of all were not alike to him. Alas! these men little consider how long Christ did stoop to us! When the God of glory comes down in flesh, to worms, and goeth preaching up and down among them from city to city! Not the silliest woman that he thought too low to confer with. Few rich, and noble, and wise, are called. It is the poor that receive the glad tidings of the gospel, John iv. and 1 Cor. i. 26.

9. Lastly; With some also their ignorance of the duty doth hinder them from performing it. Either they know it not to be a duty, or at least not to be their duty. Perhaps they have not considered much of it, nor been pressed to it by their teachers, as they have been to hearing, and praying, and other duties. If this be thy case who readest this, that mere ignorance or inconsiderateness hath kept thee from it, then I am in hope now thou art acquainted with thy duty, thou wilt set upon it.

Object. 1. O but, saith one, I am of so weak parts and gifts, that I am unable to manage an exhortation, especially to men of strong natural parts and understanding.

Answ. First, Set those upon the work who are more able. Secondly, Yet do not think that thou art so excused thyself, but use faithfully that ability which thou hast, not in teaching those of whom thou shouldst learn, but in instructing those who are more ignorant than thyself, and in exhorting those who are negligent in the things which they do know. If you cannot speak well yourself, yet you can tell them what God speaketh in his word. It is not the excel-

[b] There is no shame now among men, but to be poor and honest. Tho. Scot. Projector, p. 8.

[c] Illum ego perisse dico, cui periit pudor. Curtius.

[d] Melius tumor capitis dolet cum curatur, quam dum ei parcitur, et non sanatur. Hoc est quod acute vidit qui dixit, utiliores esse plerumque inimicos objurgantes, quam amicos objurgare metuentes. Illi dum rixantur, dicunt aliquando vera quæ corrigamus. Isti autem minorem quam oportet exhibent justitiæ libertatem, dum amicitiæ timent exasperare dulcedinem. Aug. Epist. ad Hieronym. inter opera Hieron. tom. iii. fol. (mihi) 159.

[e] Phil. ii. 20. Illud est vivere, non sibi vivere solum. Bene vivere, non est quid privatum et solitarii boni. In alios effluit sensus vitæ bonæ. Eus. Nieremberg. de Arte Voluntatis, lib. i. p. 94.

lency of speech that winneth souls, but the authority of God manifested by that speech, and the power of his word in the mouth of the instructor. A weak woman may tell what God saith in the plain passages of the word, as well as a learned man. If you cannot preach to them, yet you can turn to the place in your Bible, or at least remember them of it, and say, "Thus it is written." One of mean parts may remember the wisest of their duty when they forget it. David received seasonable advice from Abigail, a woman. When a man's eyes are blinded with passion, or the deceits of the world, or the lusts of the flesh, a weak instructor may prove very profitable; for in that case he hath as much need to hear of what he knoweth, as of what he doth not know.

Object. 2. It is my superior that needeth my advice and exhortation; and is it fit for me to teach or reprove my betters? Must the wife teach the husband, of whom the Scripture biddeth them learn? Or must the child teach the parents, whose duty it is to teach them?

Answ. First, It is fit that husbands should be able to teach their wives, and parents to teach their children; and God expecteth they should be so, and therefore commandeth the inferiors to learn of them. But if they through their own negligence do disable themselves, or through their own wickedness do bring their souls into such misery, as that they have the greatest need of advice and reproof themselves, and are objects of pity to all that know their case; then it is themselves, and not you, that break God's order, by bringing themselves into disability and misery.

Matter of mere order and manners must be dispensed with in cases of flat necessity. Though it were your minister, you must teach him in such a case. It is the part of parents to provide for their children, and not children for their parents; and yet if the parents fall into want, must not the children relieve them? It is the part of the husband to dispose of the affairs of the family and estate; and yet, if he be sick or beside himself, must not the wife do it? The rich should relieve the poor; but if the rich fall into beggary, they must be relieved themselves. It is the work of the physician to look to the health of others; and yet, if he fall sick, somebody must help him, and look to him. So must the meanest servant admonish his master, and the child his parent, and the wife her husband, and the people their ministers, in cases of necessity.

Secondly, Yet let me give you these two cautions here.

1. That you do not pretend necessity when there is none, out of a mere desire of teaching. There is scarce a more certain discovery of a proud heart, than to be forwarder and more desirous to teach than to learn, especially toward those that are fitter to teach us.

2. And when the necessity of your superiors doth call for your advice, yet do it with all possible humility, and modesty, and meekness. Let them discern your reverence and submission to their superiority in the humble manner of your addresses to them. Let them perceive that you do it not out of a mere teaching humour, or proud self-conceitedness. An elder must be admonished, but not rebuked. If a wife should tell her husband of his sin in a masterly, railing language; or if a servant reprove his master, or a child his father, (1 Tim. v. 1,) in a saucy, disrespectful way, what good could be expected from such reproof? But if they should meekly and humbly open to him his sin and danger, and entreat him to bear with them in what God commandeth, and his misery requireth; and if they could by tears testify their sense of his case; what father, or master, or husband could take this ill?

Object. 3. But some may say, This will make us all preachers, and cause all to break over the bounds of their callings; every boy and woman then will turn preacher.

Answ. 1. This is not taking a pastoral charge of souls, nor making an office or calling of it, as preachers do.

2. And in the way of our callings, every good christian is a teacher, and hath a charge of his neighbour's soul. Let it be only the voice of a Cain to say, "Am I my brother's keeper?" I would have one of these men, that are so loth that private men should teach them, to tell me, what if a man fall down in a swoon in the streets, though it be your father or superior, would you not take him up presently, and use all means you could to recover him? or would you let him lie and die, and say, It is the work of the physician, and not mine; I will not invade the physician's calling. In two cases, every man is a physician. First, in case of necessity, and when a physician cannot be had. And secondly, in case the hurt be so small, that every man can do as well as the physician. And in the same two cases, every man must be a teacher.

Object. 4. Some will further object,[f] to put off this duty, that the party is so ignorant, or stupid, or careless, or rooted in sin, and hath been so oft exhorted in vain, and there is no hope.

Answ. How know you when there is no hope? Cannot God yet cure him? And must it not be by means? And have not many as far gone been cured? Should not a merciful physician use means while there is life? And is it not inhuman cruelty in you to give up your friend to the devil and damnation as hopeless, upon mere backwardness to your duty, or upon groundless discouragements? What if you had been so given up yourself when you were ignorant?

Object. 5. But we must not cast pearls before swine, nor give that which is holy to dogs.

Answ. That is but a favourable dispensation of Christ for your own safety. When you are in danger to be torn in pieces, Christ would have you forbear; but what is that to you that are in no such danger? As long as they will hear, you have encouragement to speak, and may not cast them off as contemptuous swine.

Object. 6. O, but it is a friend that I have all my dependence on, and by telling him of his sin and misery, I may lose his love, and so be undone.

Answ. Sure no man that hath the face of a christian, will for shame own such an objection as this. Yet, I doubt, it oft prevaileth in the heart. Is his love more to be valued than his safety? or thy own benefit by him, than the salvation of his soul? Or wilt thou connive at his damnation, because he is thy friend? Is that thy best requital of his friendship? Hadst thou rather he should burn for ever in hell, than thou shouldst lose his favour, or the maintenance thou hast from him?

Object. 7. But I hope, though he be not regenerate and holy, that he is in no such danger.

[f] This is the killing pain of all our pains, that all we do is rejected. Ministers would not be gray-headed so soon, nor die so fast for all their labour, if it were but successful; but this cuts to the heart, and makes us bleed in secret, that though we do much it comes to nothing. I am placed in an hospital, where there are so many score diseased creatures, that it would pity any one's heart to look on them, and yet when I come to dress them, they all curse me in their heart; and one hides his wounds from me, and another says and swears he is as well as I, in as good a condition as his minister; and yet looks as pale as death, as black in the mouth and eyes as if he were in hell already. Lockier on Col. i. 29, p. 528.

Answ. Nay, then, if thou be one that dost not believe God's word, I have no more to say to thee, John iii.; Heb. xii. 14. I told you before that this unbelief was the root of all.

Sect. XVIII. To conclude this use, that I may prevail with every soul that feareth God, to use their utmost diligence to help all about them to this blessed rest which they hope for themselves, let me entreat you to consider of these following motives:

1. Consider, Nature teacheth the communicating of good, and grace doth especially dispose the soul thereunto; the neglect, therefore, of this work, is a sin both against nature and grace. He that should never seek after God himself, would quickly be concluded graceless by all: and is not he as certainly graceless that doth not labour for the salvation of others, when we are bound to love our neighbour as ourself? Would you not think that man or woman unnatural, that would let their own children or neighbours famish in the streets, while they have provision at hand? And is not he more unnatural, that will let his children or neighbours perish eternally, and will not open his mouth to save them? Certainly, this is most barbarous cruelty. Pity to the miserable is so natural, that we account an unmerciful, cruel man a very monster, to be abhorred of all. Many vicious men are too much loved in the world, but a cruel man is abhorred of all. Now, that it may appear to you what a cruel thing this neglect of souls is, do but consider of these two things. First, How great a work it is. Secondly, And how small a matter it is that thou refusest to do for the accomplishing so great a work. First, It is to save thy brother from eternal flames, that he may not there lie roaring in endless, remediless torments. It is to bring him to the everlasting rest, where he may live in unconceivable happiness with God. Secondly, And what is it that you should do to help him herein? Why, it is to teach him, and persuade him, and lay open to him his sin and his duty, his misery and the remedy, till you have made him willing to yield to the offers and commands of Christ. And is this so great a matter for to do, to the attaining of such a blessed end? If God had bid you give them all your estates to win them, or lay down your lives to save them, sure you would have refused, when you will not bestow a little breath to save them? Is not the soul of a husband, or wife, or child, or neighbour, worth a few words? It is worth this, or it is worth nothing. If they did lie dying in the streets, and a few words would save their lives, would not every man say, that he were a cruel wretch that would let them perish, rather than speak to them? Even the covetous hypocrite, that James reproveth, would give a few words to the poor, and say, Go and be warmed, and be clothed. What a barbarous, unmerciful wretch, then, art thou, that wilt not vouchsafe a few words of serious, sober admonition, to save the soul of thy neighbour or friend? Cruelty and unmercifulness to men's bodies, is a most damnable sin, but to their souls much more, as the soul is of greater worth than the body, and as eternity is of greater moment than this short time. Alas! you do not see or feel what case their souls are in, when they are in hell, for want of your faithful admonition. Little know you what many a soul may now be feeling, who have been your neighbours and acquaintance, and died in their sins, on whom you never bestowed one hour's sober advice for the preventing of their unhappiness. If you did know their misery, you would now do more to bring them out of hell. But, alas! it is too late; you should have done it while they were with you; it is now too late. As one said in reproach of physicians, "That they were the most happy men, because all their good deeds and cures were seen above-ground to their praise, but all their mistakes and neglects were buried out of sight."[g] So I may say to you, Many a neglect of yours to the souls about you, may be now buried with those souls in hell, out of your sight and hearing, and therefore now it doth not much trouble you; but, alas! they feel it, though you feel it not. May not many a papist rise up in judgment against us, and condemn us? They will give their lands and estates to have so many masses said for the souls of their deceased friends, when it is too late, to bring them out of a feigned purgatory, and we will not ply them with persuasions while we may, to save them from real threatened condemnation; though this cheaper means may prove effectual, when that dearer way of papists will do no good. Jeremy cried out, "My bowels, my bowels, I cannot hold my peace," because of a temporal destruction of his people. And do not our bowels yearn? And can we hold our peace at men's eternal destruction?

2. Consider, What a rate Christ did value souls at, and what he hath done towards the saving of them. He thought them worth his blood and sufferings; and shall not we then think them worth the breath of our mouths? Will you not set in with Christ for so good a work? nor do a little, where he hath done so much?

3. Consider, What fit objects of pity they are. It is no small misery to be an enemy to God, unpardoned, unsanctified, strangers to the church's special privileges, without hope of salvation if they so live and die. And, which is yet more, they are dead in these their trespasses and miseries, and have not hearts to feel them, or to pity themselves. If others do not pity them, they will have no pity; for it is the nature of their disease to make them pitiless to their own souls, yea, to make them the most cruel destroyers of themselves.

4. Consider, It was once thy own case. Thou wast once a slave of Satan thyself, and confidently didst go in the way to condemnation. What if thou hadst been let alone in that way, whither hadst thou gone, and what had become of thee? It was God's argument to the Israelites to be kind to strangers, because themselves were sometimes strangers in Egypt; so it may persuade you to show compassion to them that are strangers to Christ, and to the hopes and comforts of the saints, because you were once as strange to them yourselves.[h]

5. Consider, The relation that thou standest in towards them. It is thy neighbour, thy brother, whom thou art bound to be tender of, and to love as thyself. He that loveth not his brother, whom he seeth daily, most certainly doth not love God, whom he never saw: and doth he love his brother, that will stand by, and see him go to hell, and never hinder him?[i] 1 John iii. 10; iv. 20, 21.

6. Consider, What a deal of guilt this neglect doth lay upon thy soul. First, Thou art guilty of the murder and damnation of all those souls whom thou dost thus neglect. He that standeth by and seeth a

[g] Nicocles.

[h] Hæc et nos risimus aliquando. Fiunt, non nascuntur Christiani. Tertul. Apolog. cap. 18.

[i] Glossa igitur Lyrani in Matt. xxv. est improbanda, ubi dicit, Considerandum etiam quod hic non fit mentio de operibus misericordiæ ex parte animæ, quia illa pertinet pro majori parte ad prælatos, ad quos pertinet alios instruere et dirigere in salutem. Obsecro te per mansuetudinem Christi, ut si te læsi, dimittas mihi; nec me vicissim lædendo, malum pro malo reddas. Lædes enim si mihi tacueris errorem meum, quem forte inveneris in scriptis, vel in dictis meis. Aug. Epist. ad Hier. inter opera Hieron. tom. iii. p. (mihi) 159.

man in a pit, and will not pull him out if he can, doth drown him. And he that standeth by while thieves rob him, or murderers kill him, and will not help him if he can, is accessory to the fact. And so he that will silently suffer men to damn their souls, or will let Satan and the world deceive them, and not offer to help them, will certainly be judged guilty of damning them. And is not this a most dreadful consideration? O sirs, how many souls, then, have every one of us been guilty of damning! What a number of our neighbours and acquaintance are dead, in whom we discerned no signs of sanctification, and we never did once plainly tell them of it, or how to be recovered! If you had been the cause but of burning a man's house through your negligence, or of undoing him in the world, or of destroying his body, how would it trouble you as long as you lived! If you had but killed a man unadvisedly, it would much disquiet you. We have known those that have been guilty of murder, that could never sleep quietly after, nor have one comfortable day, their own consciences did so vex and torment them. Oh, then, what a heart mayst thou have, that hast been guilty of murdering such a multitude of precious souls! Remember this when thou lookest thy friend or carnal neighbour in the face, and think with thyself, Can I find in my heart, through my silence and negligence, to be guilty of his everlasting burning in hell? Methinks such a thought should even untie the tongue of the dumb.

2. And as you are guilty of their perishing, so are you of every sin which in the mean time they do commit. If they were converted, they would break off their course of sinning; and if you did your duty, you know not but they might be converted. As he that is guilty of a man's drunkenness, is guilty of all the sins which that drunkenness doth cause him to commit; so he that is guilty of a man's continuing unregenerate, is also guilty of the sins of his unregeneracy. How many curses and oaths, and scorns at God's ways, and other sins of most heinous nature, are many of you guilty of, that little think of it! You that live godlily, and take much pains for your own souls, and seem fearful of sinning, would take it ill of one that should tell you, that you are guilty of weekly or daily whoredoms, and drunkenness, and swearing, and lying, &c. And yet it is too true, even beyond all denial, by your neglect of helping those who do commit them.[k]

3. You are guilty, also, as of the sin, so of all the dishonour that God hath thereby. And how much is that! And how tender should a christian be of the glory of God, the least part whereof is to be valued before all our lives!

4. You are guilty, also, of all those judgments which those men's sins do bring upon the town or country where they live. I know you are not such atheists, but you believe it is God that sendeth sickness, and famine, and war; and also that it is only sin that moveth him to this indignation. What doubt, then, is there, but you are the cause of judgments, who do not strive against those sins which do cause them? God hath staid long in patience, to see if any would deal plainly with the sinners of the times, and so free their own souls from the guilt: but when he seeth that there is almost none, but all become guilty, no wonder then if he lay the judgment upon all. We have all seen the drunkards and heard the swearers in our streets, and we would not speak to them; we have all lived in the midst of an ignorant, worldly, unholy people, and we have not spoke to them with earnestness, plainness, and love; no wonder, then, if God speak in his wrath both to them and us. Eli did not commit the sin himself, and yet he speaketh so coldly against it, that he also must bear the punishment. Guns and cannons speak against sin in England, because the inhabitants would not speak. God pleadeth with us with fire and sword, because we would not plead with sinners with our tongues. God locketh up the clouds, because we have shut up our mouths. The earth is grown as hard as iron to us, because we have hardened our hearts against our miserable neighbours. The cries of the poor for bread are loud, because our cries against sin have been so low. Sicknesses run apace from house to house, and sweep away the poor, unprepared inhabitants, because we swept not out the sin that breedeth them. When you look over the woeful desolations in England, how ready are you to cry out on them that were the causers of it! But did you consider how deeply yourselves were guilty? And, as Christ said in another case, "If these should hold their peace, the stones would speak," Luke xix. 40; so, because we held our peace at the ignorance, ungodliness, and wickedness of our places, therefore do these plagues and judgments speak.

7. Consider, What a thing it will be to look upon your poor friends eternally in those flames, and to think that your neglect was a great cause of it! and that there was a time when you might have done much to prevent it! If you should there perish with them, it would be no small aggravation of your torment: if you be in heaven, it would sure be a sad thought, were it possible that any sorrow could dwell there, to hear a multitude of poor souls there to cry out for ever, Oh! if you would but have told me plainly of my sin and danger, and dealt roundly with me, and set it home, I might have escaped all this torment, and been now in rest. Oh! what a sad voice will this be!

8. Consider, What a joy it is like to be in heaven to you, to meet those there whom you have been a means to bring thither! To see their faces, and join with them for ever in the praises of God, whom ye were instruments to bring to the knowledge and obedience of Christ! What it will then be, we know not; but sure, according to our present temper, it would be no small joy.

9. Consider, How many souls have we drawn into the way of damnation, or at least hardened, or settled in it! And should we not now be more diligent to draw men to life? There is not one of us but have had our companions in sin, especially in the days of our ignorance and unregeneracy. We have enticed them or encouraged them to sabbath-breaking, drinking, or revellings, or dancings and stage-plays, or wantonness and vanities, if not to scorn and oppose the godly. We cannot so easily bring them from sin again, as we did draw them to it. Many are dead already without any change discovered, who were our companions in sin. We know not how many are and will be in hell that we drew thither, and there may curse us in their torments for ever. And doth it not beseem us, then, to do as much to save men, as we have done to destroy them; and be merciful to some as we have been cruel to others.

10. Consider, How diligent are all the enemies of these poor souls to draw them to hell! And if nobody be diligent in helping them to heaven, what is like to become of them? The devil is tempting them day and night. Their inward lusts are still working and withdrawing them. The flesh is still pleading for its delights and profits. Their old companions are ready to entice them to sin, and to dis-

[k] Qui non vetat peccare cum potest, jubet.

grace God's ways and people to them, and to contradict the doctrine of Christ that should save them, and to increase their prejudice and dislike of holiness. Seducing teachers are exceeding diligent in sowing tares, and in drawing off the unstable from the doctrine and way of life: so that when we have done all we can, and hope we have won men, what a multitude of late have, after all, been taken in this snare! And shall a seducer be so unwearied in proselyting poor, ungrounded souls to his fancies; and shall not a sound christian be much more unwearied in labouring to win men to Christ and life?

11. Consider, The neglect of this doth very deeply wound when conscience is awaked. When a man comes to die, conscience will ask him, What good hast thou done in thy life-time? The saving of souls is the greatest good work; what hast thou done towards this? How many hast thou dealt faithfully with? I have oft observed that the consciences of dying men do very much wound them for this omission. For my own part, to tell you my experience, whenever I have been near death, my conscience hath accused me more for this than for any sin. It would bring every ignorant, profane neighbour to my remembrance, to whom I never made known their danger: it would tell me, Thou shouldst have gone to them in private, and told them plainly of their desperate danger, without bashfulness or daubing, though it had been when thou shouldst have eaten or slept, if thou hadst no other time: conscience would remember me, how, at such a time or such a time, I was in company with the ignorant, or was riding by the way with a wilful sinner, and had a fit opportunity to have dealt with them, but did not; or, at least, did it by halves, and to little purpose. The Lord grant I may better obey conscience hereafter while I live and have time, that it may have less to accuse me of at death!

12. Consider, further, It is now a very seasonable time which you have for this work. Take it therefore while you have it. There are times wherein it is not safe to speak; it may cost you your liberties, or your lives: it is not so now with us. Besides, your neighbours will be here with you but a very little while; they will shortly die, and so must you. Speak to them, therefore, while you may; set upon them, and give them no rest till you have prevailed. Do it speedily, for it must be now or never. A Roman emperor, when he heard of a neighbour dead, he asked, "And what did I do for him before he died?" and it grieved him that a man should die near him, and it could not be said that he had first done him any good. Methinks you should think of this when you hear that any of your neighbours are dead; but I had far rather, while they are alive, you would ask the question: There is such and such a neighbour (alas, how many!) that are ignorant and ungodly, what have I done, or said, that might have in it any likelihood of recovering them? They will shortly be dead, and then it is too late.

13. Consider, This is a work of greatest charity, and yet such as every one of you may perform. If it were to give them monies, the poor have it not to give; if to fight for them, the weak cannot; if it were to suffer, the fearful will say, they cannot: but every one hath a tongue to speak to a sinner. The poorest may be thus charitable as well as the rich.

14. Consider, also, The happy consequences of this work, where it is faithfully done. To name some:

1. You may be instrumental in that blessed work of saving souls, a work that Christ came down and died for, a work that the angels of God rejoice in; for, saith the Holy Ghost, "If any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins," James v. 19, 20. And how can God more highly honour you, than to make you instruments in so great a work?

2. Such souls will bless you here and hereafter. They may be angry with you at first; but if your words prevail and succeed, they will bless the day that ever they knew you, and bless God that sent you to speak to them.

3. If you succeed, God will have much glory by it;[1] he will have one more to value and accept of his Son, of whom Christ's blood hath attained its end; he will have one more to love him, and daily worship and fear him, and do him service in his church.

4. The church also will have gain by it; there will be one less provoker of wrath, and one more to strive with God against sin and judgment, and to engage against the sins of the times, and to win others by doctrine and example. If thou couldst but convert one persecuting Saul, he might become a Paul, and do the church more service than ever thou didst thyself. However, the healing of sinners is the surest method for preventing or removing of judgments.

5. It is the way also to purity and flourishing of the church, and to the right erecting and executing the discipline of Christ; if men would but do what they ought with their neighbours in private, what a help would it be to the success of the public endeavours of the ministry! And what hope might we have that daily some would be added to the church! And if any be obstinate, yet this is the first course that must be taken to reclaim them. Who dare separate from them, or excommunicate them, before they have been first thoroughly admonished and instrueted in private, according to Christ's rule, Matt. xviii. 15, 16?

6. It bringeth much advantage to yourselves: First, It will increase your graces, both as it is a course that God will bless, and as it is an acting of them in this persuading of others: he that will not let you lose a cup of water which is given for him, will not let you lose these greater works of charity; besides, those that have practised this duty most conscionably, do find, by experience, that they never go on more speedily and prosperously towards heaven than when they do most to help others thither with them. It is not here as with worldly treasure, the more you give away, the less you have; but here, the more you give, the more you have. The setting forth Christ in his fulness to others, will warm your own hearts and stir up your love. The opening of the evil and danger of sin to others, will increase your hatred of it, and much engage yourselves against it. Secondly, And it seemeth that it will increase your glory as well as your grace, both as a duty which God will so reward, "for those that convert many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever," Dan. xii. 3; xi. 33; and also as we shall there behold them in heaven, and be their associates in blessedness, whom God made us here the instruments to convert. Thirdly, However, it will give us much peace of conscience, whether we succeed or not, to think that we were faithful, and did our best to save them, and that we are clear from the blood of all men, and their perishing shall not lie upon

[1] As it is a grievous thing to think of a place wherein God hath been truly worshipped, that afterwards the devil should be served there; so it is a comfortable thing to think of other places wherein the devil hath been served, that God is now truly worshipped there. Burroughs on Hos. i. p. 118.

us. Fourthly, Besides, that it is a work that, if it succeed, doth exceedingly rejoice an honest heart. He that hath a sense of God's honour, or the least affection to the soul of his brother, must needs rejoice much at his conversion, whosoever be the instrument, but especially when God maketh ourselves the means of so blessed a work. If God make us the instruments of any temporal good, it is very comfortable, but much more of eternal good.[m] There is naturally a rejoicing followeth every good work answerable to the degree of its goodness: he that doth most good, hath usually the most happy and comfortable life. If men knew the pleasure that there is in doing good, they would not seek after their pleasure so much in evil. For my own part, it is an unspeakable comfort to me, that God hath made me an instrument for the recovering of so many from bodily diseases, and saving their natural lives;[n] but all this is yet nothing to the comfort I have in the success of my labours, in the conversion and confirmation of souls; it is so great a joy to me that it drowneth the painfulness of my daily duties, and the trouble of my daily languishing, and bodily griefs; and maketh all these, with all oppositions and difficulties in my work, to be easy and as nothing. And of all the personal mercies that ever I received, next to his love in Christ and to my soul, I must most joyfully bless him for the plenteous success of my endeavours upon others. Oh, what fruit, then, might I have seen, if I had been more faithful, and plied the work in private and public as I ought! I know we have need to be very jealous of our deceitful hearts in this point, lest our rejoieing should come from our pride and self-ascribing. Naturally we would, every man, be in the place of God, and have the praise of every good work ascribed to ourselves, but yet, to imitate our Father in goodness and mercy, and to rejoice in that degree we attain to, is the part of every child of God. I tell you therefore, to persuade you from my own experience, that if you did but know what a joyful thing it is to be an instrument for the converting and saving of souls, you would set upon it presently, and follow it night and day through the greatest discouragements and resistance. Fifthly, I might also tell you of the honourableness of this work; but I will pass by that, lest I excite your pride instead of your zeal.

And thus I have showed you what should move and persuade you to this duty. Let me now conclude with a word of entreaty: First, To all the godly in general. Secondly, To some above others in particular, to set upon the conseionable performance of this most excellent work.

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[m] Si itaque qui multorum corporibus sanitatem medendo pepererit, vel ad majorem hæc deduxerit valetudinem, haudquaquam id sine divino instinctu fecisse videbitur; quanto magis qui plurimorum animas cūrat, et ad meliora traducit; et ex Deo qui omnibus præest, ut pendeant, facit; edocetque ut ad ejus voluntatem quæcunque gesserint; ut repetant homines; declinentque vel minima quæque quæ illum factis, dictisve et cogitatione offendunt. Origen cont. Celsum, lib. i.

[n] I know many learned physicians speak very sharply against ministers practising physic. But with these conditions no wise man disalloweth it: 1. That it hinder not his main employment much. 2. That it be in case of absolute necessity, that the party must die else in the eye of reason: as, (1.) When no able physician is within reach. (2.) Or cannot, or will not come. (3.) Or the case is sudden, or the party so poor that he cannot pay physicians. 3. And if a man, being conscious of his insufficiency, resolves not to go beyond his knowledge, but rather to do too little than too much. 4. And if he take nothing for what he doth. Who can blame a man that observes these conditions? except he would have a man guilty of murder, and not help a man if he fall down by us, because we are no physicians! Et omnes has ipse conditiones observavi. If physicians may be able in divinity, as to their honour many have been—as Curæus, Vadianus, Erastus, Peucerus, Camerarius, Scaliger, Gesner, Shegkius, Zingerus, &c.—why then may not a divine as well understand physic? And Dr. Primrose (de Errorib. Vulg. c. 4. lib. i.) might have remembered more divines than Marsil. Ficinus that were physicians, as Tragus, Ingolsteterus, Lemnius, &c.

[a] Non dubito quin iste sit apud inferos, quod moriens artem suam mortalibus inviserit. Vide Jo. Van. Helmon De Lithiasi, c. vii. p. 123.

CHAPTER XIV.

AN ADVICE TO SOME MORE SPECIALLY TO HELP OTHERS TO THIS REST, PRESSED LARGELY ON MINISTERS AND PARENTS.

SECT. I. Up, then, every man that hath a tongue, and is a servant of Christ, and do something of this your Master's work: why hath he given you a tongue but to speak in his service? And how can you serve him more eminently, than in the saving of souls? He that will pronounce you blessed at the last day, and sentence you to the kingdom prepared for you, because you fed him, and clothed him, and visited him, &c. in his members, will sure pronounce you blessed for so great a work as is the bringing over of souls to his kingdom, and helping to drive the match betwixt them and him. He that saith, "The poor you have always with you," hath left the ungodly always with you, that you might still have matter to exercise your charity upon. Oh, if you have the hearts of christians or of men in you, let them yearn towards your poor, ignorant, ungodly neighbours. Alas! there is but a step betwixt them and death and hell; many hundred diseases are waiting ready to seize on them, and if they die unregenerate, they are lost for ever. Have you hearts of rock, that cannot pity men in such a case as this? If you believe not the word of God, and the danger of sinners, why are you christians yourselves? If you do believe it, why do you not bestir you to the helping of others? Do you not care who is damned, so you be saved? If so, you have as much cause to pity yourselves; for it is a frame of spirit utterly inconsistent with grace. Should you not rather say, as the lepers of Samaria, Is it not a day of glad tidings, and do we sit still, and hold our peace? 1 Kings vii. 9. Hath God had so much mercy on you, and will you have no mercy on your poor neighbours? You need not go far to find objects for your pity. Look but into your streets, or into the next house to you, and you will probably find some. Have you never an ignorant and unregenerate neighbour that sets his heart below, and neglecteth eternity? Oh, what blessed place do you live in, where there is none such? If there be not some of them in thine own family, it is well; and yet art thou silent? Dost thou live close by them, or meet them in the streets, or labour with them, or travel with them, or sit still and talk with them, and say nothing to them of their souls, or the life to come? If their houses were on fire, thou wouldst run and help them; and wilt thou not help them when their souls are almost at the fire of hell? If thou knewest but a remedy for their diseases, thou wouldst tell it them, or else thou wouldst judge thyself guilty of their death. Cardan[a] speaks of one that had a receipt that would

suddenly and certainly dissolve the stone in the bladder; and he concludes of him, that he makes no doubt but that man is in hell, because he never revealed it to any before he died. What shall we say, then, of them that know of the remedy for curing souls, and do not reveal it, nor persuade men to make use of it? Is it not hypocrisy to pray daily for their conversion and salvation, and never once endeavour to procure it? And is it not hypocrisy to pray, "that God's name may be hallowed," and never to endeavour to bring men to hallow it, nor hinder them from profaning it? And can you pray, "Let thy kingdom come," and yet never labour for the coming or increase of that kingdom? Is it not grief to your hearts to see the kingdom of Satan so to flourish, and to see him lead captive such a multitude of souls? You take on you that you are soldiers in Christ's army, and will you do nothing against his prevailing enemies? You pray also daily, "that his will may be done;" and should you not daily, then, persuade men to do it, and dissuade them from sinning against it? You pray, "that God would forgive them their sins, and that he would not lead them into temptation, but deliver them from evil;" and yet will you not help them against temptations, nor help to deliver them from the greatest evil; nor help them to repent and believe, that they may be forgiven. Alas! that your prayers and your practice should so much disagree! Look about you, therefore, christians, with an eye of compassion on the ignorant ungodly sinners about you; be not like the priest or Levite who saw the man wounded, and passed by. God did not so pass by you, when it was your own case. Are not the souls of your neighbours fallen into the hands of Satan? Doth not their misery cry out to you, Help! help! As you have any compassion towards men in the greatest misery, help! As you have the hearts of men, and not of tigers in you, help! Alas! how forward are hypocrites in their sacrifice, and how backward to show mercy! How much in praying, and duties of worship, and how little in plain reproof and exhortation, and other duties of compassion! And yet God hath told them, "that he will have mercy, and not sacrifice;" that is, mercy before sacrifice. And how forward are these hypocrites to censure ministers for neglecting their duties! yea, to expect more duty from one minister, than ten can perform! And yet they make no conscience of neglecting their own. Nay, how forward are they to separate from those about them! And how censorious against those that admit them to the Lord's supper, or that join with them! And yet will they not be brought to deal with them in Christ's way for their recovery: as if other men were to work, and they only to sit by and judge. Because they know it is a work of trouble, and will many times set men against them, therefore no persuasion will bring them to it. They are like men that see their neighbour sick of the plague, or drowning in the water, or taken captive by the enemy, and they dare not venture to relieve him themselves; but none so forward to put on others. So are these men the greatest expecters of duty, and the least performers.

Sect. II. But as this duty lieth upon all in general, so upon some more especially, according as God hath called or qualified them thereto. To them, therefore, more particularly, I will address my exhortation, whether they be such as have more opportunity and advantages for this work, or such as have better abilities to perform it, or such as have both. And these are of several sorts.

1. All you that God hath given more learning and knowledge to, and endued with better parts for utterance than your neighbours, God expecteth this duty especially at your hand. The strong are made to help the weak, and those that see must direct the blind. God looketh for this faithful improvement of your parts and gifts, which if you neglect, it were better for you that you never had received them; for they will but further your condemnation, and be as useless to your own salvation as they were to others.

Sect. III. 2. All those that have special familiarity[b] with some ungodly men, and that have interest in them, God looks for this duty at their hands. Christ himself did eat and drink with publicans and sinners, but it was only to be their physician, and not their companion. Who knows but God gave you interest in them to this end, that you might be means of their recovery? They that will not regard the words of another, will regard a brother, or sister, or husband, or wife, or near friend; besides, that the bond of friendship doth engage you to more kindness and compassion than ordinary.

Sect. IV. 3. Physicians that are much about dying men, should, in a special manner, make conscience of this duty: they have a treble advantage. First, They are at hand. Secondly, They are with men in sickness and dangers, when the ear is more open, and the heart less stubborn than in time of health. He that made a scorn of godliness before, will then be of another mind, and hear counsel then, if ever he will hear it. Thirdly, Besides, they look upon their physician as a man in whose hand is their life, or at least may do much to save them; and therefore they will the more regardfully hear his advice. O, therefore, you that are of this honourable profession, do not think this a work beside your calling, as if it belonged to none but ministers; except you think it beside your calling to be compassionate, or to be christians. O, help, therefore, to fit your patients for heaven, and whether you see they are for life or death, teach them both how to live and to die, and give them some physic for their souls, as you do for their bodies. Blessed be God that very many of the chief physicians of this age have, by their eminent piety, vindicated their profession from the common imputation of atheism and profaneness.

Sect. V. 4. Another sort that have excellent advantages for this duty,[c] is, men that have wealth and authority, and are of great place and command in the world, especially that have many that live in dependence on them. Oh, what a world of good might gentlemen, and knights, and lords, do, that have a great many tenants, and that are the leaders of the country, if they had but hearts to improve their interest and advantage![d] Little do you that

[b] Habes socios ac necessarios? Non poteris rite aliorum delecta castigare, si ad horum errata connivere volueris. Muscul. in Matt. vii. tom. i. p. 154.

[c] Pestifera vis est vatere ad nocendum; illius magnitudo stabilis fundataque est, quem omnes tam supra se esse, quam pro se sciunt: cujus curam excubare pro salute singulorum atque universorum quotidie experiuntur; quo procedente, non tanquam malum aliquod aut noxium animal e cubili prosilierit, diffugiunt; sed tanquam ad clarum sidus certatim advolant. Seneca de Clementia, lib. i. c. 3.

[d] What a horrid thing is it, that usually none are greater enemies to, and hinderers of, Christ's kingdom and work, than those that, 1. By office, and 2. By the greatness of their talents of riches, power, and honour, are most deeply engaged to Christ! Even Jehu, that pretended to reformation, and destroyed the worship and priests of Baal, and said, "Come and see my zeal for the Lord," and rises up against Ahab for his persecution and idolatry; yet, when the government falls into his hands, persists in the steps of him whom he destroyed, thereby adjudging himself to destruction; and all because when he had espoused the same interest, he thinks himself necessitated to take the same

are such, think of the duty that lies upon you in this. Have you not all your honour and riches from God? And is it not evident, then, that you must employ them for the best advantage of his service? Do you not know who hath said, "that to whom men commit much, from them they will expect the more?"

You have the greatest opportunities to do good of most men in the world. Your tenants dare not contradict you, lest you dispossess them or their children of their habitations. They fear you more than they do God himself; your frown will do more with them than the threatenings of the Scripture; they will sooner obey you than God. If you speak to them for God and their souls, you may be regarded, when even a minister that they fear not shall be despised. If they do but see you favour the way of godliness, they will lightly counterfeit it, at least, to please you, especially if they live within the reach of your observation. O, therefore, as you value the honour of God, your own comfort, and the salvation of souls, improve your interest to the utmost for God. Go visit your tenants' and neighbours' houses, and see whether they worship God in their families, and take all opportunities to press them to their duties. Do not despise them because they are poor or simple. Remember, God is no respecter of persons; your flesh is of no better metal than theirs; nor will the worms spare your faces or hearts any more than theirs; nor will your bones or dust bear the badge of your gentility: you must be all equals when you stand in judgment; and, therefore, help the soul of a poor man, as well as if he were a gentleman. And let men see that you excel others as much in piety, heavenliness, compassion, and diligence in God's work, as you do in riches and honour in the world.

I confess you are like to be singular if you take this course; but then remember, you shall be singular in glory, for few great, and mighty, and noble, are called.

Sect. VI. 5. Another sort that have special opportunity to this work of helping others to heaven, is, the ministers of the gospel. As they have, or should have, more ability than others, so it is the very work of their calling, and every one expecteth it at their hands, and will better submit to their teaching than to others. I intend not these instructions so much to teachers as to others, and therefore I shall say but little to them; and if all or most ministers among us were as faithful and diligent as some, I would say nothing. But, because it is otherwise, let me give these two or three words of advice to my brethren in this office.

I. Be sure that the recovering and saving of souls be the main end of your studies and preaching, Acts xx. and xxvi. 18. O do not propound any low and base ends to yourselves. This is the end of your calling, let it be also the end of your endeavours. God forbid that you should spend a week's study to please the people, or to seek the advancing of your own reputation. Dare you appear in the pulpit on such a business,[e] and speak for yourselves, when you are sent, and pretend to speak for Christ? Dare you spend that time, and wit, and parts, for yourselves? and waste the Lord's day in seeking applause, which God hath set apart for himself? Oh, what notorious sacrilege is this! Set out the work of God as skilfully and adornedly as you can, but still let the winning of souls be your end, and let all your studies and labours be serviceable thereto. Let not the window be so painted as to keep out the light, but always judge *that* the best means that most conduceth to the end. Do not think that God is best served by a neat,[f] starched, laced oration; but that he is the able, skilful minister, that is best skilled in the art of instructing, convincing, persuading, and so winning of souls; and that is the best sermon that is best in these. When you once grow otherwise minded, and seek not God but yourselves, God will make you the basest and most contemptible of men, as you make yourselves the most sinful and wretched. Hath not this brought down the ministry of England once already? It is true of your reputation, as Christ saith of your lives, "They that will save them, will lose them." O, let the vigour, also, of your persuasions show that you are sensible on how weighty a business you are sent. O, preach with that seriousness and fervour as men that believe their own doctrine, and that know their hearers must either be prevailed with, or be damned. What you would do to save them from everlasting burning, that do while you have the opportunity and price in your hand; that people may discern that you are in good sadness, and mean as you speak; and that you are not stage-players, but preachers of the doctrine of salvation. Remember what Cicero saith, "that if the matter be never so combustible, yet, if you put not fire to it, it will not burn." And what Erasmus saith, "that a hot iron will pierce, when a cold one will not." And if the wise men of the world account you mad, say as Paul,[g] "If we are beside ourselves, it is to God." And remember that Christ was so busy in doing of good, that his friends themselves begun to lay hands on him, thinking he had been beside himself, Mark iii.

Sect. VII. 2. The second and chief word of advice that I would give you, is this: do not think that all your work is in your studies, and in the pulpit.[h] I

course! O how Christ will come upon these hypocrites in his fury, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel, and bruise them with his rod of iron, and make them know that he will reign in his holy hill, Zion! Will not kings yet be wise, nor the judges of the earth be learned; to kiss the Son lest he be angry, and they perish? Will they break his bonds, and confederate against his government, and be jealous of it and his ministers, as if Christ's government and theirs could not both stand? How long will they set their interest before and against Christ's interest, and bend their studies to keep it under, and call his government tyranny, and their subjection slavery? Do they not know how much Christ's interest hath been taken down, upon mere pretended necessity of setting up their own? Will their religious hypocrisy secure them from his burning wrath, when he shall say, "These mine enemies that would not I should reign over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me?" I entreat them (if they be not past teaching) to read what a moderate divine saith, even Junius de Communione Sanct. especially the fifth chapter of his Ecclesiastes, of the power of the magistrate in church affairs. O let all christians pray daily, "Lead us not into temptation." I will not trust my brother if he be once exalted, and in the way of temptation.

[e] Magna sapientia et pietas est, dicere ad juventutem et populum necessaria, non subtilia aut arguta, ut Curæus, vid. reliqua in ejus vita per Mel. Adam. in vit. Germ. Medicor. p. 215. Philosophers are children, till Christ makes them men, saith Clemen. Alexand. Stromat. lib. i.

[f] Quis accurate loquitur, nisi qui vult putide loqui? Qualis sermo meus esset si una sederemus, aut ambularemus, illaboratus et facilis; tales esse epistolas meas volo, quæ nihil habeant accersitum nec fictum; si fieri posset, quid sentiam, ostendere quam loqui mallem. Seneca, Ep. 75.

[g] Amlingus was much used to that saying, when he was reproached for his zeal—"Si insanimus, Deo insanimus."

[h] Nihil potius esse debet curæ episcopo, quam incolumitas gregis sibi ereditì;—quo fit ut in civitate hoc sit episcopus, quod in nave gubernator, in curru rector, in exercitu dux; utpote cujus, ut ait Cyprianus, quantum pernicicosum est ad sequentium lapsum ruina, tantum contra utile est et salutare eum se per firmamentum religionis, fratribus præbet imitandum. Væ igitur episcopis, siqui sint muneris hujus obliti, &c. Episcopi est regere ecclesiam, concionari, populum verbo Dei pascere, baptizare, et baptizatos confirmare, ordinibus sacris initiare ministros Dei, obire, circumire, circumspicere sæpius suam provinciam, &c. ut cognoscant quo statu

confess that is great; but, alas! it is but a small part of your task. You are shepherds, and must know every sheep, and what is their disease, and mark their strayings, and help to cure them, and fetch them home.

If the paucity of ministers in great congregations (which is the great unobserved mischief in England that cries for reformation) did not make it a thing impossible in many places, I should charge the ministers of England with most notorious unfaithfulness, for neglecting so much the rest of their work, which calleth for their diligence as much as public preaching. O learn of Paul, (Acts xx. 19, 20, 31,) to preach publicly, and from house to house, night and day with tears. Let there not be a soul in your charge that shall not be particularly instructed and watched over. Go from house to house daily, and inquire how they grow in knowledge and holiness, and on what grounds they build their hopes of salvation; and whether they walk uprightly, and perform the duties of their several relations, and use the means to increase their abilities. See whether they daily worship God in their families; and set them in a way, and teach them how to do it: confer with them about the doctrines and practice of religion, and how they receive and profit by public teaching, and answer all their carnal objections: keep in familiarity with them, that you may maintain your interest in them, and improve all your interest for God. See that no seducers do creep in amongst them, or if they do, be diligent to countermine them; and preserve your people from infection of heresies and schisms; or if they be infected, be diligent to procure their recovery; not with passion and lordliness, but with patience and condescension: as Musculus did by the anabaptists, visiting them in prison, where the magistrate had cast them, and there instructing and relieving them; and though they reviled him when he came, and called him a false prophet, and antichristian seducer that thirsted for their blood, yet he would not so leave them, till at last by his meekness and love he had overcome them, and recovered many to the truth, and to unity with the church.

Have a watchful eye upon each particular sheep in your flock: do not do as the lazy separatists, that gather a few of the best together, and take them only for their charge, leaving the rest to sink or swim, and giving them over to the devil and their lusts; and except it be by a sermon in the pulpit, scarce ever endeavouring their salvation, nor once looking what becomes of them. O let it not be so with you! If any be weak in the faith, receive him, but not to doubtful disputations, Rom. xiv. 1. If any be too careless of their duties, and too little savour the things of the Spirit, let them be pitied, and not neglected: if any walk scandalously and disorderly, deal with them for their recovery with all diligence and patience, and set before them the heinousness and danger of their sin; if they prove obstinate after all, then avoid them, and cast them off: but do not so cruelly as to unchurch them by hundreds and by thousands, and separate from them as so many pagans, and that before any such means have been used for their recovery. If they be ignorant, it may be your fault as well as theirs; and, however, they are fitter to be instructed than rejected, except they absolutely refuse to be taught. Christ will give you no thanks for keeping or putting out such from his school that are unlearned, when their desire or will is to be taught. I confess, it is easier to shut out the ignorant, than to bestow our pains night and day in teaching them; but woe to such slothful, unfaithful servants! Matt. xxiv. 45, 46, "Who then is a faithful and a wise servant, whom his Lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them their meat in due season," according to every one's age and capacity? "Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing." O be not asleep while the wolf is waking![i] Let your eye be quick in observing the dangers and strayings of your people. If jealousies, heart-burnings, or contentions arise among them, quench them before they break out into raging, unresistible flames. As soon as you discern any to turn worldly, or proud, or factious, or self-conceited, or disobedient, or cold, and slothful in his duty; delay not, but presently make out for his recovery: remember how many are losers in the loss of a soul.

Sect. VIII. 3. Do not daub, or deal slightly with any. Some will not tell their people plainly of their sins because they are great men, and some because they are godly, as if none but the poor and the wicked should plainly be dealt with: do not you so, but reprove them sharply, though differently, and with wisdom, that they may be sound in the faith. When the Palsgrave chose Pitiscus for his household chaplain, he charged him, That without fear he should discharge his duty, and freely admonish him of his faults, as the Scriptures do require. Such encouragement from great ones, would imbolden ministers, and free themselves from the unhappiness of sinning unreproved. If gentlemen would give no more thanks to Doegs, and accusers of the ministers, than Wigandus's prince did to that flattering lawyer who accused him for speaking to princes too plainly, they should learn quickly to be silent, when they had been forced, as Hamans themselves, to clothe Mordecai, and set him in honour.[k] However, God doth sufficiently encourage us to deal plainly; He hath bid us speak and fear not; He hath promised to stand by us, and He will be our security; He may suffer us to be *anathema secundum dici*, (as Bucholcer said,) but *non secundum esse*: He will keep us, as he did Huss's heart from the power of fire, though they did beat it, when they found it among the ashes. They may burn our bones, as Bucer's and Fagius's; or they may raise lies of us when we are dead, as of Luther, Calvin, and Œcolampadius; but the soul feeleth not this, that is rejoicing with his Lord. In the mean time let us be as well learned in the art of suffering (as Xenophon) as they are in the art of reproaching: I had rather hear from the mouth of Balak, "God hath kept thee from honour;" or from Ahab, "Feed him with the bread and water of affliction;" or from Amaziah, "Art thou made of the king's council? forbear, why shouldst thou be smitten?" than to hear conscience say, Thou hast betrayed souls to damnation by thy cowardice and silence; or to hear God say, Their blood will I require at thy hands; or to hear from Christ the Judge, "Cast the unprofitable servant into

sint fratres, et sublatis erroribus siqui irrepsissent in hominum mentes, religio non violetur. Cæterum olim episcopi vocabantur presbyteri, teste uno non in loco Hieronym.: præcipue in Epist ad Evagrium. Polydor. Virgil. de Invent. Rerum, lib. iv. c. 6. p. (mihi) 240, 241.

[i] The butcher and shepherd do both look on the sheep, but not both to one end, saith Clem. Alex. Stromat. lib. i.

[k] Poor Zegedine suffered many years' captivity in misery and irons by the Turks, for one word in a sermon, which displeased a woman, without the least cause. As Latimer saith, "We cannot say to great sinners, *Væ vobis*, but we shall be called *Coram nobis*." This I know and dare avouch, that the highest mystery in the divine rhetoric, is to feel what a man speaks, and then to speak what he felt, saith our excellent, judicious, pious Doctor Stoughton. Preachers' Dig. Serm. 2. p. 312. Lege Knoxi Orationem ante Obitum ad Symmystas et Presbyteros.

utter darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth;" yea, or to hear these sinners cry out against me in eternal fire, and with implacable rage to charge me with their undoing. Numb. xxii. 11; 1 Kings xxii. 27; 2 Chron. xxv. 16; Ezek. iii. 18, 20, and xxxiii. 8; Matt. xxv. 30.

And as you must be plain and serious, so labour to be skilful and discreet, that the manner may somewhat answer the excellency of the matter. How oft have I heard a stammering tongue, with ridiculous expressions, vain repetitions, tedious circumlocutions, and unseemly pronunciation, to spoil most precious spiritual doctrine, and make the hearers either loathe it or laugh at it! How common are these extremes in the ministers of England! That while one spoils the food of life by affectation, and new-fashioned mincing, and pedantic toys, either setting forth a little and mean matter with a great deal of froth and gaudy dressing, so that there is more of the shell or paring than of the meat;[l] or like children's babies, that when you have taken away the dressing, you have taken away all; or else hiding excellent truths in a heap of vain rhetoric, and deforming its naked beauty with their paintings, so that no more seriousness can be perceived in their sermons, than in a schoolboy's declamations; and our people are brought to hear sermons, as they do stage-plays, because ministers behave themselves but as the actors: on the other side, how many by their slovenly dressing, and the uncleanness of the dish that it is served up in, do make men loathe and nauseate the food of life, and even despise and cast up that which should nourish them! Such novices are admitted into the sacred function, to the hardening of the wicked, the saddening of the godly, and the disgrace and wrong of the work of the Lord; and those that are not able to speak sense or reason, are made the ambassadors of the most high God.

I know our style must not be the same with different auditories: our language must not only be suited to our matter, but also to our hearers, or else the best sermon may be the worst; we must not read the highest books to the lowest form: therefore was Luther wont to say, that *Qui pueriliter, populariter, trivialiter, et simplicissime docent, optimi ad vulgus sunt concionatores;* but yet it is a poor sermon that hath nothing but words and noise. Every reasonable soul hath both judgment and affection; and every rational, spiritual sermon must have both. A discourse that hath judgment without affection is dead, and uneffectual; and that which hath affection without judgment is mad and transporting: remember the proverb, *Non omnes qui habent citharam, sunt citharœdi*, Every man is not a musician that hath an instrument, or that can jangle it, and make a noise on it: and that other proverb,[m] *Multi sunt qui boves stimulant, pauci aratores*, Many can prick the oxen, but few can plough: so, many preachers can talk loud and earnestly, but few can guide their flock aright, or open to them solidly the mysteries of the gospel, and show the true mean between the extremes of contrary errors. I know both must be done; holding the plough without driving the oxen doth nothing; and driving without holding maketh mad work, and is worse than nothing: but yet remember, that every plough-boy can drive; but to guide is more difficult, and therefore belongeth to the master-workman. The violence of the natural motion of the winds can drive on the ship; but there is necessary a rational motion to guide and govern it, or else it will quickly be on the rocks or shelves, either broke or sunk, and had better lie still in the harbour, at an anchor: the horses that have no reason, can set the coach or cart a-going, but if there be not some that have reason to guide them, it were better stand still. O, therefore, let me bespeak you, my brethren, in the name of the Lord, especially those that are more young and weak, that you tremble at the greatness of this holy employment, and run not up into a pulpit as boldly as into a market-place: study and pray, pray and study, till you are become workmen that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth, that your people may not be ashamed, or weary to hear you; but that besides your clear unfolding of the doctrine of the gospel, you may also be masters of your people's affections, and may be as potent in your divine rhetoric, as Cicero in his human, who, as it is said, while he pleaded for Ligarius, *Arma de imperatoris quantumvis irati manu excusserit, et misero supplici veniam impetrarit;* or, as it is said of excellent Bucholcer,[n] that he never went up into the pulpit, but he raised in men almost what affections he pleased; so raising the dejected, and comforting the afflicted, and strengthening the tempted, that though it were two hours before he had done, yet not any, even of the common people, were weary of hearing him. Set before your eyes such patterns as these,[o] and labour with unwearied diligence to be like them. To this end take Demosthenes' counsel, *Plus olei quam vini absumere.* It is a work that requireth your most serious, searching thoughts. Running, hasty, easy studies, bring forth blind births. When you are the most renowned doctors in the church of God, alas, how little is it that you know, in comparison of all that which you are ignorant of![p] Content not your-

[l] Non tam eleganter dicentes, quam utilia docentes sunt audiendi, inquit Zeno Citti. Gibieuf saith, (out of Aquin. i. p. q. 217,) "that a teacher is to the learner as a physician to his patient. And as the physician himself gives not health, but only gives some helps to bring the body into a fit temperament and disposition, that is, to help nature; so a teacher doth not give knowledge, but the helps and motives by which natural light, being excited and helped, may get knowledge. And as he is the best physician that doth not oppress nature with multitude of medicines, but pleasantly with a few doth help it, for the recovery of health; so he is the best teacher, not that knoweth how to heap up many mediums and arguments to force the understanding rather than entice it by the sweetness of light; but he that by the easy and grateful mediums which are within reach, or fitted to our light, doth lead men as by the hand unto the truth, in the beholding or sight of which truth only knowledge doth consist, and not in use of arguments; and therefore arguments are called reasons, by a name of relation to truth, viz. because they are means for finding out the truth." Gibieuf. Præfat. de Libertat. lib. ii. p. 282. I judge this an excellent useful observation for all teachers and disputants.

[m] 2 Tim. ii. 15. Futurus pastor ecclesiæ talis eligatur, ad cujus comparationem recte grex cæteri nominentur. Definiunt rhetores oratorem, qui sit vir bonus, dicendi peritus. Hieron. ad Ocean. tom. iii. p. (mihi) 147.

[n] Bucholcerus in rostra sua et mediæ conscionis suggestum nunquam ascendit, quin de cordibus hominum ipsis quos fere vellet affectus excuteret. Templum ingrediebatur quis, sensu iræ divinæ perterritus? Deum immortalem! Quanta fidei voluptate perfusus domum redibat? Calamitatum angore et tentationum fluctibus quassabatur alius? Non doloris tantum alleviationem, sed propositum etiam ingenerari sentiebat mala quæque forti constantique animo perferendi. Erat omni vitiorum cœno contaminatus aliquis? Flexanima orationis hujus suada nisi planè desperatus esset, corrigebatur. Vivida nimirum in Bucholcero omnia fuerunt, vivida vox, vividi oculi, vividæ manus, gestus omnes vividi; adeo sese in illo divini spiritus virtutes conseruere. Hinc auditorium ejus ita commotum orationem Bucholceri constat, ut, licet non nisi finita hora altera perorarit, nullum tamen audiendi tædium, vel e media cuiquam plebe obrepserit. Melch. Adamus in Vita Bucholceri.

[o] In time, and by labour, the truth will shine forth to you, if you light on a good helper or guide. Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. i.

[p] Communes enim sensus simplicitas ipsa commendat, et compassio sententiarum et familiaritas opinionum, &c. Ratio

selves to know what is the judgment of others, as if that were to know the truth in its evidence; give not over your studies when you know what the orthodox hold, and what is the opinion of the most esteemed divines: though I think while you are novices, and learners yourselves, you may do well to take much upon trust from the more judicious; yet stop not there; but know, that such faith is more borrowed than your own: an implicit faith in matters not fundamental, and of great difficulty, is ofttimes commendable, yea, and necessary in your people, who are but scholars; but in you that are masters and teachers, it is a reproach.

Sect. IX. 4. Be sure that your conversation be teaching as well as your doctrine. Do not contradict and refute your own doctrine by your practice.[r] Be as forward in a holy and heavenly life, as you are in pressing on others to it. Let your discourse be as edifying and spiritual as you teach them that theirs must be. Go not to law with your people, nor quarrel with them, if you can possibly avoid it. If they wrong you, forgive them: for evil language give them good, and blessing for their cursing. Let go your right rather than let go your hopes and advantages for the winning of one soul. Suffer any thing rather than the gospel and men's souls should suffer. Become all things lawful to all men, if by any means you may win some. Let men see that you use not the ministry only for a trade to live by, but that your very hearts are wholly set upon the welfare of their souls. Whatsoever meekness, humility, condescension, or self-denial, you teach them from the gospel, oh! teach it them also by your undissembled, leading example. This is to be guides, and pilots, and governors of the church indeed. Be not like the orators that Diogenes blamed, that studied *bene dicere, non bene facere;* nor like the sign at the inn-door, that hangs out in the rain itself, while it shows others where they may have shelter and refreshing; nor like the fencer that can offend, but not defend; as Cicero said of Cælius, that he was a good right-hand man, but an ill left-hand man. See that you be as well able to defend yourselves when you are tempted by Satan, or accused by men to be proud, covetous, or negligent, as to tell others what they should be. Oh, how many heavenly doctrines are in some people's ears, that never were in the preacher's heart! Too true is that of Hilary, *Sanctiores sunt aures plebis, quam corda sacerdotum.* Alas, that ever pride, emulation, hypocrisy, or covetousness, should come into a pulpit! They are hateful in the shops and street, but more hateful in the church, but in the pulpit most of all. What an odious sight is it, to see pride and ambition stand up to preach humility; and hypocrisy to preach up sincerity; and an earthly-minded man to preach for a heavenly conversation! Do I need to tell you that are teachers of others, that we have but a little while longer to preach, and but a few breaths more to breathe, and then we must come down, and be accountable for our work? Do I need to tell you that we must die, and be judged as well as our people; or that justice is most severe about the sanctuary; and judgment beginneth at the house of God; and revenge is most implacable about the altar; and jealousy hottest about the ark? Have you not learned these lessons from Eli, Korah, Nadab and Abihu, Uzzah, and the Bethshemites, &c. though I had said nothing? Can you forget that even some of our tribe shall say at judgment, "Lord, we have taught in thy name," (Matt. vii.) who yet must depart with "I know you not?" Do you learn nothing by the afflictions that now lie upon you? You see what hath been done against the ministry of England: how some have been laid hold on by the hand of justice, and some by the hand of violence and injustice, and how all are lashed and reproached by the wanton tongues of ignorant, insolent sectaries; neither prelatical, presbyterian, nor mere independent, now spared, it being the very calling itself that now they set against: how they rob the church of her due maintenance, and make no more of it than Dionysius did of robbing Æsculapius of his golden beard, *Quia barbatus erat filius, at pater Apollo non ita;* or than the same Dionysius did of robbing Jupiter Olympius of the golden coat that Hieron. had given, saying, "that a coat of gold was too heavy for summer, and too cold for winter, but cloth would be suitable to both;" or than he did of robbing the images of the vessels of gold which they held in their hands, saying, "he did but take what they offered, and held forth to him;" or than the same Dionysius did of robbing the temple of Proserpina, when afterwards his ships had a prosperous wind, *Videtis, inquit, quam prospera navigatio a diis immortalibus detur sacrilegis: ex hoc colligens aut non esse deos, aut illis non esse molesta sacrilegia.* Sirs, doth God lay all this on the church and ministry for nothing? Doth not the world know what an ignorant, lazy ministry formerly possessed many churches in the land? And how many such are there yet remaining! And those that are better, alas! how far from what we should be, either in knowledge or practice; and yet how unwilling are they to learn what they know not! Even as unwilling as their people are to learn of them, if not much more. O, see your errors by the glass of your afflictions, and if the words of God will not serve the turn, let the tongues of enemies and sectaries show you your transgressions. Of whom I may say to you as Eras-

autem divina in medulla est, non in superficie, et plerumque æmula manifestis. Tertullian. Lib. de Resurrect. Carnis, cap. 3. p. 407.

[q] Eruditio, ait Metrocles, tempore emenda est. Ideo Thales dixit omnium sapientissimum est. Therefore trust not too soon to the judgment of a young divine, any more than to a young lawyer or physician. Though I know many are old ignorants too.

[r] Let presbyters be simple, merciful to all, converting all from error, visiting all that are sick, not neglecting the widows, the orphans, and the poor, but always providing things good before God and men: abstain from all anger, from unjust judgment, and be far from all covetousness. Do not hastily consent against any man; do not prevaricate in judgment; be zealous after that which is good, keeping yourselves from scandals and false brethren, and those that bear the name of the Lord in hypocrisy, and who lead empty men into error. Polycarpus in Ep. ad Philip. edit. Usserii, p. 19, 20. It seems it was the office and work of presbyters to be judges in Polycarp's time, who was John's disciple, and the people's duty to obey them, as is expressed in the words before these. Lucrum philosophiæ est sponte facere justa et sancta, inquit Aristoteles, referente Grynæo in Aphor. post Com. in Hebræ. Ne paganismo et atheismo in christianorum hominum studiis locus sit ullus: imprimis gloriæ Dei, deinde publicæ utilitati inservire oportet, inquit Grynæus Aphor. Præstantissimum genus studii est, bene agere, ait Socrates. Luther was wont to advise preachers to see that these three dogs did not follow them into the pulpit—Pride, Covetousness, or Envy. Nos non habitu sapientiam sed mente præferimus: non eloquimur magna, sed vivimus. Gloriamur nos consecutos quod illi summa intentione quæsiverunt, nec invenire potuerunt. Minut. Fælix. Octav. p. 401. Hæreant sibi invicem, et auxilio sint. Ratio etenim operibus, opera ratione indigent: ut quod mente percipimus opere perpetremus. Hieron. de Veste Sacerdot. tom. iv. p. (mihi) 26. Tanta debet esse scientia et eruditio pontificis Dei, ut et gressus ejus, et motus, et universa vocalia sint: veritatem mente concipiat; et toto eam habitu resonet, et ornatu: ut quicquid agit, quicquid loquitur, sit doctrina populorum. Hieron. ib. p. 27. fine. Nunquam periclitatur religio nisi inter reverendissimos. Probatum ut Luther. citante D. Stoughton; Valerius Maximus, lib. i. c. 2. inst. 21.

mus of Luther, *Deus dedit huic postremæ ætati propter morborum multitudinem acrem medicum;* and as the Emperor Charles of the same Luther, *Si sacrificuli frugi essent, nullo indigerent Luthero.* Yet let not any papist catch at this, as if our ministry were unlearned and vicious, in comparison of theirs; the contrary of the common sort is well known: and though the Jesuits of late have been so industrious and learned, yet I could tell them, out of Erasmus, of some that proved heretics must be killed, from Paul's *hæreticum hominem devita*, i. e. *de vita tolle;* and of Hen. Stephanus' priest of Artois, that would prove that it belonged to his parishioners to pave the church, and not to him; from Jeremy's *paveant illi*, not *paveam ego.* Or if these seem partial witnesses, I could tell them what Bellarmine saith of the ninth age: *Seculo hoc nullum extitit indoctius aut infelicius, quo qui mathematicæ aut philosophiæ operam dabat, magnus vulgo putabatur;* and as [s] Espencæus saith, *Et Græce nosse suspectum fuerit, Hebraice prope hæreticum.* I could tell them also what a clergy was found in Germany, and in England,[t] at the Reformation; what barbarous ignorance, beastly uncleanness, and murders of the children begotten in whoredom, was found among them. I could tell them who have been turned from their church by a mere journey to Rome; there seeing the wickedness of their chiefest clergy: and what Petrarch, Mantuan, with multitudes more, say of it: and (if the most horrid murders were not become virtues with them; and did they not think they did God service by killing his servants) should mind them of all the burnings in England, and of all the unparalleled bloody massacres in France, and the Inquisition of Spain, which their clergy yet manage and promote. If any say, that I speak this but upon reports, we have seen no such thing, I answer as Pausanias, when he was blamed for dispraising a physician that he had never made trial of, *Si periculum fecissem nequaquam viverem.* If we had fallen into their hands, it had been too late to complain: *Quia me vestigia terrent, omnia in adversum spectantia, nulla retrorsum.* And some taste of the fruits of their projects we have lately had in England, by which paw we may sufficiently conjecture of the lion. So that, as bad as we are, our adversaries have little cause to reproach us.

But yet, brethren, let us impartially judge ourselves; for God will shortly judge us impartially. What is it that hath occasioned so many novices to invade the ministry, who, being puffed up with pride, are fallen into the snare of the devil, (1 Tim. iii. 6,) and bring the work of God into contempt by their ignorance? Hath not the ungodliness and ambition of those that are more learned, by bringing learning itself into contempt, been the cause of all this? Alas! who can be so blinded by his charity, as not to see the truth of this among us? How many of the greatest wits have the most graceless hearts! and relish Cicero, Demosthenes, or Aristotle, better than David, or Paul, or Christ; and even loathe those holy ways which customarily they preach for: that have no higher ends in entering upon the ministry, than gain and preferment; and when the hopes of preferment are taken away, they think it but folly to choose such a toilsome and ungrateful work. And thus the ball of reproach is tossed between the well-meaning ignorant, and the ungodly learned; and between these two, how miserable is the church! The one cries out of unlearned schismatics; the other cries out of proud, ungodly persecutors; and say, These are your learned men, who study for nothing but for a benefice, or a bishopric; that are as strange to the mysteries of regeneration, and a holy life, as any others! and oh that these reproaches were not too true of many! God hath lessened ministers of late, one would think sufficiently, to beware of ambition and secular avocations; but it is hard to hear God speak by the tongue of an enemy, or to see and acknowledge his hand where the instrument doth miscarry.[u] If English examples have lost their force, as being so near your eyes that you cannot see them, remember the end of Funicius, that learned chronologer, who might have lived longer as a divine, but died as a prince's counsellor, and the distich pronounced at his death.

Disce meo exemplo, mandato munere fungi,
Et fuge ceu pestem τὴν πολυπραγμοσύνην.

And the like fate of Justus Jonas, (J. C. son of that great divine of the same name,) the next year, whose last verses were like the former.

Quid juvat innumeros scire atque evolvere casus,
Si facienda fugis, si fugienda facis?

Study not, therefore, the way of rising, but the way of righteousness. Honesty will hold out, when honours will deceive you. If your hearts be once infected with the fermentation of this swelling humour, it will quickly rise up to your brain, and corrupt your intellectuals, and then you will be of that opinion which your flesh thinks to be good, and not that which your judgment thought to be true; and you will fetch your religion from the statute-book, and not from the Bible, as the jest went of Agricola, who turned from a protestant to an antinomian; and being convinced of that error, turned papist, into the

[s] As Doctor Hackwell reciteth him, with more to the same purpose; as one that would prove, that there were ten worlds, from Christ's words, Nonne decem facti sunt mundi? And the other disproved him from the words following, Sed ubi sunt novem?

[t] I may say to them as Origen to Celsus, lib. iii. p. (mihi) 33. Antistitem ecclesiæ quempiam cum præside aliquo velim contuleris, et civitatis principe: ut plane intelligas vel in defectioribus quidem Dei ecclesiæ consultoribus, etsi primariis viris qui negligentius vivant, et præter solertissimorum quorundam et christianorum consuedinem, nil minus deprehendi posse, quam ex virtutum profectu, ut se cæteris præferant, &c.

[u] Negabitis sat scio, et pernegabitis, &c. at verendum vehementer ne vos ipsos decipiatis; non novum hoc, nec infrequens seducere alios, qui a seipsis seducti sunt. In propriis cæcutimus omnes. Actus reflexus mentis longe difficilior est actu directo. In theologia vero, omnium longe rarissimum et difficultatis plenissimum, nosse seipsum: falluntur et fallunt quicunque theologi ipsos nondum satis norunt. Velim ante omnia cavcritis vobis ipsis quam diligentissime ab hypocrisi: grave, inquis, crimen! Ergone hypocritæ tibi videmur? Atrocem injuriam! &c. Quotidianum est nostrum quemvis in aliis reprehendere, a quo ipse non sit plane immunis. Quid miri si idem eveniat quibusdam theologis? Iis cum primis qui affectibus nimium indulgent suis, ut in aliis hypocrisin notent, in seipsis non videant, non deprehendant? Omnium vitiorum subtilissimum sane est hypocrisis: quod non modo alios quosvis, sed suos possessores miris modis et artibus valet decipere et circumvenire: quo callidior hic serpens, quo magis lubricus illabitur hominum mentibus, eo majore studio, eo acriori vigilantia fugiendus aut pellendus. Rupertus Meldenius Paræsesi Votiv. pro Pace Eccl. fol. B. 23. Perdit authoritatem docendi cujus sermo opere destruitur. Hieron. ad Ocean. tom. iii. p. (edit. Erasm.) 147. Innocens tamen et absque sermone conversatio, quantum exemplo prodest, tantum silentio nocet. Ibid. Qui alios nocendi funguntur munere, non doctrina tantum sed etiam vitæ innocentia, ac morum integritate, suis debere esse conspicuos, dicere solitus est Dr. Bordingus, ut Melchior. Adam. in ejus vita. Mentior nisi alios qui talis est increpat; turpes turpis infamat; et evasisse se conscium credit; quia conscientiam suam non posse effugere satis non fit, eidem in publico accusatores; in occulto rei; in semetipsos censores pariter et nocentes: damnant foris quod intus operantur: admittentes libenter, quod cum admiserint criminantur; audacia prorsus cum vitiis faciens. Cyprian. Epist. 1. ad Donatum.

other extreme; and Pflugius and Sidonius, authors of the Interim; *Chrisma ab eis et oleum pontificium inter alia defenduntur, ut ipsi discederent unctiores,* because they obtained bishoprics by it. Oh, what a doleful case is it to see so many brave wits, and men of profound learning, to be made as useless and hurtful to the church of God by their pride and ungodliness, as others are by their pride and ignorance! Were a clear understanding conjoined with a holy heart and heavenly life, and were they as skilful in spiritual as human learning, what a glory and blessing would they be to the churches!

Sect. X. 5. Lastly, Be sure that you study and strive after unity and peace.[x] If ever you would promote the kingdom of Christ, and your people's salvation, do it in a way of peace and love: public wars and private quarrels do usually pretend the reformation of the chureh, the vindicating of the truth, and the welfare of souls; but they as usually prove, in the issue, the greatest means to the overthrow of all.

It is as natural for both wars and private contentions to produce errors, sehisms, contempt of magistracy, ministry, and ordinances, as it is for a dead carrion to breed worms and vermin: believe it from one that hath too many years' experienee of both in armies and garrisons: it is as hard a thing to maintain, even in your people, a sound understanding, a tender conseience, a lively, gracious, heavenly frame of spirit, and an upright life, in a way of war and contention, as to keep your candle lighted in the greatest storms, or under the waters.[y]

The like I may say of perverse and fierce disputings about baptism, and the eircumstantials of discipline or other questions that are far from the foundation; they oftener lose the truth than find it.

A synod is as likely and lawful a means as any for sueh deeisions;[z] and yet Nazianzen saith, *Se hactenus non vidisse ullius synodi utilem finem, aut in qua res male se habentes, non magis exacerbatæ quam curatæ fuerint.*

With the vulgar[a] he seems to be the conqueror that hath the last word, or at least he that hath the most plausible deportment, the most affecting tone, the most earnest and confident expressions, the most probable arguments, rather than he that hath the most naked demonstrations. He takes with them most, that speaks for the opinion whieh they like and are inelined to, though he speak nonsense: and he that is most familiar with them, hath the best opportunities and advantages to prevail, especially he that hath the greatest interest in their affections. So that a disputation before the vulgar, even of the godly, is as likely a means to corrupt them, as to cure them: usually the most erroneous seducers will carry out their cause with as good a face, as fluent a tongue, as great contempt and reproach of their opposers, and as much confidence that the truth is on their side, as if it were so indeed.

Paræus's[b] master taught him that *certo certius in qualibet minutissima panis portione, vere et substantialiter integrum corpus Christi esset: item in, apud, cum, sub minutissima vini guttula adesset integer sanguis dominicus.* What confidence was here in a bad cause! And if you depend on the most reverend and best-esteemed teaehers, and suffer the weight of their reputation to turn the scales, you may in many things be never the nearer to the truth. How many learned able men have the name and authority of Luther misled in the point of con-substantiation! Ursin was carried away with it awhile, till he was turned from it by the reading of Luther's own arguments, they were such paralogisms. Yet was it Luther's charge to his followers, "that none should call themselves after his name, because he died not for them, nor was his doctrine his own." The only way, therefore, to the prospering your labours, is, to quench all flames of contention, to your power. If you would have the waters of verity and piety to be clear, the way is not to stir in them, and trouble them, but to let them settle in peace, and run down into practice.

Woe to those ministers who make unnecessary divisions and parties among the people, that so they may get themselves a name, and be cried up by many followers! And as you should thus study the peaee and unity of your congregations, so keep out all the oceasions of divisiou, especially the doetrine of separation,[c] and popular chureh government, the apparent seminary of faction and perpetual contentions. If once your people be taught that it belongeth to them to govern themselves, and those that Scripture calleth their guides and rulers, you shall have mad work! When every one is a governor, who are the governed? When the multitude, how unable soever, must hear and judge of every cause, both their teachers and others, they need no other employment to follow: this will find them work enough, as it doth to parliament-men to sit, and hear, and speak, and vote.

Is it not strange that so learned a man as Pet. Ramus[d] should be advocate for the multitude's

[x] Therefore Christ died not, after the manner of John, with his head cut off, nor yet as Isaias, eut asunder, that so even in death he might keep his body whole and undivided, and so no occasion might be giveu to them that would divide the church. Athanasius de Incarnat. Verbi.

[y] Ignatius gives a true charaeter of most soldiers in his Epistle to the Romans, (edit. Usserii, p. 85,) θηριομαχῶ διὰ γῆς καὶ θαλάσσης, νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας, ἐνδεδεμένος δέκα λεοπάρδοις (ὁ ἐστὶ στρατιωτικὸν τάγμα) οἱ καὶ εὐεργετούμεναι χείρους γίνονται, ἐν δὲ τοῖς ἀδικήμασιν αὐτῶν μᾶλλον μαθητεύομαι. I would we could as patiently bear, and make as good use of, the like dispositions.

[z] How far synods are necessary, and yet particular ministers of churches are independent, see, by comparing Cyprian's Epist. 72. sect. iii. p. 217, with Firmilian's Epist. to Cyprian, ep. 75. p. (mibi) 236.

[a] How many disputes did you ever hear end as Minut. Fælix. Oetav.; Post hæc læti hilaresque discessimus: Cæcilius quod erediderit, Oetavius quod viceril: et ego quod hic crediderit, et hic viccrit.

[b] Paræus in Prefat. ad Comment. in Gen.: Suasorius enim, et verisimilis est, exquirens fucos, error; sine fueo autem est veritas, et propter hoc pueris credita est. Iren. adv. Hæres. lib. iii. c. 15.

[c] De independentibus orthodoxis et hæreticis, et horum tolerantia, lege Dav. Blondellum de jure plebis in regimine ecclesiast. p. 72—75.

[d] Pet. Ramus volebat non penes paueos, sed penes universam ecclesiam esse judicium doetrinæ, eleetionem et rejectionem ministrorum, excommunieationem et absolutionem.—A synodo autem approbata diseiplina usitata, novæ autem opiniones explosæ sunt. Injunctum etiam illarum partium ecclesiis, ut omni studio, flectere illos, et si non ad sententiam mutandam, saltem, ad paeem fovendam, mansuete invitare conarentur. Sed nova et inaudita crudelitas quæ Parisiis exorta in nuptiis illis fatalibus longe lateque regnum Galliæ pervasit, domestieas et intestinas contentiones omnes sustulit. In vita Bullingeri. Aureliæ synodo præsedit Sadeel, ubi cum primis eorum opinio discussa eonfutataque qui diseiplinam pariter doetrinamque democratico vel potius ochloeratico more quodam ex populi suffragiis regi administrarique volebant.—Et cum in aliis provinciis reerudiseere illud super ecclesiastiea politia dissidium intelligeret Sadeel, censuit de re tota sibi ampliter esse disserendum. Atque habita synodo rursum, eui et præfuit, tanta felieitate usus est dicendi doeendique, ut schismatis ejus prineeps, vir alioqui eruditionis haud spernendæ, in orthodoxorum partes sese contulerit, ac mutatam sententiam edito libello professus sit. In vita Sadeel. In Nemausensi synodo actum de disciplina ecclesiastiea, cujus formam quandam novam et insolitam quidam Johan. Parisiensis non animo tantum, sed etiam scripto designabat: eique viri quidam docti rerum novarum pruritu pius æquo laborantes adhærebant, et magna verborum argumentorumque acie opinionem illius munitam defendebant

authority in church government? But that God must use so sharp a cure for those contentions, as that bloody French massacre, methinks should make England tremble to consider it, lest the same disease here must have the like cure. If an army had tried this popular government but one year among themselves in their military affairs, and had attempted and managed all their designs by the vote of the whole army, I durst have valued their judgments the better ever after in this point.

Woe to the patient that must have a mistaken physician, till he be grown skilful by making experiments upon his diseases:[e] and woe to the people that are in such hands, as must learn their skill in government from the common calamities only, and from their experience of the sufferings of the people! This kind of knowledge, I confess, is the thoroughest; but it is pity that so many others should pay so dear for it.

You, therefore, who are the guides of this chariot of Christ, take heed of losing the reins, lest all be overthrown. Alas! poor England, how are thy bowels torn out, because thy inhabitants, yea, and guides, run all into extremes, like a drunken man that reeleth from side to side, but cannot keep the middle way: nay, they hate a man of peace, who runs not out into their extremes. One party would pluck up the hedge of government, as if the vineyard could not be fruitful, except it lie waste to the pleasure of all the beasts of the forest. They are like the pond that should grudge at the banks and dam, and thinks it injurious to be thus restrained of its liberty, and therefore combine with the winds to raise a tempest, and so assault and break down the banks in their rage: and now where is that peaceable association of waters? Methinks the enemies of government are just in the case,[f] as I remember, when I was a boy, our school was in, when we had barred out our master. We grudged at our yoke, we longed for our liberty; because it was not given us, we resolved to take it. When we had got out our master, and shut fast the doors, we grew bold, and talked to him at our pleasure: then no one was master, and every one was our master. We spend our time in playing and quarrelling, we treat at last with our master about coming in; but our liberty was so sweet that we were loth to leave it, and we had run ourselves so deep in guilt, that we durst not trust him, and therefore we resolve to let him in no more: but, in the end, when our play-days, which we called holidays, were over, we were fain to give an account of our boldness, and soundly to be whipped for it, and so to come under the yoke again. Lord, if this be the case of England, let us rather be whipped, and whipped again, than turned out of thy school, and from under thy government.

We feel now how those are mistaken that think the way for the church's unity[g] is, to dig up the banks and let all loose, that every man in religion may do what he list.[h]

On the other side, some men, to escape this Scylla, do fall into the Charybdis of violence and formality. They must have all men to walk in fetters, and they must be the makers of them; and ministers must be taught to preach by such gyves as their horses are taught to pace. No man must be suffered to come into a pulpit, that thinks not or speaks not as they would have him: or, if they cannot take away his liberty, they will do what they can to blast his reputation. Yet if he cannot have the repute of being orthodox, it were well if they would leave him the reputation of a christian.

But having, also, a christianity of their own making, and proper to themselves, they will presently unchristen him, and make him a heretic by proclamation; as if they had so far the power of the keys, as to lock up the doors of heaven against him, and wipe out his name from the book of life.

It striketh me sometimes into an amazement with admiration, that it should be possible for such mountains of pride to remain in the hearts of many godly, reverend ministers! That they should no more be conscious of the weakness of their own understandings, but that even in disputable, difficult things they must be the rule by which all others must be judged.[i] So that every man's judgment must be cut meet to the standard of theirs; and whatsoever opinion is either shorter or longer, must be rejected with the scorn of a heresy or an error. Wonderful! that men who have ever studied divinity should no more discern the profundities, and difficulties, and their own incapacities! More wonderful, that any disciple of Christ should be such an enemy to knowledge as to resolve they will know no more themselves than is commonly known, nor suffer any other to know more. So that when a man hath read once what is the opinion of the divines that are in most credit, he dare search no further, for fear of being counted a novelist or heretic, or lest he bear their curse for adding to, or taking from, the common conceits! So that divinity is become an easier study than heretofore. We are already at a *ne plus ultra*. It seemeth vain, when we know the opinion is in credit, to search any further. We have then nothing to do but easily to study for popular sermons: nor is it safe so much as to make them our own, by looking into and examining their grounds, lest in so doing we should be forced to a dissent: so that scholars may easily be drawn to think that it is better to be at a venture of the common belief, which may be with ease, than to weary and spend themselves in tedious studies, when they are sure, beforehand, of no better

Illorum tamen conatui sese opposuit Beza, doctissime et disertissime rem totam edisserens. Ejus sententiam tota synodus unanimo consensu approbavit, &c. In vita Bez.

[e] All heretics say, as Judas to Christ, Master; and with a kiss, that is, a show of love to it, they betray the truth. Origen, Tract. 35. in Matt. Non omnes qui Christi nomine gloriantur, et in externo civitatis Dei cœtu et panegyri versantur, jus habent suffragii: multi inter eos ærarii, vel in ceritum tabulas relati, imo civitate plane indigni. Quis vero populum ad suffragia vocabit? Tilen. in D. Twiss. Defens. Corvin. p. 33.

[f] Stat contra rationem, defensor mali sui, populus. Hic exitus est omnis judicii, in quo lis secundum plures datur. Seneca de Vita Beat. c. 1.

[g] Tinea est Arius: tinea Photinus, qui sanctum ecclesiæ vestimentum impietate scindunt, et sacrilego morsu fidei velamen abrodunt. Ambros. de Spirit. lib. i. c. 19.

[h] Non est levior transgressio in interpretatione, quam in conversatione. Tertul. de Pudicit. c. 9.

[i] Quid possumus exponere de oceani accessu et recessu, cum constet esse certam causam? Vel quid dicere possumus, quomodo pluviæ, et coruscationes, et tonitrua, et collectiones nubium, et nebulæ, et ventorum emissiones et similia his efficiuntur? &c. In his omnibus nos quidem loquaces erimus, requirentes causas eorum: qui autem ea facit, solus Deus veridicus est. Si ergo et in rebus creaturæ, quædam quidem eorum adjacent Deo; quædam autem et in nostram venerunt scientiam, Quid mali est si et eorum quæ in Scripturis requiruntur, universis Scripturis spiritualibus existentibus, quædam absolvamus secundum gratiam Dei, quædam autem commendemus Deo? Et non solum in hoc seculo, sed et in futuro? Ut semper quidem Deus doceat; homo autem semper discat quæ sunt a Deo, &c. Irenæus advers. Hæres. lib. ii. c. 47. Arrogantia profectus obstaculum est, ut recte Bion. Vecordis hominis est, a nemine aliquid didicisse velle videri, ut dixit Antisthenes. Read Junius Eirenicon in Psal. cxxii. and cxxxiii. in operum ejus tom. i. p. 679, &c. a most precious piece. Read Bishop Hall's 17th Soliloquy, called Allowable Variety, p. 62. Omnis secta humana authoritate firmata; ratione caret. Æneas Sylvius in Platina.

reward from men than the reputation of heretics, which is the lot of all that go out of the common road. So that who will hereafter look after any more truth than is known and in credit, except it be some one that is so taken with admiration of it as to cast all his reputation overboard, rather than make shipwreck of his self-prized merchandise; yet most wonderful it is, that any christian, especially so many godly ministers, should arrogate to themselves the high prerogatives of God, viz. to be the rule and standard of truth![k] I know they will say that Scripture is the rule; but when they must be the peremptory judges of the sense of that Scripture,[l] so that in the hardest controversies none must swerve from their sense, upon pain of being branded with heresy or error, what is this but to be the judges themselves, and Scripture but their servant? The final, full, decisive interpretation of laws, belongeth to none but the law-makers themselves; for who can know another man's meaning beyond his expressions, but himself?

And it yet increaseth my wonder that these divines have not forgotten how constantly our divines, that write against the papists, do disclaim any such living, final, decisive judge of controversies, but make Scripture the only judge. Oh! what mischief hath the church of Christ suffered by the enlarging of her creed![m] While it contained but twelve articles, believers were plain, and peaceable, and honest: but a christian now is not the same thing as then; our heads swell so big, like children that have the rickets, that all the body fares the worse for it. Every new article that was added to the creed, was a new engine to stretch the brains of believers, and in the issue to rend out the bowels of the church.

It never went so well with the church, since it begun, as Erasmus saith of the times of the Nicene council, *rem ingeniosam fore christianum esse*, to be a matter of so much wit and cunning to be a christian. Not but that all our wit should be here employed, and controversies of difficulty may be debated;[n] but when the decision of these must be put into our creed, and a man must be of the faith that the church is of, it goes hard. Methinks I could read Aquinas, or Scotus, or Bellarmine, with profit, *ut philosophiam et theologiam liberam;* but when I must make them all parts of my creed, and subscribe to all they say, or else be no catholic, this is hard dealing. I know now we have no Spanish Inquisition to fire us from the truth; but, as Grynæus was wont to say, *Pontifici Romano Erasmum plus nocuisse jocando, quam Lutherum stomachando;* so some men's reproaches may do more than other men's persecutions.

And it is not the least aggravation of these men's arrogancy, that they are most violent in the points that they have least studied, or which they are most ignorant in: yea, and that their cruel reproaches are usually so incessant, that where they once fasten, they scarce ever loose again; having learned the old lesson, "To be sure to accuse boldly, for the scar will remain when the wound is healed." Yea, some will not spare the fame of the dead, but when their souls have the happiness of saints with God, their names must have the stain of heresy with men. More ingenuity had Charles the emperor, when the Spanish soldiers would have dug up the bones of Luther: *Sinite ipsum, inquit, quiescere ad diem resurrectionis et judicium omnium*, &c. Let him rest, saith he, till the resurrection and the final judgment; if he were a heretic he shall have as severe a judge as you can desire.

These are the extremes which poor England groaneth under; and is there no remedy? Besides the God of peace, there is no remedy. Peace is fled from men's principles and judgments, and therefore it is a stranger to their affections and practices; no wonder then if it be a stranger in the land, both in church and state.[o]

If either of the forementioned extremes be the way to peace, we may have it, or else where is the man that seeketh after it? But I remember Luther's oracle, and fear it now to be verified; *Hæc perdent religionem christianam*: 1. *Oblivio beneficiorum ab evangelio acceptorum.* 2. *Securitas, quæ jam passim et ubique regnat.* 3. *Sapientia mundi, quæ vult omnia redigere in ordinem, et impiis mediis ecclesiæ paci consulere.* Three things will destroy the christian religion: First, Forgetfulness of the benefit we received by the gospel. Secondly, Security. Thirdly, The wisdom of the world, which will needs reduce all into order, and look to the church's peace by ungodly means.

The zeal of my spirit after peace, hath made me digress here further than I intended; but the sum and scope of all my speech is this:[p] Let every

[k] I speak this only of the guilty, and not of any pious and peaceable divine, of whom England hath many, but useth them so ill that they show themselves unworthy of them.

[l] Lege Cameronem accurate disserentem de Potestate Eccles. Prælect.; and besides Camero, Musculus, with many others, deny any judicial, decisive power in ministers, in doctrinals. Vid. Vedelii Rationale Theolog. lib. iii. c. 6. p. 511. But a doctoral power, as Camero calls it, such as a schoolmaster hath in his school, except the power of bodily punishment which belongeth to the magistrate, both in the commonwealth and in the church, even as a church, whatsoever some say to the contrary, is the proper power of the minister, which is far more than a bare declarative power; for he hath also a power to command and determine of order and degrees, &c. and the scholars ought to take his word in all doubtful things, till they can come to know it themselves, in its proper evidence. But yet it is not so great as to bind to any mistake or sin, *clave errante;* for an interpretation of the law is, *ipso facto*, void, if it be apparently contrary to the plain text; else God should not be the supreme authority, but man.

[m] Let them that take their religion from the credit of divines remember, that it was the mark to difference pagans from christians formerly, to take religion from man. Vobis humana æstimatio innocentiam tradidit; humana item dominatio imperavit: inde nec plenæ, nec adeo timendæ estis disciplinæ ad innocentiæ veritatem. Tanta est prudentia hominis ad demonstrandum bonum, quanta autoritas est ad exigendum: tam illa falli facilis, quam ista contemni. Tertul. Apologetic. c. 45. Sincera ac divinæ religionis, pietatisque cognitio non tam humano ministerio indiget, quam ex seipsa hauritur et discitur, quippe quæ quotidie operibus clamat, ac per doctrinam Christi sese clariorem sole ingerit oculis, inquit Athanasius, initio l. 1. cont. Gentiles. And Justin Martyr extolleth that saying of Socrates, "that no man is to be preferred before the truth." Apol. prima.

[n] Lege Vitam Ge. Majoris.

[o] Non damno quenquam si a me dissentiat; modo fundamentum, hoc est symbola non subruat. Agnosco communem imbecillitatem quam et deploro, et rogo Deum, ut ipse manum ædificio adhibeat. Hemming. in Epist. Dedic. ante Comment. in Ephes. Learn of a moderate Lutheran.

[p] I would, therefore, advise all ministers that need my advice, to study less those violent writers that care not what they say against their adversaries, so they can disgrace them; and to read more our solid, moderate, peace-making divines. For, if I have any judgment, these are generally the most knowing and judicious, as well as the most moderate, such as Davenant, Matth. Martinius, Lud. Crocius, Camero, Lud. Capellus, Amiraldus, (yea, and Testardus, for all men's hot words,) Pelargus, Paræus's Eirenicon, Conrad. Bergius, our Doctor Preston, Ball, Parker, Bradshaw, Gataker, Mede, Wotton, with the like; not to mention all the Eirenicons that the German divines have written; nor Hottonus de Toler. and many others, that have written purposely for pacification. Oh, what a thing is self-love! If men do want peace in their own consciences, or in the humours of their bodies, they can quickly feel it, and think themselves undone till they have peace again; and yet the want of peace in church and state is no trouble to them, but for their own ends and fancies they can delight in divisions.

conscionable minister study equally for peace and truth, as knowing that they dwell both together in the golden mean, and not at such a distance as most hotspurs do imagine; and let them believe that they are like to see no more success of their labours, than they are so studious of peace; and that all wounds will let out both blood and spirits; and both truth and godliness is ready to run out at every breach that shall be made among the people or themselves; and that the time for the pastures of profession to be green, and for the field of true godliness to grow ripe for the harvest, and for the rose of devotion and heavenliness to be fragrant and flourish, is not in the blustering, stormy, tempestuous winter, but in the calm, delightful summer of peace.

Oh, what abundance of excellent, hopeful fruits of godliness have I seen blown down before they were ripe, by the impetuous winds of wars, and other contentions, and so have lain trodden under foot by libertinism and sensuality, as meat for swine, who else might have been their Master's delight! In a word, I never yet saw the work of the gospel go on well in wars, nor the business of men's salvation succeed among dissensions; but if one have in such times proved a gainer, multitudes have been losers: the same God is the God both of truth and peace; the same Christ is the Prince of peace, and author of salvation; the same word is the gospel of peace and salvation: both have the same causes; both are wrought and carried on by the same Spirit; the same persons are the sons of peace and salvation, so inseparably do they go hand in hand together: O therefore let us be the ministers and helpers of our people's peace, as ever we desire to be helpers of their salvation.

And how impossible is it for ministers to maintain peace among their people, if they maintain not peace among themselves![q] Oh, what a staggering is it to the faith of the weak, when they see their teachers and leaders at such odds! It makes them ready to throw away all religion, when they see scarce two or three of the most learned and godly divines of one mind, but like the bitterest enemies, disgracing and vilifying one another, and all because the articles of our faith must be so unlimited, voluminous, and almost infinite; so that no man well knows when he may call himself an orthodox christian. When our creed is swelled to the bigness of a national confession, one would think that he that subscribeth to that confession should be orthodox;[r] and yet if he jump not just with the times in expounding every article of that confession, and run not with the stream in every other point that is in question among them, though he had subscribed to the whole harmony of confessions, he is never the nearer the estimation of orthodox. Were we all bound together by a confession or subscription of the true fundamentals, and those other points that are next to fundamentals only, and there took up our christianity and unity, yielding each other a freedom of differing in smaller or more difficult points, or in expressing ourselves in different terms, and so did live peaceably and lovingly together notwithstanding such differences, as men that all know the mysteriousness of divinity, and the imperfection of their own understandings, and that here we know but in part, and therefore shall most certainly err and differ in part; what a world of mischief might this course prevent!

I oft think on the examples of Luther and Melancthon: it was not a few things that they differed in, nor such as would now be accounted small, besides the imperious harshness of Luther's disposition, as Carolostadius could witness; and yet how sweetly, and peaceably, and lovingly did they live together, without any breach or disagreement considerable! As Mel. Adamus saith of them, *Et si tempora fuerunt ad distractiones proclivia, hominumque levitas dissidiorum cupida, tamen cum alter alterius vitia nosset, nunquam inter eos simultas extitit, ex qua animorum alienatio subsecuta sit;* so that their agreement arose not hence, that either was free from faults or error, but knowing each other's faults, they did more easily bear them. Certainly if every difference in judgment in matters of religion should seem intolerable, or make a breach in affection, then no two men on earth must live together, or tolerate each other, but every man must resolve to live by himself; for no two on earth but differ in one thing or other, except such as take all their faith upon trust, and explicitly believe nothing at all. God hath not made our judgments all of a complexion, any more than our faces; nor our knowledge all of a size, any more than our bodies: and methinks men, that be not resolved to be any thing in religion, should be afraid of making the articles of their faith so numerous,

[q] Sit consensus cordis credendo, et linguæ confitendo. Origen. Tract. 6. in Matt. xviii. 19.

[r] Lud. Crocius in Syntagm. et Parker de Descensu, two most excellent, learned men, say that the first creed contained no more but, "I believe in God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost;" and the reverend Bishop Usher will tell you, Dissert. de Symbolis, p. 8—12, &c. how short the Roman creed, and the Hierusalem and Alexandrian creed, &c. were. Some then were shorter than ours, called the Apostles' creed, as we use it now; and yet these men that I blame, would think the longest there too short, if it were ten times longer; yet then even they that had the shortest, thought it dangerous to alter it. Romanam vero ecclesiam omnis in suo symbolo mutationis impatientem fuisse ex Ruffino audivimus. Quo spectat et Ambros. illud in Epist. 81. ad Siric. Credatur symbolo apostolorum, quod ecclesia Romana intemeratum semper custodit et servat. Et Vigilii Trid. lib. iv. adversus Eutych. Roma, et antequam Nicæna synodus conveniret, a temporibus apostolorum usque ad nunc, ita fidelibus symbolum tradidit. Quo tamen hodie Romana ecclesia utitur symbolum, additamentis aliquot auctius legi, res ipsa indicat. Usserius de Symbolis, p. 9. Romanum (symbolum) omnium fuisse brevissimum, in symboli explicatione, Ruffinus Aquil. Presbyter jamdudum nos docuit: de additamentis etiam apud occidentales ad Romanum hoc appositis, in Proœmio suo sic præfatus. Illud non importune commonendum puto, quod in diversis ecclesiis aliqua in his verbis inveniuntur adjecta. In ecclesia tamen urbis Romæ, hoc non deprehenditur factum: quod ego propterea esse arbitror, quod neque hæresis ulla illic sumpsit exordium, et mos ibi servatur antiquus, eos qui gratiam baptismi suscepturi sunt, publice, id est, fidelium populo audiente, symbolum reddere: et utique adjectionem unius saltem sermonis, eorum qui præcesserunt in fide, non admittit auditus. In cæteris autem locis, quantum intelligi datur, propter nonnullos hæreticos addita quædam videntur, per quæ novellæ doctrinæ sensus crederetur exclusi. Usher de Symb. p. 5. Lege pacificam illam et christianissimam Augustini epistolam ad Hieronymum (senem morosum) quæ est inter opera Hieron. tom. iii. p. (edit. Amerbach.) 158, &c. Si ergo secundum hunc mundum, quem diximus, quædam quidem quæstionum Deo commiserimus, et fidem nostram servabimus, et omnis Scriptura a Deo nobis data consonans nobis invenietur. Et parabolæ his quæ manifeste dicta sunt consonabunt; et manifeste dicta absolvent parabolas, et per dictionum multas voces, unam consonantem melodiam in nobis sentiet, laudantem hymnis Deum qui fecit omnia. Ut puta siquis interroget, Antequam mundum faceret Deus, quid agebat? Dicimus quoniam ista responsio subjacet Deo, quoniam mundus hic factus est apotelestos a Deo, temporale initium accipiens, Scripturæ nos docent: quid autem ante hoc Deus sit operatus nulla Scriptura manifestat: subjacet ergo hæc responsio Deo; et non ita stultas, et sine disciplina blasphemas advenire velle prolationes, et per hoc quod putes te invenisse materiæ prolationem, ipsum Deum qui fecit omnia reprobare, &c. Irenæus advers. Hæres. lib. ii. c. 47. I entreat my brethren of the ministry, that are apt to be too zealous in their opinions, to read, above all other, Davenant, Morton, and Hall De Pace, and Conr. Bergius.

lest they should shortly become heretics themselves, by disagreeing from themselves; and they should be afraid of making too strict laws for those that differ in judgment in controvertible points, lest they should shortly change their judgments, and so make a rod for their own backs; for how know they, in difficult, disputable cases, but within these twelve months themselves may be of another mind, except they are resolved never to change, for fear of incurring the reproach of novelty and mutability; and then they were best resolve to study no more, nor ever to be wiser. I would we knew just at what age a man must receive this principle against changing his judgment; I am afraid lest at last they should teach it their children, and lest many divines do learn it too young: and if any, besides Christ and his apostles, must be the standard and foundation of our faith, I would we could certainly tell who they are; for I have heard yet none but the pope, or his general council, expressly lay claim to the prerogative of infallibility; and I think there are few that have appeared more fallible. For my own part, I admire the gifts of God in our first reformers, Luther, Melancthon, Calvin, &c. And I know no man, since the apostles' days, whom I value and honour more than Calvin, and whose judgment, in all things, one with another, I more esteem and come nearer to; though I may speed as Amyraldus, to be thought to defend him but for a defence to his own errors; but yet if I thought we must needs be in all things of his mind, and know no more in any one point than he did, I should heartily wish that he had lived one fifty years longer, that he might have increased and multiplied his knowledge before he died, and then succeeding ages might have had leave to have grown wiser, till they had attained to know as much as he. Some men can tell what to say in point of ceremonies, common prayer, &c. when they are pressed with the examples and judgments of our first reformers; but in matters of doctrine, they forget their own answers, as if they had been perfect here, and not in the other; or as if doctrinals were not much fuller of mysteries and difficulties than worship. So far am I from speaking all this for the security of myself in my differing from others, that if God would dispense with me for my ministerial services, without any loss to his people, I should leap as lightly as Bishop Ridley, when he was stripped of his pontificalia, and say as Pædaretus the Laconian, when he was not chosen in numerum trecentorum, *Gratias habeo tibi, O Deus, quod tot homines me meliores huic civitati dedisti.*[s]

But I must stop, and again apologize for this tediousness; though it be true, as Zeno saith, *verbis multis non eget veritas;* yet *respiciendum etiam quibus egent lectores*, I conclude not with a laconism, but a christianism, as hoping my brethren will at least hear their Master, "Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another," Mark ix. 50: and Calvin's exposition, which is the sum of all I have said, q. d. *Danda est vobis opera, non tantum ut salsi intus sitis, sed etiam ut saliatis alios: quia tamen sal acrimonia sua mordet, ideo statim admonet, sic temperandam esse condituram, ut pax interim salva maneat.* And with R. Meldenius Paræn. fol. f. 2. *Verbo dicam: si nos servaremus in necessariis unitatem, in non necessariis libertatem, in utrisque charitatem; optimo certe loco essent res nostræ: ita fiat. Amen.* Inquit Conr. Bergius hæc recitans.

Sect. XI. 6. The last whom I would persuade to this great work of helping others to the heavenly rest, is, parents, and masters of families: All you that God hath intrusted with children or servants, O consider what duty lieth on you for the furthering of their salvation.[t] That this exhortation may be the more effectual with you, I will lay down these several considerations for you seriously to think on:

1. What plain and pressing commands of God are there that require this great duty at your hand! "And these words which I command thee this day shall be in thy heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up," Deut. vi. 6—8. So Deut. xi. And how well is God pleased with this in Abraham! "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do? For I know him, that he will command his children, and his household after him, that they shall keep the way of the Lord," &c. Gen. xviii. 19. And it is Joshua's resolution,[u] "that he and his household will serve the Lord." "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it," Prov. xxii. 6. "Bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," Eph. vi. 4. Many the like precepts, especially in the book of Proverbs, you may find: so that you see it is a work that the Lord of heaven and earth hath laid upon you, and how then dare you neglect it, and cast it off?

2. It is a duty that you owe your children in point of justice; from you they received the defilement and misery of their natures, and therefore you owe them all possible help for their recovery. If you had but hurt a stranger, yea, though against your will, you would think it your duty to help to cure him.

3. Consider, How near your children are to you, and then you will perceive that from this natural relation also they have interest in your utmost help.[x] Your children are, as it were, parts of yourselves; if they prosper when you are dead, you take it almost as if you lived and prospered in them. If you labour never so much, you think it not ill bestowed, nor your buildings or purchases too dear, so that they may enjoy them when you are dead; and should you not be of the same mind for their everlasting rest?

4. You will else be witnesses against your own souls; your great care, and pains, and cost for their bodies, will condemn you for your neglect of their precious souls. You can spend yourselves in toiling and caring for their bodies, and even neglect your own souls, and venture them sometimes upon unwarrantable courses, and all to provide for your posterity; and have you not as much reason to provide for their souls? Do you not believe that your children must be everlastingly happy or miserable when this life is ended? and should not that be forethought in the first place?

5. Yea, all the very brute creatures may condemn you: which of them is not tender of their young? How long will the hen sit to hatch her chickens; and how busily scrape for them; and how carefully shelter and defend them! and so will even the most vile and venomous serpent; and will you be more unnatural and hard-hearted than all these? Will you suffer your children to be ungodly and profane, and run on in the undoubted way to damnation, and

[s] Brus. lib. i. c. 18. ex Plut. Laert. lib. iii.

[t] Read Woodward's Child's Patrimony.

[u] Josh. xxiv. 15. Jubet Deus Abrahamum non apud se sepelire divinas revelationes, sed et domesticis commemorare, et ad posteros propagare, ut vera Dei agnitio de manu in manum tradita in ejus familia conservetur. Paræus in Genes. xviii. 19. p. 1161.

[x] Nolle liberos contristare docendo quæ bona sunt, libertatem permittere peccandi, non est amare filios, sed odisse. Megand. in 1 Tim. iii. 12.

let them alone to destroy themselves without control?[y]

6. Consider, God hath made your children to be your charge; yea, and your servants too. Every one will confess they are the minister's charge, and what a dreadful thing it is for them to neglect them, when God hath told them, that if they tell not the wicked of their sin and danger, their blood shall be required at that minister's hands; and is not your charge as great and as dreadful as theirs? Have not you a greater charge of your own families than any minister hath? Yea, doubtless, and your duty it is to teach, and admonish, and reprove them, and watch over them, and at your hands else God will require the blood of their souls. The greatest charge it is that ever you were intrusted with, and woe to you if you prove unfaithful, and betray your trust, and suffer them to be ignorant for want of your teaching, or wicked for want of your admonition or correction. Oh, sad account, that many parents will make!

7. Look into the dispositions and lives of your children, and see what a work there is for you to do. First, It is not one sin that you must help them against, but thousands; their name is Legion, for they are many. It is not one weed that must be pulled up, but the field is overspread with them. Secondly, And how hard is it to prevail against any one of them! They are hereditary diseases, bred in their natures: *Naturam expellas furca*, &c. They are as near them as the very heart; and how tenacious are all things of that which is natural! How hard to teach a hare not to be fearful; or a lion or tiger not to be fierce! Besides, the things you must teach them are quite above them; yea, and clean contrary to the interest and desires of their flesh: how hard is it to teach a man to be willing to be poor, and despised, and destroyed here for Christ; to deny themselves, and displease the flesh; to forgive an enemy; to love those that hate us; to watch against temptations; to avoid occasions and appearance of evil; to believe in a crucified Saviour; to rejoice in tribulation; to trust upon a bare word of promise, and let go all in hand, if called to it, for something in hope that they never saw, nor ever spake with man that did see; to make God their chief delight and love, and to have their hearts in heaven, while they live on earth: I think none of this is easy; they that think otherwise, let them try and judge: yet all this must be learned, or they are undone for ever. If you help them not to some trade, they cannot live in the world; but if they be destitute of these things, they shall not live in heaven. If the mariner be not skilful, he may be drowned; and if the soldier be not skilful, he may be slain; but they that cannot do the things above mentioned, will perish for ever, "for without holiness none shall see God," Heb. xii. 14. Oh that the Lord would make all you that are parents sensible what a work and charge doth lie upon you! You that neglect this important work, and talk to your families of nothing but the world, I tell you the blood of souls lies on you; make as light of it as you will, if you repent not, and amend, the Lord will shortly call you to an account for your guiltiness of your children's everlasting undoing; and then you that could find in your hearts to neglect the souls of your own children, will be judged more barbarous than the Irish or Turks, that kill the children of others.

8. Consider, also, What a world of sorrows do you prepare for yourselves, by the neglect of your children.[z]

First, You can expect no other but that they should be thorns in your very eyes, and you may thank yourselves if they prove so, seeing they are thorns of your own planting.

Secondly, If you should repent of this your negligence, and be saved yourselves, yet is it nothing to you to think of the damnation of your children? You know God hath said, "that except they be born again, they shall not enter into the kingdom of God." Methinks, then, it should be a heart-breaking to all you that have unregenerate children; methinks you should weep over them every time you look them in the face, to remember that they are in the way to eternal fire. Some people would lament the fate of their children, if but a wizard should foretell them some ill fortune to befall them; and do you not regard it when the living God shall tell you, "that the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all they that forget God?" Psal. ix. 17.

Thirdly, Yet all this were not so doleful to you, if it were a thing that you had no hand in, or could do nothing to help; but to think that all this is much long of you! that ever your negligence should bring your child to these everlasting torments, which the very damned man (Luke xvi.) would have had his brethren been warned to escape. If this seem light to thee, thou hast the heart of a hellish fiend in thee, and not of a man.[a]

Fourthly, But yet worse than all this will it prove to you if you die in this sin, for then you shall be miserable as well as they: and, oh, what a greeting will there be then between ungodly parents and children! What a hearing will it be to your tormented souls, to hear your children cry out against you: All this that we suffer was long of you; you should have taught us better, and did not; you should have restrained us from sin, and corrected us, but you did not: and what an addition will such outcries be to your misery!

9. On the other side, do but think with yourselves, what a world of comfort you may have if you be faithful in this duty. First, If you should not succeed, yet you have freed your own souls; and though it be sad, yet not so sad, for you may have peace in your own consciences. Secondly, But if you do succeed, the comfort is unexpressible. For, 1. Godly children will be truly loving to yourselves that are their parents; when a little riches, or matters of this world, will oft make ungodly children to cast off their very natural affection. 2. Godly children will be most obedient to you; they dare not disobey and provoke you, because of the command of God, except you should command them that which is unlawful, and then they must obey God rather than men. 3. And if you should fall into want, they would be most faithful in relieving you, as knowing they are tied by a double bond, of nature and of grace. 4. And they will also be helpers to your souls, and to your spiritual comforts; they will be delighting you with the mention of heaven, and with holy conference and actions; when wicked children will be grieving you with cursing, and swearing, or drunk-

[y] Utitur verbo [præcipiet] ut parentes et superiores intelligant, non segniter aut obiter, sed sedulo et cum authoritate inferiores ad Dei timorem et obedientiam adducendo, faciendum esse officium. Paræus in Gen. xviii. 19.

[z] Think of Eli's sad example: though he did admonish them, yet it was out of season, he did it not soon enough; he suffered them to have their will too long; he dealt not with them till they were grown impudent in their sin, and all Israel rang of them. Borrh. Neither was his admonition severe enough according to his authority. Willet in 1 Sam. iii. 13. q. 6. p. 11.

[a] Ut vinitor laboris onus et sumptus libenter sustinet; sic paterfamilias onus et curam et sumptus, et molestias, &c. quia spem habet fructuum. Wolfius in Psal. cxviii. p. (mihi) 131.

enness, or disobedience. 5. Yea, when you are in trouble, or sickness, and at death, your godly children will be at hand to advise and to support you; they will strive with God in prayers for you. Oh, what a comfort is it to a parent to have a child that hath the spirit of prayer and interest in God! how much good may they do you by their importunity with God! And what a sadness is it to have children, that when you lie sick, can do no more but ask you how you do, and look on you in your misery! 6. Yea, all your family may fare the better for one child or servant that feareth God; yea, perhaps all the town where he liveth; as Joseph's case proveth, and Jacob's, and many the like; when one wicked child may bring a judgment on your house. 7. And if God make you instruments of your children's conversion, you will have a share in all the good that they do through their lives; all the good they do to their brethren, or to the church of God, and all the honour they bring to God, will redound to your happiness as having been instruments of it. 8. And what a comfort may it be to you all your lives, to think that you shall live with them for ever with God! 9. But the greatest joy will be when you come to the possession of this, and you shall say, Here am I, and the children thou hast given me. And are not all these comforts enough to persuade you to this duty?

10. Consider, further, that the very welfare of church and state lieth mainly on this duty of well educating children; and without this, all other means are like to be far less successful. I seriously profess to you, that I verily think all the sins and miseries of the land may acknowledge this sin for their great nurse and propagator. Oh, what happy churches might we have, if parents did their duties to their children! Then we need not exclude so many for ignorance or scandal, nor have our churches composed of members so rude. Then might we spare most of the quarrels about discipline, reformation, toleration, and separation: any reasonable government would do better with a well-taught people, than the best will do with the ungodly. It is not good laws and orders that will reform us, if the men be not good, and reformation begin not at home; when children go wicked from the hands of their parents: thence some come such to the universities, and so we come to have an ungodly ministry; and in every profession they bring this fruit of their education with them. When gentlemen[b] teach their children only to hunt, and hawk, and game, and deride the godly, what magistrates, and what parliaments, and so what government, and what a commonwealth, are we like to have, when all must be guided by such as these! Some perverse, inconsiderate persons lay the blame of all this on the ministers, that people of all sorts are so ignorant and profane; as if one man can do the work of many hundreds. I beseech you that are masters and parents, do your own duties, and free ministers from these unjust aspersions, and the church from her reproach and confusion. Have not ministers work enough of their own to do? Oh that you knew what it is that lieth on them! And if, besides this, you will cast upon them the work of every master and parent in the parish, it is like, indeed, to be well done. How many sorts of workmen must there be to the building of a house! And if all of them should cast it upon one, and themselves do nothing, you may judge how much were like to be done. If there be three or four schoolmasters in a school, amongst three or four hundred scholars, and all the lower that should fit them for the higher schools, should do nothing at all but send all these scholars to the highest schoolmaster as ignorant as they received them, would not his life be a burden to him, and all the work be frustrated and spoiled? Why, so it is here. The first work towards the reforming and making happy of church and commonwealth, lies in the good education of your children; the most of this is your work; and if this be left undone, and then they come to ministers raw and ignorant, and hardened in their sins, alas! what can a minister do? Whereas, if they came trained up in the principles of religion, and the practice of godliness, and were taught the fear of God in their youth, oh what an encouragement would it be to ministers! and how would the work go on in our hands! I tell you seriously, this is the cause of all our miseries and unreformedness in church and state, even the want of a holy education of children. Many lay the blame on this neglect and that, but there is none hath so great a hand in it as this. What a school must there needs be where all are brought raw, as I said, to the highest form! What a house must there needs be built, when clay is brought to the mason's hands instead of bricks! What a commonwealth may be expected if all the constables and justices should do nothing, but cast all upon king and parliament! And so, what a church may we expect, when all the parents and masters in the parish shall cast all their duty on their ministers! Alas! how long may we catechise them, and preach to them, before we can get them to understand the very principles of the faith! This, this is the cause of our church's deformities, and this is the cause of the present difficulty of reformation. It is in vain to contend about orders and discipline if the persons that live under it be not prepared. Perhaps you will say, The apostles had not their hearers thus prepared to their hands. Is not the word the first means of conversion?

Answ. 1. The apostles preached to none at first but infidels and pagans. And are you no better? Will you do no more for your children than they?

2. All the success of their labours was to gather here and there a church from among the world of unbelievers. But now, the kingdoms of the world are become the kingdoms of the Lord and his Christ.

3. And yet the apostles were extraordinarily qualified for the work, and seconded it by miracles for the convincing of their hearers.

4. I do verily believe that if parents did their duty as they ought, the word publicly preached would not be the ordinary means of regeneration in the church, but only without the church, among infidels. Not that I believe Doctor Burgess and Mr. Bedford's doctrine of baptismal regeneration. But God would pour out his grace upon the children of his people, and hear prayers for them, and bless such

[b] See Charron's invective against unlearned gentlemen, lib. iii. c. 14. p. 500. Like Askham's of the English. Much more may be said against the irreligious. Parents are the first authors and cause of a commonwealth; to furnish a state with honest men and good citizens, the culture and good education of youth are necessary, which is the seed of a commonwealth. There comes not so much evil to a commonwealth by the ingratitude of children to the parents, as by the carelessness of parents in the instruction of their children; therefore, by great reason, in Lacedemon, and other good and politic states, there was a punishment laid on the parents when the children were ill conditioned. Charron. lib. iii. cap. 14. p. 490. Parents are doubly obliged to this duty; both because they are their children, and because they are the tender plants and hope of the commonwealth. Ibid. The strength and continuance of a reformation lie not all in the magistrate, but in this: that the people receive the truth into them, and among them; who otherwise would be but as hens in a coop, always looking to get out. M. Vines' Sermon on Numb. xiv. 24. p. 27.

endeavours for their holy education, that we should see the promises made good to our seed, and the unthankful anabaptists, that will not confess that the children of the saints are any nearer God, or more beholden to him, than pagans, so much as for the favour to be visible church members, should, by sweet experience, be convinced of their error, and be taught better how to understand that our children are holy.

11. I entreat you that are parents, also to consider what excellent advantages you have above all others for the saving of your children.

1. They are under your hands while they are young, and tender, and flexible; but they come to ministers when they are grown elder, and stiffer, and settled in their ways, and think themselves too good to be catechised, and too old to be taught.[c] You have a twig to bend, and we an oak. You have the young plants of sin to pluck up, and we the deep-rooted vices. The consciences of children are not so seared with a custom of sinning and long resisting grace, as others. You have the soft and tender earth to plough in, and we have the hard and stony ways, that have been trodden on by many years' practice of evil. When they are young, their understandings are like a sheet of white paper, that hath nothing written on, and so you have opportunity to write what you will. But when they are grown up in sin, they are like the same paper written over with falsehoods, which must all be blotted out again, and truth written in the place. And how hard is that! We have a double task; first to unteach them, and then to teach them better; but you have but one. We must unteach them all that the world, and flesh, and wicked company, and the devil, have been diligently teaching them in many years' time. We have hardened hearts to beat on, like a smith's anvil, that will not feel us; we may tell them of death and judgment, heaven and hell, and they hear us as if they were asleep or dead: you have the soft clay to mould, and we have the hardened burned bricks. You have them before they are possessed with prejudice and false conceits against the truth, but we have them to teach when they have many years lived among those that have scorned at godliness, and taught them to think God's ways to be foolish preciseness. Custom hath not insnared and engaged our little ones to contrary ways, but of old sinners, the Lord himself hath said, "that if the Ethiopian can change his skin, and the leopard his spots, then may those that are accustomed to do evil, learn to do well," Jer. xiii. 23. Doth not the experience of all the world show you the power of education? What else makes all the children of the Jews to be Jews; and all the children of the Turks to be Mahometans; and of christians to be in profession christians; and of each sect or party in religion to follow their parents, and the custom of the place? Why now, what an advantage have you to use all this for the furtherance of their happiness, and possess them as strongly beforehand against sin, as else Satan would do for it; and so Satan should come to them upon some of those disadvantages that now Christ comes on.

2. Consider, also, that you have the affections of your children more than any others. None in the world hath that interest in their hearts as you. You will receive that counsel from an undoubted friend, that you would not do from an enemy, or a stranger. Why now, your children cannot choose but know that you are their friends, and advise them in love; and they cannot choose but love you again. Their love is loose and arbitrary to others, but to you it is determinate and fast. Nature hath almost necessitated them to love you. O, therefore, improve this your interest in them for their good.

3. You have also the greatest authority over them. You may command them, and they dare not disobey you; or else it is your own fault, for the most part, for you can make them obey you in your business in the world; yea, you may correct them to enforce obedience. Your authority also is the most unquestioned authority in the world. The authority of kings and parliaments has been disputed, but yours is past dispute. And therefore, if you use it not to constrain them to the works of God, you are without excuse.

4. Besides, their whole dependence is on you for their maintenance and livelihood. They know you can either give them or deny them what you have, and so punish and reward them at your pleasure. But on ministers or neighbours they have no such dependence.

5. Moreover, you that are parents know the temper and inclinations of your children, what vices they are most inclined to, and what instruction or reproof they most need; but ministers that live more strange to them, cannot know this.

6. Above all, you are ever with them, and so have opportunity as to know their faults, so to apply the remedy. You may be still talking to them of the word of God, and minding them of their state and duty, and may follow and set home every word of advice, as they are in the house with you, or in the shop, or in the field at work. Oh, what an excellent advantage is this, if God do but give you hearts to use it! Especially you, mothers,[d] remember this; you are more with your children while they are little ones than their fathers, be you therefore still teaching them as soon as ever they are capable of learning. You cannot do God such eminent service yourselves as men, but you may train up children that may do it, and then you will have part of the comfort and honour. Bathsheba had part of the honour of Solomon's wisdom, (Prov. xxxi. 1,) for she taught him; and Timothy's mother and grandmother, of his piety. Plutarch speaks of a Spartan woman, that when her neighbours were showing their apparel and jewels, she brought out her children virtuous and well taught, and said, "These are my ornaments and jewels." Oh, how much more will this adorn you than your bravery! What a deal of pains you are at with the bodies of your children more than the fathers, and what do you suffer to bring them into the world! and will not you be at as much pains for the saving their souls? You are naturally of more tender affections than men; and will it not move you to think that your children should perish for ever? O, therefore, I beseech you, for the sake of the children of your bowels, teach them, admonish them, watch over them, and give them no rest till you have brought them over to Christ.

And thus I have showed you reason enough to make you diligent in teaching your children, if reason will serve, as methinks among reasonable creatures it should do.

[c] Nemo est omnium tam efficax ad liberos, vel servandos, vel perdendos, quam sunt ipsi parentes. Rolloc. in Col. iii. 21. Ut aqua in areola digitum sequitur præcedentem; ita ætas mollis, flexibilis; et quocunque duxeris, trahitur. Hieron. lib. ii. epist. 16. p. 201. Nobis qui sacramentum veræ religionis accepimus, cum sit veritas revelata divinitus, cum doctorem sapientiæ ducemque veritatis Deum sequamur: universos sine ullo discrimine, vel sexus, vel ætatis, ad cœleste pabulum convocamus. Lactant. Instit. lib. i. c. 1.

[d] Magna hic matribus fidis vitanda est molestia, nec audiendum quod affectus, sed quod ratio et pietas dictabit. Bullin. in 1 Tim. iii. 11.

Sect. XII. Let us next hear what is usually objected against this by negligent men.

Object. 1. We do not see but those children prove as bad as others that are taught the Scriptures, and brought up so holily; and those prove as honest men and good neighbours, that have none of this ado with them.

Answ. O, who art thou, man, that disputest against God? Hath God charged you to teach your children diligently his word,[e] speaking of it as you sit at home, and as you walk abroad, as you lie down, and as you rise up, (Deut. vi. 6—8,) and dare you reply that it is as good let it alone? Why, this is to set God at defiance, and, as it were, to spit in his face, and give him the lie. Will you take it well at your servants, if, when you command them to do a thing, they should return you such an answer that they do not see but it were as good let alone? Wretched worm! darest thou thus lift up thy head against the Lord that made thee, and must judge thee? Is it not he that commandeth thee? If thou dost not believe that this Scripture is the word of God, thou dost not believe in Jesus Christ; for thou hast nothing else to tell thee that there is a Christ. And if thou do believe that this is his word, how darest thou say, It is as good disobey it? This is devilish pride indeed when such sottish, sinful dust shall think themselves wiser than the living God, and take upon them to reprove and cancel his word.[f]

2. But, alas! you know not what honesty is when you say that the ignorant are as honest as others. You think those are the honestest men that best please you, but I know those are the most honest that best please God. Christ saith, in Luke viii. 15, that an honest heart is that which keepeth the word of God; and you say, they are as honest that reject it. God made men to please himself, and not to please you; and you may know by his laws who please him best. The commandments have two tables, and the first is, "Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy heart;" and the second, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." First seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, Matt. vi. 33.

3. And what if some prove naught that are well brought up? it is not the generality of them. Will you say that Noah's family was no better than the drowned world, because there was one Cham in it; nor David's, because there was one Absalom; nor Christ's, because there was one Judas?

4. But what if it were so: have men need of the less teaching, or the more? You have more wit in the matters of this world. You will not say, I see many labour hard, and yet are poor, and therefore it is as good never labour at all. You will not say, Many that go to school learn nothing, and therefore they may learn as much though they never go:[g] or many that are great tradesmen break, and therefore it is as good never trade at all: or many great eaters are as lean as others, and many sick men recover no strength though they eat, and therefore it is as good for men never to eat more: or many plough and sow, and have nothing come up, and therefore it is as good never to plough more. What a fool were he that should reason thus! And is not he a thousand times worse that shall reason thus for men's souls? Peter reasons the clean contrary way, "If the righteous be scarcely saved, where shall the godly and the sinner appear?" 1 Pet. iv. 18. And so doth Christ, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate, for many shall seek to enter, and not be able," Luke xiii. 24. Other men's miscarriages should quicken our diligence, and not make us cast away all. What would you think of that man that should look over into his neighbour's garden, and because he sees here and there a nettle or weed among much better stuff, should say, Why you may see these men that bestow so much pains in digging and weeding, have weeds in their garden as well as I that do nothing, and therefore who would be at so much pains? Just thus doth the mad world talk; You may see now that those that pray, and read, and follow sermons, have their faults as well as we, and have wicked persons among them as well as we. Yea, but that is not the whole garden, as yours is; it is but here and there a weed, and as soon as they spy it, they pluck it up, and cast it away.

But, however, if such men be as wicked as you imagine, can you for shame lay the fault upon the Scripture, or ordinances of God? Do they find any thing in the Scriptures to encourage them to sin? You may far better say, It is long of the judge and the law which hangs them, that there are so many thieves. Did you ever read a word for sin in the Scripture; or ever hear a minister or godly man persuade people to sin, or from it rather? I speak not of sectaries, who usually grow to be enemies to Scripture. Lord, what horrible impudence is in the faces of ungodly men! when a minister hath spent himself in studying and persuading his people from sin, or when parents have done all they can to reform their children, yet people will say, It is long of this that they are so bad. What! will reproving and correcting for sin bring them soonest to it? I dare challenge any man breathing, to name any one ruler that ever was in the world, that was so severe against sin as Jesus Christ; or to show me any law that ever was made in the world so severe against sin as the laws of God. And yet it must be long of Christ and Scripture that men are evil! When he threateneth damnation against impenitent sinners, is it yet long of him? Yea, see how these wicked men contradict themselves. What is it that they hate the Scripture for, but that it is so strict and precise, and forbids them their pleasures and fleshly liberties, that is, their sins? And yet if any fall into sin, they will blame the Scripture, that forbids it. I know in these late years of licentiousness and apostasy, many that talk much of religion, prove guilty of grievous crimes, but then they turn away so far from Christ and Scripture. As bad as the godly are, I dare yet challenge you to show me any society under heaven like them that most study and delight in the Scriptures; or any school, like the scholars of Christ. Because parents cannot, by all their diligence, get their children to be as good as they should be, shall they therefore leave them to be as bad as they will? Because they cannot get them to be perfect saints, shall they therefore leave them to be as incarnate devils? Certainly, your children untaught will be little better.[h]

Sect. XIII. *Object.* 2. Some will further object, and say, It is the work of ministers to teach both us and our children, and therefore we may be excused.

[e] Præter publicam doctrinam etiam privata catechizatio domesticorum vigere debet inter nos ex Dei mandato. Paræus in Gen. xviii. 19.

[f] Qui vel frigide de pietatis studiis ipsi sentiunt, vel aliis autores sunt, ut a teneris unguiculis quam diligentissime in religione suos institui negligant, videant quid velint olim Christo Domino respondere, qui per os sacrum Pauli pueris commendat sacrarum literarum studium. Hemming. in Eph. vi. 4.

[g] Verum, bone Deus, quam paucos hodie reperias qui tam sint soliciti quomodo post se, recte et honeste vivant filii, quam curant ut ampiam illis hæreditatem relinquant, qua post obitum ipsorum splendide et otiose delicientur! Musc. in Gen. xviii. 19. p. (mihi) 427.

[h] Liberi prudenter et diligenter educati sunt optimi; et parentes cum ornare tum juvare possunt. Wolf. in Psal. cxxviii. Homil. 153. p. 131. B. c. 3.

Answ. 1. It is first your duty, and then the ministers'; it will be no excuse for you, because it is their work, except you could prove it were only theirs. Magistrates must govern both you and your children: doth it therefore follow that you must not govern them? It belongs to the schoolmaster to correct them, and doth it not belong also to you? There must go many hands to this great work, as to the building of a house there must be many workmen, one to one part, and another to another: and as your corn must go through many hands before it be bread; the reaper's, the thresher's, the miller's, the baker's; and one must not leave their part, and say, It belongs to the other: so it is here in instructing of your children; first, you must do your work, and then the minister must do his: you must be doing it privately night and day; the minister must do it publicly, and privately as oft as he can.[i]

2. But as the case now stands with the ministers of England, they are disabled from doing that which belongs to their office, and therefore you cannot now cast your work on them. I will instance but in two things. First, It belongs to their office to govern the church, and to teach with authority; and great and small are commanded to obey them, Heb. iii. 7, 17, &c. But now this is unknown, and hearers look on themselves as freemen, that may obey or not, at their own pleasure: a parent's teaching which is with authority, will take more than one's that is taken to have none: people think we have authority to speak to them when they please to hear, and no more. Nay, few of the godly themselves do understand the authority that their teachers have over them from Christ: they know how to value a minister's gifts, but not how they are bound to learn of him and obey him because of his office. Not that they should obey him in evil, nor that he should be a final decider of all controversies, nor should exercise his authority in things of no moment; but as a schoolmaster may command his scholars when to come to school, and what book to read, and what form to be of; and as they ought to obey him, and to learn of him, and not to set their wits against his, but to take his word, and believe him as their teacher, till they understand as well as he, and are ready to leave his school;[k] just so are people bound to obey and learn of their teachers, and to take their words while they are learners, in that which is beyond their present capacity, till they are able to see things in their proper evidence. Now this ministerial authority is unknown, and so ministers are the less capable of doing their work; which comes to pass, First, From the pride of man's nature, especially novices, which makes men impatient of the reins of guidance and command. Secondly, From the popish error of implicit faith; to avoid which we are driven as far into the contrary extreme. Thirdly, And from the modesty of ministers that are loth to show their commission, and make known their authority, lest they should be thought proud: as if a schoolmaster should let his scholars do what they list, or a pilot let the seamen run the ship whither they will, for fear of being thought proud in exercising their authority. Secondly, But a far greater clog than this yet doth lie upon the ministers, which few take notice of; and that is, the fewness of ministers, and the greatness of congregations. In the apostles' time every church had a multitude of ministers; and so it must be again, or we shall never come near that primitive pattern; and then they could preach publicly, and from house to house. But now, when there is but one or two ministers to many thousand souls, we cannot so much as know them, much less teach them one by one: it is as much as we can do to discharge the public work. So that you see, you have little reason to cast your work on the ministers, but should the more help them by your diligence, in your several families, because they are already so over-burdened.

Sect. XIV. *Object.* 3. But some will say, We are poor men, and must labour for our living, and so must our children, and cannot have while to teach them the Scriptures, we have somewhat else for them to do.

Answ. And are not poor men subject to God, as well as rich; and are they not christians; and must they not give account of their ways; and have not your children souls to save or lose, as well as the rich? Cannot you have while to speak to them as they are at their work? Have you not time to instruct them on the Lord's day? You can find time to talk idly, as poor as you are, and can you find no time to talk of the way to life? You can find time on the Lord's day for your children to play, or walk or talk in the streets, but no time to mind the life to come.[l] Methinks you should rather say to your children, I have no lands or lordships to leave you, nothing but hard labour and poverty in the world; you have no hope of great matters here; be sure therefore to make the Lord your portion, and to get interest in Christ, that you may be happy hereafter: if you could get riches, they would shortly leave you, but the riches of grace and glory will be everlasting. Methinks you should say as Peter, "Silver and gold I have none, but such as I have I give you." The kingdoms of the world cannot be had by beggars, but the kingdom of heaven may. Oh what a terrible reckoning will many poor men have, when Christ shall plead his cause, and judge them! May not he say, I made the way to worldly honours inaccessible to you, that you might not look after it for yourselves or your children, but heaven I set open, that you might have nothing to discourage you; I confined riches and honour to a few, but my blood and salvation I offered to all, that none may say, I was not invited; I tendered heaven to the poor, as well as the rich; I made no exception against the meanest beggar, that did not wilfully shut out themselves: why then did you not come yourselves, and bring your children, and teach them the way to the eternal inheritance? Do you say, you were poor? Why, I did not set heaven to sale for money, but I called those that had nothing, to take it freely; only on condition they would take me for their Saviour and Lord, and give up themselves unfeignedly to me in obedience and love. What can you answer Christ, when he shall thus convince you? It is not enough, that your children are poor and miserable here, but you would have them be worse for everlasting too! If your children were beggars, yet if

[i] Familiæ patrum erant domesticæ ecclesiæ; pastores, sacerdotes, et doctores, erant parentes; liberi et domestici erant catechumeni, discentes doctrinam de Deo, creatione, de lapsu et peccato, de ira et judiciis Dei adversus peccata, de gratia et misericordia Dei, de Messia venturo, et reparatione humani generis per eum, &c. Paræus in Gen. xviii. 19.

[k] Nemo existemet parochorum tantum esse, et præceptorum, teneros puerorum animos pietatis doctrina imbuere; verum etiam id multo magis parentum; quorum interest una cum lacte, in eos semina pietatis jacere, modo contumaces erga Deum haberi nolint. Hemingius in Eph. vi. 4.

[l] Crates cried out in anger, "To what end do men take so much care in heaping up goods, and so little care of those to whom they shall leave them? What should he do with riches that is not wise, and knows not how to use them? It is as if a man should take care of his shoe, and not of his foot; or set a rich saddle on a jade's back. Charron. lib. iii. p. 491. Plato saith, he knew not in what a man should be more careful and diligent than to make a good son. Ibid.

they were such beggars as Lazarus, they may be conveyed by angels into the presence of God. But believe it, as God will save no man because he is a gentleman, so will he save no man because he is a beggar. God hath so ordered it in his providence, that riches are exceeding occasions of men's damnation, and will you think poverty a sufficient excuse? The hardest point in all our work is to be weaned from the world, and in love with heaven; and if you will not be weaned from it, who have nothing in it but labour and sorrow, you have no excuse. The poor cannot have while, and the rich will not have while, or they are ashamed to be so forward: the young think it too soon, and the old too late: and thus most men, instead of being saved, have somewhat to say against their salvation; and when Christ sendeth to invite them, they say, I pray thee have me excused. O unworthy guests of such a blessed feast, and most worthy to be turned into the everlasting burnings!

Sect. XV. *Object.* 4. But some will object, We have been brought up in ignorance ourselves, and therefore we are unable to teach our children.

Answ. Indeed this is the very sore of the land: but is it not pity that men should so receive their destruction by tradition? Would you have this course to go on thus still? Your parents did not teach you, and therefore you cannot teach your children, and therefore they cannot teach theirs: by this course the knowledge of God should be banished out of the world, and never be recovered. But if your parents did not teach you, why did not you learn when you came to age? The truth is, you had no hearts to it; for he that hath not knowledge, cannot value it, or love it. But yet, though you have greatly sinned, it is not too late, if you will but follow my faithful advice in these four points:

1. Get your hearts deeply sensible of your own sin and misery, because of this long time which you have spent in ignorance and neglect. Bethink yourselves sometimes when you are alone; did not God make you, and sustain you for his service? Should not he have had the youth and strength of your spirits? Did you live all this while at the door of eternity? What if you had died in ignorance, where had you been then? What a deal of time have you spent to little purpose! Your life is near done, and your work all undone. You are ready to die, before you have learned to live. Should not God have had a better share of your lives, and your souls been more duly regarded and provided for? In the midst of these thoughts, cast down yourselves in sorrow, as at the feet of Christ; bewail your folly, and beg pardon and recovering grace.

2. Then think as seriously how you have wronged your children: if an unthrift, that hath sold all his lands, will lament it for his children sake, as well as his own, much more should you.

3. Next set presently to work, and learn yourselves. If you can read, do; if you cannot, get some that can; and be much among those that will instruct and help you: be not ashamed to be seen among learners, though it be to be catechised, but be ashamed that you had not learned sooner. God forbid you should be so mad, as to say, I am now too old to learn: except you be too old to serve God, and be saved, how can you be too old to learn to be saved? Why not rather, I am too old to serve the devil and the world, I have tried them too long to trust them any more. What if your parents had not taught you any trade to live by; or what if they had never taught you to speak; would not you have set yourselves to learn, when you had come to age? Remember, that you have souls to care for, as well as your children, and therefore first begin with yourselves.[m]

4. In the mean time, while you are learning yourselves, teach your children what you do know; and what you cannot teach them yourselves, put them on to learn it of others that can: persuade them into the company of the godly, who will be glad to instruct them. If Frenchmen or Welchmen lived in the town among us, that could not understand our language, would they not converse with those that do understand it? and would they not daily send their children to learn it, by being in the company of those that speak it? So do you, that you may learn the heavenly language: get among those that use it, and encourage your children to do so. Have you no godly neighbours that will be helpful to you herein? O do not keep yourselves strange to them, but go among them, and desire their help; and be thankful to them, that they will entertain you into their company. God forbid you should be like those that Christ speaks of, Luke xi. 52, that would neither enter into the kingdom of God themselves, nor suffer those that would to enter. God forbid you should be such cruel, barbarous wretches, as to hinder your children from being godly, and to teach them to be wicked![n] And yet, alas! how many such are there swarming every where among us! If God do but touch the heart of their children or servants, and cause them to hear and read the word, and call upon him, and accompany with the godly, who will sooner scorn them, and revile them, and discourage them, than an ungodly parent? What, say they, you will now be one of the holy brethren! you will be wiser than your parents! Just such as Pharaoh was to the Israelites, such are these wicked wretches to their own children: Exod. v. 3, 8, 9, when Moses said, "Let us go sacrifice to the Lord, lest he fall upon us with pestilence or sword," &c. Pharaoh answers, "They are idle, therefore they say, Let us go sacrifice: lay more work upon them," &c. Just so do these people say to their children. You know Pharaoh was the representer of the devil; and yet let me tell you, these ungodly parents are far worse than Pharaoh: for the children of Israel were many thousands, and were to go three days' journey out of the land, but these men hinder their children from serving God at home: Pharaoh was not their father, but their king; but these men are enemies to the children of their bodies. Nay, more, let me tell you, I know none on earth that play the part of the devil himself more truly than these men. And if any thing that walks in flesh may be called a devil, I think it is a parent that thus hindereth his children from salvation. I solemnly profess I do not speak one jot worse of these men, than I do think and verily believe in my soul: nay, take it how you will, I will say thus much more, I verily think that in this they are far worse than the devil. God is a righteous judge, and will not make the devil himself worse than he is: I pray you be patient while you consider it, and then judge yourselves. They are the parents of their children, and so is not the devil. Do you

[m] Job ita regebat filios suos ut tam pro præsentibus criminibus, quam pro occultis in corde peccatis, quæ hominum fugere notitiam possunt, divinam clementiam assiduis sacrificiis exoraret. Hieronym. in Job i.

[n] Adolescentiores etiam invitos, parentes ministris ecclesiæ sistant, ut de fide et oratione christianorum, deque præceptis decalogi et gratiæ Christi sacramentis interrogati respondentes instruantur: et si qua in re culpabiles fuerint, ad judicia majorum corrigantur, et ad studium pietatis incitentur, et ad dominicæ mensæ communionem nisi explorati non admittantur. Muscul. in Matt. ii. tom. I. p. 26.

think then that it is as great a fault in him to seek their destruction, as in them? Is it as great a fault for the wolf to kill the lambs as for their own dams to do it? Is it so horrid a fault for an enemy in war to kill a child, or for a bear or a mad dog to kill it, as for the mother to dash its brains against the wall? You know it is not: do not you think then that it is so hateful a thing in Satan to entice your children to sin and hell, and to discourage and dissuade them from holiness and from heaven, as it is in you. You are bound to love them by nature, more than Satan is. Oh then what people are those that will teach their children instead of holiness, to curse, and swear, and rail, and backbite, to be proud and revengeful, to break the Lord's day, and to despise his ways, to speak wantonly and filthily, to scorn at holiness, and glory in sin! Oh when God shall ask these children, Where learned you this language and practice? and they shall say, I learned it of my father or mother;[o] I would not be in the case of those parents for all the world! Alas, is it a work that is worth the teaching, to undo themselves for ever? Or can they not without teaching learn it too easily of themselves? Do you need to teach a serpent to sting, or a lion to be fierce? Do you need to sow weeds in your garden? will they not grow of themselves? To build a house requires skill and teaching; but a little may serve to set a town on fire. To heal the wounded or the sick, requireth skill; but to make a man sick, or to kill him, requireth but little. You may sooner teach your children to swear, than to pray; and to mock at godliness, than to be truly godly. If these parents were sworn enemies to their children, and should study seven years how to do them the greatest mischief, they could not possibly find out a surer way, than by drawing them to sin, and withdrawing them from God.

Sect. XVI. I shall therefore conclude with this earnest request to all christian parents that read these lines, that they would have compassion on the souls of their poor children, and be faithful to the great trust that God hath put in them.[p] O sirs, if you cannot do what you would do for them, yet do what you can; both church and state, city and country, do groan under the neglect of this weighty duty; your children know not God, nor his laws, but take his name in vain, and slight his worship, and you do neither instruct them nor correct them; and therefore doth God correct both them and you. You are so tender of them that God is the less tender both of them and you. Wonder not if God make you smart for your children's sins; for you are guilty of all they commit, by your neglect of doing your duty to reform them; even as he that maketh a man drunk, is guilty of all the sin that he committeth in his drunkenness. Will you resolve therefore to set upon this duty, and neglect it no longer? Remember Eli. Your children are like Moses in the basket in the water, ready to perish if they have not help. As ever you would not be charged before God for murderers of their souls, and as ever you would not have them cry out against you in everlasting fire, see that you teach them how to escape it, and bring them up in holiness and the fear of God. You have heard that the God of heaven doth flatly command it you; I charge every one of you, therefore, upon your allegiance to him, as you will very shortly answer the contrary at your peril, that you neither refuse nor neglect this most necessary work.[q] If you are not willing, now you know it to be so plain and so great a duty, you are flat rebels, and no true subjects of Christ. If you are willing to do it, but know not how, I will add a few words of direction to help you. 1. Teach them by your own example, as well as by your words. Be yourselves such as you would have them be: practice is the most effectual teaching of children, who are addicted to imitation, especially of their parents. Lead them the way to prayer, and reading, and other duties: be not like base commanders, that will put on their soldiers, but not go on themselves. Can you expect your children should be wiser or better than you? Let them not hear those words out of your mouths, nor see those practices in your lives, which you reprove in them. No man shall be saved because his children are godly, if he be ungodly himself. Who should lead the way in holiness, but the father and master of the family? It is a sad time when he must be accounted a good master or father that will not hinder his family from serving God, but will give them leave to go to heaven without him.

I will but name the rest of your direct duty for your family. 1. You must help to inform their understandings. 2. To store their memories. 3. To rectify their wills. 4. To quicken their affections. 5. To keep tender their consciences. 6. To restrain their tongues, and help them to skill in gracious speech; and to reform and watch over their outward conversation.

To these ends, 1. Be sure to keep them, at least, so long at school till they can read English. It is a thousand pities that a reasonable creature should look upon a Bible as upon a stone, or a piece of wood. 2. Get them Bibles and good books, and see that they read them. 3. Examine them often what they learn. 4. Especially bestow the Lord's day in this work, and see that they spend it not in sports or idleness. 5. Show them the meaning of what they read and learn, Josh. iv. 6, 21, 22; Psal. lxxviii. 4—6; and xxxiv. 11. 6. Acquaint them with the godly, and keep them in good company, where they may learn good, and keep them out of that company that would teach them evil. 7. Be sure to cause them to learn some catechism containing the chief heads of divinity.

Sect. XVII. The heads of divinity, which you must teach them first, are these:[r]

1. That there is one only God, who is a Spirit in-

[o] Carpendæ sunt matres, quæ coram liberis nihil honestum nec loquuntur nec agunt. Megander in 1 Tim. iii. 12.

[p] Officium pii patrisfamilias est, liberos et familiam educare ad pietatem, doccreque quo modo opera Dei recte debeant considerare. Piscator in Gen. xviii. 19. Si paterfamilias fueris, erit tibi primo loco consideranda et emendanda domus tua. Neque enim eum fructu alios corriges, tuorum neglector. Muscul. in Matt. vii. p. 154.

[q] Bodin De Repub. lib. i. c. 4, writes very confidently that parents have, by the law of God and nature, power of life and death over their children; and that the want of it is very injurious to commonwealths; and how only the ambition of princes took it from the Romans and others: but, as wise men think, he is mistaken.

[r] Nil enim fide christiana iniquius esset si in doctos solum et artibus hisce excultos competeret. Nazianzen, orat. 21. referente Davenantio Adhort. pro Pace, p. 85. Si quis seponeret totam quæ hoc seculo nostro viget controversam theologiam, atque in unum corpus colligeret illos christianæ doctrinæ articulos, de quibus bene convenit inter universas ecclesias, quæ Christum Θεάνθρωπον colunt et pro servatore suo agnoscunt, posse christianos in illis tantum salutiferæ veritatis et scientiæ invenire, quantum credentibus sufficere posset ad consecutionem vitæ æternæ; si ad cognitionem accesserit obedientia, et studium sanctitatis. Usserius Armachan. in Conc. coram Rege, p. 28, referente Davenantio ubi sup. 84. That the creed, in the beginning, contained only the profession of belief in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, taken from Matt. xxviii. 19, and how it was, in time, by degrees, enlarged; see it excellently handled by those excellent, learned, judicious, pious divines, Sandford and Parker, in that most learned treatise De Descensu Christi, lib. iv. initio, præcipue p. 5, 6, ad 50. Ecclesia per universum orbem disseminata hanc fidem ab

visible, infinite, eternal, almighty, good, merciful, true, just, holy, &c. 2. That this God is one in three, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. 3. That he is the Maker, Maintainer, and Lord of all. 4. That man's happiness consisteth in the enjoying of this God, and not in fleshly pleasure, profits, or honours. 5. That God made the first man upright and happy, and gave him a law to keep, with condition, that if he kept it perfectly, he should live happy for ever, but if he broke it he should die. 6. That man broke this law, and so forfeited his welfare, and became guilty of death as to himself and all his posterity. 7. That Christ the Son of God did here interpose, and prevent the full execution, undertaking to die instead of man, and so to redeem him; whereupon all things were delivered into his hands as the Redeemer, and he is under that relation the Lord of all. 8. That Christ hereupon did make with man a better covenant or law, which proclaimed pardon of sin to all that did but repent, and believe, and obey sincerely. 9. That he revealed this covenant and mercy to the world by degrees; first, in darker promises, prophecies, and sacrifices; then, in many ceremonious types; and then, by more plain foretelling by the prophets. 10. That in the fulness of time Christ came and took our nature into union with his Godhead, being conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary. 11. That while he was on earth he lived a life of sorrows, was crowned with thorns, and bore the pains that our sins deserved; at last, being crucified to death, and buried, so satisfied the justice of God. 12. That he also preached himself to the Jews, and by constant miracles did prove the truth of his doctrine and mediatorship before thousands of witnesses: that he revealed more fully his new law or covenant; that whosoever will believe in him, and accept him for Saviour and Lord, shall be pardoned and saved, and have a far greater glory than they lost; and they that will not, shall lie under the curse and guilt, and be condemned to the everlasting fire of hell. 13. That he rose again from the dead, having conquered death, and took fuller possession of his dominion over all, and so ascended up into heaven, and there reigneth in glory. 14. That before his ascension he gave charge to his apostles to preach the foresaid gospel to all nations and persons, and to offer Christ, and mercy, and life, to every one without exception, and to entreat and persuade them to receive him; and that he gave them authority to send forth others on the same message, and to baptize, and to gather churches, and confirm and order them, and settle a course for a succession of ministers and ordinances to the end of the world. 15. That he also gave them power to work frequent and evident miracles for the confirmation of their doctrine, and the convincing of the world; and to annex their writings to the rest of the Scriptures, and so to finish and seal them up, and deliver them to the world as his infallible word and laws, which none must dare to alter, and which all must observe. 16. That though his free grace is offered to the world, yet the heart is by nature so desperately wicked, that no man will believe and entertain Christ sincerely, except by an almighty power he be changed and born again; and therefore doth Christ send forth his Spirit with his word, which secretly and effectually worketh holiness in the hearts of the elect, drawing them to God and the Redeemer. 17. That the means by which Christ worketh and preserveth this grace, is the word read and preached, together with frequent fervent prayer, meditation, sacraments, gracious conference; and it is much furthered also by special providences keeping us from temptation, fitting occurrences to our advantage, drawing us by mercies, and driving us by afflictions; and therefore it must be the great and daily care of every christian to use faithfully all the said ordinances, and improve the said providences. 18. That though the new law or covenant be an easy yoke, and there is nothing grievous in Christ's commands, yet so bad are our hearts, and so strong our temptations, and so diligent our enemies, that whosoever will be saved, he must strive, and watch, and bestow his utmost care and pains, and deny his flesh, and forsake all that would draw him from Christ, and herein continue to the end, and overcome. And because this cannot be done without continual supplies of grace, whereof Christ is the only fountain, therefore we must live in continual dependence on him by faith, and know that our life is hid with God in him. 19. That Christ will thus by his word and Spirit gather him a church of all the elect out of the world, which is his body and spouse, and he their head and husband, and will be tender of them as the apple of his eyes, and preserve them from danger, and continue among them his presence and ordinances; and that the members of this church must live together in most entire love and peace, delighting themselves in God and his worship, and the forethoughts and mention of their everlasting happiness; forbearing and forgiving one another, and relieving each other in need, as if that which they have were their brother's. And all men ought to strive to be of this society. Yet will the visible churches be still mixed of good and bad. 20. That when the full number of these elect are called home, Christ will come down from heaven again, and raise all the dead, and set them before him to be judged; and all that have loved God above all, and believed in Christ, and been willing that he should reign over them, and have improved their mercies in the day of grace, them he will justify, and sentence them to inherit the everlasting kingdom of glory; and those that were not such, he will condemn to everlasting fire: both which sentences shall be then executed accordingly.

This is the creed, or brief sum, of the doctrine which you must teach your children. Though our ordinary creed, called the apostles' creed, contains all the absolute fundamentals; yet in some it is so generally and darkly expressed, that an explication is necessary.

Sect. XVIII. Then, for matter of practice, teach them the meaning of the commandments,[s] especially

apostolis accepit, atque diligenter custodit: per consensum in hac fide quasi unam domum inhabitat, et unam animam habet, Irenæus, l. i. c. 2, 3. Vide plura testimonia pro sufficientia symboli in Davenantii Adhort. ad Pacem, p. 93—95. Et in Parkero de Descens. Et in Conrad. Bergio fere per totam Prax. Cathol. Canon. Una definitio fidei est, confiteri, et recte glorificare Patrem, et Christum Filium Dei, et Spiritum Sanctum. Istam confessionem conservamus, in qua et baptizati sumus; donatam quidem a magno Deo servatore nostro Jesu Christo sanctis suis discipulis et apostolis: ab iis autem confessionem, i. e. sanctum mathema et symbolum fidei, 318. sancti patres in Nicea collecti tradiderunt. Justinian Imper. in Act. Concil. Tolet. i. Sicut hæretici in moribus, omnes rimas cavillandi indagantes, in causa fuerunt, ut contractus instrumenta, olim compendiosa, in infinitas conditiones, clausulas, et provisiones jam hodie extendantur; sic illud pactum in baptismo inter christianum et Deum suum in hac brevitate tum sufficiebat. Hæretici vero in fide curiosis dubitationibus, perversisque altercationibus occasionem dederunt explicationis cujusdam magis popularis illius symboli, quod antea in majestate quasi sua complicatum fuerat. Doctis. Parker de Descensu, lib. iv. p. 9. Read also of this, honest Bishop Hall's book called The Peacemaker.

[s] Νουθησία in genere talem admonitionem notat, qua alicui veluti in animum ponas ac ingeras quid factu opus sit. Hemingius in Eph. vi. 4.

of the great commands of the gospel; show them what is commanded and forbidden, in the first table and in the second, towards God and men, in regard of the inward and the outward man: and here show them, 1. The authority commanding; that is, the Almighty God, by Christ the Redeemer. They are not now to look at the command as coming from God immediately, merely as God, or the Creator, but as coming from God by Christ the Mediator, who is now the Lord of all, and only lawgiver; seeing the Father now judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son, John v. 21—24. 2. Show them the terms on which duty is required, and the ends of it. 3. And the nature of duties, and the way to perform them aright. 4. And the right order; that they first love God above all, and then their neighbour: first seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness. 5. Show them the excellences and delights of God's service. 6. And the flat necessity. 7. Especially labour to get all to their hearts, and teach them not only to speak the words.

And for sin, show them its evil and danger, and watch over them against it. Especially, 1. The sins that youth is commonly addicted to. 2. And which their nature and constitution most lead them to. 3. And which the time and place do most strongly tempt to. 4. But especially be sure to kill their killing sins; those that all are prone to, and are of all most deadly: as, pride, worldliness, ignorance, profaneness, and flesh-pleasing.

And for the manner, you must do all this, 1. Betimes, before sin get rooting. 2. Frequently. 3. Seasonably. 4. Seriously and diligently. 5. Affectionately and tenderly. 6. And with authority; compelling where commanding will not serve, and adding correction where instruction is frustrate.

And thus I have done with the use of exhortation to do our utmost for the salvation of others. The Lord give men compassionate hearts that it may be practised; and then, I doubt not but he will succeed it to the increase of his church.

PART IV.

CONTAINING

A DIRECTORY FOR THE GETTING AND KEEPING OF THE HEART IN HEAVEN,

BY THE DILIGENT PRACTICE OF THAT EXCELLENT UNKNOWN DUTY OF HEAVENLY MEDITATION. BEING THE MAIN THING INTENDED BY THE AUTHOR IN THE WRITING OF THIS BOOK, AND TO WHICH ALL THE REST IS BUT SUBSERVIENT.

TO MY DEARLY BELOVED FRIENDS IN THE LORD,

THE INHABITANTS OF THE TOWN OF SHREWSBURY, BOTH MAGISTRATES, MINISTERS, AND PEOPLE, AS ALSO OF THE NEIGHBOURING PARTS,

RICHARD BAXTER DEVOTETH THIS PRACTICAL PART OF THIS TREATISE, AS A TESTIMONY OF HIS LOVE TO HIS NATIVE SOIL, AND TO HIS MANY GODLY AND FAITHFUL FRIENDS THERE LIVING:

HEARTILY praying the Lord and Head of the church to keep them in unity, peace, humility, vigilancy, and stedfastness in the truth; and to cause them to contribute their utmost endeavours for the setting up of able, faithful teachers, and building up the house of God, which hath so long been neglected, and which hath now so many hands employed to divide and demolish it: and that the Lord would save them in this hour of temptation, that they may be approved in this trial, and not be found light when God shall weigh them: and that he would acquaint them with the daily serious exercise of this most precious, spiritual, soul-exalting work of heavenly meditation, and that when the Lord shall come, he may find them so doing.

THE INTRODUCTION.

IN the former part, I have chiefly pressed those duties which must be used for the attainment of this everlasting rest. In this I shall chiefly handle those which are necessary to raise the heart to God, and to a heavenly and comfortable life on earth. It is a truth too evident, which an inconsiderate zealot reprehended in Master Culverwell as an error, that many of God's children do not enjoy that sweet life and blessed

estate in this world, which God their Father hath provided for them; that is, which he offereth them in his promises, and chargeth upon them as their duty in his precepts, and bringeth even to their hands in all his means and mercies. God hath set open heaven to us in his word, and told every humble, sincere christian that they shall shortly there live with himself in unconceivable glory; and yet, where is the person that is affected with this promise; whose heart leaps for joy at the hearing of the news; or that is willing, in hopes of heaven, to leave this world? But even the godly have as strange unsavoury thoughts of it, as if God did but delude us, and there were no such glory; and are almost as loth to die as men without hope. The consideration of this strange disagreement between our professions and affections, caused me to suspect that there was some secret, lurking unbelief in all our hearts; and therefore I wrote those arguments in the second part, for the divine authority of the Scripture: and because I find another cause to be, the carelessness, forgetfulness, and idleness of the soul, and not keeping in action that faith which we have, I have here attempted the removal of that cause, by prescribing a course for the daily acting of those graces which must fetch in the celestial delights into the heart. Oh! the princely, joyful, blessed life, that the godly lose through mere idleness! As the papists have wronged the merits of Christ by their ascribing too much to our own works, so it is almost incredible, how much they, on the other extreme, have wronged the safety and consolation of men's souls, by telling them that their own endeavours are only for obedience and gratitude, but are not so much as conditions of their salvation, or means of their increased sanctification or consolation. And while some tell them that they must look at nothing in themselves, for acceptation with God, or comfort, and so make that acceeptance and comfort to be equally belonging to a christian and a Turk; and others tell them that they must look at nothing in themselves, but only as signs of their good estates; this hath caused some to expect only enthusiastic consolation, and others to spend their days in inquiring after signs of their sincerity. Had these poor souls well understood that God's way to persuade their wills, and to excite and actuate their affections, is by the discourse, reasoning, or consideration of their understandings, upon the nature and qualifications of the objects which are presented to them; and had they bestowed but that time in exercising holy affections, and in serious thoughts of the promised happiness, which they have spent in inquiring only after signs, I am confident, according to the ordinary working of God, they would have been better provided, both with assurance and with joys. How should the heir of a kingdom have the comfort of his title, but by fore-thinking on it? It is true, God must give us our comforts by his Spirit: but how? By quickening up our souls to believe, and consider of the promised glory; and not by comforting us, we know not how, nor why; or by giving men the foretastes of heaven, when they never think of it.

I have here prescribed thee, reader, the delightfulest task to the spirit, and the most tedious to the flesh, that ever men on earth were employed in. I did it first only for myself, but am loth to conceal the means that I have found so consolatory. If thou be one that wilt not be persuaded to a course so laborious, but wilt only go on in thy task of common formal duties, thou mayst let it alone, and so be destitute of delights, except such as the world and thy forms can afford thee; but then, do not, for shame, complain for want of comfort, when thou dost wilfully reject it; and be not such a hypocrite as to pray for it, while thou dost refuse to labour for it. If thou say thy comfort is all in Christ, I must tell thee it is a Christ remembered and loved, and not a Christ forgotten or only talked of, that will solidly comfort. Though the directory for contemplation was only intended for this part, yet I have now premised two other uses. The heart must be taken off from resting on earth before it will be fit to converse above. The first part of saving religion, is the taking God only for our end and rest.

CHAPTER I.

THE SIXTH USE.—REPROVING OUR EXPECTATIONS OF REST ON EARTH.

SECT. I. Doth this rest remain? How great, then, is our sin and folly to seek and expect it here! Where shall we find the christian that deserves not this reproof? Surely we may all cry Guilty! to this accusation. We know not how to enjoy convenient houses, goods, lands, and revenues, but we seek rest in these enjoyments. We seldom, I fear, have such sweet and heart-contenting thoughts of God and glory, as we have of our earthly delights. How much rest do the voluptuous seek, in buildings, walks, apparel, ease, recreation, sleep, pleasing meats and drinks, merry company, health and strength, and long life! Nay, we can scarce enjoy the necessary means which God hath appointed for our spiritual good, but we are seeking rest in them. Do we want ministers, godly society, or the like helps? Oh! think we, if it were but thus and thus with us, we were well. Do we enjoy them?[a] Oh, how we settle upon them, and bless ourselves in them, as the rich fool in his wealth! Our books, our preachers, sermons, friends, abilities for duty, do not our hearts hug them, and quiet themselves in them, even more than in God? Indeed, in words we disclaim it, and God hath usually the pre-eminence in our tongues and professions; but it is too apparent that it is otherwise in our hearts, by these discoveries: First, Do we not desire these more violently, when we want them, than we do the Lord himself? Do we not cry out more sensibly, O my friend, my goods, my health, than O my God! Do we not miss ministry and means more passionately than we miss our God? Do we not bestir ourselves more to obtain and enjoy these than we do to recover our communion with God? Secondly, Do we not delight more in the possession of these than we do in the fruition of God himself? Nay, be not those mercies and duties most

[a] These must be delighted in, but as means only to help us to God, not as a happiness to content us without God.

pleasant to us, wherein we stand at greatest distance from God? We can read, and study, and confer, preach, and hear, day after day, without much weariness, because in these we have to do with instruments and creatures; but in secret prayer and conversing with God immediately, where no creature interposeth, how dull, how heartless and weary are we! Thirdly, And if we lose creatures or means, doth it not trouble us more than our loss of God? If we lose but a friend, or health, &c. all the town will hear of it; but we can miss our God, and scarce bemoan our misery. Thus it is apparent, we exceedingly make the creature our rest. Is it not enough that they are sweet delights, and refreshing helps in our way to heaven, but they must also be made our heaven itself? Christian reader, I would as willingly make thee sensible of this sin as of any sin in the world, if I could tell how to do it; for the Lord's greatest quarrel with us is in this point. Therefore I most earnestly beseech thee to press upon thine own conscience these following considerations.

Sect. II. 1. It is gross idolatry to make any creature or means our rest; to settle the soul upon it, and say, Now I am well, upon the bare enjoyment of the creature. What is this but to make it our God? Certainly, to be the soul's rest, is God's own prerogative. And as it is palpable idolatry to place our rest in riches and honours; so it is but a more spiritual and refined idolatry to take up our rest in excellent means, in the church's prosperity, and in its reformation. When we would have all that out of God which is to be had only in God, what is this but to turn away from him to the creature, and in our hearts to deny him? When we fetch more of our comfort and delight from the thoughts of prosperity, and those mercies which here we have at a distance from God, than from the fore-thoughts of our everlasting blessedness in him; nay, when the thought of that day when we must come to God is our greatest trouble, and we would do any thing in the world to escape it, but the enjoyment of creatures, though absent from him, is the very thing our souls desire; when we had rather talk of him than come to enjoy him; and had rather go many miles to hear a powerful sermon of Christ and heaven, than to enter and possess it; oh! what vile idolatry is this! When we dispute against epicures, academics, and all pagans, how earnestly do we contend that God is the chief good, and the fruition of him our chief happiness! What clear arguments do we bring to evince it! But do we believe ourselves; or are we christians in judgment, and pagans in affection? Or do we give our senses leave to be the choosers of our happiness, while reason and faith stand by? O christians! how ill must our dear Lord needs take it, when we give him cause to complain, as sometimes he did of our fellow-idolaters, (Jer. l. 6,) that we have been lost sheep, and have forgotten our resting-place! When we give him cause to say, Why, my people can find rest in any thing rather than in me! They can find delight in one another, but none in me; they can rejoice in my creatures and ordinances, but not in me; yea, in their very labours and duty they seek for rest, and not in me; they had rather be any where than be with me. Are these their gods? Have these delivered and redeemed them? Will these be better to them than I have been, or than I would be? If yourselves have but a wife, a husband, a son, that had rather be any where than in your company, and is never so merry as when farthest from you, would you not take it ill yourselves? Why so must our God needs do: for what do we but lay these things in one end of the balance and God in the other, and foolishly, in our choice, prefer them before him? As Elkanah said to Hannah, "Am not I better to thee than ten sons?" 1 Sam. i. 8; so when we are longing after creatures, we may hear God say, Am not I better than all the creatures to thee?

Sect. III. 2. Consider, How thou contradictest the end of God in giving these things.[b] He gave them to help thee to him, and dost thou take up with them in his stead? He gave them that they might be comfortable refreshments in thy journey, and wouldst thou now dwell in thy inn, and go no further? Thou dost not only contradict God herein, but losest that benefit which thou mightest receive by them, yea, and makest them thy great hurt and hinderance. Surely it may be said of all our comforts and all ordinances, and the blessedest enjoyments in the church on earth, as God said to the Israelites of his ark, "The ark of the covenant went before them, to search out for them a resting-place," Numb. x. 33. So do all God's mercies here. They are not that rest, (as John professeth he was not the Christ,) but they are voices crying in this wilderness, to bid us prepare, for the kingdom of God, our true rest, is at hand. Therefore, to rest here, were to turn all mercies clean contrary to their own ends, and our own advantages, and to destroy ourselves with that which should help us.

Sect. IV. 3. Consider, Whether it be not the most probable way to cause God, either, First, To deny those mercies which we desire; or, Secondly, To take from us these which we enjoy; or, Thirdly, To imbitter them at least, or curse them to us? Certainly, God is no where so jealous as here. If you had a servant whom your own wife loved better than she did yourself, would you not both take it ill of such a wife, and rid your house of such a servant? You will not suffer your child to use a knife till he have wit to do it without hurting him. Why so, if the Lord see you begin to settle in the world, and say, Here I will rest, no wonder if he soon in his jealousy unsettle you. If he love you, no wonder if he take that from you wherewith he sees you are about to destroy yourselves. It hath been my long observation of many, that when they have attempted great works, and have just finished them, or have aimed at great things in the world, and have just obtained them; or have lived in much trouble and unsettlement, and have just overcome them, and begin with some content to look upon their condition, and rest in it, they are usually near to death or ruin.[c] You know the story of the fool in the gospel. When a man is once at this language, Soul, take thy ease or rest; the next news usually is, Thou fool, this night, or this month, or this year, shall they require thy soul, and then whose shall these things be? Oh, what house is there where this fool dwelleth not! Dear christian friends, you to whom I have especially relation, let you and I consider whether this be not our own case. Have not I, after such an unsettled life, and after four years' living in the weary condition and the unpleasing state of war; and after so many years' groaning under the church's unreformedness, and the great fears that lay upon us, and after so many

[b] I mean the end of precept, not of his purpose.

[c] Mundus iste periculosior est blandus quam molestus: et magis cavendus cum se illicit diligi, quam cum admonet cogitque contemni; sæpe etiam iis qui spiritualia, invisibilia, æterna terrenis præponunt, infert se terrenæ suavitatis affectus, et delectationibus suis nostra comitatur officia. Quanto enim charitati sunt futura meliora, tanto sunt infirmitati violentiora præsentia: et utinam ii qui ea videre et gemere noverunt, vincere et evadere mereantur. August. Epist. 144.

longings, and prayers for these days; have I not thought of them with too much content? and been ready to say, Soul, take thy rest? Have not I comforted myself more in the forethoughts of enjoying these, than of coming to heaven and enjoying God? What wonder, then, if God cut me off, when I am just sitting down in this supposed rest? And hath not the like been your condition? Many of you have been soldiers, driven from house to home, endured a life of trouble and blood, been deprived of ministry and means, longing to see the church's settling. Did you not reckon up all the comforts you should have at your return; and glad your hearts with such thoughts more than with the thoughts of your coming to heaven? Why, what wonder if God now somewhat cross you, and turn some of your joy into sadness? Many a servant of God hath been destroyed from the earth by being overvalued and overloved. I pray God you may take warning for the time to come, that you rob not yourselves of all your mercies. I am persuaded our discontents, and murmurings with our unpleasing condition, and our covetous desires after more, are not so provoking to God, nor so destructive to the sinner, as our too sweet enjoying, and rest of spirit in a pleasing state. If God have crossed any of you in wife, children, goods, friends, &c. either by taking them from you, or the comfort of them, or the benefit and blessing, try whether this above all other be not the cause. For wheresoever your desires stop, and you say, Now I am well, that condition you make your god, and engage the jealousy of God against it. Whether you be friends to God or enemies, you can never expect that God should wink at such idolatry, or suffer you quietly to enjoy your idols.

Sect. V. 4. Consider, If God should suffer thee thus to take up thy rest here, it were one of the surest plagues and greatest curses that could possibly befall thee. It were better for thee, if thou never hadst a day of ease or content in the world, for then weariness might make thee seek after the true rest, Psal. xvii. 14; Luke xvi. 25. But if he should suffer thee to sit down and rest here, where were thy rest when this deceives thee? A restless wretch thou wouldst be through all eternity. To have their portion in this life, and their good things on the earth, is the lot of the most miserable, perishing sinners. And doth it become christians, then, to expect so much here? Our rest is our heaven, and where we take our rest, there we make our heaven. And wouldst thou have but such a heaven as this? Certainly, as Saul's messengers found but Michal's man of straw when they expected David, so wilt thou find but a rest of straw, of wind, of vanity, when thou most needest rest. It will be but a handful of waters to a man that is drowning, which will help to destroy, but not to save him. But that is the next.

Sect. VI. 5. Consider, Thou seekest rest where it is not to be found, and so wilt lose all thy labour, and, if thou proceed, thy soul's eternal rest too. I think I shall easily evince this by these clear demonstrations following:

First, Our rest is only in the full obtaining of our ultimate end, but that is not to be expected in this life, therefore, neither is rest to be here expected. Is God to be enjoyed in the best reformed church, in the purest and powerfullest ordinances here, as he is in heaven? I know you will all confess he is not. How little of God, not only the multitude of the blind world, but sometimes the saints themselves, do enjoy, even under the most excellent means, let their own frequent complainings testify. And how poor comforters are the best ordinances and enjoyments, without God, the truly spiritual christian knows. Will a stone rest in the air in the midst of its fall, before it comes to the earth? No, because its centre is its end. Should a traveller take up his rest in the way? No, because his home is his journey's end. When you have all that creatures and means can afford, have you that you sought for? Have you that you believe, pray, suffer for? I think you dare not say so. Why, then, do we once dream of resting here? We are like little children strayed from home, and God is now fetching us home; and we are ready to turn into any house, stay and play with every thing in our way, and sit down on every green bank, and much ado there is to get us home.

Secondly, As we have not yet obtained our end, so are we in the midst of labours and dangers; and is there any resting here? What painful work doth lie upon our hands! Look to our brethren, to godly, to ungodly, to the church, to our souls, to God, and what a deal of work in respect of each of these doth lie before us! And can we rest in the midst of all our labours?[d] Indeed, we may take some refreshing, and ease ourselves sometimes in our troubles, if you will call that rest, but that is not the settling rest we now are speaking of: we may rest on earth, as the ark is said to have rested in the midst of Jordan, Josh. iii. 13; a short and small rest, no question: or as the angels of heaven are desired to turn in, and rest them on earth, Gen. xviii. 4; they would have been loth to have taken up their dwelling there. Should Israel have settled his rest in the wilderness among serpents, and enemies, and weariness, and famine? Should Noah have made the ark his home, and have been loth to come forth when the waters were fallen? Should the mariner choose his dwelling on the sea, and settle his rest in the midst of rocks, and sands, and raging tempests? Though he may adventure through all these for a commodity of worth, yet I think he takes it not for his rest. Should a soldier rest in the midst of fight, when he is in the very thickest of his enemies, and the instruments of death compass him about? I think he cares not how soon the battle is over. And though he may adventure upon war for the obtaining of peace, yet I hope he is not so mad as to take that instead of peace. And are not christians such travellers, such mariners, such soldiers? Have you not fears within, and troubles without? Are we not in the thickest of continual dangers? We cannot eat, drink, sleep, labour, pray, hear, confer, &c. but in the midst of snares and perils, and shall we sit down and rest here? O christian, follow thy work, look to thy danger, hold on to the end; win the field and come off the ground, before thou think of a settling rest. I read indeed that Peter on the mount, when he had seen a glimpse of glory, said, "It is good for

[d] Quum transierit tempus pugnæ, et venerit pax illa quæ præcellit omnem intellectum, (quantumcumque enim cogitaverit de pace illa, minus eam capit animus in ista corporis gravedine constitutus) cum venerit inquam illa pax et patria, jam domus erit Deo, qui in pugna tabernaculum. Non procedimus ad pugnandum, sed permanebimus ad laudandum. Quid enim dicitur de illa domo? Beati qui habitant in domo tua, Domine, in secula seculorum laudabunt te. In tabernaculo adhuc gemimus; in domo laudabimus. Quare? Quia gemitus est peregrinantium, laudatio jam in patria et in domo commorantium. Qui in illam intrant ut inhabitent, ipsi sunt qui intrant ut inhabitentur. In domum tuam intra ut inhabites. In domum Dei ut inhabiteris. Est enim melior Domus: qui cum te cœperit inhabitare, beatum te faeit. Nam si tu ab illo non habitaris, miser es. August. in Psalm xxvi. et xxxi. Verum ecce; vivat ut vult, quoniam extorsit, sibique imperavit, non velle quod non potest, atque hoc velle quod potest (ut ait Terentius, quoniam non potest id fieri quod vis, id velis quod possit). Non tamen ideo beatus est, qui patienter miser est. August. de Civit. lib. xiv. c. 25.

us to be here." But sure, when he was on the sea, in the midst of waves, he doth not then say, "It is good to be here." No, then he hath other language, "Save, Master, we perish." And even his desires to rest on the mount, are noted in Scripture to come from hence, He knew not what he said: it was on earth, though with Christ in his transfiguration. And I dare say the like of thee, whenever thou talkest of resting on earth, Thou knowest not what thou sayest. I read that Christ, when he was on the cross, comforted the converted thief with this, "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise." But if he had only comforted him with telling him that he should rest there on that cross, would he not have taken it for a derision? Methinks it should be ill resting in the midst of sicknesses and pains, persecution and distresses. One would think it should be no contentful dwelling for lambs among wolves. The wicked have some slender pretence for their sin in this kind; they are among their friends, in the midst of their portion, enjoying all the happiness that they are like to enjoy. But is it so with the godly? Surely the world is at best but a stepmother to them; nay, an open enemy. But if nothing else would convince us, yet sure the remainders of sin which doth so easily beset us, should quickly satisfy a believer that here is not his rest. What, a christian! and rest in a state of sinning! It cannot be; or do they hope for a perfect freedom here? That is impossible. I say, therefore, to every one that thinketh of rest on earth, as Micah, "Arise ye, depart; this is not your rest, because it is polluted," chap. ii. 10.

Thirdly, The nature of all these things may convince you, that they cannot be a christian's true rest. They are too poor to make us rich; and too low to raise us to happiness; and too empty to fill our souls; and too base to make us blessed; and of too short continuance to be our eternal contents. They cannot subsist themselves without support from heaven; how, then, can they give subsistence to our souls? Sure, if prosperity, or whatsoever we here can desire, be too base to make us gods of, then are they too base to be our rests.

Fourthly, That which is the soul's true rest, must be sufficient to afford it perpetual satisfaction; but all things below do delight us only with fresh variety.[e] The content which any creature affordeth, doth wax old and abate after a short enjoyment. We pine away for them, as Amnon for his sister; and when we have satisfied our desire, we are weary of them and loathe them. If God should rain down angels' food, after awhile our souls would loathe that dry manna. The most dainty fare, the most costly clothing, would not please us, were we tied to them alone. The most sumptuous house, the softest bed, were we confined to them, would be but a prison. One recreation pleaseth not long, we must have supply of new, or our delights will languish. Nay, our delight in our society and friendship, especially if carnal, is strongest while fresh: and in the ordinances of God themselves, so far as we delight in them for themselves, and not for God, if novelty support not, our delight grows dull. If we hear still the same minister, or if in preaching and praying he use oft the same expressions, or if he preach oft the same sermon, how dull grows our devotion, though the matter be never so good, and at first did never so highly please us! If we read the most excellent and pleasing books, the third or fourth reading is usually more heartless than the first or second; nay, in our general way of christianity, our first godly acquaintance, our first preachers, our first books, our first duties, have too commonly our strongest affections. All creatures are to us, as the flowers to the bee; there is but little of that matter which affords them honey on any flower, and therefore they must have supply of fresh variety, and take of each a superficial taste, and so to the next: yea, some, having gone through variety of states, and tasted of the pleasures of their own country, do travel for fresh variety abroad; and when they come home, they usually betake themselves to some solitary corner, and sit down, and cry with Solomon, Vanity and vexation! and with David, I have seen an end of all perfection: and can this be a place of rest for the soul?

Fifthly, Those that know the creature least, do affect it most; the more it is known, the less it satisfieth: those only are taken with it, who can see no farther than its outward beauty, not beholding its outward vanity; it is like a comely picture, if you stand too near it, it appears less beautiful. We are prone to over-admire the persons of men, places of honour, and other men's happy condition; but it is only while we do but half know them: stay but a while till we know them thoroughly, and have discovered the evil as well as the good, and the defects as well as the perfections, and we then do cease our admiration.

Sect. VII. 6. To have creatures and means without God, who is their end, is so far from being our happiness, that it is an aggravation of our misery, even as to have food without strength, and starve in the midst of plenty, and as Pharaoh's kine, to devour all, and lean still. What the better were you if you had the best minister on earth, the best society, the purest church, and therewithal the most plentiful estate, but nothing of God? If God should say, Take my creatures, my word, my servants, my ordinances, but not myself, would you take this for a happiness? If you had the word of God, and not the Word which is God; or the bread of the Lord, and not the Lord, which is the true bread;[f] or could cry with the Jews, "The temple of the Lord," and had not the Lord of the temple; this were a poor happiness.

Was Capernaum the more happy, or the more miserable, for seeing the mighty works which they had seen, and hearing the words of Christ which they did hear? Surely that which aggravates our sin and misery cannot be our rest.

7. If all this be nothing, do but consult with experience, both other men's and your own; too many thousands and millions have made trial, but did ever one of these find a sufficient rest for his soul on this earth?[g] Delights I deny not but they have found, and imperfect temporary content, but rest and satis-

[e] Summum bonum immortale est; nescit exire. Nec satietatem habet, nec pœnitentiam. At voluptas tunc cum maxime delectat, extinguitur. Nec multum loci habet; itaque cito implet: et tædio est, et post primum impetum marcet. Nec id unquam certum est, cujus in motu natura est. Nec ulla potest ejus esse substantia, quod venit transitve celerrime, in ipso usu sui periturum. Eo enim pervenit, ubi desinat: et dum incipit, spectat ad finem. Seneca de Vita Beat. c. 7.

[f] Panem Domini, non panem Dominum, ut Aug. Matt. i. 21—23.

[g] Hinc evidentior miseria est quia homo non vivit ut vult. Nam sicut vellet, vivere, beatum se putaret, sed nec sic tamen esset si turpiter viveret. Quanquam si diligentius attendemus, nisi beatus, non vivit ut vult; et nullus beatus nisi justus. Sed etiam ipse justus non vivit ut vult, nisi eo pervenerit ubi mori, falli, offendi omnino non possit, eique sit certum ita semper futurum. Hoc enim natura expetit; nec plene et perfecte beata erit, nisi adepta quod expetit. Nunc vero quis hominum potest ut vult vivere, quando ipsum vivere non est in potestate? Vivere enim vult, mori cogitur. Quomodo ergo vivit ut vult, qui non vivit quamdiu vult? Quod

faction they never found: and shall we think to find that which never man could find before us? Ahab's kingdom is nothing to him, except he had also Naboth's vineyard; and did that satisfy him, think you, when he obtained it? If we had conquered to ourselves the whole world, we should perhaps do as Alexander is fabled to have done, sit down and weep because there is never another world to conquer. If I should send you forth as Noah's dove, to go through the earth, to look for a resting-place, you would return with a confession, that you can find none. Go ask honour, Is there rest here? Why you may as well rest on the top of the tempestuous mountains, or in Ætna's flames, or on the pinnacle of the temple. If you ask riches, Is there rest here? Even such is in a bed of thorns; or were it a bed of down, yet you must arise in the morning, and leave it to the next guest that shall succeed you. Or if you inquire of worldly pleasure and ease, can they give you any tidings of true rest? Even such as the fish or bird hath in the net, or in swallowing down the deceitful bait; when the pleasure is at the sweetest, death is the nearest: it is just such a content and happiness, as the exhilarating vapours of the wine do give to a man that is drunk: it causeth a merry and cheerful heart, it makes him forget his wants and miseries, and conceive himself the happiest man in the world, till his sick vomitings have freed him of his disease, or sleep hath assuaged and subdued those vapours which deluded his phantasy and perverted his understanding, and then he awakes a more unhappy man than ever he was before. Such is the rest and happiness that all worldly pleasures do afford. As the phantasy may be delighted in a pleasant dream, when all the senses are captivated by sleep; so may the flesh of sensitive appetite, when the reasonable soul is captivated by security: but when the morning comes, the delusion vanisheth, and where is the pleasure and happiness then? Or if you should go to learning, to purest, plentifullest, powerfullest ordinances, or compass sea and land to find the perfectest church and holiest saints, and inquire whether there your soul may rest; you might haply receive from these indeed an olive-branch of hope, as they are means to your rest, and have relation to eternity; but in regard of any satisfaction in themselves, you would remain as restless as ever before. Oh how well might all these answer many of us, with that indignation, as Jacob did Rachel, "Am I instead of God?" Or as the king of Israel said to the messengers of the king of Assyria, when he required him to restore Naaman to health, "Am I God, to kill and make alive, that this man sends to me to recover a man of his leprosy?" So may the highest perfection on earth say, Are we God, or instead of God, that this man comes to us to give a soul rest? Go take a view of all estates of men in the world, and see whether any of them have found this rest. Go to the husbandman, and demand of him; behold his circular, endless labours, his continual care and toil and weariness, and you will easily see that there is no rest: go to the tradesman, and you shall find the like: if I should send you lower, you would judge your labour lost; or go to the conscionable, painful minister, and there you will yet more easily be satisfied; for though his spending, killing, endless labours are exceeding sweet, yet it is not because they are his rest, but in reference to his people's and his own eternal rest, at which he aims, and to which they may conduce: if you should ascend to magistracy, and inquire at the throne, you would find there is no condition so restless, and your hearts would even pity poor princes and kings. Doubtless neither court nor country, towns or cities, shops or fields, treasuries, libraries, solitariness, society, studies, or pulpits, can afford any such thing as this rest. If you could inquire of the dead of all generations, or if you could ask the living through all dominions, they would all tell you, Here is no rest; and all mankind may say, "All our days are sorrow, and our labour is grief, and our hearts take not rest," Eccles. ii. 23. Go to Geneva, go to New England, find out the church which you think most happy, and we may say of it, as lamenting Jeremy of the church of the Jews, "She dwelleth among the heathen, she findeth no rest, all her persecutors overtake her," Lam. i. 3. The holiest prophet, the blessedest apostle, would say, as one of the most blessed did, "Our flesh had no rest, without were fightings, within were fears," 2 Cor. vii. 5. If neither Christ nor his apostles, to whom was given the earth and the fulness thereof, had no rest here, why should we expect it? [h]

Or if other men's experiences move you not, do but take a view of your own: can you remember the estate that did fully satisfy you? or if you could, will it prove a lasting state? For my own part, I have run through several places and states of life, and though I never had the necessities which might occasion discontent, yet did I never find a settlement for my soul; and I believe we may all say of our rest, as Paul of our hopes, "If it were in this life only, we were of all men most miserable," 1 Cor. xv. 19. Or if you will not credit your past experience, you may try in your present or future wants; when conscience is wounded, God offended, your bodies weakened, your friends afflicted, see if these can yield you rest. If then either Scripture, or reason, or the experience of ourselves, and all the world, will satisfy us, we may see there is no resting here. And yet how guilty are the generality of professors of this sin! How many halts and stops do we make, before we will make the Lord our rest! How must God even drive us, and fire us out of every condition, lest we should sit down and rest there! If he give us prosperity, riches, or honour, we do in our hearts dance before them, as the Israelites before their calf, and say, These are thy gods, and conclude it is good being here. If he imbitter all these to us by crosses, how do we strive to have the cross removed, and the bitterness taken away, and are restless till our condition be sweetened to us, that we may sit down again and rest where we were! If the Lord, seeing our perverseness, shall now proceed in the cure, and take the creature quite away, then how do we labour, and care, and cry, and pray, that God would restore it, that, if it may be, we may make it our rest again! And while we are deprived of its actual enjoyment, and have not our former idol to delight in, yet rather than come to God, we delight ourselves in our hopes of recovering our former state; and as long as there is the least likelihood of obtaining it, we make those very hopes our rest. If the poor by labouring all their days, have but hopes of a fuller estate when they are old, (though a hundred to one they die be-

si mori voluerit, quomodo potest ut vult vivere, qui non vult vivere? Et si ideo mori velit, non quod nolit vivere, sed ut post mortem melius possit vivere, nondum ergo ut vult vivit, sed cum ad id quod vult moriendo pervenerit. Aug. de Civ. lib. xiv. c. 24, 25.

[h] Aliæ ætates hominum exilia videre: nostra totos populos patria extorres, bella ubique, et in ipsis belliis alia bella per militum sævitiam ac rapacitatem. In tot malis aut circumstantibus, aut impendentibus, tutum nihil nisi mors. Qui tanto rerum turbini eripitur, quid aliud quam evasisse censendus est? Grotius ad Gallos, Epist. 178. p. 432.

fore they have obtained it, or certainly at least immediately after,) yet do they labour with patience, and rest themselves on these expectations. Or if God doth take away both present enjoyments, and all hopes of ever recovering them, how do we search about, from creature to creature, to find out something to supply the room, and to settle upon, instead thereof? Yea, if we can find no supply, but are sure we shall live in poverty, in sickness, in disgrace, while we are on earth, yet will we rather settle in this misery, and make a rest of a wretched being, than we will leave all and come to God. A man would think, that a multitude of poor people, who beg their bread, or can scarce with their hardest labour have sustenance for their lives, should easily be driven from resting here, and willingly look to heaven for rest; and the sick who have not a day of ease, nor any hope of recovery left them. But oh the cursed averseness of these souls from God! We will rather account our misery our happiness, yea, that which we daily groan under as intolerable, than we will take up our happiness in God. If any place in hell were tolerable, the soul would rather take up its rest there, than come to God. Yea, when he is bringing us over to him, and hath convinced us of the worth of his ways and service, the last deceit of all is here, we will rather settle upon those ways that lead to him, and those ordinances which speak of him, and those gifts which flow from him, than we will come clean over to himself. Christian, marvel not that I speak so much of resting in these; beware lest it should prove thy own case: I suppose thou art so far convineed of the vanity of riches, and honour, and carnal pleasure, that thou canst more easily disclaim these, and it is well if it be so; but for thy more spiritual mercies in thy way of profession, thou lookest on these with less suspicion, and thinkest they are so near to God, that thou canst not delight in them too much, especially seeing most of the world despise them, or delight in them too little. But doth not the increase of those mercies dull thy longings after heaven? If all were according to thy desire in the church, wouldst thou not sit down and say, I am well, soul, take thy rest; and think it a judgment to be removed to heaven? Surely if thy delight in these excel not thy delight in God, or if thou wouldst gladly leave the most happy condition on earth, to be with God, then art thou a rare man, a christian indeed. I know the means of grace must be loved and valued, and the usual enjoyment of God is in the use of them; and he that delighteth in any worldly thing more than in them, is not a true christian; but when we are content with duty instead of God, and had rather be at a sermon than in heaven, and a member of a church here than of that perfect church, and rejoice in ordinances but as they are part of our earthly prosperity, this is a sad mistake. Many were more willing to go to heaven in the former days of persecution, when they had no hopes of seeing the church reformed, or delivered: but now men are in hopes to have all things almost as they desire, the case is altered; and they begin to look at heaven as strangely and sadly, as if it would be a loss to be removed to it. Is this the right use of reformation? or is this the way to have it continued or perfected? Should our deliverances draw our hearts from God? Oh, how much better were it, in every trouble, to fetch our chief arguments of comfort from the place where our chiefest rest remains! And when others comfort the poor with hopes of wealth, or the sick with hopes of health and life, let us comfort ourselves with the hopes of heaven. So far rejoice in the creature, as it comes from God, or leads to him, or brings thee some report of his love: so far let thy soul take comfort in ordinances, as God doth accompany them with quickening, or comfort, or gives himself unto thy soul by them; still remembering, when thou hast even what thou dost desire, yet this is not heaven; yet these are but the first-fruits. Is it not enough that God alloweth us all the comfort of travellers, and accordingly to rejoice in all his mercies, but we must set up our staff as if we were at home? "While we are present in the body, we are absent from the Lord," 2 Cor. v. 6—9; and while we are absent from him, we are absent from our rest. If God were as willing to be absent from us as we from him, and if he were as loth to be our rest as we are loth to rest in him, we should be left to an eternal restless separation. In a word, as you are sensible of the sinfulness of your earthly discontents, so be you also of your irregular contents, and pray God to pardon them much more. And above all the plagues and judgments of God on this side hell, see that you watch and pray against this of settling any where short of heaven, or reposing your souls to rest on any thing below God. Or else, when the bough which you tread on breaks, and the things which you rest upon deceive you, you will perceive your labour all lost, and your sweetest contents to be preparatives to your woe, and your highest hopes will make you ashamed. Try if you can persuade Satan to leave tempting, and the world to cease both troubling and seducing, and sin to cease inhabiting and acting; if you can bring the glory of God from above, or remove the court from heaven to earth, and secure the continuance of this through eternity, then settle yourselves below, and say, Soul, take thy rest here; but till then, admit not such a thought.

CHAPTER II.

THE SEVENTH USE.—REPROVING OUR UNWILLINGNESS TO DIE.

SECT. I. Is there a rest remaining for the people of God? Why are we then so loth to die, and to depart from hence that we may possess this rest? If I may judge of other men's hearts by my own, we are exceeding guilty in this point. We linger, as Lot in Sodom, till God being merciful to us, doth pluck us away against our wills.[a] How rare is it to meet with a christian, though of strongest parts, and longest profession, that can die with an unfeigned willingness! especially if worldly calamity constrain them not to be willing! Indeed, we sometimes set a good face on it, and pretend a willingness when we see there is no remedy, and that our unwillingness is only a disgrace to us, but will not help to prolong our lives: but if God had enacted such a law for the continuance of our lives on earth, as is enacted for the continuance of the parliament, that we should not be dissolved till our own pleasure, and that no man should die till he were truly willing, I fear heaven might be empty for the most of us; and if our worldly prosperity

[a] We resist and struggle, and, like froward servants, we are haled to our Master's presence with sadness and unwillingness; going out hence as compelled by necessity, and not in willing obedience: and would we be honoured by him with the heavenly rewards, to whom we go against our wills? Why pray we that the kingdom of heaven may come, if this earthly captivity do delight us? Cyprian. de Mortalitat. p 355.

did not fade, our lives on earth would be very long, if not eternal. We pretend desires of being better prepared, and of doing God some greater service, and to that end we beg one year more, and another, and another;[b] but still our promised preparation and service are as far to seek as ever before, and we remain as unwilling to die as we were when we begged our first reprival. If God were not more willing of our company, than we are of his, how long should we remain thus distant from him! And as we had never been sanctified if God had staid till we were willing; so if he should refer it wholly to ourselves, it would at least be long before we should be glorified. I confess that death of itself is not desirable, but the soul's rest is with God, to which death is the common passage. And because we are apt to make light of this sin, and to plead our common nature to patronize it, let me here set before you its aggravations; and also propound some further considerations, which may be useful to you and myself against it.

Sect. II. And, first, consider what a deal of gross infidelity doth lurk in the bowels of this sin. Either paganish unbelief of the truth of that eternal blessedness, and of the truth of the Scripture which doth promise it to us; or, at least, a doubting of our own interest; or most usually somewhat of both these. And though christians are usually most sensible of the latter, and therefore complain most against it, yet I am apt to suspect the former to be the main, radical master-sin, and of greatest force in this business. Oh! if we did but verily believe that the promise of this glory is the word of God, and that God doth truly mean as he speaks, and is fully resolved to make it good; if we did verily believe that there is, indeed, such blessedness prepared for believers as the Scripture mentioneth; sure we should be as impatient of living as we are now fearful of dying,[c] and should think every day a year till our last day should come. We should as hardly refrain from laying violent hands on ourselves, or from the neglecting of the means of our health and life, as we do now from over-much carefulness and seeking of life by unlawful means. If the eloquent oration of a philosopher, concerning the soul's immortality and the life to come, could make his affected hearer presently to cast himself headlong from the rock, as impatient of any longer delay, what would a serious christian belief do, if God's law against self-murder did not restrain? Is it possible that we can truly believe that death will remove us from misery to such glory, and yet be loth to die? If it were the doubts of our interest which made us afraid, yet a true belief of the certainty and excellency of this rest would make us restless till our interest be cleared. If a man that is desperately sick to-day, did believe he should arise sound the next morning; or a man to-day, in despicable poverty, had assurance that he should to-morrow arise a prince; would they be afraid to go to bed, or rather think it the longest day of their lives, till that desired night and morning came? The truth is, though there is much faith and christianity in our mouths, yet there is much infidelity and paganism in our hearts, which is the main cause that we are so loth to die.

Sect. III. 3. And as the weakness of our faith,[d] so also the coldness of our love, is exceedingly discovered by our unwillingness to die. Love doth desire the nearest conjunction, the fullest fruition, and closest communion. Where these desires are absent, there is only a naked pretence of love. He that ever felt such a thing as love working in his breast, hath also felt these desires attending it. If we love our friend, we love his company: his presence is comfortable, his absence is troublesome. When he goes from us, we desire his return: when he comes to us, we entertain him with welcome and gladness: when he dies, we mourn, and usually over-mourn. To be separated from a faithful friend, is to us as the renting of a member from our bodies: and would not our desires after God be such, if we really loved him? Nay, should it not be much more than such, as he is above all friends most lovely? The Lord teach us to look closely to our hearts, and take heed of self-deceit in this point: for, certainly, whatever we pretend or conceit, if we love either father, mother, husband, wife, child, friend, wealth, or life, more than Christ, we are yet none of his sincere disciples. When it comes to the trial, the question will not be who hath preached most, or heard most, or talked most, but who hath loved most. When our account is given, Christ will not take sermons, prayers, fastings; no, not the giving of our goods, nor the burning of our bodies, instead of love, 1 Cor. xiii. 1—4, 8, 13; xvi. 22; Eph. vi. 24. And do we love him, and yet care not how long we are from him? If I be deprived of my bosom friend, methinks I am as a man in a wilderness, solitary and disconsolate: and is my absence from God no part of my trouble; and yet can I take him for my chiefest friend? If I delight but in some garden, or walk, or gallery, I would be much in it: if I love my books, I am much with them, and almost unweariedly poring on them. The food which I love, I would often feed on; the clothes that I love, I would often wear; the recreations which I love, I would often use them; the business which I love, I would be much employed in. And can I love God, and that above all these, and yet have no desires to be with him? Is it not a far likelier sign of hatred than of love, when the thoughts of our appearing before God are our most grievous thoughts; and when we take ourselves as undone, because we must die and come unto him? Surely I should scarce take him for an unfeigned friend, who were as well contented to be absent from me, as we ordinarily are to be

[b] We are all naturally desirous to live, and though we prize life above all earthly things, yet we are ashamed to profess that we desire it for its own sake, but pretend some other reason; one for this, and another for that, &c. After all this hypocrisy, nature above all things would live, and makes life the main end of living: but grace hath higher thoughts, &c. Bishop Hall, Solil. p. 21, 79, 80. For mere moral considerations against the fear of death, read Sen. Epist. 20. ad Lucilium, and Charron of Wisdom, lib. ii. c. 11. For spiritual considerations, (among many larger,) Cypr. de Mortalitate (and others of his) is excellent.

[c] Let him fear to die, who being not born again of water and the Spirit, is condemned to the flames of hell. Let him fear to die, who is not judged to be Christ's in his cross and passion. Let him fear to die, who must from this death pass to the second death. Let him fear to die, whom eternal fire must torment with everlasting pains, when he departeth hence. Let him fear to die, who by his longer delay doth gain only the deferring of his groans and torments. Cyprian. de Mortalitate, sect. x. p. (mihi) 344.

[d] Beata vita si non amatur, non habetur: porro si amatur et habetur, cæteris omnibus rebus excellentius necesse est ametur; quoniam propter hanc amandum est, quicquid aliud amatur: porro si tantum amatur quantum amari digna est, (non enim beatus est a quo ipsa beata vita non amatur ut digna est) fieri non potest ut eam qui sic amat, non æternam velit. Tunc igitur beata erit, quando erit æterna. Aug. de Civit. lib. xiv. c. 25. Solus est qui sine amico est. Aug. Herodotus tells us of a country where men have many wives, and when a man dieth all his wives must be examined, that it may be known which he loved best, and that must be slain and buried with him; and that they used to strive for this as a high privilege, and take it to heart as a great dishonour to be put by it. Herodot. lib. v. p. (edit. Sylburg.) 284. And will not the love of Christ make a christian as willing to die?

absent from God. Was it such a joy to Jacob to see the face of Joseph in Egypt, and shall we so dread the sight of Christ in glory, and yet say we love him? I dare not conclude that we have no love at all when we are so loth to die; but I dare say, were our love more, we should die more willingly. Yea, I dare say, did we love God but as strongly as a worldling loves his wealth, or as an ambitious man his honour, or a voluptuous man his pleasure; yea, as a drunkard loves his swinish delight, or an unclean person his brutish lust; we should not then be so exceeding loth to leave the world, and go to God. Oh! if this holy flame of love were thoroughly kindled in our breasts, instead of our pressing fears, our dolorous complaints, and earnest prayers against death, we should join in David's wilderness lamentations: "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God: my soul thirsteth for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God?" Psal. xlii. 1, 2. The truth is, as our knowledge of God is exceeding dark, and our faith in him exceeding feeble; so is our love to him but little, and therefore are our desires after him so dull.

Sect. IV. 3. It appears we are little weary of sinning, when we are so unwilling to be freed by dying. Did we take sin for the greatest evil, we should not be willing of its company so long; did we look on sin as our cruellest enemy, and on a sinful life as the most miserable life, sure we should then be more willing of a change. But, oh! how far are our hearts from our doctrinal profession, in this point also! We preach, and write, and talk against sin, and call it all that naught is; and when we are called to leave it, we are loth to depart: we brand it with the most odious names that we can imagine, and all fall short of expressing its vileness; but when the approach of death puts us to the trial, we choose a continuance with these abominations, before the presence and fruition of God. But as Nemon smote his soldier for railing against Alexander's enemy, saying, "I hired thee to fight against him, and not to rail against him;"[e] so may God smite us also when he shall hear our tongues reviling that sin which we resist so slothfully, and part with so unwillingly. Christians, seeing we are conscious that our hearts deserve a smiting for this, let us join together to chide and smite our own hearts, before God do judge and smite them. O foolish, sinful heart! hast thou been so long a sink of sin, a cage of all unclean lusts, a fountain incessantly streaming forth the bitter and deadly waters of transgression: and art thou not yet more weary? Wretched soul! hast thou been so long wounded in all thy faculties; so grievously languishing in all thy performances; so fruitful a soil for all iniquities; and art thou not yet weary? Hast thou not yet transgressed long enough;[f] nor long enough provoked thy Lord; nor long enough abused love? Wouldst thou yet grieve the Spirit more, and sin against thy Saviour's blood, and more increase thine own wounds, and still lie under thy grievous imperfections? Hath thy sin proved so profitable a commodity, so necessary a companion, such a delightful employment, that thou dost so much dread the parting day? Hath thy Lord deserved this at thy hands, that thou shouldst choose to continue in the suburbs of hell, rather than live with him in light; and rather stay and drudge in sin, and abide with his and thy own professed enemy, than come away and dwell with God? May not God justly grant thee thy wishes, and seal thee a lease of thy desired distance, and nail thy ear to these doors of misery, and exclude thee eternally from his glory? Foolish sinner! who hath wronged thee, God or sin? Who hath wounded thee and caused thy groans? Who hath made thy life so woeful, and caused thee to spend thy days in dolour? Is it Christ, or is it thy corruption? and art thou yet so loth to think of parting? Shall God be willing to dwell with man, and the Spirit to abide in thy peevish heart; and that where sin doth straiten his room, and a cursed inmate inhabit with him, which is ever quarrelling and contriving against him; and shall man be loth to come to God, where is nothing but perfect blessedness and glory? Is not this to judge ourselves unworthy of everlasting life? If they in Acts xiii. 46, who put the gospel from them, did judge themselves unworthy, do not we who flee from life and glory?

Sect. V. 4. It shows that we are insensible of the vanity of the creature, and of the vexation accompanying our residence here, when we are so loth to hear or think of a removal. Whatever we say against the world, or how grievous soever our complaints may seem; we either believe not or feel not what we say, or else we should be answerably affected to it. We call the world our enemy, and cry out of the oppression of our task-masters, and groan under our sore bondage; but either we speak not as we think, or else we imagine some singular happiness to consist in the possession of worldly things, for which all this should be endured. Is any man loth to leave his prison, or to remove his dwelling from his cruel enemies, or to escape the hands of murderous robbers?[g] Do we take the world indeed for our prison, our cruel, spoiling, murderous foe; and yet are we loth to leave it? Do we take this flesh for the clog of our spirits; and a veil that is drawn betwixt us and God; and a continual in-dwelling traitor to our souls; and yet are we loth to lay it down? Indeed, Peter was smitten by the angel,[h] before he arose and left his prison; but it was more from his ignorance of his intended deliverance, than any unwillingness to leave the place. I have read of Joseph's long imprisonment, and Daniel's casting into the den of lions, and Jeremiah's sticking fast in the dungeon, and Jonah's lying in the belly of the whale, and David from the deep crying to God; but I remember not that any were loth to be delivered. I have read, indeed, that they suffered cheerfully, and rejoiced in being afflicted, destitute, and tormented; yea, and that some of them would not accept of deliverance:[i] but not from any love to the suffering, or any unwillingness to change their condition, but because of the hard terms of their deliverance, and from the hope they had of a better resurrection. Though Paul and Silas could sing in the

[e] Plutarch. in Apotheg.

[f] Cum Schegius medicus cæcus fieret, patienter fert, Quid, inquit, multa in vita vidi, quæ maluissem non videre. Optavi ad nonnulla etiam fuisse surdum. Why do we over and over in our prayers beg and entreat that God's kingdom might hasten, if we have greater desires and stronger wishes to serve the devil here, than to go reign with Christ? Cyprian. de Mortal. sect. xiii. p. 345.

[g] Inquit Platerus ille felix ægrotus, Finem fac dolorum Domine: sordent enim mihi omnia terrena. Utinam, utinam vel hoc momento hora meæ mortis instaret; ex animo cupio dissolvi, et esse cum Christo. Even because we despise death, you may judge well of us. For I myself, when I delighted in the doctrine of Plato, when I heard the christians reproached, and saw that they feared not death, nor any thing which was terrible to other men, I bethought myself, that it was impossible that these men should be servants to vice and pleasures. For what man that is given to pleasure, or is intemperate, or sweetly glutteth in human bowls, can delight in death, which depriveth him of his delights; and would not rather endeavour to live here still, and to dissemble with the magistrates (that would kill him)? much less will he give up himself to death. Justin Martyr. Apolog. 1.

[h] Acts xii. 7—9. [i] Heb. xi.

stocks,[k] and comfortably bear the cruel scourgings, yet I do not believe they were unwilling to go forth, nor took it ill when God released them.[l] Ah, foolish, wretched soul! doth every prisoner groan for freedom, and every slave desire his jubilee, and every sick man long for health, and every hungry man for food; and dost thou alone abhor deliverance? Doth the seaman long to see the land? Doth the husbandman desire the harvest, and the labouring man to receive his pay? Doth the traveller long to be at home, and the runner long to win the prize, and the soldier long to win the field? And art thou loth to see thy labours finished, and to receive the end of thy faith and sufferings, and to obtain the thing for which thou livest? Are all thy sufferings only seeming? Have thy gripes, thy griefs and groans, been only dreams? If they were, yet methinks we should not be afraid of waking. Fearful dreams are not delightful. Or, is it not rather the world's delights that are all mere dreams and shadows? Is not all its glory as the light of a glow-worm, a wandering fire, yielding but small directing light, and as little comforting heat in all our doubtful and sorrowful darkness? Or, hath the world, in these its latter days, laid aside its ancient enmity? Is it become of late more kind? Hath it left its thorny, renting nature? Who hath wrought this great change, and who hath made this reconciliation? Surely, not the great Reconciler. He hath told us, in the world we shall have trouble, and in him only we shall have peace. We may reconcile ourselves to the world at our peril, but it will never reconcile itself to us. O foolish, unworthy soul, who hadst rather dwell in this land of darkness, and rather wander in this barren wilderness, than be at rest with Jesus Christ; who hadst rather stay among the wolves, and daily suffer the scorpions' stings, than to praise the Lord with the hosts of heaven. If thou didst well know what heaven is, and what earth is, it would not be so.

Sect. VI. This unwillingness to die, doth actually impeach us of high treason against the Lord: is it not a choosing of earth before him; and taking these present things for our happiness, and consequently making them our very God? If we did indeed make God our God, that is, our end, our rest, our portion, our treasure, how is it possible but we should desire to enjoy him? It behoves us the rather to be fearful of this, it being utterly inconsistent with saving grace, to value any thing before God, or to make the creature our highest end. Many other sins, foul and great, may possibly yet consist with sincerity; but so, I am certain, cannot that. But concerning this I have spoken before.

Sect. VII. 6. And all these defects being thus discovered, what a deal of dissembling doth it moreover show![m] We take on us to believe undoubtedly the exceeding, eternal weight of glory; we call God our chiefest good, and say, We love him above all; and for all this, we flee from him as if it were from hell itself. Would you have any man believe you, when you call the Lord your only hope, and speak of Christ as all in all, and talk of the joy that is in his presence, and yet would endure the hardest life rather than die, and come into his presence? What self-contradiction this, to talk so hardly of the world and flesh, to groan and complain of sin and suffering, and yet fear no day more than that which we expect should bring our final freedom! What shameless, gross dissembling is this, to spend so many hours and days in hearing sermons, reading books, conferring with others, and all to learn the way to a place which we are loth to come to; to take on us all our life-time to walk towards heaven, to run, to strive, to fight for heaven, which we are loth to come to! What apparent, palpable hypocrisy is this, to lie upon our knees in public and private, and spend one hour after another in prayer for that which we would not have! If one should overhear thee in thy daily devotions crying out, Lord, deliver me from this body of death, from this sin, this sickness, this poverty, these cares and fears; how long, Lord, shall I suffer these? and withal should hear thee praying against death, can he believe thy tongue agrees with thy heart? except thou have so far lost thy reason as to expect all this here; or except the papists' doctrine were true, that we are able to fulfil the law of God; or our late perfectionists are truly enlightened, who think they can live and not sin: but if thou know these to be undoubtedly false, how canst thou deny thy gross dissembling?

Sect. VIII. 7. Consider, How do we wrong the Lord and his promises, and disgrace his ways in the eyes of the world![n] As if we would actually persuade them to question, whether God be true to his word or no; whether there be any such glory as Scripture mentions; when they see those who have professed to live by faith, and have boasted of their hopes in another world, and persuaded others to let go all for these hopes, and spoken disgracefully of all things below, in comparison of these unexpressible things above; I say, when they see these very men so loth to leave their hold of present things, and to go to that glory which they talked and boasted of, how doth it make the weak to stagger, and confirm the world in their unbelief and sensuality; and make them conclude, Sure if these professors did expect so much glory, and make so light of the world as they seem, they would not themselves be so loth of a change. Oh, how are we ever able to repair the wrong which we do to God and poor souls by this scandal! and, what an honour to God, what a strengthening to believers, what a conviction to unbelievers, would it be, if christians in

[k] Acts xvi. 25.

[l] Compara nunc si placeat hanc vitam cum illa. Elige si potes perpetuam corporis vitam in labore, ærumnaque miserabili tantarum commutationum, votorumque tædio, fastidio voluptatum. Nam si Deus ista perpetuare velit, illa diligeres? Nam si per se vita fugienda est, ut si molestiarum fuga, requies ærumnarum, quanto magis ea requies est expetenda, cui futuræ resurrectionis voluptas perpetua succedet? Ubi nulla criminum series, nulla illecebra delictorum. Ambros. Lib. de Resurrect. John xvi. 20, 22.

[m] Transi circa natalia suorum atque obitus hoc factitant; edito puero propinqui eum circumsidentes cum ploratione prosequuntur, ob ea mala quæ necesse est illi quod vitam ingressus sit, perpeti; humanas omnes calamitates, recensentes. Hominem autem fato functum, per lusum atque lætitiam terræ demandant, referentes quot malis liberatus, in omni sit felicitate. Herodotus, lib. v. (edit. Sylburg.) p. 284. It seems these believed the soul's immortality and future happiness. How preposterous is it, and how perverse, that when we pray that God's will be done; yet when he calleth us out of this world, we will not readily obey the command of his will! Cyprian. de Mortalit. sect. xii. p. 345.

[n] How oft hath it been revealed to me that I should daily preach and publicly contest, that our brethren are not to be lamented, who are delivered from this world by the call of God, when we know that they are not lost, but sent before! Departing, they lead us the way, as travellers and sailors use to do; that they may be desired, and not bewailed. And that we should not put on black clothes for them here, when they have put on white raiment there; that we should give the heathen occasion justly to reprehend us; that we lament those as dead and lost, whom we affirm to be with God; and that we condemn that faith by the testimony of our hearts, which we profess by the testimony of our speech. We are prevaricators of our faith and hope; and make that which we teach seem to them counterfeit, feigned, and dissembled. It will do us no good to prefer virtue in words, and destroy verity by our deeds. Cyprian. de Mortalitate, sect. xiv. p. (mihi) 315.

this did answer their professions, and cheerfully welcome the news of rest!

Sect. IX. 8. It evidently discovers that we have been careless loiterers, that we have spent much time to little purpose, and that we have neglected and lost a great many warnings.[o] Have we not had all our life-time to prepare to die? So many years to make ready for one hour, and are we so unready and unwilling yet? What have we done, why have we lived, that the business of our lives is so much undone? Had we any greater matters to mind? Have we not foolishly wronged our souls in this? Would we have wished more frequent warnings? How oft hath death entered the habitations of our neighbours! How oft hath it knocked at our own doors! We have first heard that such a one is dead, and then such a one, and such a one, till our towns have changed most of their inhabitants; and was not all this a sufficient warning to tell us that we were also mortals, and our own turn would shortly come? Nay, we have seen death raging in towns and fields, so many hundred a day dead of the pestilence, so many thousands slain by the sword? and did we not know it would reach to us at last? How many distempers have vexed our bodies; frequent languishings, consuming weaknesses, wasting fevers; here pain, and there trouble; that we have been forced to receive the sentence of death: and what were all these but so many messengers sent from God to tell us we must shortly die, as if we had heard a lively voice bidding us, Delay no more, but make you ready: and are we unready and unwilling after all this? O careless, dead-hearted sinners, unworthy neglecters of God's warning, faithless betrayers of our own souls!

All these heinous aggravations do lie upon this sin of unwillingness to die, which I have laid down to make it hateful to my own soul, which is too much guilty of it, as well as yours; and for a further help to our prevailing against it, I shall adjoin these following considerations:

Sect. X. 1. Consider, "Not to die," were "never to be happy."[p] To escape death, were to miss of blessedness; except God should translate us as Enoch and Elias, which he never did before or since. If our hope in Christ were in this life only, we were then of all men most miserable: the epicure hath more pleasure to his flesh than the christian; the drunkard, the whoremaster, and the jovial lads, do swagger it out with gallantry and mirth, when a poor saint is mourning in a corner: yea, the very beasts of the field do eat, and drink, and skip, and play, and care for nothing, when many a christian dwells with sorrows: so that if you would not die, and go to heaven, what would you have more than an epicure or a beast? What doth it avail us to fight with beasts, as men, if it were not for our hopes of a life to come? why do we pray, and fast, and mourn; why do we suffer the contempt of the world; why are we the scorn and hatred of all; if it were not for our hopes after we are dead? Why are we christians, and not pagans and infidels, if we do not desire a life to come? Why, christian, wouldst thou lose thy faith, and lose thy labour in all thy duties and all thy sufferings? Wouldst thou lose thy hope, and lose all the end of thy life, and lose all the blood of Christ, and be contented with the portion of a worldling or a brute? If thou say no to this, how canst thou then be loth to die? As good old Milius said, when he lay a dying, and was asked whether he was willing to die or no, *Illius est nolle mori, qui nolit ire ad Christum.*[q] A saying of Cyprian's, which he oft repeated, "Let him be loth to die, who is loth to be with Christ."[r]

Sect. XI. 2. Consider, Is God willing by death to glorify us; and are we unwilling to die that we may be glorified? Would God freely give us heaven; and are we unwilling to receive it? As the prince who would have taken the lame beggar into his coach, and he refused, said to him, *Optime mereris qui in luto hæreas*, Thou well deservest to stick in the dirt; so may God to the refusers of rest, You well deserve to live in trouble. Methinks, if a prince were willing to make you his heir, you should scarce be unwilling to accept it. Sure the refusing of such a kindness must needs discover ingratitude and unworthiness. As God hath resolved against them who make excuses when they should come to Christ, "Verily, none of these that were bidden shall taste of my supper;" so is it just with him to resolve against us who frame excuses when we should come to glory. [s] Ignatius, when he was condemned to be torn with wild beasts, was so afraid, lest by the prayers and means of his friends, he should lose the opportunity and benefit of martyrdom, that he often entreats them to let him alone, and not hinder his happiness; and tells them he was afraid of their love, lest it would hurt him, and their carnal friendship would keep him from death.

Sect. XII. 3. The Lord Jesus was willing to come from heaven to earth for us, and shall we be unwilling to remove from earth to heaven for ourselves and him?[t] Sure if we had been once possessed of heaven, and God should have sent us to earth again, as he did his Son for our sakes, we should then have been loth to remove indeed. It was another kind of change than ours is, which Christ did freely submit unto, to clothe himself with the garments of flesh, and to take upon him the form of a servant; to come from the bosom of the Father's love to bear his wrath which we should have borne. Shall he come down to our hell, from the height of glory to the depth of misery, to bring us up to his eternal rest? and shall we be after this unwilling?[u] Sure Christ

[a] Ultima verbi nobilis Andr. Dudithii ad Ruterum discedentem verissima; Vale, inquit, et fœliciter vive, et inter vivendum bene mori disce; quæ ars est artium omnium difficillima, simulque præstantissima. Non pudet te reliquias vitæ tibi reservare? Et id solum tempus bonæ menti destinare, quod in nullam rem conferri possit? Quam serum est tunc vivere incipere, cum desinendum est? Seneca de Brev. Vit. c. 4.

[p] When we die, we pass over by death to immortality; and it is impossible that we should come to eternal life if we go not hence. This is no ending, but a passing on; and a reaching to eternity by the despatch of our temporal journey. Who would not hasten to a better state? Who would not wish to be changed and reformed to the image of Christ, and to come quickly to the dignity of the heavenly grace? Cyprian. de Mortalit. sect. 15. p. 346.

[q] Melch. Adam in vita Milii.

[r] Regnum Dei cœpit esse in proximo: præmium vitæ, et gaudium salutis æternæ, et perpetua lætitia, et possessio paradisi nuper amissa, mundo transeunte jam veniunt; jam terrenis cœlestia, et magna parvis, et caducis æterna succedunt. Quis hinc anxietatis et solicitudinis locus est? Quis inter hæc trepidus et mœstus est, nisi cui spes et fides deest? Ejus enim mortem timere, qui ad Christum nolit ire. Ejus est ad Christum nolle ire, qui se non credat cum Christo incipere regnare; Justus enim fide vivet. Cyprian. de Mortalit. sect. ii. p. 341.

[s] Φοβοῦμαι γὰρ τὴν ἀγάπην ὑμῶν, μὴ αὐτὴ με ἀδικήσῃ· ὑμῖν γὰρ εὐχερές ἐστιν ὃ θέλετε ποιῆσαι· ἐμοὶ δὲ δυσκολόν ἐστι τοῦ θεοῦ ἐπιτυχεῖν, &c. Ignat. Epist. ad Romanos, Edit. Usserii, p. 82.

[t] Cum dicis, Beate vivere volo, bonam rem quæris, sed non hic; si habuit hic istud Christus, habe et tu in regione mortis tuæ: Quid ille invenit, attende.

[u] Venit de alta regione, et quid invenit nisi quod hic abundavit? Labores, dolores, mortem: Ecce quod hic habes et quod abundat, manducavit tecum. Quod hic in cella miseriæ tuæ abundavit, acetum hic bibit, fel hic bibit: ecce quod in cella tua invenit. At ad magnam mensam te invitavit, mensam solis mensam angelorum, ubi ipse panis est. August. sup. Joan. 13.

had more cause to be unwilling; he might have said, What is it to me if these sinners suffer? If they value their flesh above their spirits, and their lusts above my Father's love, if they needs will sell their souls for nought, who is it fit should be the loser; and who should bear the blame and curse? Should I whom they have wronged? Must they wilfully transgress my law, and I undergo their deserved pain? Is it not enough that I bear the trespass from them, but I must also bear my Father's wrath, and satisfy the justice which they have wronged? Must I come down from heaven to earth, and clothe myself with human flesh; be spit upon, and scorned by man; and fast, and weep, and sweat, and suffer, and bleed, and die a cursed death? and all this for wretched worms, who would rather hazard all they had, and venture their souls and God's favour, than they would forbear but one forbidden morsel? Do they cast away themselves so slightly, and must I redeem them again so dearly? Thus we see that Christ had much to have pleaded against his coming down for man, and yet he pleaded none of this; he had reason enough to have made him unwilling, and yet did he voluntarily condescend. But we have no reason against our coming to him, except we will reason against our hopes, and plead for a perpetuity of our own calamities. Christ came down to fetch us up, and would we have him lose his blood and labour, and go away again without us? Hath he bought our rest at so dear a rate? Is our inheritance purchased with the blood of God, and are we after all this loth to enter? Ah! sirs, it was Christ, and not we, that had cause to be loth. The Lord forgive and heal this foolish ingratitude.

Sect. XIII. 4. Consider, Do we not combine with our most cruel, mortal foes, and jump with them in their most malicious design, while we are loth to die and go to heaven?[x] Where is the height of their malice; and what is the scope of all temptations; and what is the devil's daily business? Is it not to keep our souls from God? And shall we be well content with this, and join with Satan in our desires? What though it be not those eternal torments, yet it is the one half of hell which we wish to ourselves, while we desire to be absent from heaven and God. If thou shouldst take counsel of all thine enemies, if thou shouldst beat thy brains both night and day in studying to do thyself a mischief, what greater than this could it possibly be, to continue here on earth from God; excepting only hell itself? Oh, what sport is this to Satan, that his desires and thine should so concur; that when he sees he cannot get thee to hell, he can so long keep thee out of heaven, and make thee the earnest petitioner for it thyself! Oh, gratify not the devil so much to thy own displeasure!

Sect. XIV. 5. Do not our daily fears of death make our lives a continual torment? The fears of death being, as Erasmus saith, a sorer evil than death itself.[y] And thus, as Paul did die daily in regard of preparation, and in regard of the necessary sufferings of this life, so do we in regard of the torments and the useless sufferings which we make ourselves. Those lives which might be full of joys in the daily contemplation of the life to come, and the sweet, delightful thoughts of bliss, how do we fill them up with terrors through all these causeless thoughts and fears! Thus do we consume our own comforts, and prey upon our truest pleasures. When we might lie down, and rise up, and walk abroad, with our hearts full of the joys of God, we continually fill them with perplexing fears. For he that fears dying, must be always fearing, because he hath always cause to expect it. And how can that man's life be comfortable, who lives in continual fear of losing his comforts?

Sect. XV. 6. Moreover, All these are self-created sufferings; as if it were not enough to be the deservers, but we must also be the executioners of our own calamities. As if God had not inflicted enough upon us, but we must inflict more upon ourselves! Is not death bitter enough to the flesh of itself, but we must double, and treble, and multiply its bitterness? Do we complain so much of the burden of our troubles, and yet daily add unto the weight? Sure the state of poor mortals is sufficiently calamitous; they need not make it so much worse. The sufferings laid upon us by God, do all lead to happy issues; the progress is from suffering to patience, from thence to experience, and so to hope, and at last to glory, Rom. v. 3, 4; viii. 17. But the sufferings which we do make ourselves, have usually issues answerable to their causes. The motion is circular and endless; from sin to suffering, from suffering to sin, and so to suffering again, and so *in infinitum:* and not only so, but they multiply in their course; every sin is greater than the former, and so every suffering also greater. This is the natural progress of them, which, if mercy do intercept, no thanks to us. So that, except we think that God hath made us to be our own tormentors, we have small reason to nourish our fears of death.[z]

Sect. XVI. 7. Consider, further, They are all but useless, unprofitable fears. As all our care cannot make one hair white or black, or add one cubit to our stature, (Matt. v. 36; vi. 27,) so can neither our fear prevent our sufferings, nor delay our dying time an hour; willing or unwilling, we must away. Many a man's fears have hastened his end, but no man's ever did avert it. It is true, a cautelous fear or care concerning the danger after death, hath profited many, and is very useful to the preventing of that danger; but for a member of Christ, and an heir of heaven, to be afraid of entering his own inheritance, this is a sinful, useless fear.[a]

Sect. XVII. 8. But though it be useless in respect of good, yet to Satan it is very serviceable. Our fears of dying insnare our souls, and add strength to many temptations. Nay, when we are called to die for Christ, and put to it in a day of trial, it may draw us to deny the known truth, and forsake the Lord God himself. You look upon it now as a small sin, a common frailty of human nature; but if you look to the dangerous consequences of it, methinks it should move you to other thoughts. What made Peter deny his Lord? What makes apostates in suffering times forsake the truth, and the green blade of unrooted faith to wither before the heat of persecution? Fear of imprisonment and poverty may do much, but fear of death will do much more. When you see the gibbet, or hear the sentence, if this fear of dying prevail in you, you will straight begin to say as Peter, "I know not the man." When you see the faggots set, and fire ready, you will say as that apostate to the martyr, "Oh! the fire is hot, and nature is frail," forgetting that the fire of hell is

[x] Posse mori nunquam tollitur, nisi morte: quare Christus per mortem tulit posse mori, ut per resurrectionem natura pervenerit ad immortalitatem. Card. Cusanus Operum, vol. ii. exercit. lib. vii. p. 133.

[y] Timor mortis pejor quam ipsa mors. Erasm. Colloq.

[z] Eheu quam miserum est, fieri metuendo senem! Publius.

[a] If mortality do no more, yet this good it will do to christians and the servants of God, that we be willing to desire martyrdom, when we learn not to fear death. They are our exercises, and not our funerals; they give to the soul the glory of fortitude, and by contempt of death prepare for glory. Cyprian. de Mortalitat. p. 344.

hotter: Sirs, as light as you make of it, you know not of what foree these fears are to separate your souls from Jesus Christ. Have we not lately had frequent experience of it? How many thousands have fled in fight, and turned their backs on a good cause, where they knew the honour of God was concerned, and their country's welfare was the prize for which they fought, and the hopes of their posterity did lie at the stake, and all through unworthy fear of dying! Have we not known those who, lying under a wounded conscience, and living in the practice of some known sin, durst scarce look the enemy in the face, because they durst not look death in the face, but have trembled, and drawn back, and cried, Alas! I dare not die: if I were in the case of such or such, I durst die. He that dare not die, dare scarce fight valiantly. Therefore, we have seen in our late wars, that there is none more valiant than these two sorts: 1. Those who have conquered the fear of death by the power of faith; 2. And those who have extinguished it by desperate profaneness, and cast it away through stupid security. So much fear as we have of death, usually so much cowardice in the cause of God. However, it is an evident temptation and snare. Besides the multitude of unbelieving contrivances and discontents at the wise disposals of God, and hard thoughts of most of his providences, which this sin doth make us guilty of: besides, also, it loseth us much precious time, and that for the most part near our end. When time should be most precious of all to us, and when it should be employed to better purpose, then do we vainly and sinfully waste it in the fruitless issues of these distracting fears. So that you see how dangerous a snare these fears are, and how fruitful a parent of many evils.

Sect. XVIII. 9. Consider, What a competent time the most of us have had; some thirty, some forty, some fifty or sixty years. How many come to the grave younger, for one that lives to the shortest of these! Christ himself, as is generally thought, lived but thirty-three years on earth.[b] If it were to come, as it is past, you would think thirty years a long time. Did you not, long ago, in your threatening sickness, think with yourselves, Oh, if I might but enjoy one seven years more, or ten years more! And now you have enjoyed perhaps more than you then begged, and are you nevertheless unwilling yet? except you would not die at all, but desire an immortality here on earth, which is a sin inconsistent with the truth of grace. If your sorrow be merely this, that you are mortal, you might as well have lamented it all your lives, for sure you could never be ignorant of this. Why should not a man that would die at all, be as well willing at thirty or forty, if God see it meet, as at seventy or eighty; nay, usually when the longest day is come, men are as loth to depart as ever.[c] He that loseth so many years, hath more cause to bewail his own neglect, than to complain of the shortness of his time, and were better lament the wickedness of his life, than the brevity. Length of time doth not conquer corruption, it never withers nor decays through age. Except we receive an addition of grace, as well as time, we naturally grow the older the worse. Let us, then, be contented with our allotted proportion. And as we are convinced that we should not murmur against our assigned degree of wealth, of health, of honour, and other things here, so let us not be discontented with our allowed proportion of time. O my soul, depart in peace! Hast thou not here enjoyed a competent share? As thou wouldst not desire an unlimited state in wealth and honour, so desire it not in point of time. Is it fit that God or thou should be the sharer. If thou wert sensible how little thou deservest an hour of that patience which thou hast enjoyed, thou wouldst think thou hast had a large part. Wouldst thou have thy age called back again; canst thou eat thy bread, and have it too? Is it not divine wisdom that sets the bounds? God will not let one have all the work, nor all the suffering, nor all the honour of the work. He will honour himself by variety of instruments; by various persons and several ages, and not by one person or age. Seeing thou hast acted thine own part, and finished thine appointed course, come down contentedly, that others may succeed, who must have their turns as well as thou. As of all other outward things, so also of that time and life, thou mayst as well have too much as too little: only of God and eternal life, thou canst never enjoy too much, nor too long. Great receivings will have great accounts; where the lease is longer, the fine and rent must be the greater. Much time hath much duty. Is it not as easy to answer for the receivings and the duties of thirty years, as of a hundred? Beg therefore for grace to improve it better, but be contented with thy share of time.

Sect. XIX. 10. Consider, Thou hast had a competency of the comforts of life, and not of naked time alone. God might have made thy life a misery; till thou hadst been as weary of possessing it, as thou art now afraid of losing it. If he had denied thee the benefits and ends of living, thy life would have been but a slender comfort. They in hell have life as well as we, and longer far than they desire. God might have suffered thee to have consumed thy days in ignorance, or to have spent thy life to the last hour, before he brought thee home to himself, and given thee the saving knowledge of Christ; and then thy life had been short, though thy time long. But he hath opened thine eyes in the morning of thy days, and acquainted thee betimes with the trade of thy life. I know the best are but negligent loiterers, and spend not their time according to its worth;[d] but yet he that hath a hundred years' time, and loseth it all, lives not so long as he that hath but twenty, and bestows it well. It is too soon to go to hell at a hundred years old, and not too soon to go to heaven at twenty.[e] The means are to be valued in reference to their end: that is the best means

[b] Helvicus and some other modern chronologers think he died in the thirty-fifth year of his age.

[c] Quid de rerum natura querimur? illa se benigne gessit. Vita, si scias uti, longa est. Seneca de Brevit. Vit. c. 2. Non exiguum temporis habemus, sed multum perdimus. Satis longe vita, et in maximarum rerum consummationem large data est, si tota bene collocetur. Sed ubi per luxum et negligentiam defluit, ubi nulli rei bonæ impenditur, ultima demum necessitate cogente quam ire non intelleximus, transisse sentimus. Non accepimus brevem vitam, sed fecimus: nec inopes ejus, sed prodigi sumus. Ibid. c. 1. The elect man hath a care in the body, of the worldly things of the place where he sojourneth, as a traveller in the inns and houses in his way; but without any trouble he leaveth the habitation, possession, and use, with a ready and cheerful mind, following him that leadeth him out of this life, upon no occasion turning back: he is thankful for his entertainment here, but he blesseth God for his departure, embracing the celestial mansion. Clemens Alexand. Stromat. lib. iv. prope fin.

[d] Solus sapiens generis humani legibus solvitur: omnia illi secula, aut Deo serviunt. Transivit tempus? Aliquid ex hoc, recordatione comprehendit. Instat? Hoc utitur. Venturum est? Hoc percipit. Longum illi vitam facit omnium temporum in unum collatio. Illorum brevissima ac solicitissima ætas est, qui præteritorum obliviscuntur, præsentia negligunt, de futuro timent: cum ad extremum venerint, sero intelligunt, miseri, tamdiu se cum nihil agunt occupatos fuisse. Seneca de Brevit. Vit. 15.

[e] Iter imperfectum erit, si in media parte, aut citra petitum locum steteris. Vita non est imperfecta, si honesta est. Ubicunque desines, si bene desinis, tota est. Seneca, Epist.

which speediliest and surest obtaineth the end. He that hath enjoyed most of the ends of life, hath had the best life, and not he that hath lived longest. You that are aequainted with the life of grace, what if you live but twenty or thirty years, would you change it for a thousand years of wickedness? God might have let you have lived like the ungodly world, and then you would have had cause to be afraid of dying. We have lived in a place and time of light; in Europe, not in Asia, Africa, or America; in England, not in Spain or Italy; in the age when knowledge doth most abound, and not in our forefathers' days of darkness. We have lived among Bibles, sermons, books, and christians. As one acre of fruitful soil is better than many of barren commons; as the possession of a kingdom for one year is better than a lease of a cottage for twenty; so twenty or thirty years' living in such a place or age as we, is better than Methuselah's age, in the case of most of the world besides. And shall we not then be contented with our portion? If we who are ministers of the gospel have seen abundant fruit of our labours; if God have blessed our labour in seven years, more than some others in twenty or thirty; if God have made us the happy, though unworthy, means of converting and saving more souls at a sermon, than some better men in all their lives; what cause have we to complain of the shortness of our time in the work of God? Would unprofitable, unsuccessful preaching have been comfortable? Will it do us good to labour to little purpose, so we may but labour long? If our desires of living are for the service of the church, as our deceitful hearts are still pretending, then sure if God honour us to do the more service, though in the lesser time, we have our desire. God will have each to have his share; when we have had ours, let us rest contented. Persuade, then, thy backward soul to its duty, and argue down these dreadful thoughts. Unworthy wretch! hath thy Father allowed thee so large a part, and caused thy lot to fall so well,[f] and given thee thine abode in pleasant places, and filled up all thy life with mercies, and dost thou think thy share too small? Is not that which thy life doth want in length, made up in breadth, and weight, and sweetness? Lay all together, and look about thee, and tell me how many of thy neighbours have more; how many in all the town or country have had a better share than thou. Why mightest not thou have been one of the thousands, whose carcasses thou hast seen scattered as dung on the earth; or why mightest not thou have been one that is useless in the church, and an unprofitable burden to the place thou livest in? What a multitude of hours of consolation; of delightful sabbaths; of pleasant studies; of precious companions; of wondrous deliverances; of excellent opportunities; of fruitful labours; of joyful tidings; of sweet experiences; of astonishing providences; hath thy life partaked of! So that many a hundred who have each of them lived a hundred years, have not altogether enjoyed so much, and yet art thou not satisfied with thy lot? Hath thy life been so sweet that thou art loth to leave it? Is that the thanks thou returnest to him, who sweetened it to draw thee to his own sweetness? Indeed, if this had been all thy portion, I could not blame thee to be discontented. And yet let me tell thee too, that of all these poor souls, who have no other portion, but receive all their good things in this life, there is few or none even of them who ever had so full a share as thyself. And hast thou not, then, had a fair proportion, for one that must shortly have heaven besides? O foolish soul! would thou wert as covetous after eternity, as thou art for a fading, perishing life; and after the blessed presence of God, as thou art for continuance with earth and sin! Then thou wouldst rather look through the windows, and cry through the lattices, "Why is his chariot so long a coming; why tarry the wheels of his chariots?" Judg. v. 28. How long, Lord! how long!

Sect. XX. 11. Consider, What if God should grant thy desire, and let thee live yet many years, but withal should strip thee of the comforts of life, and deny thee the mercies which thou hast hitherto enjoyed; would this be a blessing worth the begging for? Might not God in judgment give thee life, as he gave the murmuring Israelites quails; or as he ofttimes give men riches and honour, when he sees them over-earnest for it? Might he not justly say to thee, Seeing thou hadst rather linger on earth, than come away and enjoy my presence; seeing thou art so greedy of life, take it, and a curse with it; never let fruit grow on it more, nor the sun of comfort shine upon it, nor the dew of my blessing ever water it. Let thy table be a snare; let thy friends be thy sorrow; let thy riches be corrupted, and the rust of thy silver eat thy flesh, Jam. v. 2, 3. Go, hear sermons as long as thou wilt, but let never sermon do thee good more; let all thou hearest make against thee, and increase the smart of thy wounded spirit. If thou love preaching better than heaven, go and preach till thou be weary, but never profit soul more. Sirs, what if God should thus chastise our inordinate desires of living, were it not just? and what good would our lives then do us? Seest thou not some that spend their days on their couch in groaning; and some in begging by the highway sides; and others in seeking bread from door to door; and most of the world in labouring for food and raiment, and living only that they may live, and losing the ends and benefits of life? Why, what good would such a life do thee, were it never so long; when thy soul shall serve thee only instead of salt, to keep thy body from stinking? God might give thee life, till thou art weary of living, and as glad to be rid of it as Judas or Ahithophel, and make thee like many miserable creatures in the world, who can hardly forbear laying violent hands on themselves. Be not, therefore, so importunate for life, which may prove a judgment instead of a blessing.[g]

Sect. XXI. 12. Consider, How many of the precious saints of God, of all ages and places, have gone before thee. Thou art not to enter an untrodden path, nor appointed first to break the ice. Except only Enoch and Elias, which of the saints have escaped death? And art thou better than they? There are many millions of saints dead, more than do now remain on earth. What a number of thine own bosom friends, and intimate acquaintance, and companions in duty, are now there; and why shouldst thou be so loth to follow? Nay, hath not Jesus Christ himself gone this way?[h] Hath he not

77. p. 688. Nemo tam imperitus est, ut nesciat sibi quandoque moriendum; tamen cum prope accesserit, tergiversatur, tremit, plorat. Nonne tibi videbitur stultissimus omnium qui fleverit quod ante annos mille non vixerat? Atqui stultus est qui flet, quod post annos mille non vivet. Hæc paria sunt, non eris nec fuisti. Ibid. p. 689.

[f] The merchant that arriveth safely with a rich lading of gold, spices, and precious things, doth more heartily thank God for his voyage, than he that goes as far for some smaller commodity; so here, saith Seneca, Epist. lib. iii. p. 671.

[g] How far a man may desire death, and how far not, see Calvin on Jonah iv. p. 351. In sum, he shows that we may not desire it out of mere impatience under poverty, sickness, or other suffering; but in weariness of sinning we may: but so, as yet patiently to stay God's time, and be willing to die when he calls.

[h] Heretofore, indeed, before the coming of our Saviour,

sanctified the grave to us, and perfumed the dust with his own body; and art thou loth to follow him too? Oh! rather let us say as Thomas, "Let us also go, and die with him;" or rather, let us suffer with him, that we may be glorified together with him.[i]

Many such-like considerations might be added, as, that Christ hath taken out the sting; how light the saints have made of it; how cheerfully the very pagans have entertained it! &c.[k] But because all that is hitherto spoken, is also conducible to the same purpose, I pass them by. If what hath been said will not persuade, Scripture and reason have little force.

I have said the more on this subject, finding it so needful to myself and others; finding that among so many christians, who could do and suffer much for Christ, there is yet so few that can willingly die; and of many who have somewhat subdued other corruptions, so few have got the conquest of this. This caused me to draw forth these arrows from the quiver of Scripture, and spend them against it.

Sect. XXII. I will only yet answer some objections, and so conclude this use.

Object. 1. Oh! if I were but certain of heaven, I should then never stick at dying.

Answ. 1. Search, for all that, whether some of the forementioned causes may not be in fault, as well as this.

2. Didst thou not say so long ago? Have you not been in this song this many years? If you are yet uncertain, whose fault is it? You have had nothing else to do with your lives, nor no greater matter than this to mind. Were you not better presently fall to the trial, till you have put the question out of doubt? Must God stay while you trifle; and must his patience be continued to cherish your negligence? If thou have played the loiterer, do so no longer. Go, search thy soul, and follow the search close, till thou come to a clear discovery. Begin to-night; stay not till the next morning. Certainty comes not by length of time, but by the blessing of the Spirit upon wise and faithful trial. You may linger out thus twenty years more, and be still as uncertain as now you are.

3. A perfect certainty may not be expected; we shall still be deficient in that as well as in other things. They who think the apostle speaks absolutely, and not comparatively, of a perfect assurance in the very degree, when he mentions a plerophory or full assurance, I know no reason but they may expect perfection in all things else as well as this. When you have done all, you will know this but in part. If your belief of that scripture which saith, "Believe and be saved," be imperfect; and if your knowledge, whether your own deceitful hearts do sincerely believe or not, be imperfect; or if but one of these two be imperfect, the result or conclusion must needs be so too. If you would then stay till you are perfectly certain, you may stay for ever: if you have attained assurance but in some degree, or got but the grounds for assurance laid, it is then the speediest and surest way, to desire rather to be quickly in rest; for then, and never till then, will both the grounds and assurance be fully perfect.

4. Both your assurance, and the comfort thereof, is the gift of the Spirit, who is a free bestower; and God's usual time to be largest in mercy, is when his people are deepest in necessity. A mercy in season is the sweetest mercy. I could give you here abundance of late examples of those who have languished for assurance and comfort; some all their sickness, and some most of their lives: and when they have been near to death they have received in abundance. Never fear death, then, through imperfection of assurance; for that is the most usual time of all, when God most fully and sweetly bestows it.

Object. 2. Oh! but the church's necessities are great. God hath made me useful in my place; so that the loss will be to many; or else, methinks, I could willingly die.

Sect. XXIII. *Answ.* This may be the case of some, but yet remember the heart is deceitful. God is often pretended, when ourselves are intended. But if this be it that sticks with thee indeed, consider, wilt thou pretend to be wiser than God? Doth not he know how to provide for his church? Cannot he do his work without thee, or find out instruments enough besides thee? Think not too highly of thyself, because God hath made thee useful. Must the church needs fall when thou art gone? Art thou the foundation on which it is built? Could God take away a Moses, an Aaron, David, Elias, &c. and find supply for all their places; and cannot he also find supply for thine? This is to derogate from God too much, and to arrogate too much unto thyself. Neither art thou so merciful as God, nor canst love the church so well as he. As his interest is infinitely beyond thine, so is his tender care and bounty. But of this before.[l]

Yet mistake me not in all that I have said. I deny not but that it is lawful and necessary for a christian, upon both the before-mentioned grounds, to desire God to delay his death, both for a further opportunity of gaining assurance, and also to be further serviceable to the church. See Phil. ii. 26, 27. Time and life is a most precious mercy; not so much because of what we here enjoy, but because eternity of joy or torment dependeth on this time, when it must go with man for ever in heaven or hell, according to the provision he makes on earth; and they that will find a treasure in heaven must now lay it up there, Matt. vi. 19, 20. I do not blame a

death was terrible even to holy men, and all men lamented the dying, as if they were perishing: but when Christ had raised his body, death was no more to be feared; and all that believe in Christ do trample upon it as nothing, and had rather die a thousand times, than deny the faith of Christ. For they know that by dying they do not perish, but live, and by the resurrection are made immortal. Athanas. de Incarnat. Verbi.

[i] It is certainly reported that St. Peter, when he saw his wife led to death, was glad that she was called to it, and that she was going home; and strongly exhorting and comforting her, he called her by her name, saying, "Ho! see thou remember the Lord." Clem. Alexand. Stromat. lib. vii.

[k] Read the strange examples of heathens in Seneca Epist. ad Lucil. 24.

[l] As Jac. Monach. said to Dr. Haverenter, (ut Melch. Adam in ejus vita,) so Frederick the Third, Prince Elector Palsgrave of Rhine, when he was dying at Heidelberg, said to his friends, "I have lived long enough on earth for you, I must now go live for myself in heaven for ever." As Jac. Grynæus in the last words in his Commentary on the Hebrews: "So, methinks, when ministers have lived long in hard labour and sufferings for God and the church, they should be willing to live in heaven for God and themselves." I may say of our service, as Cyprian to some that were loth to die, because they would fain die martyrs; "I had," saith one, "fully set my heart on it, and devoted myself to martyrdom;" martyrdom is not in thy power, but is God's gift. Nor canst thou say, thou hast lost that which thou knowest not whether thou wert worthy to receive. God, the Searcher of the heart, who saw thee prepared in resolution, will give the reward for thy resolution. As an evil thought is seen in the wicked; so a purpose to confess Christ, and a soul given up to good, shall be crowned by God the Judge. For it is one thing to want a heart for martyrdom, and another to want martyrdom, when we have a heart. God will judge thee such as he finds thee. For it is not our blood that God desires, but our faith or fidelity. Cypr. de Mortalitat. sect. xii. p. 315

man that is well in his wits, if he be loth to die, till he hath some comfortable assurance that it shall certainly go well with him in another world. And every man's assurance, as I have proved, is imperfect. And there I doubt not but, 1. We may pray for recovery from sicknesses. 2. And may rejoice in it, and give thanks for it, as a great mercy. 3. And may pray hard for our godly and ungodly friends in their sickness. 4. And must value our time highly, and improve it as a mercy which we must be accountable for. 5. And every godly man is so useful to the church, ordinarily, that, even for the church's service, he may desire to live longer, as Paul did, even till he come to the full age of man, and while he is able to serve the chureh, and it hath need of him. No man should be over-hasty to a state that must never be changed, when both assurance of glory and his fitness for it are still imperfect; and ordinarily the saints grow fitter in their age. But then this must not be in love of earth, but we must take it as our present loss to be kept from heaven, though it may tend to the church's and our own future advantage, and so may be desired: so that you must still see that heaven be valued and loved above earth, even when you have cause to pray for longer time, as she that longs to be married to a prince, may desire delay for preparation. But, First, This is nothing to their case who are still delaying, and never willing; whose true discontents are at death itself, more than at the unseasonableness of dying. Secondly, Though such desires are sometimes lawful, yet must they be carefully bounded and moderated; to which end are the former considerations. We must not be too absolute and peremptory in our desires, but cheerfully yield to God's disposal. The rightest temper is that of Paul's, to be in a strait between two; desiring to depart, and be with Christ, and yet to stay while God will have us, to do the chureh the utmost service. But, alas! we are seldom in this strait: our desires run out all one way, and that for the flesh, and not the church, Phil. i. 23. Our straits are only for fear of dying, and not betwixt the earnest desires of dying and of living. He that desireth life only to prepare for heaven, doth love heaven better than life on earth, for the end is still more beloved than all the means.

Sect. XXIV. *Object.* But is not death a punishment of God for sin? Doth not Scripture call it the "king of fears;" and nature, above all other evils, abhor it?[m]

Answ. I will not meddle with that which is controversial in this, whether death be properly a punishment or not; but grant that, in itself considered, it may be called evil, as being naturally the dissolution of the creature. Yet being sanctified to us by Christ, and being the season and occasion of so great a good, as is the present possession of God in Christ, it may be welcomed with a glad submission, if not with desire. Christ affords us grounds enough to comfort us against this natural evil; and therefore endues us with the principle of grace, to raise us above the reach of nature.

For all those low and poor objections, as leaving house, goods, and friends, leaving our children unprovided, &c. I pass them over, as of lesser moment, than to take much with men of grace.

Sect. XXV. Lastly, Understand me in this also, that I have spoken all this to the faithful soul. I persuade not the ungodly from fearing death. It is a wonder rather that they fear it no more, and spend not their days in continual horror, as is said before. Truly, but that we know a stone is insensible, and a hard heart is dead and stupid, or else a man would admire how poor souls can live in ease and quietness, that must be turned out of these bodies into everlasting flames; or that be not sure, at least, if they should die this night, whether they shall lodge in heaven or hell the next, especially when many are called, and so few chosen, and the righteous themselves are scarcely saved. One would think such men would eat their bread with trembling, and the thoughts of their danger should keep them waking in the night, and they should fall presently a searching themselves, and inquiring of others, and crying to God, that if it were possible they might quickly be out of this danger, and so their hearts be freed from horror. For a man to quake at the thoughts of death that looks by it to be dispossessed of his happiness, and knoweth not whither he is next to go, this is no wonder. But for the saints to fear their passage by death to rest, this is an unreasonable, hurtful fear.[n]

CHAPTER III.

MOTIVES TO A HEAVENLY LIFE.

Sect. I. We have now, by the guidance of the word of the Lord, and by the assistance of his Spirit, showed you the nature of the rest of the saints, and acquainted you with some duties in relation thereto. We come now to the close of all, to press you to the great duty, which I chiefly intended, when I begun this subject, and have here reserved it to the last place, because I know hearers are usually of slippery memories, yet apt to retain the last that is spoken, though they forget all that went before. Dear friends, it is pity that either you or I should forget any thing of that which doth so nearly concern us, as this eternal rest of the saints doth. But if you must needs forget something, let it be any thing else, rather than this; let it be rather all that I have hitherto said (though I hope of better) than this one ensuing use.

Is there a rest, and such a rest, remaining for us? Why then are our thoughts no more upon it? Why are not our hearts continually there? Why dwell we not there in constant contemplation? Sirs, ask your hearts in good earnest, What is the cause of this neglect? Are we reasonable in this, or are we not? Hath the eternal God provided us such a glory, and promised to take us up to dwell with himself, and is not this worth the thinking on? Should

[m] Jam nemo est qui esse nolit, quam nemo est qui non beatus esse velit. Quomodo enim potest beatus esse, si nihil sit? Ita vi quadam naturali ipsum esse jucundum est, ut non ob aliud, et hi qui miseri sunt, nolint interire. Et cum se miseros esse sentiant, non seipsos de rebus, sed miseriam suam potius auferri velint; etiam miserrimus, siquis immortalitatem daret, qua nec ipsa miseria moreretur; proposito sibi quod si in eadem miseria semper esse nollent, nulli et musquam essent futuri, sed omni modo perituri; profecto exultarent lætitia, et sic semper eligerent esse, quam omnino non esse. August. de Civit. lib. xi. cap. 26. Sed hoc de tolerabili tantum miseria intelligendum est.

[n] For comfort in the death of friends, the nine considerations of Gerson are excellent, Operum, part. iv. fol. 146; and his following tractate De Consolatione Mortis Parentum. Lege et Grotii Epist. ad Gal. 26. p. 67: Mali cum non possint de sua vita rectam rationem reddere, cumque timeant coram judice sistere, dilatant mortem quantum possunt, corpus lautis opiparisque ciborum generibus pascendo: ut si possent in perpetuam in hac vita permanerent. Mulier adultera, quæ domi adulterum habet, quando maritus ad ostium pulsat, non ita cito aperit, sed tardatur, ut interim abscondere possit adulterum; ita mali, &c. Stella in Luke xii. tom. ii. p. 109. a.

not the strongest desires of our hearts be after it, and the daily delights of our souls be there? Do we believe this; and can we yet forget and neglect it? What is the matter? Will not God give us leave to approach this light; or will he not suffer our souls to taste and see it? Why, then, what mean all his earnest invitations? Why doth he so condemn our earthly-mindedness, and command us to set our affections above. Ah, vile hearts! if God were against it, we were likelier to be for it; when he would have us to keep our station, then we are aspiring to be like God, and are ready to invade the divine prerogatives; but when he commands our hearts to heaven, then they will not stir an inch: like our predecessors the sinful Israelites; when God would have them march for Canaan, then they mutiny, and will not stir; either they fear the giants, or the walled cities, or want necessaries; something hinders them; but when God bids them not go, then will they needs be presently marching, and fight they will, though it be to their overthrow. If the forethoughts of glory were forbidden fruits, perhaps we should be sooner drawn unto them, and we should itch, as the Bethshemites, to be looking into this ark. Sure I am, where God hath forbidden us to place our thoughts and our delights, thither it is easy enough to draw them. If he say, "Love not the world, nor the things of the world," we dote upon it nevertheless. We have love enough if the world require it, and thoughts enough to pursue our profits. How delightfully and unweariedly can we think of vanity; and day after day employ our minds about the creature! And have we no thoughts of this our rest? How freely and how frequently can we think of our pleasures, our friends, our labours, our flesh, our lusts, our common studies, our news; yea, our very miseries, our wrongs, our sufferings, and our fears! But where is the christian whose heart is on his rest? Why, sirs, what is the matter? Why are we not taken up with the views of glory, and our souls more accustomed to these delightful meditations? Are we so full of joy that we need no more? or, is there no matter in heaven for our joyous thoughts? or rather, are not our hearts carnal and blockish? Earth will to earth. Had we more spirit, it would be otherwise with us. As the Jews use to cast to the ground the book of Esther before they read it, because the name of God is not in it; and as Augustin cast by Cicero's writings, because they contained not the name of Jesus; so let us humble and cast down these sensual hearts that have in them no more of Christ and glory. As we should not own our duties any further than somewhat of Christ is in them, so should we no further own our hearts; and as we should delight in the creatures no further than they have reference to Christ and eternity, so should we no further approve of our own hearts. If there were little of Christ and heaven in our mouths, but the world were the only subject of our speeches, then all would account us to be ungodly; why then may we not call our hearts ungodly, that have so little delight in Christ and heaven? A holy tongue will not excuse or secure a profane heart. Why did Christ pronounce his disciples' eyes and ears so blessed, but as they were doors to let in Christ by his works and words into their heart? Oh, blessed are the eyes that so see, and the ears that so hear, that the heart is thereby raised to this blessed, heavenly frame. Sirs, so much of your hearts as is empty of Christ and heaven, let it be filled with shame and sorrow, and not with ease.

Sect. II. But let me turn my reprehension to exhortation, that you would turn this conviction into reformation. And I have the more hope because I here address myself to men of conscience, that dare not wilfully disobey God; and to men whose relations to God are many and near, and therefore, methinks, there should need the fewer words to persuade their hearts to him; yea, because I speak to no other men but only them whose portion is there, whose hopes are there, and who have forsaken all, that they may enjoy this glory: and shall I be discouraged from persuading such to be heavenly-minded? Why, fellow-christians, if you will not hear and obey, who will? Well may we be discouraged to exhort the poor, blind, ungodly world, and may say, as Moses, "Behold, the children of Israel have not hearkened unto me, how then shall Pharaoh hear me?" Exod. xvi. 12. Whoever thou art, therefore, that readest these lines, I require thee, as thou tenderest thine allegiance to the God of heaven, as ever thou hopest for a part in this glory, that thou presently take thy heart to task; chide it for its wilful strangeness to God; turn thy thoughts from the pursuit of vanity; bend thy soul to study eternity; busy it about the life to come; habituate thyself to such contemplations, and let not those thoughts be seldom and cursory, but settle upon them; dwell here: bathe thy soul in heaven's delights; drench thine affections in these rivers of pleasure, or rather, in this sea of consolation; and if thy backward soul begin to flag, and thy loose thoughts to fly abroad, call them back, hold them to their work, put them on, bear not with their laziness, do not connive at one neglect; and when thou hast once in obedience to God tried this work, and followed on till thou hast got acquainted with it, and kept a close guard upon thy thoughts till they are accustomed to obey, and till thou hast got some mastery over them, thou wilt then find thyself in the suburbs of heaven, and, as it were, in a new world; thou wilt then find, indeed, that there is sweetness in the work and way of God, and that the life of christianity is a life of joy. Thou wilt meet with those abundant consolations, which thou hast prayed, and panted, and groaned after, and which so few christians do ever here obtain, because they know not the way to them, or else make not conscience of walking in it.

You see the work now before you: this, this is that I would fain persuade your souls to practise. Beloved friends, and christian neighbours, who hear me this day, let me bespeak your consciences in the name of Christ, and command you by the authority I have received from Christ, that you faithfully set upon this weighty duty, and fix your eye more stedfastly on your rest, and daily delight in the forethoughts thereof. I have persuaded you to many other duties, and (I bless God) many of you have obeyed; and I hope never to find you at that pass as to say, when you perceive the command of the Lord, that you will not be persuaded, nor obey; if I should, it were high time to bewail your misery. Why, you may almost as well say, We will not obey, as sit still and not obey. Christians, I beseech you, as you take me for your teacher, and have called me hitherto, so hearken to this doctrine. If ever I shall prevail with you in any thing, let me prevail with you in this, to set your hearts where you expect a rest and treasure. Do you not remember that when you called me to be your teacher, you promised me under your hands that you would faithfully and conscionably endeavour the receiving every truth, and obeying every command, which I should from the word of God manifest to you? I now charge your promise upon you: I never delivered to you a more apparent truth, nor pressed upon you a more apparent duty than this. If I knew you would not obey, what should I do here preaching? Not that I de-

sire you to receive it chiefly as from me, but as from Christ, on whose message I come. Methinks if a child should show you Scripture, and speak to you the word of God, you should not dare to disobey it. Do not wonder that I persuade you so earnestly, though indeed if we were truly reasonable in spiritual things, as we are in common, it would be a real wonder that men should need so much persuasion to so sweet and plain a duty; but I know the employment is high, the heart is earthly, and will still draw back; the temptations and hinderances will be many and great, and therefore I fear before we have done, and laid open more fully the nature of the duty, that you will confess all these persuasions little enough. The Lord grant they prove not so too little, as to fail of success, and leave you as they find you. Say not, We are unable to set our own hearts on heaven, this must be the work of God only, and therefore all your exhortation is in vain; for I tell you, though God be the chief disposer of your hearts, yet next under him you have the greatest command of them yourselves, and a great power in the ordering of your own thoughts, and for determining your own wills in their choice: though without Christ you can do nothing, yet under him you may do much, and must do much, or else it will be undone, and you undone through your neglect. Do your own parts, and you have no cause to distrust whether Christ will do his. Do not your own consciences tell you, when your thoughts fly abroad, that you might do more than you do to restrain them; and when your hearts lie flat, and neglect eternity, and seldom mind the joys before you, that most of this neglect is wilful? If you be to study a set speech, you can force your thoughts to the intended subject; if a minister be to study a sermon, he can force his thoughts to the most saving truths, and that without any special grace; might not a true christian then mind more the things of the life to come, if he did not neglect to exercise that authority over his own thoughts which God hath given him? especially in such a work as this, where he may more confidently expect the assistance of Christ, who useth not to forsake his people in the work he sets them on? If a carnal minister can make it his work to study about Christ and heaven through all his life-time, and all because it is the trade he lives by, and knows not how to subsist without it, why, then, methinks a spiritual christian should study as constantly the joys of heaven, because it is the very business he lives for, and that the place he must be in for ever. If the cook can find in his heart to labour and sweat about your meat, because it is the trade that maintains him, though perhaps he taste it not himself, methinks then you, for whom it is prepared, should willingly bestow that daily pains to taste its sweetness, and feed upon it; and if it were about your bodily food, you would think it no great pains neither. A good stomach takes it for no great labour to eat and drink of the best till it be satisfied; nor needs it any great invitation thereto. Christians, if your souls were sound and right, they would perceive incomparably more delight and sweetness in knowing, thinking, believing, loving, and rejoicing in your future blessedness in the fruition of God, than the soundest stomach finds in its food, or the strongest senses in the enjoyment of their objects; so little painful would this work be to you, and so little should I need to press you to it. It is no great pains to you to think of a friend, or any thing else that you dearly love; and as little would it be to think of glory, if your love and delight were truly there. If you do but see some jewel, or treasure, you need not long exhortations to stir up your desires, the very sight of it is motive enough. If you see the fire when you are cold, or see a house in a stormy day, or see a safe harbour from the tempestuous sea, you need not be told what use to make of it; the sight doth presently direct your thought; you think, you look, you long, till you do obtain it. Why should it not be so in the present case? Sirs, one would think, to show you this crown and glory of the saints, should be motive enough to make you desire it; to show you that harbour where you may be safe from all dangers, should soon teach you what use to make of it, and should bend your daily studies towards it; but because I know while we have flesh about us, and any remnants of that carnal mind which is enmity to God, and to this noble work, that all motives are little enough; and because my own and others' sad experience tell me, how hardly the best are drawn to a constancy and faithfulness in this duty; I will here lay down some moving considerations, which, if you will but vouchsafe to ponder thoroughly, and deliberately weigh with an impartial judgment, I doubt not but they will prove effectual with your hearts, and make you resolve upon this excellent duty. I pray you, friends, let them not fall to the ground, but take them up, and try them, and if you find them concern you, make much of them, and obey them accordingly.

Sect. III. 1. Consider, A heart set upon heaven will be one of the most unquestionable evidences of thy sincerity, and a clear discovery of a true work of saving grace upon thy soul.[a] You are much in inquiring after marks of sincerity, and I blame you not; it is dangerous mistaking when a man's salvation lies upon it. You are oft asking, How shall I know that I am truly sanctified? Why, here is a mark that will not deceive you, if you can truly say that you are possessed of it; even a heart set upon heaven. Would you have a sign infallible, not from me, or from the mouth of any man, but from the mouth of Jesus Christ himself, which all the enemies of the use of marks can lay no exception against? Why, here is such a one, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also," Matt. vi. 21. Know once assuredly where your heart is, and you may easily know that your treasure is there. God is the saints' treasure and happiness; heaven is the place where they must fully enjoy him. A heart therefore set upon heaven is no more but a heart set upon God, desiring after this full enjoyment; and, surely, a heart set upon God through Christ, is the truest evidence of saving grace. External actions are easiest discovered, but those of the heart are the surest evidences. When thy learning will be no good proof of thy grace; when thy knowledge, thy duties, and thy gifts, will fail thee; when arguments from thy tongue and thy hand may be confuted; yet then will this argument from the bent of thy heart prove thee sincere. Take a poor christian that can scarce speak true English about religion, that hath a weak understanding, a failing memory, a stammering tongue, yet his heart is set on God, he hath chosen him for his portion; his thoughts are on eternity; his desires there, his dwelling there; he cries out, Oh that I were there! He takes that day for a time

[a] In this do true christians differ from all other men; and the difference is very great; to wit, in that the mind and understanding of christians is always conversant about heavenly cogitations, and is beholding of celestial excellences, because of the participation of the Holy Ghost; as, also, in that they are born of God from above, and thought meet to be the sons of God in truth and in power; and by great labours, and sweat, after long time, they shall arrive at perfection, stability, tranquillity, and rest. Macarius Hom. Hinc sequitur, cœlo renunciare qui in mundo fælices esse appetunt. Calvin in Matt. vi. 21.

of imprisonment, wherein he hath not taken one refreshing view of eternity. I had rather die in this man's condition, and have my soul in his soul's case, than in the case of him that hath the most eminent gifts, and is most admired for parts and duty, whose heart is not thus taken up with God. The man that Christ will find out at the last day, and condemn for want of a wedding garment, will he be that wants this frame of heart. The question will not then be, How much you have known, or professed, or talked? but, How much have you loved, and where was your heart? Why, then, christians, as you would have a sure testimony of the love of God, and a sure proof of your title to glory, labour to get your hearts above. God will acknowledge that you really love him, and take you for faithful friends indeed, when he sees your hearts are set upon him. Get but your hearts once truly in heaven, and, without all question, yourselves will follow. If sin and Satan keep not thence your affections, they will never be able to keep away your persons.

Sect. IV. 2. Consider, A heart in heaven is the highest excellency of your spirits here, and the noblest part of your christian disposition: as there is not only a difference between men and beasts, but also among men, between the noble and the base; so there is not only a common excellency, whereby a christian differs from the world, but also a peculiar nobleness of spirit, whereby the more excellent differ from the rest: and this lies especially in a higher and more heavenly frame of spirit. Only man, of all inferior creatures, is made with a face directed heavenward; but other creatures have their faces to the earth. As the noblest of creatures, so the noblest of christians, are they that are set most direct for heaven. As Saul is called a choice and goodly man, higher by the head than all the company; so is he the most choice and goodly christian, whose head and heart is thus the highest, 1 Sam. ix. 2; x. 23, 24. Men of noble birth and spirits, do mind high and great affairs, and not the smaller things of low poverty.[c] Their discourse is of councils and matters of state, of the government of the commonwealth, and public things; and not of the countryman's petty employments. Oh! to hear such a heavenly saint, who hath fetched a journey into heaven by faith, and hath been raised up to God in his contemplations, and is newly come down from the views of Christ, what discoveries will he make of those superior regions! What ravishing expressions drop from his lips! How high and sacred is his discourse! Enough to make the ignorant world astonished, and perhaps say, "Much study hath made them mad," Acts xxvi. 24; and enough to convince an understanding hearer that they have seen the Lord; and to make one say, No man could speak such words as these, except he had been with God. This, this is the noble christian; as Bucholcer's hearers concluded, when he had preached his last sermon, being carried between two into the church, because of his weakness, and there most admirably discoursed of the blessedness of souls departed this life, *Cæteros concionatores a Bucholcero semper omnes, illo autem die etiam ipsum a sese superatum*, that Bucholcer did ever excel other preachers, but that day he excelled himself; so may I conclude of the heavenly christian, he ever excelleth the rest of men, but when he is nearest heaven he excelleth himself. As those are the most famous mountains that are highest; and those the fairest trees that are tallest;[d] and those the most glorious pyramids and buildings whose tops do reach nearest to heaven; so is he the choicest christian, whose heart is most frequently and most delightfully there. If a man have lived near the king, or have travelled to see the sultan of Persia, or the great Turk, he will make this a matter of boasting, and thinks himself one step higher than his private neighbours, that live at home. What shall we then judge of him that daily travels as far as heaven, and there hath seen the King of kings? that hath frequent admittance into the Divine presence, and feasteth his soul upon the tree of life? For my part, I value this man before the ablest, the richest, the most learned in the world.

Sect. V. 3. Consider, A heavenly mind is a joyful mind; this is the nearest and the truest way to live a life of comfort.[e] And without this you must needs be uncomfortable. Can a man be at the fire, and not be warm; or in the sunshine, and not have light? Can your heart be in heaven, and not have comfort? The countries of Norway, Iceland, and all the northward, are cold and frozen, because they are farther from the power of the sun; but in Egypt, Arabia, and the southern parts, it is far otherwise, where they live more near its powerful rays. What could make such frozen, uncomfortable christians, but living so far as they do from heaven? And what makes some few others so warm in comforts, but their living higher than others do, and their frequent access so near to God? When the sun in the spring draws near our part of the earth, how do all things congratulate its approach! The earth looks green, and casteth off her mourning habit; the trees shoot forth; the plants revive; the pretty birds, how sweetly do they sing! the face of all things smiles upon us, and all the creatures below rejoice. Beloved friends, if we would but try this life with God, and would but keep these hearts above, what a spring of joy would be within us, and all our graces be fresh and green! How would the face of our souls be changed, and all that is within us rejoice! How should we forget our winter sorrows, and withdraw our souls from our sad retirements! How early should we rise (as those birds in the spring) to sing the praise of our great Creator! O christian, get above: believe it, that region is warmer than this below. Those that have been there, have found it so, and those that have come thence have told us

[b] Read Bishop Hall's thirty-second soliloquy, called, Acquaintance with Heaven, p. 131. Os homini sublime dedit, &c.

[c] Of so many divers religions and manners of serving God, which are or may be in the world, they seem to be the most noble, and to have the greatest appearance of truth, which without great external and corporal service, such as popish superstitions and formalities are, draw the soul into itself, and raise it by pure contemplation, to admire and adore the greatness and infinite majesty of the first Cause of all things, and the Essence of essences, without any great declaration or determination thereof, acknowledging it to be goodness, perfection, and infiniteness, wholly incomprehensible. This is to approach to the religion of angels, and adore God in spirit and truth. Charron of Wisd. lib. ii. cap. 2. p. 297.

[d] Fraxinus in sylvis pulcherrima, pinus in hortis; populus in fluviis, abies in montibus altis. Virgil.

[e] Lord, if I had the skill and grace to be ever communing with my own heart, and with thee, I should never want either work or company; never have cause to complain of solitariness or tedious hours; for there is no time wherein there is not some main business to be done between thee and my soul. Bishop Hall, soliloq. xiii. p. 45. Aristoteles dicit quod homo se ad divina et immortalia trahere debet quantum potest; unde in 11 de Animal. dicit, quod, quamvis parum sit quod de substantiis superioribus percipimus; tamen id modicum est magis amatum et desideratum omni cognitione quam de substantiis inferioribus habemus. Dicit etiam in 2do Cœli et Mundi, quod cum de corporibus cœlestibus questiones possunt solvi parva et topica solutione, contingit auditori ut vehemens sit gaudium ejus. Ex quibus omnibus apparet, quod de rebus nobilissimis quantumcunque imperfecta cognitio maximam perfectionem animæ confert. Aquin. cont. Gentiles, lib. i. cap. 5.

so: and I doubt not but that thou hast sometime tried it thyself. I dare appeal to thy own experience, or to the experience of any soul that knows what the true joys of a christian are: when is it that you have largest comforts? Is it not after such an exercise as this, when thou hast got up thy heart, and conversed with God, and talked with the inhabitants of the higher world, and viewed the mansions of the saints and angels, and filled thy soul with the forethoughts of glory? If thou know by experience what this practice is, I dare say thou knowest what spiritual joy is. David professeth that the light of God's countenance would make his heart more glad than theirs that have corn, and wine, and oil. "Thou shalt fill me full of joy with thy countenance," Psal. iv. 6, 7; and Acts ii. 28, out of Psal. xvi. If it be the countenance of God that fills us with joy, then sure they that draw nearest, and most behold it, must needs be fullest of these joys. Sirs, if you never tried this art, nor lived this life of heavenly contemplation, I never wonder that you walk uncomfortably, that you are all complaining, and live in sorrows, and know not what the joy of the saints means. Can you have comforts from God, and never think of him? Can heaven rejoice you, when you do not remember it? Doth any thing in the world glad you, when you think not on it? Must not every thing first enter your judgment and consideration, before it can delight your heart and affection? If you were possessed of all the treasures of the earth, if you had title to the highest dignities and dominions, and never think on it, sure it would never rejoice you.[f] Whom should we blame then, that we are so void of consolation, but our own negligent, unskilful hearts? God hath provided us a crown of glory, and promised to set it shortly on our heads, and we will not so much as think of it: he holdeth it out in the gospel to us, and biddeth us behold and rejoice; and we will not so much as look at it; and yet we complain for want of comfort. What a perverse course is this, both against God and our own joys! I confess, though in fleshly things, the presenting of a comforting object is sufficient to produce an answerable delight, yet in spirituals we are more disabled. God must give the joy itself, as well as afford us matter for joy: but yet withal, it must be remembered, that God doth work upon us as men, and in a rational way doth raise our comforts: he enableth and excitcth us to mind and study these delightful objects, and from thence to gather our own comforts, as the bee doth gather her honey from the flowers; therefore he that is most skilful and painful in this gathering art, is usually the fullest of this spiritual sweetness. Where is the man that can tell me from experience, that he hath solid and usual joy in any other way but this, and that God worketh it immediately on his affections, without the means of his understanding and considering?[g] It is by believing that we are filled with joy and peace, Rom. xv. 13; and no longer than we continue our believing. It is in hope that the saints rejoice, yea, in this hope of the glory of God, Rom. v. 2; and no longer than they continue hoping. And here let me warn you of a dangerous snare, an opinion which will rob you of all your comfort: some think, if they should thus fetch in their comfort by believing and hoping, and work it out of Scripture promises, and extract it by their own thinking and studying, that then it would be a comfort only of their own hammering out, (as they say,) and not the genuine joy of the Holy Ghost. A desperate mistake, raised upon a ground that would overthrow almost all duty, as well as this, which is their setting the workings of God's Spirit and their own spirits in opposition, when their spirits must stand in subordination to God's: they are conjunct causes, co-operating to the producing of one and the same effect. God's Spirit worketh our comforts, by setting our own spirits a-work upon the promises, and raising our thoughts to the place of our comforts. As you would delight a covetous man by showing him gold, or a voluptuous man with fleshly delights; so God useth to delight his people, by taking them, as it were, by the hand, and leading them into heaven, and showing them himself, and their rest with him. God useth not to cast in our joys while we are idle, or taken up with other things. It is true, he sometimes doth it suddenly, but yet usually in the foresaid order, leading it into our hearts by our judgment and thoughts: and his sometimes sudden extraordinary casting of comforting thoughts in our hearts, should be so far from hindering endeavours in a meditating way, that it should be a singular motive to quicken us to it; even as a taste given us of some cordial or choicer food, will make us desire and seek the rest. God feedeth not saints as birds do their young, bringing it to them, and putting it into their mouths, while they lie still in the nest, and only gape to receive it. But as he giveth to man the fruits of the earth, the increase of their land in corn and wine, while we plough, and sow, and weed, and water, and dung, and dress, and then with patience expect his blessing; so doth he give the joys of the soul. Yet I deny not, that if any should so think to work out his own comforts by meditation, as to attempt the work in his own strength, and not do all in subordination to God, nor perceive a necessity of the Spirit's assistance, the work would prove to be like the workman, and the comfort he would gather would be like both; even mere vanity: even as the husbandman's labour without the sun, and rain, and blessing of God.

So then you may easily see, that close meditation on the matter and cause of our joy, is God's way to procure solid joy. For my part, if I should find my joy of another kind, I should be very prone to doubt of its sincerity. If I find a great deal of comfort in my heart, and know not how it came thither, nor upon what rational ground it was raised, nor what considerations do feed and continue it, I should be ready to question, How I know whether this be from God? And though, as the cup in Benjamin's sack, it might come from love, yet it would leave me but in fears and amazements, because of uncertainty. As I think our love to God should not be like that of fond lovers, who love violently, but they know not why; so I think a christian's joy should be grounded, rational joy, and not to rejoice, and know

[f] If there be delight in God in letting out himself to the saints, in reason there must needs be delight in the saints in letting out themselves into God, in flowing into God. The delight that the saints have in communicating themselves unto Christ is unutterable. Take this note, The more fully you lay out yourselves for Christ, the more comfort you shall have in your lives. Burroughs on Hos. ii. 19. lect. xvii. p. 605, 606.

[g] 1 Pet. i. 8. Cum contemplator inflammatus desiderio fœlicitatis, totam suam ponit conversationem in cœlestibus; cum ad cœlestia toto nisu aspirat, ex calore charitatis cor dilatatur; et testimonio conscientiæ adesse sentitur, et spiritualiter videtur oculo animæ, qui est intellectus; ubi enim ardenter desideratur, adest; et ibi mansionem facit et in sanctas illas animas se transfert. Oritur ex hac dulci visitatione (qua sicut fulgor momentaneus adesse se ostendit) mentis sublevatio, et inter brachia amati incipit aliquantulum consopiri, ut non solum delectabiliter, sed tenaciter illi adhæreat; ut quasi vi quadam ab omnium visibilium, sensu et memoria abstrahatur, et pene suimet obliviscatur. Card. Cusan. vol. ii. exercitat. lib. iv. fol. 68.

not why. Though perhaps in some extraordinary case, God may cast in such an extraordinary kind of joy, yet I think it is not his usual way. And if you observe the spirit of most forlorn, uncomfortable, despairing christians, you shall find the reason to be, their ungrounded expectation of such unusual kind of joys; and accordingly are their spirits variously tossed, and most unconstantly tempered: sometimes, when they meet with such joys, (or at least think so,) then they are cheerful and lifted up; but because these are usually short-lived joys, therefore they are straight as low as hell; and ordinarily that is their more lasting temper. And thus they are tossed as a vessel at sea, up and down, but still in extremes;[h] whereas, alas! God is most constant, Christ the same, heaven the same, and the promise the same: and if we took the right course for fetching in our comfort from these, sure our comforts should be more settled and constant, though not always the same. Whoever thou art, therefore, that readest these lines, I entreat thee in the name of the Lord, and as thou valuest the life of constant joy, and that good conscience which is a continual feast, that thou wouldst but seriously set upon this work, and learn the art of heavenly-mindedness, and thou shalt find the increase a hundredfold, and the benefit abundantly exceed thy labour. But this is the misery of man's nature: though every man naturally abhorreth sorrow, and loves the most merry and joyful life; yet few do love the way to joy, or will endure the pains by which it is obtained: they will take the next that comes to hand, and content themselves with earthly pleasures, rather than they will ascend to heaven to seek it; and yet when all is done, they must have it there, or be without it.

Sect. VI. 4. Consider, A heart in heaven will be a most excellent preservative against temptations, a powerful means to kill thy corruptions, and to save thy conscience from the wounds of sin. God can prevent our sinning, though we be careless; and keep off the temptation which we would draw upon ourselves, and sometimes doth so; but this is not his usual course, nor is this our safest way to escape. When the mind is either idle, or ill employed, the devil needs not a greater advantage: when he finds the thoughts let out on lust, revenge, ambition, or deceit, what an opportunity hath he to move for execution, and to put on the sinner to practise what he thinks on! Nay, if he find but the mind empty, there is room for any thing that he will bring in: but when he finds the heart in heaven, what hope that any of these motions should take? Let him entice to any forbidden course, or show us the bait of any pleasure, the soul will return Nehemiah's answer, "I am doing a great work, and cannot come," Neh. vi. 3. Several ways will this preserve us against temptation: First, By keeping the heart employed: Secondly, By clearing the understanding, and so confirming the will: Thirdly, By prepossessing the affections with the highest delights: Fourthly, And by keeping us in the way of God's blessing.

First, By keeping the heart employed. When we are idle, we tempt the devil to tempt us: as it is an encouragement to a thief, to see your doors open, and nobody within; and as we use to say, Careless persons make thieves: so it will encourage Satan, to find your hearts idle; but when the heart is taken up with God, it cannot have while to hearken to temptations; it cannot have while to be lustful and wanton, ambitious or worldly: if a poor man have a suit to any of you, he will not come when you are taken up in some great man's company or discourse; that is but an ill time to speed.

If you were but busied in your lawful callings, you would not be so ready to hearken to temptations; much less if you were busied above with God. Will you leave your plough and harvest in the field, or leave the quenching of a fire in your houses, to run with children a hunting of butterflies? would a judge be persuaded to rise from the bench, when he is sitting upon life and death, to go and play among the boys in the streets? No more will a christian, when he is busy with God, and taking a survey of his eternal rest, give ear to the alluring charms of Satan. *Non vacat exiguis*, &c. is a character of the truly prudent man; the children of that kingdom should never have while for trifles, but especially when they are employed in the affairs of the kingdom; and this employment is one of the saints' chief preservatives against temptation. For, as Gregory saith, [i] *Nunquam Dei amor otiosus est: operatur enim magna, si est: si vero operari renuit, non est amor;* The love of God is never idle; it worketh great things when it truly is; and when it will not work, it is not love. Therefore, being still thus working, it is still preserving.

Secondly, A heavenly mind is freest from sin, because it is of clearest understanding in spiritual matters of greatest concernment. A man that is much in conversing above, hath truer and livelier apprehensions of things concerning God and his soul, than any reading or learning can beget: though, perhaps, he may be ignorant in divers controversies and matters that less concern salvation; yet those truths which must establish his soul, and preserve him from temptation, he knows far better than the greatest scholars: he hath so deep an insight into the evil of sin, the vanity of the creature, the brutishness of fleshly, sensual delights, that temptations have little power on him; for these earthly vanities are Satan's baits, which, though they may take much with the undiscerning world, yet, with the clear-sighted, they have lost their force. "In vain," saith Solomon, "the net is spread in the sight of any bird," Prov. i. 17. And usually in vain doth Satan lay his snares to entrap the soul that plainly sees them. When a man is on high, he may see the further: we use to set our discovering sentinels on the highest place that is near unto us, that they may discern all the motions of the enemy. In vain doth the enemy lay his ambuscades when we stand over him on some high mountain, and clearly discover all he doth: when the heavenly mind is above with God, he may far easier from thence discern every danger that lies below, and the whole method of the devil in deceiving; nay, if he did not discover the snare, yet were he likelier far to escape it than any others that converse below. A net or bait that is laid on the ground, is unlikely to catch the bird that flies in the air; while she keeps above, she is out of danger, and the higher the safer; so it is with us. Satan's temptations are laid on the earth, earth is the place, and earth is the ordinary bait: how shall these insnare the christian who hath left the earth, and walks with God? But, alas! we keep not long so high, but down we must to the earth again, and then we are taken.

If conversing with wise and learned men is the way to make one wise and learned, then no wonder if he that converseth with God become wise.[k] If men that travel about the earth, do think to return home with more experience and wisdom, how much

[h] Jam jam tacturos sydera summa putes; jam jam tacturos tartara nigra putes. Ovid.

[i] In Homil.

[k] Itali habent proverbium hoc, Qui Venetias non vidit, non credit: et qui aliquando ibi non vixit, non intelligit. Quod de vita hac cœlesti verissimum.

more he that travels to heaven! As the very air and climate that we most abide in, do work our bodies to their own temper, no wonder if he that is much in that sublime and purer region, have a purer soul and quicker sight, and if he have an understanding full of light, who liveth with the Sun, the Fountain, the Father of light: as certain herbs and meats we feed on, do tend to make our sight more clear, so the soul that is fed with angels' food, must needs have an understanding much more clear, than they that dwell and feed on earth. And, therefore, you may easily see that such a man is in far less danger of temptation, and Satan will hardlier beguile his soul, even as a wise man is hardlier deceived than fools and children. Alas! the men of the world that dwell below, and know no other conversation but earthly, no wonder if their understandings be darkened, and they be easily drawn to every wickedness; no wonder if Satan take them captive at his will, (2 Tim. ii. 26,) and lead them about, as we see a dog lead a blind man with a string. The foggy air and mists of earth do thicken their sight; the smoke of worldly care and business blinds them, and the dungeon which they live in is a land of darkness. How can worms and moles see, whose dwelling is always in the earth? While this dust is in men's eyes, no wonder if they mistake gain for godliness, sin for grace, the world for God, their own wills for the law of Christ, and in the issue, hell for heaven. If the people of God will but take notice of their own hearts, they shall find their experiences confirming this that I have said. Christians, do you not sensibly perceive, that when your hearts are seriously fixed on heaven, you presently become wiser than before? Are not your understandings more solid, and your thoughts more sober? Have you not truer apprehensions of things than you had? For my own part, if ever I be wise, it is when I have been much above, and seriously studied the life to come. Methinks I find my understanding after such contemplations as much to differ from what it was before, as I before differed from a fool or idiot. When my understanding is weakened, and befooled with common employment, and with conversing long with the vanities below, methinks a few sober thoughts of my Father's house, and the blessed provision of his family in heaven, doth make me, with the prodigal, to come to myself again. Surely, when a christian withdraws himself from his earthly thoughts, and begins to converse with God in heaven, he is as Nebuchadnezzar, taken from the beasts of the field to the throne, and his understanding returneth to him again. Oh, when a christian hath had but a glimpse of eternity, and then looks down on the world again, how doth he befool himself for his sin; for neglects of Christ; for his fleshly pleasures; for his earthly cares! How doth he say to his laughter, Thou art mad! and to his vain mirth, What dost thou? How could he even tear his very flesh, and take revenge on himself for his folly! How verily doth he think there is no man in Bedlam so truly mad as wilful sinners and lazy betrayers of their own souls, and unworthy slighters of Christ and glory!

This is it that makes a dying man to be usually wiser than other men are, because he looks on eternity as near, and knowing he must very shortly be there, he hath more deep and heart-piercing thoughts of it than ever he could have in health and prosperity. Therefore it is that the most deluded sinners that were cheated with the world, and bewitched with sin, do then most ordinarily come to themselves, so far as to have a righter judgment than they had; and that many of the most bitter enemies of the saints would give a world to be such themselves, and would fain die in the condition of those whom they hated; even as wicked Balaam, when his eyes are open to see the perpetual blessedness of the saints, will cry out, "Oh! that I might die the death of the righteous, and that my last end might be like his." As witches when they are taken, and in prison, or at the gallows, have no power left them to bewitch any more; so we see commonly the most ungodly men, when they see they must die, and go to another world, their judgments are so changed, and their speech so changed, as if they were not the same men, as if they were come to their wits again, and sin and Satan had power to bewitch them no more. Yet let the same men recover, and lose their apprehension of the life to come, and how quickly do they lose their understandings with it! In a word, those that were befooled with the world and the flesh, are far wiser when they come to die; and those that were wise before, are now wise indeed. If you would take a man's judgment about sin, or grace, or Christ, or heaven, go to a dying man, and ask him which you were best to choose? Ask him whether you were best be drunk or no; or be lustful, or proud, or revengeful, or no? Ask him whether you were best pray, and instruct your families, or no; or to sanctify the Lord's day, or no? though some to the death may be desperately hardened, yet, for the most part, I had rather take a man's judgment then, about these things, than at any other time. For my own part, if my judgment be ever solid, it is when I have the seriousest apprehensions of the life to come; nay, the sober mention of death sometimes will a little compose the most distracted understanding. Sirs, do you not think, except men are stark devils, but that it would be a harder matter to entice a man to sin when he lies a dying, than it was before? If the devil, or his instruments, should then tell him of a cup of sack, of merry company, of a stage-play, or a morris-dance, do you think he would then be so taken with the motion? If he should then tell him of riches, or honours, or show him a pair of cards, or dice, or a whore, would the temptation, think you, be as strong as before? Would he not answer, Alas! what is all this to me, who must presently appear before God, and give account of all my life, and straightways be in another world! Why, christian, if the apprehension of the nearness of eternity will work such strange effects upon the ungodly, and make them wiser than to be deceived so easily as they were wont to be in time of health, oh! then, what rare effects would it work with thee, and make thee scorn the baits of sin, if thou couldst always dwell in the views of God, and in lively thoughts of thine everlasting state! Surely a believer, if he improve his faith, may ordinarily have truer and more quickening apprehensions of the life to come, in the time of his health, than an unbeliever hath at the hour of his death.

Thirdly, Furthermore, a heavenly mind is exceedingly fortified against temptations, because the affections are so thoroughly prepossessed with the high delights of another world. Whether Satan do not usually by the sensitive appetite prevail with the will, without any further prevailing with the reason, than merely to suspend it, I will not now dispute; but, doubtless, when the soul is not affected with good, though the understanding do never so clearly apprehend the truth, it is easy for Satan to entice that soul. Mere speculations, be they never so true, which sink not into the affections, are poor preservatives against temptations. He that loves most, and not only he that knows most, will easiliest resist the motions of sin. There is in a christian a kind of spiritual taste whereby he knows these things, be-

sides his mere discursive reasoning power: the will doth as sweetly relish goodness, as the understanding doth truth, and here lies much of a christian's strength. If you should dispute with a simple man, and labour to persuade him that sugar is not sweet, or that wormwood is not bitter, perhaps you might by sophistry over-argue his mere reason, but yet you could not persuade him against his sense; whereas, a man that hath lost his taste, is easilier deceived for all his reason. So is it here; when thou hast had a fresh delightful taste of heaven, thou wilt not be so easily persuaded from it; you cannot persuade a very child to part with his apple while the taste of its sweetness is yet in his mouth. Oh that you would be persuaded to try this course, to be much in feeding on the hidden manna, and to be frequently tasting the delights of heaven. It is true, it is a great way off from our sense, but faith can reach as far as that. How would this raise thy resolutions, and make thee laugh at the fooleries of the world, and scorn to be cheated with such childish toys! Reader, I pray thee tell me in good sadness, dost thou think, if the devil had set upon Peter in the mount, when he saw Christ in his transfiguration, and Moses and Elias talking with him, would he so easily have been drawn to deny his Lord? What! with all that glory in his eye? No, the devil took a greater advantage, when he had him in the high priest's hall, in the midst of danger and evil company, when he had forgotten the sight of the mount, and then he prevails: so if he should set upon a believing soul, when he is taken up in the mount with Christ, what would such a soul say? Get thee behind me, Satan; wouldst thou persuade me from hence with trifling pleasures, and steal my heart from this my rest; wouldst thou have me sell these joys for nothing? Is there any honour or delight like this; or can that be profit which loseth me this? Some such answer would the soul return. But, alas! Satan stays till we are come down, and the taste of heaven is out of our mouths, and the glory we saw is even forgotten, and then he easily deceives our hearts. What if the devil had set upon Paul, when he was in the third heaven, and seeing those unutterable things, could he then, do you think, have persuaded his heart to the pleasures, or profits, or honours of the world? If his prick in the flesh, which he after received, were not affliction, but temptation, sure it prevailed not, but sent him to heaven again for preserving grace. Though the Israelites below may be enticed to idolatry, and from eating and drinking to rise up to play, yet Moses in the mount with God will not do so; and, if they had been where he was, and had but seen what he there saw, perhaps they would not so easily have sinned. If he give a man aloes after honey, or some loathsome thing when he hath been feeding on junkets, will he not soon perceive, and spit it out? Oh, if we could keep the taste of our soul continually delighted with the sweets above, with what disdain should we spit out the baits of sin!

Fourthly, Besides, whilst the heart is set on heaven, a man is under God's protection; and, therefore, if Satan then assault him, God is more engaged for his defence, and will doubtless stand by us, and say, My grace is sufficient for thee: when a man is in the way of God's blessing, he is in the less danger of sin's enticings.

So that now, upon all this, let me entreat thee, christian reader, if thou be a man that is haunted with temptation, (as doubtless thou art, if thou be a man,) if thou perceive thy danger, and wouldst fain escape it, O use much this powerful remedy; keep close with God by a heavenly mind; learn this art of diversion; and when the temptation comes, go straight to heaven, and turn thy thoughts to higher things; thou shalt find this a surer help than any other resisting whatsoever. As men will do with scolding women, let them alone and follow their business, as if they heard not what they said; and this will sooner put them to silence, than if they answered them word for word; so do by Satan's temptations: it may be he can over-talk you, and over-wit you in dispute; but let him alone, and study not his temptations, but follow your business above with Christ, and keep your thoughts to their heavenly employment, and you sooner will this way vanquish the temptation, than if you argued or talked it out with the tempter: not but that sometimes it is most convenient to over-reason him; but in ordinary temptations, you shall find it far better to follow this your work, and neglect the allurements, and say, as Gryneus (out of Chrysost.) when he sent back Pistorius's letters, not so much as opening the seal, *Inhonestum est honestam matronam cum meretrice litigare:* It is an unseemly thing for an honest matron to be scolding with a whore: so it is a dishonest thing for a son of God, in apparent cases, to stand wrangling with the devil, and to be so far at his beck as to dispute with him at his pleasure, even as oft as he will be pleased to tempt us. Christian, if thou remember that of Solomon, (Prov. xv. 24,) thou hast the sum of what I intend, "The way of life is above to the wise, to avoid the path of hell beneath;" and withal remember Noah's example, "Noah was a just man, and perfect in his generation," Gen. vi. 9; and no wonder, for Noah "walked with God." So I may say to thee, even as God to Abraham, "Walk before God, and thou wilt be upright," Gen. xvii. 1.

Sect. VII. 5. Consider, The diligent keeping of your hearts on heaven, will preserve the vigour of all your graces, and put life into all your duties. It is the heavenly christian that is the lively christian. It is our strangeness to heaven that makes us so dull; it is the end that quickens to all the means: and the more frequently and clearly this end is beheld, the more vigorous will all our motion be. How doth it make men unweariedly labour, and fearlessly venture, when they do but think of the gainful prize! How will the soldier hazard his life, and the mariner pass through storms and waves; how cheerfully do they compass sea and land! And no difficulty can keep them back, when they think of an uncertain, perishing treasure. Oh, what life then would it put into a christian's endeavours, if he would frequently forethink of his everlasting treasure! We run so slowly, and strive so lazily, because we so little mind the prize. When a christian hath been tasting the hidden manna, and drinking of the streams of the paradise of God, what life doth this ambrosia and nectar put into him! How fervent will his spirit be in prayer, when he considers that he prays for no less than heaven! If Enoch, Elias, or any of the saints who are now in heaven, and have been partakers of the vision of the living God, should be sent down to the earth again to live on the terms as we now do, would they not strive hard, and pray earnestly, rather than lose that blessed rest? No wonder, for they would know what it is they pray for. It is true, we cannot know it here so thoroughly as they, yet if we would but get as high as we can, and study but that which may now be known, it would strangely alter both our spirits and our duties. Observe but the man who is much in heaven and you shall see he is not like other

[1] Non est vivere, sed valere vita; ut proverb.

christians. There is somewhat of that which he hath seen above, appeareth in all his duty and conversation; nay, take but the same man immediately when he is returned from these views of bliss, and you shall easily perceive that he excels himself, as if he were not, indeed, the same as before. If he be a preacher, how heavenly are his sermons; what clear descriptions, what high expressions, what savoury passages, hath he of that rest! If he be a private christian, what heavenly conference, what heavenly prayers, what a heavenly carriage hath he! May you not even hear in a preacher's sermons, or in the private duties of another, when they have been most above? When Moses had been with God in the mount, he had derived so much glory from God that made his face to shine, that the people could not behold him. Beloved friends, if you would but set upon this employment, even so would it be with you. Men would see the face of your conversation shine, and say, Surely he hath been with God. As the body is apt to be changed into the temper of the air it breathes in, and the food it lives on, so will your spirits receive an alteration according to the objects which they are exercised about. If your thoughts do feed on Christ and heaven, you will be heavenly; if they feed on earth, you will be earthly. It is true, a heavenly nature goes before this heavenly employment; but yet the work will make it more heavenly. There must be life before we can feed; but our life is continued and increased by feeding: therefore, reader, let me here inform thee, that if thou lie complaining of deadness and dulness, that thou canst not love Christ, nor rejoice in his love; that thou hast no life in prayer, nor any other duty; and yet never triedst this quickening course, or at least art careless and unconstant in it; why, thou art the cause of thy own complaints; thou deadest and dullest thy own heart; thou deniest thyself that life which thou talkest of. Is not thy "life hid with Christ in God?" Col. iii. 3. Whither must thou go but to Christ for it? and whither is that but to heaven, where he is? Thou wilt not come to Christ, that thou mayst have life, John v. 40. If thou wouldst have light and heat, why art thou then no more in the sunshine? If thou wouldst have more of that grace which flows from Christ, why art thou no more with Christ for it? Thy strength is in heaven, and thy life in heaven, and there thou must daily fetch it if thou wilt have it. For want of this recourse to heaven, thy soul is as a candle that is not lighted, and thy duties as a sacrifice which hath no fire. Fetch one coal daily from this altar, and see if thy offering will not burn. Light thy candle at this flame, and feed it daily with oil from hence, and see if it will not gloriously shine. Keep close to this reviving fire, and see if thy affections will not be warm. Thou bewailest thy want of love to God, and well thou mayst, for it is a heinous crime, a killing sin; why, lift up thy eye of faith to heaven, behold his beauty, contemplate his excellences, and see whether his amiableness will not fire thy affections, and his perfect goodness ravish thy heart. As the eye doth incense the sensual affections by its over-much gazing on alluring objects, so doth the eye of our faith in meditation inflame our affections towards our Lord, by the frequent gazing on that highest beauty. Whoever thou art, that art a stranger to this employment, be thy parts and profession never so great, let me tell thee, thou spendest thy life but in trifling or idleness; thou seemest to live, but thou art dead. I may say of thee, as Seneca of idle Vacia, *Scis latere, vivere nescis*, Thou knowest how to lurk in idleness, but how to live thou knowest not: and as the same Seneca would say, when he passed by that sluggard's dwelling, *Ibi situs est Vacia;* so it may be said of thee, There lies such a one, but not there lives such a one; for thou spendest thy days liker to the dead than the living. One of Draco's laws to the Athenians was, that he who was convict of idleness should be put to death.[m] Thou dost execute this on thy own soul, whilst by thy idleness thou destroyest its liveliness.

Thou mayst many other ways exercise thy parts, but this is the way to exercise thy graces. They all come from God as their fountain, and lead to God as their ultimate end; and are exercised on God as their chiefest object, so that God is their all in all. From heaven they come, and heavenly their nature is, and to heaven they will direct and move thee. And as exercise maintaineth appetite, strength, and liveliness, to the body, so doth it also to the soul. "Use limbs, and have limbs," is the known proverb; and use grace and spiritual life in these heavenly exercises, and you shall find it quickly cause their increase. The exercise of your mere abilities of speech will not much advantage your graces, but the exercise of these heavenly, soul-exalting gifts will unconceivably help to the growth of both. For as the moon is then most full and glorious when it doth most directly face the sun, so will your souls be both in gifts and graces when you do most nearly view the face of God. This will feed your tongue with matter, and make you abound and overflow, both in preaching, praying, and conferring: besides, the fire which you fetch from heaven for your sacrifices, is no false or strange fire; as your liveliness will be much more, so will it be also more sincere. A man may have a great deal of fervour in affections and duties, and all prove but common and unsound when it is raised upon common grounds and motives: your zeal will partake of the nature of those things by which it is acted; the zeal therefore which is kindled by your meditations on heaven, is most like to prove a heavenly zeal; and the liveliness of the spirit, which you fetch from the face of God, must needs be the divinest, sincerest life. Some men's fervency is drawn only from their books, and some from the pricks of some stinging affliction, and some from the mouth of a moving minister, and some from the encouragement of an attentive auditory; but he that knows this way to heaven, and derives it daily from the pure fountain, shall have his soul revived with the water of life, and enjoy that quickening which is the saints' peculiar. By this faith thou mayst offer Abel's sacrifice, more excellent than that of common men, and by it obtain witness that thou art righteous, God testifying of thy gifts that they are sincere, Heb. xi. 4: when others are ready, as Baal's priests, to beat themselves, and cut their flesh, because their sacrifice will not burn; then if thou canst get but the spirit of Elias, and in the chariot of contemplation canst soar aloft, till thou approachest near to the quickening Spirit, thy soul and sacrifice will gloriously flame, though the flesh and the world should cast upon them the water of all their opposing enmity. Say not now, How shall we get so high, or how can mortals ascend to heaven? For faith hath wings, and meditation is its chariot; its office is to make absent things as present. Do you not see how a little piece of glass, if it do but rightly face the sun, will so contract its beams and heat as to set on fire that which is behind it, which

[m] De animo hoc cœlesti dico ut Rabinus ille de operibus: Doctrina sine opere non est doctrina: cadit enim super corda, sicut imber super saxa. Et ut Chrysost.: Nihil frigidius est doctore verbis solummodo philosophante · hoc enim non est doctoris sed histrionis.

without it would have received but little warmth? Why, thy faith is as the burning-glass to thy sacrifice, and meditation sets it to face the sun; only take it not away too soon, but hold it there awhile, and thy soul will feel the happy effect. The slanderous Jews did raise a foolish tale of Christ, that he got into the holy of holies, and thence stole the true name of God; and lest he should lose it, cut a hole in his thigh, and sewed it therein, and by virtue of this he raised the dead, gave sight to the blind, cast out devils, and performed all his miracles. Surely, if we can get into the holy of holies, and bring thence the name and image of God, and get it closed up in our hearts, this would enable us to work wonders; every duty we performed would be a wonder, and they that heard would be ready to say, Never man spake as this man speaketh. The Spirit would possess us, as those flaming tongues, and make us every one to speak, not in the variety of the confounded languages, but in the primitive, pure language of Canaan, the wonderful works of God. We should then be in every duty, whether prayer, exhortation, or brotherly reproof, as Paul was at Athens, his spirit (*παρωξύνετο*) was stirred within him, Acts xvii. 16; and should be ready to say, as Jeremy did, "His word was in my heart, as a burning fire shut up in my bones; and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay," Jer. xx. 9.

Christian reader, art thou not thinking when thou seest a lively believer, and hearest his soul-melting prayers, and soul-ravishing discourse, Oh, how happy a man is this! Oh that my soul were in this blessed plight! Why, I here direct and advise thee from God; try this fore-mentioned course, and set thy soul conscionably to this work, and thou shalt be in as good a case. Wash thee frequently in this Jordan, and thy leprous, dead soul will revive, and thou shalt know that there is a God in Israel, and that thou mayst live a vigorous and joyous life, if thou wilfully cast not by this duty, and so neglect thine own mercies. If thou be not a lazy, reserved hypocrite, but most truly value this strong and active frame of spirit, show it then by thy present attempting this heavenly exercise. Say not now, but thou hast heard the way to obtain this life into thy soul, and into thy duties. If thou wilt yet neglect it, blame thyself. But, alas! the multitude of professors come to a minister just as Naaman came to Elias; they ask us, How shall I know I am a child of God? How shall I overcome a hard heart, and get such strength and life of grace? But they expect that some easy means should do it; and think we should cure them with the very answer to their question, and teach them a way to be quickly well: but when they hear of a daily trading in heaven, and the constant meditation on the joys above; this is a greater task than they expected, and they turn their backs as Naaman to Elias, or the young man on Christ, and few of the most conscionable will set upon the duty. Will not preaching, and praying, and conference, serve, say they, without this dwelling still in heaven? Just as country people come to physicians; when they have opened their case, and made their moan, they look he should cure them in a day or two, or with the use of some cheap and easy simple; but when they hear of a tedious method of physic, and of costly compositions, and bitter potions, they will hazard their lives with some sottish empiric, who tells them an easier and cheaper way; yea, or venture on death itself before they will obey such difficult counsel. Too many that we hope well of, I fear, will take this course here. If we could give them life, as God did, with a word, or could heal their souls, as charmers do their bodies, with easy stroking, and a few good words, then they would readily hear and obey. I entreat thee, reader, beware of this folly: fall to the work; the comfort of spiritual health will countervail all the trouble of the duty. It is but the flesh that repines and gainsays, which thou knowest was never a friend to thy soul. If God had set thee on some grievous work, shouldst thou not have it done for the life of thy soul? How much more when he doth but invite thee heavenward to himself!

Sect. VIII. 6. Consider, The frequent believing views of glory are the most precious cordial in all afflictions. First, To sustain our spirits, and make our sufferings far more easy: Secondly, To stay us from repining, and make us bear with patience and joy: and, Thirdly, to strengthen our resolutions, that we forsake not Christ for fear of trouble. Our very beast will carry us more cheerfully in travel, when he is coming homeward, where he expecteth rest. A man will more quietly endure the lancing of his sores, the cutting out the stone, when he thinks on the ease that will afterwards follow. What then will not a believer endure, when he thinks of the rest to which it tendeth? What if the way be never so rough? can it be tedious if it lead to heaven? O sweet sickness,[n] sweet reproaches, imprisonments, or death, which is accompanied with these tastes of our future rest! This doth keep the suffering from the soul, so that it can work upon no more but our fleshly outside; even as alexipharmical medicines preserve the heart, that the contagion reach not the vital spirits. Surely our sufferings trouble not the mind, according to the degrees of bodily pain, but as the soul is more or less fortified with this preserving antidote. Believe it, reader, thou wilt have a doleful sickness, thou wilt suffer heavily, thou wilt die most sadly, if thou have not at hand the foretastes of rest. For my own part, if thou regard the experience of one that hath often tried, had it not been for that little (alas! too little) taste which I had of rest, my sufferings would have been grievous, and death more terrible. I may say, as David, "I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living," Psal. xxvii. 13. And, as the same David, "I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul. I cried unto thee, O Lord: I said, Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living," Psal. cxlii. 4, 5. I may say of the promise of this rest, as David of God's law, "Unless this had been my delight, I had perished in mine affliction," Psal. cxix. 92. "One thing," saith he, "I have desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple: for in time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion; in the secret of his tabernacle he shall hide me; he shall set me upon a rock. And then shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies

[n] Contumeliis, quæ vulgo tales habentur, nimio otio ingenia nostra infirma et muliebria, et inopia veræ injuriæ lascivientia commoventur. Venit tandem mors *φαρμακευτικὴ κάθαρσις* omnium malorum, quæ omnes pares facit, et victo victorique finem æque maturum affert. Chytræus. Read Tertullian, Cyprian, &c. when it was ordinary to die for Christ; and see what other argument they so much encourage with, as this certain crown of glory. Nos non annectimus arescentem coronam; sed a Deo æternis floribus vividam sustinemus: qui et modeste Dei nostri liberalitate securi, spe fut ræ fœlicitatis, fide præsentis ejus majestatis animamur; sic et beate resurgimus et futuri contemplatione jam vivimus. Minut. Fælix. Octav. p. 401.

round about me; therefore shall I offer in that his tabernacle sacrifices of joy, and sing, yea, sing praises unto the Lord," Psal. xxvii. 4—6. Therefore as thou wilt then be ready, with David, to pray, "Be not far from me, for trouble is near," Psal. xxii. 11; so let it be thy own chiefest care not to be far from God and heaven, when trouble is near, and thou wilt then find him to be unto thee a very present help in trouble, Psal. xlvi. 1. Then, though the fig-tree should not blossom, neither should fruit be in the vines, the labour of the olive should fail, and the fields should yield no meat, the flock should be cut off from the fold, and there were no herd in the stalls; yet thou mightest rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of thy salvation, Hab. iii. 17, 18. All sufferings are nothing to us, so far as we have the foresight of this salvation. No bolts, nor bars, nor distance of place, can shut out these supporting joys, because they cannot confine our faith and thoughts, although they may confine our flesh. Christ and faith are both spiritual, and therefore prisons and banishments cannot hinder their intercourse.[o] Even when persecution and fear hath shut the doors, Christ can come in, and stand in the midst, and say to his disciples, "Peace be unto you." And Paul and Silas can be in heaven, even when they are locked up in the inner prison, and their bodies scourged, and their feet in the stocks. No wonder if there be more mirth in their stocks than on Herod's throne, for there was more of Christ and heaven. The martyrs find more rest in the flames than their persecutors can in their pomp and tyranny, because they foresee the flames they escape, and the rest which that fiery chariot is conveying them to. It is not the place that gives the rest, but the presence and beholding of Christ in it. If the Son of God will walk with us in it, we may walk safely in the midst of those flames which shall devour those that cast us in, Dan. iii. Why, then, christian, keep thy soul above with Christ: be as little as may be out of his company, and then all conditions will be alike to thee. For that is the best estate to thee, in which thou possessest most of him. The moral arguments of a heathen philosopher may make the burden somewhat lighter, but nothing can make us soundly joy in tribulation, except we can fetch our joy from heaven. How came Abraham to leave his country, and follow God he knew not whither? Why, because "he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God," Heb. xi. 8—10. What made Moses choose affliction with the people of God, rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, and to esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt? Why, because he had respect to the recompence of reward, Heb. xi. 24—26. What made him to forsake Egypt, and not to fear the wrath of the king? Why, he endured, as seeing him who is invisible, ver. 27. How did they quench the violence of fire; and out of weakness were made strong? why would they not accept deliverance when they were tortured?[p] Why, they had their eye on a better resurrection which they might obtain. Yea, it is most evident that our Lord himself did fetch his encouragement to sufferings from the foresight of his glory; for, to this end, he both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living, Rom. xiv. 9. "Even Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right-hand of the throne of God," Heb. xii. 2. Who can wonder that pain and sorrow, poverty and sickness, should be exceeding grievous to that man who cannot reach to see the end? or that death should be the king of terrors to him who cannot see the life beyond it? He that looks not on the end of his sufferings, as well as on the suffering itself, he needs must lose the whole consolation: and if he see not the quiet fruit of righteousness which it afterward yieldeth, it cannot to him be joyous, but grievous, Heb. xii. 11. This is the noble advantage of faith; it can look on the means and end together. This, also, is the reason why we oft pity ourselves more than God doth pity us, though we love not ourselves so much as he doth; and why we would have the cup to pass from us, when he will make us drink it up. We pity ourselves with an ignorant pity, and would be saved from the cross, which is the way to save us. God sees our glory as soon as our suffering, and sees our suffering as it conduceth to our glory. He sees our cross and our crown at once, and therefore pitieth us the less, and will not let us have our wills. Sirs, believe it, this is the great reason of our mistakes, impatience, and censuring of God, of our sadness of spirit at sickness and at death, because we gaze on the evil itself, but fix not our thoughts on what is beyond it. We look only on the blood, and ruin, and danger; but God sees these, with all the benefits to souls, bodies, church, state, and posterity, all with one single view. We see the ark taken by the Philistines, but see not their god falling before it, and themselves returning it home with gifts. They that saw Christ only on the cross, or in the grave, do shake their heads, and think him lost: but God saw him dying, buried, rising, glorified, and all this with one view. Surely, faith will imitate God in this, so far as it hath the glass of a promise to help it. He that sees Joseph only in the pit, or in the prison, will more lament his case, than he that sees his dignity beyond it. Could old Jacob have seen so far, it might have saved him a great deal of sorrow. He that sees no more than the burying of the corn under ground, or the threshing, the winnowing, and grinding of it, will take both it and the labour for lost; but he that foresees its springing and increase, and its making into bread for the life of man, will think otherwise. This is our mistake: we see God burying us underground, but we foresee not the spring when we shall all revive: we feel him threshing and winnowing and grinding us, but we see not when we shall be served to our Master's table. If we should but clearly see heaven as the end of all God's dealings with us, surely none of his dealings could be so grievous. Think of this, I entreat thee, reader. If thou canst but learn this way to heaven, and get thy soul acquainted there, thou needest not be unfurnished of the choicest cordials to revive thy spirits in every affliction: thou knowest where to have them whenever thou wantest. Thou mayst have arguments at hand, to answer all that the devil or flesh can say to thy discomfort. Oh! if God would once raise us to this life, we should find that though heaven and sin are at a great distance, yet heaven and a prison, or

[o] Cum revocatio illa venerit, eum claritas super nos fulserit, tam beati erimus et læti dignatione Domini honorati, quam rei remanebunt et miseri qui Dei desertores, et contra Deum rebelles voluntatem fecerunt diaboli. Hæc, fratres, hæreant cordibus vestris: hæc sit armorum vestrorum præparatio: hæc diurna ac nocturna meditatio; ante oculos habere et cogitatione semper ac sensibus volvere iniquorum supplicia, et præmia ac merita justorum. Si hæc meditantibus nobis supervenit persecutionis dies, miles Christi non expavescit ad pugnam, sed paratus est ad coronam. Cyprian, epist. lvi. p. 156.

[p] Omnia facile contemnere potest, qui se moriturum esse serio cogitat, inquit Chytræus.

remotest banishment; heaven and the belly of a whale in the sea; heaven and a den of lions, a consuming sickness, or invading death; are at no such distance. But as Abraham so far off saw Christ's day, and rejoiced, so we, in our most forlorn estate, might see that day when Christ shall give us rest, and therein rejoice.[q] I beseech thee, christian, for the honour of the gospel, and for the comfort of thy soul, that thou be not to learn this heavenly art, when in the greatest extremity thou hast most need to use it. I know thou expectest suffering days; at least, thou lookest to be sick and die. Thou wilt then have exceeding need of consolation. Why, whence dost thou think to draw thy comforts? If thou broach every other vessel, none will come. It is only heaven that can afford thee store. The place is far off: the well is deep; and if, then, thou have not wherewith to draw, nor hast got thy soul acquainted with the place, thou wilt find thyself at a fearful loss. It is not an easy nor a common thing, even with the best sort of men, to die with joy. As ever thou wouldst shut up thy days in peace, and close thy dying eyes with comfort, die daily. Live now above, be much with Christ, and thy own soul and the saints about thee shall bless the day that ever thou tookest this counsel. When God shall call thee to a sick bed, and a grave, thou wilt perceive him saying to thee, "Come, my people, enter into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast," Isa. xxvi. 20. It is he that, with Stephen, doth see heaven opened, and Christ sitting at the right-hand of God, who will comfortably bear the storm of stones, Acts vii. 56. Thou knowest not yet what trials thou mayst be called to. The clouds begin to rise again, and the times to threaten us with fearful darkness: few ages so prosperous to the church, but that still we must be saved so as by fire, (1 Cor. iii. 15,) and go to heaven by the old road. Men that would fall if the storm should shake them, do frequently meet with that which tries them. Why, what wilt thou do if this should be thy case? Art thou fitted to suffer imprisonment, or banishment; to bear the loss of goods and life? How is it possible thou shouldst do this, and do it cordially and cheerfully, except thou hast a taste of some greater good, which thou lookest to gain by losing these? Will the merchant throw his goods overboard till he sees he must otherwise lose his life? And wilt thou cast away all thou hast before thou hast felt the sweetness of that rest, which else thou must lose by saving these? Nay, and it is not a speculative knowledge, which thou hast got only by reading or hearing of heaven, which will make thee part with all to get it. As a man that only hears of the sweetness of pleasant food, or reads of the melodious sounds of music, this doth not much excite his desires; but when he hath tried the one by his taste, and the other by his ear, then he will more lay out to get them: so if thou shouldst know only by the hearing of the ear what is the glory of the inheritance of the saints, this would not bring thee through sufferings and death; but if thou take this trying, tasting course, by daily exercising thy soul above, then nothing will stand in thy way, but thou wouldst on till thou art there, though through fire and water. What state more terrible than that of an apostate, when God hath told us, if any man draw back, his soul shall have no pleasure in him? Heb. x. 38. Because they take not their pleasure in God, and fill not themselves with the delights of his ways, and of his heavenly paths, which drop fatness, Psal. lxv. 11; therefore do they prove backsliders in heart, and are filled with the bitterness of their own ways, Prov. xiv. 14.[r]

Nay, if they should not be brought to trial, and so not actually deny Christ, yet they are still interpretatively such, because they are such in disposition, and would be such in action, if they were put to it. I assure thee, reader, for my part, I cannot see how thou wilt be able to hold out to the end, if thou keep not thine eye upon the recompence of reward, and use not frequently to taste this cordially; for the less thy diligence is in this, the more doubtful must thy perseverance needs be: for the joy of the Lord is thy strength, and that joy must be fetched from the place of thy joy; and if thou walk without thy strength, how long dost thou think thou art like to endure?

Sect. IX. 7. Consider, It is he that hath his conversation in heaven, who is the profitable christian to all about him: with him you may take sweet counsel, and go up to the celestial house of God. When a man is in a strange country, far from home, how glad is he of the company of one of his own nation! How delightful is it to them to talk of their country, of their acquaintance, and the affairs of their home! Why, with a heavenly christian thou mayst have such discourse: for he hath been there in the Spirit, and can tell thee of the glory and rest above. What pleasant discourse was it to Joseph to talk with his brethren in a strange land, and to inquire of his father, and his brother Benjamin! Is it not so to a christian to talk with his brethren that have been above, and inquire after his Father, and Christ his Lord? When a worldling will talk of nothing but the world, and a politician of nothing but the affairs of the state, and a mere scholar of human learning, and a common professor of duties, and of christians; the heavenly man will be speaking of heaven, and the strange glory which his faith hath seen, and our speedy and blessed meeting there. I confess, to discourse with able men, of clear understandings and piercing wits, about the controverted difficulties in religion, yea, about some criticisms in languages and sciences, is both pleasant and profitable; but nothing to this heavenly discourse of a believer. Oh, how refreshing and savoury are his expressions! How his words do pierce and melt the heart! How they transform the hearers into other men, that they think they are in heaven all the while! How doth his doctrine drop as the rain, and his speech distil as the gentle dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass; while his tongue is expressing the name of the Lord, and ascribing greatness to his God! Deut. xxxii. 1—3. Is not his feeling, sweet discourse of heaven, even like that box of precious ointment, which being opened to pour on the head of Christ, doth fill the house with the pleasure of its perfume? All that are near may be refreshed by it. His words are like the precious ointment on Aaron's head, that ran down upon his beard, and the skirts of his garments, even like the dew of Hermon; and as the dew that descendeth from the celestial mount Zion, where the Lord hath commanded the blessing, even

[q] Nullus iis dolor est de incursatione malorum præsentium, quibus fiducia est futurorum bonorum. Nec consternamur adversis, nec dolemus, neque in ulla aut rerum clade rebelles aut corporum valetudine mussitamus, spiritu magis quam carne viventes, firmitate animi infirmitatem corporis vincimus. Cyprian ad Demetrian. sect. lib. 15. ed. Goulart. p. 328.

[r] Nemo potest personam diu ferre. Ficta in naturam suam cito recidunt. Quibus veritas subest, quæque ex solido enascuntur, tempore ipso in majus meliusque proceedunt. Seneca de Clement. lib. i. c. 1. p. 463.

life for evermore, Psal. cxxxiii. 3. This is the man who is as Job; "When the candle of God did shine upon his head, and when by his light he walked through darkness; when the secret of God was upon his tabernacle, and when the Almighty was yet with him; then the ear that heard him, did bless him; and the eye that saw him, gave witness to him," Job xxix. 3—5, 11. Happy the people that have a heavenly minister; happy the children and servants that have a heavenly father or master; happy the man that hath heavenly associates, if they have but hearts to know their happiness! This is the companion who will watch over thy ways; who will strengthen thee when thou art weak; who will cheer thee when thou art drooping, and comfort thee with the same comforts wherewith he hath been so often comforted himself, 2 Cor. i. 4. This is he that will be blowing at the spark of thy spiritual life, and always drawing thy soul to God, and will be saying to thee, as the Samaritan woman, Come and see one that hath told me all that ever I did, one that hath ravished my heart with his beauty; one that hath loved our souls to the death. Is not this the Christ? Is not the knowledge of God and him eternal life? Is not it the glory of the saints to see his glory? If thou come to this man's house, and sit at his table, he will feast thy soul with the dainties of heaven:[s] thou shalt meet with a better than Plato's philosophical feast, even a taste of that feast of fat things; "of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined," Isa. xxv. 6; that thy soul may be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and thou mayst praise the Lord with joyful lips, Psal. lxiii. 5. If thou travel with this man on the way, he will be directing and quickening thee in thy journey to heaven: if thou be buying or selling, or trading with him in the world, he will be counselling thee to lay out for the inestimable treasure. If thou wrong him, he can pardon thee, remembering that Christ hath not only pardoned great offences to him, but will also give him this invaluable portion. If thou be angry, he is meek, considering the meekness of his heavenly pattern; or if he fall out with thee, he is soon reconciled, when he remembereth that in heaven you must be everlasting friends. This is the christian of the right stamp; this is the servant that is like his Lord; these be the innocent that save the island, and all about them are the better where they dwell. O sirs, I fear the men I have described are very rare, even among the religious; but were it not for our own shameful negligence, such men we might all be. What families, what towns, what commonwealths, what churches, should we have, if they were but composed of such men! but that is more desirable than hopeful, till we come to that land which hath no other inhabitants, save what are incomparably beyond this. Alas! how empty are the speeches, and how unprofitable the society, of all other sorts of christians in comparison of these! A man might perceive by his divine song, and high expression, (Deut. xxxii. and xxxiii.) that Moses had been oft with God, and that God had showed him part of his glory. Who could have composed such spiritual psalms, and poured out praises, as David did, but a man after God's own heart; and a man that was near the heart of God, and no doubt had God also near his heart? Who could have preached such spiritual doctrine, and dived into the precious mysteries of salvation, as Paul did, but one who had been called with a light from heaven, and had been rapt up into the third heavens, in the Spirit, and there had seen the unutterable things? If a man should come down from heaven amongst us, who had lived in the possession of that blessed state, how would men be desirous to see or hear him! and all the country, far and near, would leave their business and crowd about him: happy would he think himself that could get a sight of him; how would men long to hear what reports he would make of the other world; and what he had seen; and what the blessed there enjoy! Would they not think this man the best companion, and his discourse to be of all most profitable? Why, sirs, every true believing saint shall be there in person, and is frequently there in spirit, and hath seen it also in the glass of the gospel. Why then do you value their company no more; and why do you inquire no more of them; and why do you relish their discourse no better? Well, for my part, I had rather have the fellowship of a heavenly-minded christian, than of the most learned disputers or princely commanders.

Sect. X. 8. Consider, There is no man so highly honoureth God, as he who hath his conversation in heaven; and without this we deeply dishonour him. Is it not a disgrace to the father, when the children do feed on husks, and are clothed in rags, and accompany with none but rogues and beggars? Is it not so to our Father, when we who call ourselves his children, shall feed on earth, and the garb of our souls be but like that of the naked world? and when our hearts shall make this clay and dust their more familiar and frequent company, who should always stand in our Father's presence, and be taken up in his own attendance? Sure it beseems not the spouse of Christ, to live among his scullions and slaves, when they may have daily admittance into his presence-chamber; he holds forth the sceptre, if they will but enter. Sure we live below the rates of the gospel, and not as becometh the children of a King, even of the great King of all the world. We live not according to the height of our hopes, nor according to the plenty that is in the promises, nor according to the provision of our Father's house, and the great preparations made for his saints. It is well we have a Father of tender bowels, who will own his children, even in dirt and rags: it is well the foundation of God stands sure, and that the Lord knoweth who are his: or else he would hardly take us for his own, so far do we live below the honour of saints: if he did not first challenge his interest in us, neither ourselves nor others could know us to be his people. But, oh! when a christian can live above, and rejoice his soul in the things that are unseen, how doth God take himself to be honoured by such a one! The Lord may say, Why, this man believes me; I see he can trust me, and take my word: he rejoiceth in my promises, before he hath possession: he can be glad and thankful for that which his bodily eyes did never see: this man's rejoicing is not in the flesh: I see he loves me, because he minds me: his heart is with me, he loves my presence; and he shall surely enjoy it in my kingdom for ever. "Because thou hast seen," saith Christ to Thomas, "thou hast believed; but blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed," John xx. 29. How did God take himself honoured by Caleb and Joshua, when they went into the promised land, and brought back to their brethren a taste of the fruits, and gave it commendation, and encouraged the people! And what a promise and recompence do they receive! Numb. xiv. 24, 30. For those that honour him, he will honour, 1 Sam. ii. 30.

[s] Junius writes of himself in his Life, that when he lay in the sin of atheism he was driven by a tumult into a countryman's house, where he received the first spark of zeal, kindled in him by the countryman's zealous discourse; and the countryman also received an increase of knowledge from him, who then had knowledge without zeal.

Sect. XI. 9. Consider, If thou make not conscience of this duty of diligent keeping thy heart in heaven, First, Thou disobeyest the flat commands of God: Secondly, Thou losest the sweetest parts of Scripture: Thirdly, And dost frustrate the most gracious discoveries of God.

God hath not left it as a thing indifferent, and at thy own choice, whether thou wilt do it or not. He hath made it thy duty, as well as the means of thy comfort, that so a double bond might tie thee not to forsake thy own mercies. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above; set your affections on things above, not on things on earth," Col. iii. 1, 2. The same God that hath commanded thee to believe, and to be a christian, hath commanded thee to set thy affections above. The same God that hath forbidden thee to murder, to steal, to commit adultery, incest, or idolatry, hath forbidden thee the neglect of this great duty; and darest thou wilfully disobey him? Why makest thou not conscience of the one as well as of the other? Secondly, Besides, thou losest the most comfortable passages of the word. All those most glorious descriptions of heaven, all those discoveries of our future blessedness, all God's revelations of his purposes towards us, and his frequent and precious promises of our rest; what are they all but lost to thee? Are not these the stars in the firmament of the Scripture, and the most golden lines in that book of God? Of all the Bible, methinks thou shouldst not part with one of those promises or predictions; no, not for a world. As heaven is the perfection of all our mercies, so the promises of it in the gospel, are the very soul of the gospel. That word, which was sweeter to David than the honey and the honeycomb, and to Jeremy, the joy and rejoicing of his heart, (Jer. xv. 16,) the most pleasant part of this thou losest. Thirdly, Yea, thou dost frustrate the preparations of Christ for thy joy, and makest him to speak in vain. Is a comfortable word from the mouth of God of so great worth, that all the comforts of the world are nothing to it; and dost thou neglect and overlook so many of them? Reader, I entreat thee to ponder it, why God should reveal so much of his counsel, and tell us beforehand of the joys we shall possess, but only that he would have us know it for our joy? If it had not been to make comfortable our present life, and fill us with the delights of our foreknown blessedness, he might have kept his purpose to himself, and never have let us know till we come to enjoy it, nor have revealed it to us till death had discovered it, what he meant to do with us in the world to come; yea, when we had got possession of our rest, he might still have concealed its eternity from us, and then the fears of losing it again would have bereaved us of much of the sweetness of our joys. But it hath pleased our Father to open his counsel, and to let us know the very intent of his heart, and to acquaint us with the eternal extent of his love; and all this that our joy may be full, and we might live as the heirs of such a kingdom. And shall we now overlook all, as if he had revealed no such matter? Shall we live in earthly cares and sorrows, as if we knew of no such thing? and rejoice no more in these discoveries, than if the Lord had never written it? If thy prince had sealed thee but a patent of some lordship, how oft wouldst thou be casting thine eye upon it, and make it thy daily delight to study it, till thou shouldst come to possess the dignity itself. And hath God sealed thee a patent of heaven; and dost thou let it lie by thee, as if thou hadst forgot it? Oh that our hearts were as high as our hopes, and our hopes as high as these infallible promises!

Sect. XII. 10. Consider, It is but equal that our hearts should be on God, when the heart of God is so much on us. If the Lord of glory can stoop so low, as to set his heart on sinful dust, sure one would think we should easily be persuaded to set our hearts on Christ and glory, and to ascend to him in our daily affections, who vouchsafeth to condescend to us! Oh, if God's delight were no more in us, than ours is in him, what should we do? what a case were we in! Christian, dost thou not perceive that the heart of God is set upon thee, and that he is still minding thee with tender love, even when thou forgettest both thyself and him? Dost thou not find him following thee with daily mercies, moving upon thy soul, providing for thy body, preserving both? Doth he not bear thee continually in the arms of love; and promise that all shall work together for thy good; and suit all his dealings to thy greatest advantage, and give his angels charge over thee? and canst thou find in thy heart to cast him by, and be taken up with the joys below, and forget thy Lord, who forgets not thee? Fie upon this unkind ingratitude! Is not this the sin that Isaiah so solemnly doth call both heaven and earth to witness against? "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib, but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider," Isa. i. 2, 3. If the ox or ass do straggle in the day, they likely come to their home at night; but we will not so much as once a day, by our serious thoughts, ascend to God. When he speaks of his own respects to us, hear what he saith, when Zion saith, "The Lord hath forsaken, my Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands, thy walls are continually before me," Isa. xlix. 14. But, when he speaks of our thoughts to him, the case is otherwise. "Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? yet my people have forgotten me days without number," Jer. ii. 32. As if he should say, You will not forget the clothes on your backs, you will not forget your braveries and vanities! you will not rise one morning, but you will remember to cover your nakedness. And are these of more worth than your God; or of more concernment than your eternal life? and yet you can forget these day after day. O brethren, give not God cause to expostulate with us, as, "Ye are they that have forsaken the Lord, and that forget my holy mountain," Isa. lxv. 11. But rather admire his minding of thee, and let it draw thy mind again to him, and say, "What is man, that thou shouldst magnify him; and that thou shouldst set thy heart upon him; and that thou shouldst visit him every morning, and try him every moment?" Job vii. 17, 18. So let thy soul get up to God, and visit him every morning, and thy heart be towards him every moment.

Sect. XIII. 11. Consider, Should not our interest in heaven, and our relation to it, continually keep our hearts upon it; besides that excellency which is spoken of before. Why, there our Father keeps his court. Do we not call him "Our Father which art in heaven?" Ah! ungracious, unworthy children, that can be so taken up in their play below as to be mindless of such a Father? Also, there is Christ our Head, our Husband, our Life; and shall we not look towards him, and send to him, as oft as we can, till we come to see him face to face? If he were, by transubstantiation, in the sacraments, or other ordinances, and that as gloriously as he is in heaven, then there were some reason for our lower thoughts; but when the heavens must receive him till the restitution of all things, let them also receive our

hearts with him. There, also, is our mother. For Jerusalem, which is above, is the mother of us all, Gal. iv. 26. And there are multitudes of our elder brethren. There are our friends and our ancient acquaintance, whose society in the flesh we so much delighted in, and whose departure hence we so much lamented. And is this no attractive to thy thoughts? If they were within thy reach on earth, thou wouldst go and visit them; and why wilt thou not oftener visit them in spirit, and rejoice beforehand to think of thy meeting them there again? Saith old Bullinger, *Socrates gaudet sibi moriendum esse, propterea quod Homerum, Hesiodum, et alios præstantissimos viros se visurum crederet; quanto magis ego gaudeo, qui certus sum me visurum esse Christum, Servatorem meum, æternum Dei Filium, in assumpta carne; et præterea tot sanctissimos et eximios patriarchas*, &c. Socrates rejoiced that he should die, because he believed he should see Homer, Hesiod, and other excellent men; how much more do I rejoice, who am sure to see Christ, my Saviour, the eternal Son of God, in his assumed flesh; and, besides, so many holy and excellent men. When Luther desired to die a martyr, and could not obtain it, he comforted himself with these thoughts, and thus did write to them in prison: *Vestra vincula mea sum, vestri carceres et ignes mei sunt, dum confiteor et prædico, vobisque simul compatior et congratulor;* Yet this is my comfort, your bonds are mine, your prisons and fires are mine, while I confess and preach the doctrine for which you suffer, and while I suffer and congratulate with you in your sufferings. Even so should a believer look to heaven, and contemplate the blessed state of the saints, and think with himself, Though I am not yet so happy as to be with you, yet this is my daily comfort, you are my brethren and fellow-members in Christ, and therefore your joys are my joys, and your glory, by this near relation, is my glory; especially while I believe in the same Christ, and hold fast the same faith and obedience by which you were thus dignified; and also, while I rejoice in spirit with you, and in my daily meditations congratulate your happiness. Moreover, our house and home is above, "for we know if this earthly house of our tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Why do we, then, look no oftener towards it, and groan not, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven? 2 Cor. v. 1, 2. Sure, if our home were far meaner, we should yet remember it, because it is our home. You use to say, "Home is home, be it never so poor;" and should such a home then be no more remembered? If you were but banished into a strange land, how frequent thoughts would you have of home; how oft would you think of your old companions! which way ever you went, or what company soever you came in, you would still have your hearts and desires there. You would even dream in the night that you were at home; that you saw your father, or mother, or friends; that you were talking with wife, or children, or neighbours. And why is it not thus with us in respect of heaven? Is not that more truly and properly our home where we must take up our everlasting abode, than this, which we are looking every hour when we are separated from, and shall see it no more? We are strangers, and that is our country, Heb. xi. 14, 15. We are heirs, and that is our inheritance; even an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us, 1 Pet. i. 4. We are here in continual distress and want, and there lies our substance; even that better and more enduring substance, Heb. x. 34. We are here fain to be beholden to others, and there lies our own perpetual treasure, Matt. vi. 21. Yea, the very hope of our souls is there; all our hope of relief from our distresses; all our hope of happiness, when we are here miserable; all this hope is laid up for us in heaven, whereof we hear in the true word of the gospel, Col. i. 5. Why, beloved christians, have we so much interest, and so seldom thoughts? have we so near relation, and so little affection? are we not ashamed of this? Doth it become us to be delighted in the company of strangers, so as to forget our Father and our Lord; or to be so well pleased with those that hate and grieve us, as to forget our best and dearest friends; or to be so besotted with borrowed trifles, as to forget our own profession and treasure; or to be so taken up with a strange place, as not once a day to look toward home; or to fall in love with tears and wants, as to forget our eternal joy and rest? Christians, I pray you think whether this become us, or whether this be the part of a wise or thankful man? Why, here thou art like to other men, as the heir under age, who differs not from a servant; but there it is that thou shalt be promoted, and fully estated in all that was promised. Surely God useth to plead his propriety in us, and from thence to conclude to do us good, even because we are his own people, whom he hath chosen out of all the world; and why then do we not plead our interest in him, and thence fetch arguments to raise up our hearts, even because he is our own God, and because the place is our own possession? Men use in other things to overlove and overvalue their own, and too much to mind their own things. Oh that we could mind our own inheritance, and value it but half as it doth deserve!

Sect. XIV. 12. Lastly, Consider, There is nothing else that is worth the setting our hearts on.[t] If God have them not, who or what shall have them? If thou mind not thy rest, what wilt thou mind? As the disciples said of Christ, "Hath any man given him meat to eat, that we know not of?" John iv. 32, 33; so say I to thee. Hast thou found out some other God or heaven, that we know not of; or something that will serve thee instead of rest? Hast thou found on earth an eternal happiness; where is it, and what is it made of? or who was the man that found it out, or who was he that last enjoyed it? where dwelt he, and what was his name? Or art thou the first that hast found this treasure, and that ever discovered heaven on earth? Ah, wretch! trust not to thy discoveries, boast not of thy gain till experience bid thee boast; or rather take up with the experience of thy forefathers, who are now in the dust, and deprived of all, though sometime they were as lusty and jovial as thou. I would not advise thee to make experiments at so dear rates, as all those do that seek after happiness below, lest, when the substance is lost, thou find too late that thou didst catch but a shadow; lest thou be like those men that will needs search out the philosopher's stone, though none could effect it that went before them; and so buy their experience with the loss of their own estates and time, which they might have had at a cheaper rate, if they

[t] Simile tu putas esse, utrum cures de frumento, &c. an ad hæc sacra et sublimia accedas? sciturus quæ natura sit Diis, quæ voluntas, quæ conditio, quæ forma, quis animum tuum casus expectet, ubi nos a corporibus dismissos natura componit? Quid sit quod hujus mundi gravissima quæque in medio sustineat? supra levia suspendat? in summum ignem ferat? Sydera cursibus suis excitet? Cætera deinceps ingentibus plena miraculis. Seneca de Brevit. Vitæ, cap. 19. How much more may a christian say so of his expected glory! Tom. i. Epist. p. 355.

would have taken up with the experience of their predecessors. So I would wish thee not to disquiet thyself in looking for that which is not on earth; lest thou learn thy experience with the loss of thy soul, which thou mightest have learned at easier terms, even by the warnings of God in his word, and loss of thousands of souls before thee. It would pity a man to see that men will not believe God in this, till they have lost their labour, and heaven, and all. Nay, that many christians, who have taken heaven for their resting-place, do lose so many thoughts needlessly on earth, and care not how much they oppress their spirits, which should be kept nimble and free for higher things. As Luther said to Melancthon, when he overpressed himself with the labours of his ministry, so may I much more say to thee, who oppressest thyself with the cares of the world: *Vellem te adhuc decies plus obrui. Adeo me nihil tui miseret, qui toties monitus, ne onerares teipsum tot oneribus, et nihil audis, omnia bene monita contemnis. Erit cum sero stultum tuum hunc zelum frustra damnabis, quo jam ardes solus omnia portare, quasi ferrum aut saxum sis:* It were no matter if thou wert oppressed ten times more; so little do I pity thee, who, being so often warned that thou shouldst not load thyself with so many burdens, dost no whit regard it, but contemnest all these wholesome warnings. Thou wilt shortly, when it is too late, condemn this thy foolish forwardness, which makes thee so desirous to bear all this, as if thou wert made of iron or stone. Alas! that a christian should rather delight to have his heart among these thorns and briers, than in the bosom of his crucified, glorified Lord! Surely, if Satan should take thee up to the mountain of temptation, and show thee the kingdoms and glory of the world, he could show thee nothing that is worthy thy thoughts, much less to be preferred before thy rest. Indeed, so far as duty and necessity require it, we must be content to mind the things below; but who is he that contains himself within the compass of those limits? And yet if we bound our cares and thoughts as diligently as ever we can, we shall find the least to be bitter and burdensome; even as the least wasp hath a sting, and the smallest serpent hath his poison. As old Hiltenius said of Rome: *Est proprium Romanæ potestatis ut sit ferrum, et licet digiti minorentur ad parvitatem acus, tamen manent ferrei:* It is proper to the Roman power to be of iron, and though the fingers of it be diminished to the smallness of a needle, yet they are iron still. The like may I say of our earthly cares; it is their property to be hard and troublous, and so they will be when they are at the least. Verily, if we had no higher hopes than what are on earth, I should take man for a most silly creature, and his work and wages, all his travel and his felicity, to be no better than dreams and vanity, and scarce worth the minding or mentioning; especially to thee, a christian, should it seem so, whose eyes are opened by the word and Spirit, to see the emptiness of all these things, and the precious worth of the things above. O, then, be not detained by these silly things, but if Satan present them to thee in a temptation, send them away from whence they came, as Pellicanus did send back the silver bowl which the bishop had sent him for a token, with this answer: *Astricti sunt quotquot Tiguri cives et inquilini, bis singulis annis, solemni juramento, ne quis eorum ullum munus ab ullo principe accipiat:* All that are citizens and inhabitants of Zurich, are solemnly sworn twice a year not to receive any gift from any prince abroad. Say thou, We the citizens and inhabitants of heaven, are bound by solemn and frequent covenants, not to have our hearts enticed or entangled with any foreign honours or delights, but only with those of their own country. If thy thoughts should, like the laborious bee, go over the world from flower to flower, from creature to creature, they would bring thee no honey or sweetness home, save what they gathered from their relations to eternity.

Object. But you will say, perhaps, Divinity is of larger extent than only to treat of the life to come, or the way thereto; there are many controversies of great difficulty, which therefore require much of our thoughts, and so they must not be all of heaven.

Answ. For the smaller controversies which have vexed our times, and caused the doleful divisions among us, I express my mind as that of Graserus: *Cum in visitatione ægrotorum, et ad emigrationem ex hac vita ad beatam præparatione deprehendisset, controversias illas theologicas, quæ scientiam quidem inflantem pariunt, conscientias vero fluctuantes non sedant, quæque hodie magna animorum contentione agitantur, et magnos tumultus in rebus publicis excitant, nullum prorsis usum habere, quinimo conscientias simpliciorum non aliter ac olim in papatu humana figmenta intricare; cœpit ab eis toto animo abhorrere, et in publicis concionibus tantum ea proponere, quæ ad fidem salvificam in Christum accedendam, et ad pietatem veram juxta verbum Dei exercendam, veramque consolationem in vita et morte præstandam faciebant:* When he had found in his visiting the sick, and in his own preparations for well dying, that the controversies in divinity, which begot a swelling knowledge, but do not quiet troubled consciences, and which are at this day agitated with such contention of spirits, and raise such tumults in commonwealths, are indeed utterly useless; yea, and moreover do entangle the consciences of the simple, just as the human inventions in popery formerly did; he begun with full bent of mind to shun or abhor them, and in his public preaching to propound only those things which tended to the kindling a true faith in Jesus Christ, and to the exercise of true godliness, according to the word of God, and to the procuring of true consolation both in life and death. I can scarce express my own mind more plainly than in this historian's expressions of the mind of Graserus.[x] While I had some competent measure of health, and looked at death as at a greater distance, there was no man more delighted in the study of controversy; but

[u] He that comes to us is either learned or unlearned; if learned, then he can inquire into the weakness of reasons, and upon prayers for the Spirit's illumination, he may know what party to join with; but if he be unlearned, let him follow the simplicity of Scripture, and he will not easily be deceived; let him go to the middle way between extremes, and he shall not err. Dr. John Stegman. Dodecad. de Eccles. Viator, p. 1. And I think it were well if the learned would do as he adviseth the unlearned. I am sure it were better for the church and themselves, unless he would have the unlearned the wiser, honester, and happier men.

[x] Sacrilegæ sine dubio blasphemiæ alligatis, cum quis vestras controversias nominare ausit stultas; ineruditas quæstiones, profanas inanias, verborum pugnas; h. e. uno verbo, nugas. Ego vero quid de me sentiatis parum curo: hoc palam dico: stolidas, vanas, inutiles, indoctas disputationes; vid. nænias et gerras esse omnes eas, quæ vel nihil faciunt ad pietatem et ædificationem ecclesiæ, vel in verbo Dei non sunt, pene revelatæ, explicatæ, decisæ, et sic a Spiritu Sancto ad salutem minus necessariæ judicatæ. At tales non sunt hodiernæ quædam controversiæ. Vera me scribere, judicabit olim ecclesia; judicabit ipse Christus. Soletis supra modum exaggerare minutissimas liticulas quasi a quibus cardo sempiternæ salutis unice dependeat. At longe aliter sentiunt quicunque nondum sunt vestris præconceptis opinionibus fascinati; et contagio vestro infecti. Rupert. Meldenius Parænesi Votiv. pro Pace Eccles. fol. d. 3.

when I saw dying men have no mind on it, and how unsavoury and uncomfortable such conference was to them, and when I had oft been near to death myself, and found no delight in them further than they confirmed or illustrated the doctrine of eternal glory, I have minded them ever since the less, though every truth of God is precious, and it is the sin and shame of professors that they are no more able to defend the truth; yet should all our study of controversy be still in relation to this perpetual rest, and consequently be kept within its bounds, and with most christians, not have the twentieth part of our time or thoughts. Who that hath tried both studies, doth not cry out, as Summerhard was wont to do of the popish school divinity, *Quis me miserum tandem liberabit ab ista rixosa theologia?* Who will once deliver me, wretch, from this wrangling kind of dignity? And as it is said of Bucholcer: *Cum eximiis a Deo dotibus esset decoratus, in certamen tamen cum rabiosis illius seculi theologis descendere noluit. Desii (inquit) disputare, cœpi supputare: quoniam illud dissipationem, hoc collectionem significat. Vidit enim ab iis controversias moveri, quas nulla unquam amoris Dei scintilla calefecerat: vidit ex diuturnis theologorum rixis, utilitatis nihil, detrimenti plurimum in ecclesias redundasse:* i. e. Though he was adorned by God with excellent gifts, yet would he never enter into contention with the furious divines of that age. I have ceased, saith he, my disputations, and now begin my supputation; for that signifieth dissipation, but this collection. For he saw, that those men were the movers of controversies who had never been warmed with one spark of the love of God; he saw, that from the continual brawls of divines, no benefit, but much hurt, did accrue to the churches. And it is worth the observing, which the historian adds: *Quapropter omnis ejus cura in hoc erat, ut auditores fidei suæ commissos, doceret bene vivere et beate mori; et annotatum in universariis amici ejus reperierunt, permultos in extremo agone constitutos gratias ipsi hoc nomine egisse, quod ipsius ductu servatorem suum Jesum agnovissent, cujus in cognitione pulchrum vivere, mori vero longe pulcherrimum ducerent. Atque haud scio annon hoc ipsum longe Bucholcero coram Deo sit gloriosius futurum, quam si aliquot contentiosorum libellorum myriadas posteritatis memoriæ consecrassat:* i. e. Therefore this was all his care, that he might teach his hearers committed to his charge, to live well, and die happily; and his friends found noted down in his papers a great many of persons, who in their last agony did give him thanks for this very reason, that by his direction they had come to the knowledge of Jesus their Saviour; in the knowledge of whom, they esteem it sweet to live, but to die far more sweet. And I cannot tell whether this very thing will not prove more glorious to Bucholcer before God, than if he had consecrated to the memory of posterity many myriads of contentious writings. And as the study of controversies is not the most pleasant nor the most profitable, so much less the public handling of them; for do it with the greatest meekness and ingenuity, yet shall we meet with such unreasonable men, as the said Bucholcer did, *qui arrepta ex aliquibus voculis calumniandi materia, hæreseos insimulare et traducere optimum virum non erubescerent; frustra obtestante ipso, dextre data, dextre acciperent:* i. e. who, taking occasion of reproach from some small words, were not ashamed to traduce the good man, and accuse him of heresy, while he in vain obtested with them, that they should take in good part what was delivered with a good intention. Siracides saith, in Ecclesiasticus, chap. xxvi. that a scolding woman shall be sought out for to drive away the enemies; but experience of all ages tells us, to our sorrow, that the wrangling divine is their chiefest inlet, and no such scarecrow to them at all.

So then it is clear to me that there is nothing worth our minding but heaven, and the way to heaven.

All the question will be about the affairs of church and state. Is not this worth our minding, to see what things will come to, and how God will conclude our differences?

Answ. So far as they are considered as the providences of God, and as they tend to the settling of the gospel, and government of Christ, and so to the saving of our own and our posterity's souls, they are well worth our diligent observation: but these are only their relations to eternity. Otherwise, I should look upon all the stirs and commotions in the world, but as the busy gadding of a heap of ants, or the swarming of a nest of wasps or bees; the spurn of a man's foot destroys all their labour: or as an interlude, or a tragedy, of a few hours long.[y] They first quarrel, and then fight, and let out one another's blood, and bring themselves more speedily and violently to their graves, which, however, they could not long have delayed, and so come down, and the play is ended. And the next generation succeeds them in their madness, and makes the like bustle in the world for a time; and so they also come down, and lie in the dust. Like the Roman gladiators, that would kill one another by the hundreds, to make the beholders a solemn show; or as the young men of Joab and Abner, that must play before them, by stabbing one another to the heart, and fall down and die, and there is an end of the sport. And is this worth a wise man's observance?

Surely our very bodies themselves, for which we make all this ado in the world, are very silly pieces: look upon them (not as they are set out in a borrowed bravery) but as they lie rotting in a ditch, or grave; and you will say, they are silly things indeed. Why then, sure all our dealings in the world, our buyings and sellings, and eating and drinking, our building and marrying, our wealth and honours, our peace and our war, so far as they relate not to the life to come, but tend only to the support and pleasing of this silly flesh, must needs themselves be silly things, and not worthy the frequent thoughts of a christian: for the means (as such) is meaner than their end.

And now doth not thy conscience say as I say, that there is nothing but heaven, and the way to it, that is worth thy minding?

Sect. XV. Thus I have given thee these twelve arguments to consider of, and, if it may be, to persuade thee to a heavenly mind. I now desire thee to view them over; read them deliberately, and read them again, and then tell me, are they reason, or are they not? Reader, stop here, while thou answerest my question: Are these considerations weighty, or not? Are these arguments convincing, or not? Have I proved it thy duty, and a flat necessity, to keep thy heart on things above, or have I not? Say yea, or nay, man! If thou say nay, I am confident thou contradictest thine own conscience, and speakest against the light that is in thee, and thy reason tells thee thou speakest falsely: if thou say yea, and acknowledge thyself convinced of the duty, bear witness then, that I have thine own confession: that very tongue of thine shall condemn thee, and that confession be pleaded against thee, if thou now go home, and cast this off, and wilfully neglect such a confessed duty; and these twelve considerations shall be as a jury to convict thee,

[y] Read Cyprian's excellent contemplation of the world's vanity and wickedness, from his prospect in the mount, Epist. i. ad Donat.

which I propounded, hoping they might be effectual to persuade thee. I have not yet fully laid open to you the nature and particular way of that duty, which I am all this while persuading you to; that is the next thing to be done: all that I have said hitherto, is but to make you willing to perform it. I know the whole work of man's salvation doth stick most at his own will; if we could once get over this block well, I see not what could stand before us. Be soundly willing, and the work is more than half done. I have now a few plain directions to give you, for to help you in doing this great work; but, alas! it is in vain to mention them, except you be willing to put them in practice. What sayest thou, reader? Art thou willing, or art thou not? Wilt thou obey, if I show thee the way of thy duty? However, I will set them down, and tender them to thee, and the Lord persuade thy heart to the work.

CHAPTER IV.

CONTAINING SOME HINDERANCES OF A HEAVENLY LIFE.

SECT. I. The first task that I must here set thee, consists in the avoiding some dangerous[a] hinderances, which otherwise will keep thee off from this work, as they have done many a thousand before thee. If I show thee briefly where the rocks and gulf do lie, I hope thou wilt beware. If I stick up a mark at every quicksand, I hope I need to say no more, to put thee by it. Therefore, as thou valuest the comforts of a heavenly conversation, I here charge thee from God to beware most carefully of these impediments.

1. The first is, the living in a known unmortified sin. Observe this. Oh what havoc will this make in thy soul! Oh the joys that this hath destroyed! the blessed communion with God that this hath interrupted! the ruins it hath made amongst men's graces! the soul-strengthening duties that this hath hindered! And above all others, it is especially an enemy to this great duty.

Christian reader, I desire thee, in the fear of God, stay here a little, and search thy heart. Art thou one that hath used violence with thy conscience? Art thou a wilful neglecter of known duties, either public, private, or secret? Art thou a slave to thine appetite, in eating or drinking, or to any other commanding sense? Art thou a proud seeker of thine own esteem, and a man that must needs have men's good opinion, or else thy mind is all in a combustion? Art thou a wilfully peevish and passionate person, as if thou wert made of tinder, or gunpowder, ready to take fire at every word, or every wry look, or every supposed slighting of thee, or every neglect of a compliment or courtesy? Art thou a knowing deceiver of others in thy dealing, or one that hath set thyself to rise in the world? not to speak of greater sins, which all take notice of. If this be thy case, I dare say, heaven and thy soul are very great strangers: I dare say, thou art seldom in heart with God, and there is little hope it should ever be better, as long as thou continuest in these transgressions. These beams in thine eyes will not suffer thee to look to heaven; these will be a cloud between thee and God. When thou dost but attempt to study eternity, and to gather comfort from the life to come,[b] thy sin will presently look thee in the face, and say, These things belong not to thee. How shouldst thou take comfort from heaven, who takest so much pleasure in the lusts of thy flesh? Oh, how this will damp thy joys, and make the thoughts of that day and state to become thy trouble, and not thy delight! Every wilful sin that thou livest in, will be to thy comforts as water to the fire; when thou thinkest to quicken them, this will quench them; when thy heart begins to draw near to God, this will presently come in thy mind, and cover thee with shame, and fill thee with doubting. Besides, (which is most to the point in hand,) it doth utterly indispose thee, and disable thee to this work: when thou shouldst wind up thy heart to heaven, alas! it is biassed another way; it is entangled in the lusts of the flesh; and can no more ascend in divine meditation, than the bird can fly whose wings are clipped, or that is entangled in the lime twigs, or taken in the snare. Sin doth cut the very sinews of the soul; therefore, I say of this heavenly life, as Mr Bolton saith of prayer, Either it will make thee leave sinning, or sin will make thee leave it, and that quickly too, for these cannot continue together. If thou be here guilty, who readest this, I require thee sadly to think of this folly. O man! what a life dost thou lose; and what a life dost thou choose; what daily delights dost thou sell for the swinish pleasure of a stinking lust; what a Christ, what a glory, dost thou turn thy back upon, when thou art going to the embracements of thy hellish pleasures! I have read of a gallant addicted to uncleanness, who at last meeting with a beautiful dame, and having enjoyed his fleshly desires of her, found her in the morning to be the dead body of one that he had formerly sinned with, which had been acted by the devil all night, and left dead again in the morning. Surely, all thy sinful pleasures are such: the devil doth animate them in the darkness of the night; but when God awakes thee, at the farthest at death, the deceit is vanished, and nothing left but a carcass to amaze thee, and be a spectacle of horror before thine eyes. Thou thinkest thou hast hold of some choice delight, but it will turn in thy hand (as Moses's rod) into a serpent; and then thou wouldst fain be rid of it, if thou knewest how; and would fly from the face of it, as thou dost now embrace it: and shall this now detain thee from the high delights

[a] Ad illam vitam requiritur, 1. Quod homo per virtuosam assuefactionem et gratiam, sit radicatus in virtutibus. Quod nullam delectationem habeat in appetitu vanæ glóriæ, in cupiditate divitiarum; in concupiscentia oculorum et gulæ. 2. Requiritur internum silentium, ut non occupet se circa exteriora; quid audierit, vel viderit foris, nihil curando, tanquam in somno occurrissent. 3. Amorosa adhæsio cum Deo: ut omnia ejus judicia, omnia facta, omnes doctrinas cum reverentia amplectatur. 4. Quod nihil aliud quærat, sed reputet sibi illum dilectum sufficientissimum, supcrexcellentem illum in corde suo diligat super omne quod potest videri, audiri, vel cogitari, vel imaginari, quia totus amabilis, totus desiderabilis, &c. 5. Quod sæpe reducat ad memoriam perfectiones Dei, et illis intime congratuletur.—Gerson. 3. Part. in Alphabete Divini Amoris.

[b] Nam absque munditia animi, et vita sanctitatis æmula, possibile non est sanctorum dicta intelligere. Ut siquis vult intueri lucem solis, oculum purgat, &c. Aut siquis civitatem aut regionem inspicere cupiat, pergit ad locum inspiciendi gratia. Ita et qui theologorum consequi intelligentiam cupit, abluere prius animam debet, atque detergere, et per vitæ morumque similitudinem, ipsos adire sanctos; ut voto atque instituto illis conjunctus, ea etiam qua Deus illis revelavit, intelligat; et quasi unus ex illis effectus, effugiat peccatorum periculum, et ignem eis in die judicii preparatum. Recipiatque reposita sanctis in regnis cœlestibus præmia. Athanas. de Incarn. Verbi, translat. in fine. "He that will do all that is lawful, will soon be drawn to that which is unlawful," saith Clemens Alex. Pæd. l. cap. 1.

of the saints? If heaven and hell can meet together, and if God can beeome a lover of sin, then mayst thou live in thy sin and in the tastes of glory, and mayst have a conversation in heaven though thou cherish thy corruption. If, therefore, thou find thyself guilty, never doubt on it, but this is the cause that estrangeth thee from heaven; and take heed lest it keep out thee, as it keeps out thy heart; and do not say, but thou wast bid take heed. Yea, if thou be a man that hitherto hast escaped, and knowest no reigning sin in thy soul, yet let this warning move thee to prevention, and stir up a dread of this danger in thy spirit. As Hunnius writes of himself, that, hearing the mention of the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost, it stirred up such fears in his spirit, that made him cry out, What if this should be my case? and so roused him to prayer and trial. So think thou, though thou yet be not guilty, what a sad thing were it, if ever this should prove thy case, and therefore watch. Especially resolve to keep from the occasions of sin, and, as much as is possible, out of the way of temptations.[c] The strongest christian is unsafe among occasions of sin. Oh what need have we to pray daily, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil!" And shall we pray against them, and cast ourselves upon them? If David, Solomon, Peter, &c. teach you not, at least look upon the multitudes that have revolted of late times, and fallen into the most horrid sins, with religious pretences. As Christ thought meet to say to his disciples, "Remember Lot's wife; and what I say to one I say to all, Watch;" so say I, Remember these, and watch.

The description of a worldling.

Sect. II. 2. A second hinderance carefully to be avoided is, an earthly mind; for you may easily conceive that this cannot stand with a heavenly mind. God and mammon, earth and heaven, cannot both have the delight of thy heart.[d] This makes thee like Anselm's bird, with a stone tied to the foot, which as oft as she took flight, did pluck her to the earth again. If thou be a man that hast fancied to thyself some content or happiness to be found on earth, and beginnest to taste a sweetness in gain, and to aspire after a fuller and a higher estate; and hast hatched some thriving projects in thy brain, and art driving on thy rising design; believe it, thou art marching with thy back upon Christ, and art posting apace from this heavenly life. Why, hath not the world that from thee, which God hath from the heavenly believer? When he is blessing himself in his God, and rejoicing in hope of the glory to come, then thou art blessing thyself in thy prosperity, and rejoicing in hope of thy thriving here: when he is solacing his soul in the views of Christ, of the angels and saints, that he shall live with for ever, then art thou comforting thyself with thy wealth, in looking over thy bills and bonds, in viewing thy money, thy goods, thy cattle, thy buildings, or large possessions; and art recreating thy mind in thinking on thy hopes; of the favour of some great ones, on whom thou dependest; of the pleasantness of a plentiful and commanding state; of thy larger provision for thy children after thee; of the rising of thy house, or the obeisance of thine inferiors. Are not these thy morning and evening thoughts, when a gracious soul is above with Christ? Dost thou not delight and please thyself with a daily rolling these thoughts in thy mind, when a gracious soul should have higher delights? If he were a fool by the sentence of Christ that said, "Soul, take thy rest, thou hast enough laid up for many years;" what a fool of fools art thou, that, knowing this, yet takest not warning, but in thy heart speakest the same words! Look them over seriously, and tell me what difference between this fool's expressions and thy affections? I doubt not but thou hast more wit than to speak thy mind just in his language; but, man, remember thou hast to do with the Searcher of hearts. It may be, thou holdest on thy course of duty, and prayest as oft as thou didst before; it may be, thou keepest in with good ministers, and with godly men, and seemest as forward in religion as ever: but what is all this to the purpose? Mock not thy soul, man, for God will not be so mocked. What good may yet remain in thee, I know not; but sure I am, thy course is dangerous, and, if thou follow it on, will end in dolour. Methinks I see thee befooling thyself, and tearing thy hair, and gnashing thy teeth, when thou hearest thy case laid open by God: "Thou fool, this night shall they require thy soul from thee; and then whose are all these things?" Certainly, so much as thou delightest and restest on earth, so much is abated of thy delights in God. Thine earthly mind may consist with thy profession and common duties, but it cannot consist with this heavenly duty.[e] I need not tell thee all this, if thou wouldst deal impartially, and not be a traitor to thy own soul: thou knowest thyself how seldom and cold, how cursory and strange, thy thoughts have been of the joys hereafter, ever since thou didst trade so eagerly for the world. Methinks I even perceive thy conscience stir now, and tell thee plainly that this is thy case. Hear it, man! Oh! hear it now, lest thou hear it in another manner when thou wouldst be full loth. Oh the cursed madness of many that seem to be religious; who thrust themselves into a multitude of employments, and think they can never have business enough till they are loaded with labours and clogged with cares; that their souls are as unfit to converse with God, as a man to walk with a mountain on his back; and till he hath even transformed his soul almost into the nature of his drossy carcass, and made it as unapt to soar aloft as his body is to leap above the sun: and when all is done, and they have lost that heaven they might have had upon earth, they take up a few rotten arguments to prove it lawful, and then they think that they have salved all. Though these sots would not do so for their bodies, nor forbear their eating, or drinking, or

[c] Nemo diu tutus periculoso proximus. Nec evadere diabolum servus Dei poterit, qui se diaboli laqueis implicavit. Cyprian. epist. lxii. p. 169.

[d] Non domus aut fundus, non æris acervus et auri ægroto Domini deduxit corpore febres; non animo curas: Valeat possessor oportet, &c. Horat. Quis potest pauper esse qui non eget? qui non inhiat alieno? qui Deo dives est? magis pauper ille est qui eum multa habeat, plura desiderat. Dicam tandem quemadmodum sentio; nemo tam pauper potest esse quam natus est. Aves sine patrimonio vivunt, et indies pecora pascuntur: et hæc nobis tamen nota sunt, quæ omnia si non concupiscimus, possidemus. Igitur ut qui viam terit, eo fœlicior quo levior incedit: ita beatior in hoc itinere vivendi qui paupertate se sublevat, non sub divitiarum onere suspirat. Minut. Fœl. Octavius, p. 398.

[e] Cyprian, expounding the word "daily bread," saith, "We that have renounced this world, viz. in our baptismal covenant with Christ, and have cast away the riches and glory of it, in our belief of spiritual grace, must only ask for food and victuals, seeing our Lord telleth us, He that forsaketh not all that he hath, cannot be his disciple." Cypr. in Orat. Dom. in sect. xiv. p. 313: Avaritia est inordinatus amor temporalium, viz. omnis terrenæ substantiæ quæ potest esse de possessione hominis; et habitudinum respectivarum in rebus terrenis fundatarum, quas homo irrationabiliter appetit, sicut dominia et honores mundanos, quæ ex possessione talium oriuntur. Et ita 1 Tim. vi. 10: Radix omnium malorum est cupiditas. Wicliff. Trialog. lib. iii. cap. 18. p. 72, 73.

sleeping, or sporting, though they could prove it lawful so to do, though, indeed, they cannot prove it lawful neither. They miss not the pleasures of this heavenly life, if they can but quiet their consciences, while they fasten upon lower and baser pleasures. For thee, O christian, who hast tasted of these pleasures, I advise thee, as thou valuest their enjoyment, as ever thou wouldst taste of them any more, take heed of this gulf of an earthly mind;[f] for if once thou come to this, that thou wilt be rich, "thou fallest into temptation, and a snare, and into divers foolish and hurtful lusts:" it is St. Paul's own words, 1 Tim. vi. 9. Set not thy mind, as Saul, on the asses, when the kingdom of glory is set before thee. Keep these things as thy upper garments, still loose about thee, that thou mayst lay them by whenever there is cause: but let God and glory be next thy heart, yea, as the very blood and spirit by which thou livest. Still remember that of the Spirit, "The friendship of the world is enmity with God: whosoever, therefore, will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God," James iv. 4. And, "Love not the world, nor the things of the world: if any love the world, the love of the Father is not in him," 1 John ii. 15. This is plain dealing, and happy he that faithfully receives it.

Sect. III. 3. A third hinderance which I must advise thee to beware is, the company of ungodly and sensual men. Not that I would dissuade thee from necessary converse,[g] or from doing them any office of love, especially not from endeavouring the good of their souls, as long as thou hast any opportunity or hope: nor would I have thee conclude them to be dogs and swine, that so thou mayst evade the duty of reproof; nor yet to judge them such at all, as long as there is any hope of better, or before thou art certain they are such indeed. Much less can I approve of the practice of those who, because the most of the world are naught, do therefore conclude men dogs, or swine, before ever they faithfully and lovingly did admonish them, yea, or perhaps before they have known them, or spoke with them: and hereupon they will not communicate with them in the Lord's supper, but separate from them into distinct congregations. I persuade thee to no such ungodly separation: as I never found one word in Scripture where either Christ or his apostles denied admittance to any man that desired to be a member of the church, though but only professing to repent and believe; so neither did I ever there find that any but convicted heretics, and scandalous ones, and that for the most part after due admonition, were to be avoided or debarred our fellowship. And whereas it is urged that they are to prove their title to the privileges which they lay claim to, and not we to disprove it:[h] I answer, If that were granted, yet their mere sober professing to repent and believe in Christ, is as to us a sufficient evidence of their title to church membership, and admittance thereto by baptism, supposing them not admitted before; and their being baptized persons, if at age, or members of the universal visible church, into which it is that they are baptized, and owning their baptismal profession, is sufficient evidence of their title to the supper, till they do by heresy or seandal blot that evidence;[i] which evidenee, if they do produce in the church of which they are members, yea, though they are yet weak in the faith of Christ, who is he that dare refuse to receive them? And this, after much doubting, dispute, and study of the Scriptures, I speak as confidently as almost any truth of equal moment: so plain is the Scripture in this point, to a man that brings his understanding to the model of Scripture, and doth not bring a model in his brain, and reduce all he reads to that model. The door of the visible church is incomparably wider than the door of heaven: and Christ is so tender, so bountiful, and forward to convey his grace, and the gospel so free an offer and invitation to all, that surely Christ will keep no man off: if they will come quite over in spirit to Christ, they shall be welcome; if they will come but only to a visible profession, he will not deny them admittance there, because they intend to go no farther, but will let them come as near as they will; and that they come no farther, shall be their own fault: and so it is not his readiness to admit such, nor the openness of the door of his visible church, that makes men hypocrites, but their own wickedness. Christ will not keep such out among infidels, for fear of making hypocrites; but when the net is drawn unto the shore, the fishes shall be separated; and when the time of harvest comes, "then the angels shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them that work iniquity," Matt. xiii. 41. There are many saints, or sanctified men, that yet shall never come to heaven, who are only saints by their separation from paganism, into fellowship with the visible church, but not saints in the strictest sense, by separation from the ungodly into the fellowship of the mystical body of Christ. Heb. x. 29; Deut vii. 6; xiv. 2, 21; xxvi. 19; xxviii. 9; Exod. xix. 6; 1 Cor. vii. 13, 14; Rom. xi. 16; Heb. iii. 1, compared with verse 12; 1 Cor. iii. 17; xiv. 33; 1 Cor. i. 2, compared with xi. 20,

[f] Quicquid nobis bono futurum erat, Deus et parens noster in proximo posuit. Non expectavit inquisitionem nostram, ultro dedit; nocitura altissime pressit. Nihil nisi de nobis queri possumus. Ea quibus perirenus, nolente rerum natura et abscondente, protulimus. Addiximus animum voluptati, cui indulgere initium omnium malorum est. Seneca, epist. ex.; 1 Sam. ix. 20. Sed amor Dei adhuc est valde modicus et debilis: mundanus vero fortis et potens; repugnatque fortiter, ne nidum suum seu hospitium quod habuit ab infantia in homine perdat. Et quod plus molestat, ipse amor mundi oculis cernitur corporis, et sentitur dulcis esse ad retinendum; amarus vero ad perdendum: amor autem Dei e contra non videtur; et sentitur durus ad acquirendum, et dulcis ad dimittendum. Gerson, part. iii. p. 382. De Monte Contemplat. cap. 21.

[g] I love the zeal of those Athenians, that would not wash in the same bath with the persecutors of Socrates. But this wise averseness from the known enemies of peace may, and must be, accompanied with a friendly correspondence with differing brethren. Bishop Hall, in the Peace-maker, p. 134, 135. Quemcunque Deus sistit, qua authoritate, quo jure homo depulsurus est, donec ipse Deus architector suæ domus, depulerit? Pudeat ergo christianos, qui inscientissimis suis præjudiciis, aut impotentissimis studiis sic abripiuntur, ut quam Deus materiam domus suæ advocat, ipsi negent, aver-tant et omnibus viribus interturbent. Junius Irenic. in Psal. cxxii. tom. i. p. 691. An excellent book for a censorious, separating, turbulent christian to peruse. Lege Cypriani Epist. li. p. 111, 112; of not departing from the unity of the church, because they are wicked.

[h] Verbo et disciplina Domini emendo quod possum, tolero quod non possum, fugio paleam ne hæc sim; non aream, ne nihil sim. As Austin excellently, cont. Cresc. lib. iii. c. 35; cited also by Willet, on John xvii. p. 66; i. e. What I can, I amend by the word and discipline of the Lord; what I cannot, I suffer. I avoid the chaff, lest I prove such myself; but not the flour, lest I prove nothing. Yet a necessary use of church censures I deny not; which how it was in the primitive times, and how terrible, (præjudicium summum futuri judicii,) Tertull. shows in Apologet. cap. 39.

[i] Hilarius, lib. ad Const. Aug. inquit, Tutissimum nobis est primam et solam evangelicam fidem, in baptismate confessam intellectamque, retinere, &c. Qui credit omnia quæ hoc brevi symbolo comprehensa habemus, vitamque Christi præceptis conformem agere conatur, ex albo christianorum non est expungendus, neque a communione cum aliis christianæ cujuscunque ecclesiæ membris abigendus. E contra, qui ullam ex hisce articulis surcillat et suggillat, licet nomen christiani sibi vendicet, ab orthodoxorum communione arcendus est, &c. Davenant pro Pace, p. 10, 11. vid. ult.

21, &c.; Gal. iii. 26, compared with Gal. iii. 3, 4, iv. 11, and v. 2—4; John xv. 2.[k]

Thus far I have digressed, by way of caution, that you may not think that I dissuade you from lawful converse; but it is the unnecessary society of ungodly men, and too much familiarity with unprofitable companions, though they be not so apparently ungodly, that I dissuade you from.[l] There are many persons whom we may not avoid or excommunicate out of the church, no nor out of our private society, judicially, or by way of penalty to them, whom yet we must exclude from our too-much familiarity in way of prudence for preservation of ourselves. It is not only the open profane, the swearer, the drunkard, and the enemies of godliness, that will prove hurtful companions to us, though these, indeed, are chiefly to be avoided; but too frequent society with dead-hearted formalists, or persons merely civil and moral, or whose conference is empty, unsavoury, and barren, may much divert our thoughts from heaven, and do ourselves a great deal of wrong.[m] As mere idleness and forgetting God, will keep a soul as certainly from heaven, as a profane, licentious, fleshly life; so also will the useless company of such idle, forgetful, negligent persons, as surely keep our hearts from heaven, as the company of men more dissolute and profane. Alas! our dulness and backwardness is such, that we have need of the most constant and powerful helps. A clod, or a stone, that lies on the earth, is as prone to arise and fly in the air, as our hearts are naturally to move towards heaven. You need not hold nor hinder the earth and rocks, to keep them from flying up to the skies; it is sufficient that you do not help them. And, surely, if our spirits have not great assistance, they may easily be kept from flying aloft, though they never should meet with the least impediment. Oh, think of this in the choice of your company. When your spirits are so powerfully disposed for heaven that you need no help to lift them up; but, as the flames, you are always mounting upward, and carrying with you all that is in your way, then you may, indeed, be less careful of your company; but till then, as you love the delights of a heavenly life, be careful therein. As it is reported of a lord that was near to his death,[n] and the doctor that prayed with him read over the Litany; "for all women labouring with child, for all sick persons and young children, &c.; from lightning and tempest, from plague, pestilence, and famine; from battle, murder, and sudden death," &c.; "Alas!" saith he, "what is this to me who must presently die?" &c.: so mayst thou say of such men's conference, who can talk of nothing but their callings and vanity; Alas! what is this to me who must shortly be in rest, and should now be refreshing my soul with its foretastes? What will it advantage thee to a life with God, to hear where the fair is such a day, or how the market goes, or what weather is, or is like to be; or when the moon changed, or what news is stirring? Why, this is the discourse of earthly men. What will it conduce to the raising of thy heart God-ward, to hear that this is an able minister, or that a serious christian, or that this was an excellent sermon, or that an excellent book; to hear a violent arguing or tedious discourse of baptism, ceremonies, the power of the keys, the order of God's decrees, or other such controversies of great difficulty, but little importance? Yet this, for the most part, is the sweetest discourse that thou art like to have of a formal, speculative, dead-hearted professor. Nay, if thou hadst newly been warming thy heart in the contemplation of the blessed joys above, would not this discourse benumb thine affections and quickly freeze thy heart again? I appeal to the judgment of any man that hath tried it, and maketh observations on the frame of his spirit. Men cannot well talk of one thing and mind another, especially things of such differing natures. You young men, who are most liable to this temptation, think sadly of what I say. Can you have your hearts in heaven on an ale-house bench, among your roaring, singing, swaggering companions, or when you work in your shops with none but such whose ordinary language is oaths, or filthiness, or foolish talking, or jesting? Nay, let me tell you thus much more; that if you choose such company when you might have better, and find more delight and content in such, you are so far from a heavenly conversation, that as yet you have no title to heaven at all, and in that estate shall never come there: for were your treasure there, your heart would not be on things so distant, Matt. vi. 21. In a word, our company will be part of our happiness in heaven, and it is a singular part of our furtherance to it, or hinderance from it. As the creatures living in the several elements are commonly of the temperature of the element they live in, as the fishes cold and moist like the water, the worms cold and dry as the earth, and so the rest; so are we usually like the society which we most converse in. He that never found it hard to have a heavenly mind in earthly company, it is certainly because he never tried.

Sect. IV. 4. A fourth hinderance to heavenly conversation is, too frequent disputes about lesser truths, and especially when a man's religion lies only in his opinions: a sure sign of an unsanctified soul.[o]

[k] Haud dubitem affirmare (inter Germ. doctores) illos qui falluntur et tamen communionem fraternam cum aliis retinere parati sunt, esse schismate coram Deo magis excusatos, quam qui veras opiniones in hisce controversis tuentur, et mutuam interim communionem cum aliis ecclesiis etiam desiderantibus aspernantur. D. Davenant de Pace Eccl. p. 24, 25.

[l] Optime de hac re Calvinus in Matt. xiii. 37—40. ubi vid.

[m] I will tell who they be that may complain of the unprofitableness of christians. It is the bawds, panders, robbers, witches, wizards; and so ale-houses, taverns, play-houses, gaming-houses, &c. To be unprofitable to these is no small profit. Tertul. Apolog. adv. Gentes, cap. 43. There are many among us also that teach men to say and to do things reproachful to God, and wicked, and yet they come in the name of Jesus. And they are distinguished by several names, taken from certain men, as every one was the author of any doctrine or opinion. Some of them blaspheme God, the Creator of all, and Christ, &c. We communicate with none of these men, for we know them to be ungodly, irreligious, unrighteous, and unjust; and that they confess Christ only in name, but do not worship him in deed, though they call themselves christians. Justin Martyr. Dialog. cum Tryphon.

[n] O God, let me be dumb to all the world, so as I may ever have a tongue for thee and my own heart. Bishop Hall's Soliloq. xxiii. p. 48. Seneca's separation I allow: Sanabimur, si modo separamur a cœtu. Hæc pars major esse videtur: ideo pejor est. Non tam bene cum rebus humanis agitur, ut meliora pluribus placeant. Argumentum pessimi, turba est. Quæramus quid optime factum sit, non quid usitatissimum; et quid nos in possessione fœlicitatis æternæ constituat; non quid vulgo veritatis pessimo interpreti probatum sit. Vulgum autem, tam chlamydatos, quam coronam voco. Non enim colorem vestium quibus prætexta corpora sunt, aspicio: oculis de homine non credo. Habeo melius, certiusque lumen quo a falsis vera dijudicem. Animi bonum animus inveniat. Seneca de Vita Beat. cap. 2. Ego confiteor imbecillitatem meam. Nunquam mores quos extuli (e turba) refero. Aliquid ex eo quod composui, turbatur; aliquid ex his quæ fugavi, redit. Seneca, epist. 7. Fœlix est illorum conditio quibus datum est quam longissime ab impiorum cohabitatione abesse. Polanus, in Ezek. ii. p. 82.

[o] There must needs therefore be some toleration in controverted lesser doctrinals: that this is no Socinianism, hear one that was none: Apud nos vera fides est in Christi meritis; vera de vitæ sanctimonia doctrina valet; hoc inficiari non poterunt pontificii. At in his duobus cardinibus omnis Christianismus vertitur. Quod ergo in nobis desiderant? D. Jos. Stegman. Dodecat. de Eccles. Viator. Præfat. Ad fidem

If sad examples be doctrinal to you, or the judgments of God upon us be regarded, I need to say the less upon this particular. It is legibly written in the faces of thousands; it is visible in the complexion of our diseased nation: this *facies hypocritica* is our *facies hypocratica*. He that hath the least skill in physiognomy may see that this complexion is mortal, and this picture-like, shadow-like visage affordeth our state a sad prognostic. You that have been my companions in armies and garrisons, in cities and countries, I know have been my companions in this observation, that they are usually men least acquainted with a heavenly life, who are the violent disputers about the circumstantials of religion. He whose religion is all in his opinions, will be most frequently and zealously speaking his opinions; and he whose religion lies in the knowledge and love of God in Christ, will be most delightfully speaking of that time when he shall enjoy God and Christ. As the body doth languish in consuming fevers when the native heat abates within, and an unnatural heat inflaming the external parts succeeds; so, when the zeal of a christian doth leave the internals of religion, and fly to ceremonials, externals, or inferior things, the soul must needs consume and languish: yea, though you were sure your opinions were true, yet when the chiefest of your zeal is turned thither, and the chiefest of your conference there laid out, the life of grace decays within, and your hearts are turned from this heavenly life. Not that I would persuade you to undervalue the least truth of God, nor that I do acknowledge the hot disputers of the time to have discovered the truth above their brethren;[p] but in case we should grant them to have hit on the truth, yet let every truth in our thoughts and speeches have their due proportion, and I am confident the hundredth part of our time and our conference would not be spent upon the now common themes. For as there are a hundred truths of far greater consequence, who do all challenge the precedency before these, so many of those truths alone are of a hundred times nearer concernment to our souls, and therefore should have an answerable proportion in our thoughts. Neither is it any excuse for our casting by those great, fundamental truths, because they are common and known already; for the chief improvement is yet behind, and the soul must be daily refreshed with the truth of Scripture, and the goodness of that which it offereth and promiseth, as the body must be with its daily food; or else the known truths that lie idle in your heads will no more nourish, or comfort, or save you, than the bread that lies still in your cupboards will feed you. Ah! he is a rare and precious christian who is killed in the improving of well-known truths. Therefore let me advise you that aspire after this joyous life, spend not too much of your thoughts, your time, your zeal, or your speeches, upon quarrels that less concern your souls; but when hypocrites are feeding on husks or shells, or on this heated food which will burn their lips far sooner than warm and strengthen their hearts, then do you feed on the joys above. I could wish you were all understanding men, able to defend every truth of God; and to this end that you would read and study controversy more;[q] and your understanding and stability in these days of trial is no small part of my comfort and encouragement. But still I would have the chiefest to be chiefly studied, and none to shoulder out your thoughts of eternity. The least controverted points are usually most weighty, and of most necessary frequent use to our souls.

For you, my neighbours and friends in Christ, I bless God that I have so little need to urge this hard upon you, or to spend my time and speeches in the pulpit on these quarrels, as I have been necessitated, to my discontent, to do elsewhere:[r] I rejoice in the wisdom and goodness of our Lord, who hath saved me much of this labour, 1. Partly by his tempering of your spirits to sincerity. 2. Partly by the doleful, yet profitable example of those few that went from us, whose former and present condition of spirit makes them stand, as the pillar of salt, for a continual terror and warning to you, and so to be as useful as they were like to be hurtful. 3. Partly by the confessions and bewailings of this sin that you have heard from the mouth of the dying,[s] advising you to beware of changing your fruitful society for the company of deceivers. I do unfeignedly rejoice in these providences, and bless the Lord who thus establisheth his saints. Study well these precepts of the Spirit: "Him that is weak in the faith, receive, but not to doubtful disputations," Rom. xiv. 1. "But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes; and the servant of the Lord must not strive," 2 Tim. ii. 23. "But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law, for they are unprofitable and vain," Tit. iii. 9. "If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railing, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself," 1 Tim. vi. 3—5.

sufficit pauca nosse; in reliquis sufficit, contrarium non tueri. Ibid. mem. ii. p. 29. Quoad elementaria adeo dilucide S. Sanctus mentem suam in Scripturis declaravit, ut ex ipso verborum sono verus sensus statim hauriri queat. Ibid. mem. xii. p. 229. Quando consequentiæ necessitas non est evidenter cognita, atque ita negatio illa ex infirmitate, non autem animi ex obfirmatione provenit; ut in patribus factum est, damnabilis error non incurritur. Ibid. p. 226.

[p] Hinc videas theologastros, ut primum eos hæc fœtida scabies ac desperata, (φιλονειχεία) ingentis sapientiæ persuasione tumida, occupavit; rupta omni mora scriptitare. Controversias agitare, immo perinde acsi nullæ antea essent, novas suscitare, et obviam quemvis adversarium etiam nil tale cogitantem, nil hostile meruentem, deligere, &c. Rupert. Meldenius Paræn. Vot. pro Pac. fol. c. 2. Opiniones ignotæ veteri ecclesia etiamsi hoc tempore sint receptissimæ, tamen non sunt dogmata catholicæ ecclesiæ. Melancthon apud Luther. tom. i. disput. p. 411.

[q] It is a good saying of Picus Mirandula, wherewith D. Estius concludeth his oration De Certitudine Salutis; Veritatem Philosophia quærit, Theologia invenit, Religio possidet. "Study to obey, not to dispute: turn not conscience into questions and controversies, lest while thou art resolving what to do, thou do just nothing. Draw not all to reason, leave something to faith. Where thou canst not sound the bottom, admire the depth: kiss the book, and lay it down; weep over thy own ignorance, and send one hearty wish to heaven, Oh when shall I come to know as I am known! The time is at hand when all must be accomplished, and we accountable; when arts shall cease, and tongues be abolished, and knowledge vanish away. Do but think now one thought, what will be the joy of thy heart when thou canst truly say, Lord, thou hast written to me the great things of thy law, and I have not accounted them as strange things," &c. Pemble in Preface to Vindic. Gratiæ. Necessaria ignoramus, quia non necessaria didicimus, inquit Rupertus, Meldenius, Paræsi.

[r] As it is said of Erasmus, in his Life, Videbat plus satis tribui theologiæ argutatrici, priori prorsus abolita: sicque theologos Scoticis argutiis incumbere, ut non attingerent fontes divinæ sapientiæ. Read Bishop Hall's excellent book called The Peace-maker, and his Pax Terris; and Davenant's Adhortatio.

[s] Yet still I doubt not but we should be still learning to know more; as Dav. Chytræus said, when he lay on his deathbed: Jucundiorem sibi discessum fore, si moribundus etiam aliquid dedidisset.

Sect. V. 5. As you value the comforts of a heavenly life, take heed of a proud and lofty spirit.[t] There is such an antipathy between this sin and God, that thou wilt never get thy heart near him, nor get him near thy heart, so long as this prevaileth in it. If it cast the angels from heaven that were in it, it must needs keep thy heart estranged from it. If it cast our first parents out of paradise, and separated between the Lord and us, and brought his curse on all the creatures here below, it must needs then keep our hearts from paradise, and increase the cursed separation from our God. Believe it, hearers, a proud heart and a heavenly heart are exceeding contrary. Intercourse with God will keep men low, and that lowliness will further their intercourse.[u] When a man is used to be much with God, and taken up in the study of his glorious attributes, he abhors himself in dust and ashes, and that self-abhorrence is his best preparative to obtain admittance to God again. Therefore, after a soul-humbling day, or in times of trouble, when the soul is lowest, it useth to have freest access to God, and savour most of the life above. He will bring them into the wilderness, and there he will speak comfortably to them, Hos. ii. 14. The delight of God is a humble soul, even him that is contrite, and trembleth at his word; and the delight of a humble soul is in God; and sure, where there is mutual delight, there will be freest admittance, and heartiest welcome, and most frequent converse. Heaven would not hold God and the proud angels together, but a humble soul he makes his dwelling; and surely if our dwelling be with him, and in him, and his dwelling also be with us, and in us, there must needs be a most near and sweet familiarity. But the soul that is proud cannot plead this privilege. God is so far from dwelling in it, that he will not admit it to any near access, but looks upon it afar off, Psal. cxxxviii. 6. The proud he resisteth, and the proud resisteth him, but to the humble he gives this and other graces, 1 Pet. v. 5. A proud mind is a high mind in conceit, self-esteem, and carnal aspiring. A heavenly mind is a high mind indeed in God's esteem, and in higher, yet holy, aspiring. These two sorts of high-mindedness are more adverse to one another, than a high mind and a low: as we see that most wars and bloodshed is between princes and princes, and not between a prince and a ploughman. A low spirit and a humble is not so contrary to a high and heavenly, as is a high and a proud. A grain of mustard-secd may come to be a tree; a small acorn may be a great oak; the sail of the windmill that is now down may presently be the highest of all; a subject that is low may be raised high, and he that is high may be yet higher, as long as he stands in subordination to his prince, who is the fountain of honour; but if he break out of that subordination, and become a competitor, or will assume and arrogate honour to himself, he will find this prove the falling way. A man that is swelled in a dropsy with wind or water, is as far from a sound, well-fleshed constitution, as he that is in a consuming atrophy. Well, then, art thou a man of worth in thine own eyes, and very tender of thine esteem with others? Art thou one that much valuest the applause of the people, and feelest thy heart tickled with delight when thou hearest of thy great esteem with men, and much dejected when thou hearest that men slight thee? Dost thou love those best who highly honour thee, and doth thy heart bear a grudge at those that thou thinkest do undervalue thee, and entertain mean thoughts of thee, though they be otherwise men of godliness and honesty?[x] Art thou one that must needs have thy humours fulfilled, and thy judgment must be a rule to the judgments of others, and thy word a law to all about thee? Art thou ready to quarrel with every man that lets fall a word in derogation from thy honour?[y] Are thy passions kindled if thy word or will be crossed? Art thou ready to judge humility to be sordid baseness, and knowest not how to stoop and submit; and wilt not be brought to shame thyself by humble confession when thou hast sinned against God, or injured thy brother? Art thou one that honourest the godly that are rich, and thinkest thyself somebody if they value and own thee, but lookest strangely at the godly poor, and art almost ashamed to be their companion? Art thou one that canst not serve God in a low place as well as in a high; and thinkest thyself the fittest for offices and honours, and lovest God's service when it stands with preferment? Hast thou thine eye and thy speech much on thy own deservings; and are thy boastings restrained more by wit than by humility?[z] Dost thou

[t] Radix omnium malorum cupiditas: radix omnium malorum superbia. Hæc secundum viam intentionis: illa secundum viam executionis: hæc, ut quærens quo homo satiari possit: illa, quibus ad propositam fœlicitatem pervenire. Utraque ab illa infinita Dei capacitate, et descendens et degenerans; sentiente et gaudente homine etiam postquam a Deo aberravit non nisi infinito se posse repleri, suamque vel ex hoc magnitudinem approbante, sed frustra infinitum inter finita quærente. Utraque ergo prioris et veræ locum occupat; et est origo deinceps omnium aliorum malorum; sed utriusque prima origo est vera illa et divina capacitas; non quatenus Dei capacitas et a Deo data, sed quatenus suo actu vacua et nihilum subnotans. Gibieuf de Libert. lib. ii. cap. 19. sect. 11. p. 414, 415.

[u] Quanto excellentius in mandatis Deo quique proficiunt, tanto majores habent causas formidinis et tremoris; ne de ipsis probitatis augmentis, mens sibi conscia, et laudis avida, in superbiæ rapiatur excessus, et fiat immunda vanitate, dum sibi videtur clara virtute. Prosp. Epist. ad Demetr. Superbia est inordinatus amor excellentiæ propriæ, &c. Consistit primo in hypocrisi, quæ est pessima species superbiæ, et religiosos nostros sæpe consequitur, cum non præsumerent superaddere traditiones supra evangelium, quæ communiter sunt contraria rationi, nisi hypocrisi laborarent. Wickliffe Trialog. lib. iii. cap. 10. p. 60, 61.

[x] Clemens. Alexand. Stromat. lib. ii. citeth Barnabas the apostle saying, Woe to them that are understanding in their own conceit, and knowing men in their own eyes!

[y] Sive in lapsu diaboli, sive in prevaricatione hominis, Initium peccati superbia est; quæ congruenter et avaritia nominatur, quia utraque appellatio enm significat appetitum qui et suam mensuram concupiscat excedere, et non dignetur dives esse nisi propriis: tanquam habeat hoc simile Deo, ut honorum suorum ipse sibi sit fons, ipse sibi copia. Prosper, in Epistol. ad Demetr. Seneca De Ira, lib. iii. cap. 22, writes of Antigonus, that hearing two of his servants without his tent speaking against him, he softly calls to them, saying, Go farther off, lest the king hear you. And when he heard some of his soldiers, when they stuck in the dirt, cursing the king that brought them a march, he went and helped out them that were in the most danger; and when he had done, said, Now curse Antigonus that led you into the quicksand, but thank him that helped you out. It is a shame that a heathen king can bear an ill word better than a mean inferior christian. Nemo pluris æstimavit virtutem, quam qui boni viri famam perdidit; ne conscientiam perderet; ut Seneca admodum theologice.

[z] Optime Chytræus: Amplum nomen et claritatem popularem in his terris plerique nescimus, antequam pœnitere cœpit, contemnere. Usibus denique edocti cum sævum prælustri fulmen ab arce venit, sero nobis et Christo vivere optamus. Though the saints are thus chosen and approved of God, yet in their own eyes they are nobody, and disapproved: for it is exceeding natural to them, and inseparable, to think humbly of themselves, as being nothing, &c. For grace teacheth those that are such, to account themselves as nothing worth, and naturally they repute themselves contemptible and dishonourable. When therefore they are excellent with God, with themselves they are not so. And when they are in progress of the knowledge of God, they are to themselves as if they were ignorant of all things; and when with God they are rich, in their own eyes they are poor. And as

delight in opportunities of setting forth thy parts, and lovest to have thy name made public to the world, and wouldst fain leave behind thee some monument of thy worth, that posterity may admire thee when thou art dead and gone? Hast thou witty circumlocutions to commend thyself, while thou seemest to abase thyself, and deny thy worth? Dost thou desire to have all men's eyes upon thee, and to hear men observing thee, say, This is he? Is this the end of thy studies and learning, of thy labours and duties, of seeking degrees, and titles, and places, that thou mayst be taken for somebody abroad in the world? Art thou unacquainted with the deceitfulness and wickedness of thy heart; or knowest thyself to be vile only by reading and by hearsay, but not by experience, and feeling of thy vileness? Art thou readier to defend thyself, and maintain thine innocency, than to accuse thyself, or confess thy fault? Canst thou hardly bear a close reproof, and dost digest plain dealing with difficulty and distaste? Art thou readier in thy discourse to teach than to learn, and to dictate to others than to hearken to their instructions? Art thou bold and confident of thy own opinions, and little suspicious of the weakness of thy understanding, but a slighter of the judgment of all that are against thee? Is thy spirit more disposed to command and govern, than it is to obey and be ruled by others? Art thou ready to censure the doctrine of thy teachers, the actions of thy rulers, and the persons of thy brethren; and to think, if thou wert a judge, thou wouldst be more just; or, if thou wert a minister, thou wouldst be more fruitful in doctrine, and more faithful in overseeing; or, if thou hadst the managing of other men's business, thou wouldst have carried it more honestly and wisely? If these symptoms be undeniably in thy heart, beyond doubt thou art a proud person. I will not talk of thy following the fashions, of thy bravery and comportment, thy proud gestures and arrogant speeches, thy living at a rate above thy abilities. Perhaps thy incompetency of estate, or thy competency of wit, may suffice to restrain these unmanly fooleries. Perhaps thou mayst rather seem sordid to others, and to live at a rate below thy worth, and yet, if thou be guilty of the former accusations, be it known to thee thou art a person abominably proud; it hath seized on thy heart, which is the principal fort; there is too much of hell abiding in thee, for thee to have any acquaintance in heaven. Thy soul is too like the devil for thee to have any familiarity with God. A proud man is all in the flesh, and he that will be heavenly must be much in the Spirit. Is it likely that the man whom I have here described, hath either will or skill to go out of himself, and out of the flesh, as it were, and out of the world, that so he may have freedom for converse above? A proud man makes himself his god, and admires and sets himself as his idol; how, then, can he have his affections set on God? As the humble, godly man is the zealot in forward worshipping of God, so the ambitious man is the great zealot in idolatry; for what is his ambition but a more hearty and earnest desire after his idol, than the common and calmer idolaters do reach? And can this man possibly have his heart in heaven? It is possible his invention and memory may furnish his tongue both with humble and heavenly expressions, but in his spirit there is no more heaven than there is humility.

I entreat you, readers, be very jealous of your souls in this point.[a] There is nothing in the world will more estrange you from God. I speak the more of it, because it is the most common and dangerous sin in morality, and most promoting the great sin of infidelity. You would little think (yea, and the owners do little think) what humble carriage, what exclaiming against pride, what moanful self-accusings, may stand with this devilish sin of pride. O christian, if thou wouldst live continually in the presence of thy Lord, and lie in the dust, he would thence take thee up: descend first with him into the grave, thence thou mayst ascend with him to glory. Learn of him to be meek and lowly, and then thou mayst taste of this rest to thy soul. Thy soul else will be as the troubled sea, still casting out mire and dirt, which cannot rest; and, instead of these sweet delights in God, thy pride will fill thee with perpetual disquietness. It is the humble soul that forgets not God, and God will not forget the humble, Psal. ix. 12; x. 12. As he that humbleth himself as a little child, shall hereafter be greatest in the kingdom of God, (Matt. xviii. 4,) so shall he now be greatest in the foretastes of the kingdom; for, as whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased, so he that humbleth himself shall be, in both these respects, exalted, Matt. xxiii. 12. God therefore dwelleth with him that is humble and contrite, to revive the spirit of such with his presence, Isa. lvii. 15. I conclude with that counsel of James and Peter, Humble yourselves, therefore, in the sight of the Lord, and he shall now in the spirit lift you up, (Jam. iv. 10,) and in due time shall perfectly exalt you, 1 Pet. v. 6. And when others are cast down, then shalt thou say, "There is a lifting up, and he shall save the humble person," Job xxii. 29; Prov. xv. 33; xviii. 22.

Sect. VI. 6. Another impediment to this heavenly life is, wilful laziness, and slothfulness of spirit; and I verily think for knowing men, there is nothing hinders more than this.[b] Oh, if it were only the exercise of the body, the moving of the lips, the bending of the knee, then it were an easy work indeed, and men would as commonly step to heaven as they go a few miles to visit a friend; yea, if it were to spend most of our days in numbering beads, and repeating certain words and prayers, in voluntary humility, and neglecting the body, after the commandments and doctrines of men, (Col. ii. 21—23,)

Christ overcame the devil by humility, in the form of a servant; so in the beginning the serpent overthrew Adam by arroganey and loftiness. And even now the same serpent lying hid in the secret corners of the heart, doth by pride destroy and ruin the most christians, &c. Holy Macarius, in Homil. 27. Some men, void of discretion, when they have got a little comfort or refreshment, and some desires or prayer, begin presently to look high, and to be lifted up with insolency, and to judge others, and by this means they fall into the lowest misery. For the same serpent that overthrew Adam, saying, "Ye shall be as gods," doth now suggest arroganey into their hearts, saying, Thou art now perfect, thou hast enough, thou art rich, thou wantest nothing, thou art blessed. Macarius ubi supra.

[a] Est aliquid humilitatis miro modo quod sursum facit cor, et est aliquid elationis quod deorsum facit cor! Hoc quidem quasi contrarium videtur, ut elatio sit deorsum, et humilitas sursum: sed pia humilitas facit subditum superiori; nihil est autem superius Deo, et ideo exaltat humilitas, quia facit subditum Deo. Elatio autem quæ in vitio est, eo ipso quo respuit subjectionem, cadit ab illo, quo non est superius quicquam, et ex hoc erit inferius. August. de Civitat. lib. xiv. cap. 13; Matt. xi. 28, 29; Isa. lvii. 20. Scitum est illud Rabbi Levitæ, Maxime humili spiritu esto; expectatio enim hominis sunt vermes.

[b] One would be holy; but he would not wait too long at the door-posts of God's house, nor lose too many hours in the exercise of his stinted devotions. Another would be happy; but he would leap into heaven suddenly, not abiding to think of a leisurely towering up thither, by a thousand degrees of ascent, in the slow proficiency of grace. Whereas the great God of heaven, that can do all things in an instant, hath thought good to produce all the effects of natural agency, not without a due succession of time. Bishop Hall's Soliloq. xvi. p. 58.

yea, or in the outward part of duties commanded by God, yet it were comparatively easy. Further, if it were only in the exercise of parts and gifts, though we made such performance our daily trade, yet it were easy to be heavenly-minded. But it is a work more difficult than all this, to separate thoughts and affections from the world; to force them to a work of so high a nature; to draw forth all our graces in their order, and exercise each on its proper object; to hold them to this till they perceive success, and till the work doth thrive and prosper in their hands. This, this is the difficult task. Reader, heaven is above thee, the way is upwards. Dost thou think, who art a feeble, short-winded sinner, to travel daily this steep ascent without a great deal of labour and resolution? Canst thou get that earthly heart to heaven, and bring that backward mind to God, while thou liest still, and takest thine ease? If lying down at the foot of the hill, and looking toward the top, and wishing we were there, would serve the turn, then we should have daily travellers for heaven. But the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force, Matt. xi. 12. There must be violence used to get the first-fruits, as well as to get the full possession. Dost thou not feel it so, though I should not tell thee? Will thy heart get upwards, except thou drive it? Is it not like a dull and jadish horse, that will go no longer than he feels the spur? Dost thou find it easy to dwell in the delights above? It is true, the work is exceeding sweet, and no condition on earth so desirable; but therefore it is that our hearts are so backward, especially in the beginning, till we are acquainted with it. Oh, how many hundred professors of religion, who can easily bring their hearts to ordinary duties, as reading, hearing, praying, conferring, could never yet in all their lives bring them and keep them to a heavenly contemplation one half hour together! Consider here, reader, as before the Lord, whether this be not thine own case. Thou hast known that heaven is all thy hopes; thou knowest thou must shortly be turned hence, and that nothing below can yield thee rest; thou knowest, also, that a strange heart, a seldom and careless thinking of heaven, can fetch but little comfort thence; and dost thou yet for all this let slip thy opportunities, and lie below in dust, or mere duties, when thou shouldst walk above, and live with God? Dost thou commend the sweetness of a heavenly life, and judge those the excellentest christians that use it; and yet didst never once try it thyself? But as the sluggard that stretched himself on his bed, and cried, Oh that this were working! so dost thou talk and trifle, and live at thy ease, and say, Oh that I could get my heart to heaven! This is to lie a-bed and wish, when thou shouldst be up and doing. How many a hundred do read books, and hear sermons, in expectation to hear of some easy course, or to meet with a shorter cut to comforts, than ever they are like to find in this world! And if they can hear of none from the preachers of truth, they will snatch it with rejoicing from the teachers of falsehood; and presently applaud the excellency of the doctrine, because it hath fitted their lazy temper; and think there is no other doctrine will comfort the soul, because it will not comfort it with hearing and looking on. They think their venison is best, though accompanied with a lie, because it is the easiest catched, and next at hand; and they think it will procure the chiefest blessing; and so it may, if God be as subject to mistake as blind Isaac. And while they pretend enmity only to the impossibilities of the law, they oppose the easier conditions of the gospel, and cast off the burden that is light also, and which all must bear that will find rest to their souls; and in my judgment may as fitly be styled enemies to the gospel,[c] as enemies to the law, from whence they receive their common title. The Lord of light and Spirit of comfort show these men in time a surer way for lasting comfort. The delusions of many of them are strong, and ungrounded comforts they seem to have store. I can judge it to be of no better a kind, because it comes not in the Scripture way.[d] They will some of them profess, that when they meditate and labour for comfort themselves, they either have none, or at least but human, and of a lower kind; but all the comforts that they own and value, are immediately injected without their pains: so do I expect my comforts to come in, in heaven; but till then, I am glad if they will come with labour, and the Spirit will help me to suck them from the breasts of the promise, and to walk from them daily to the face of God. It was an established law among the Argi, that if a man were perceived to be idle and lazy, he must give an account before the magistrate, how he came by his victuals and maintenance. And sure, when I see these men lazy in the use of God's appointed means for comfort, I cannot but question how they come by their comforts. I would they would examine it thoroughly themselves, for God will require an account of it from them. Idleness, and not improving the truth in painful duty, is the common cause of men's seeking comfort from error; even as the people of Israel, when they had no comfortable answer from God, because of their own sin and neglect, would run to seek it from the idols of the heathens. So, when men were false-hearted to the truth, and the Spirit of truth did deny them comfort, because they denied him sincere obedience, therefore they will seek it from a lying spirit.

A multitude also of professors there are, that come and inquire for marks and signs, How shall I know whether my heart be sincere? and they think the bare naming of some mark is enough to discover it; but never bestow one hour in trying themselves by the marks they hear.[e] So here, they ask for direc-

[c] Antinomists. Many are hindered because they refuse to give themselves to prayer or meditation, except they feel themselves brought to it by devotion; and except it be when these duties delight them, and go to their hearts, otherwise all seems to them unprofitable. But these kind of men are like him that, being vexed with cold, will not go to the fire except he were first warm; or like one that is ready to perish with famine, and will not ask meat except he were first satisfied. For why doth a man give himself to prayer and meditation, but that he might be warmed with the fire of divine love; or that he might be filled with the gifts and grace of God? These men are mistaken in thinking the time lost in prayer or meditation, if they be not presently watered with a shower of devotion: for, I answer them, that if they strive as much as in them lieth for this, and do their duty, and are in war, and in continual fight against their own thoughts, with displeasure because they depart not, nor suffer them to be quiet; such men for this time are more accepted, than if the heat of devotion had come to them suddenly, without any such conflict: the reason is, because they go to warfare for God, as it were, at their own cost and charges, and serve him with greater labour and pains, &c. Gerson, de Monte Contemplationis, part. iii. p. 386. cap. 43. Read this, you libertines, and learn better the way of devotion from a papist.

[d] Arbitrium voluntatis humanæ nequaquam destruimus, quando Dei gratiam, qua ipsum adjuvatur arbitrium, non superbia negamus ingrata, sed grata potius pietate prædicamus. Nostrum est enim velle, sed voluntas ipsa etiam movetur ut surgat, et sanatur ut valeat, et dilatatur ut capiat, et impletur ut habeat. Nam nisi nos vellemus, nec nos utique acciperemus ea quæ dantur, nec nos haberemus. August. Lib. de Bono Viduitatis, cap. 17.

[e] Profluens largiter spiritus nullis finibus premitur, nec coercentibus claustris intra certa notarum spatia frænatur: manat jugiter; exuberat affluenter. Nostrum tantum sitiat

tions for a heavenly life; and if the hearing and knowing of these directions will serve, then they will be heavenly christians; but if we set them to task, and show them their work, and tell them they cannot have these delights on easier terms, then, here they leave us, as the young man left Christ, with sorrow. How our comforts are only in Christ, and yet this labour of ours is necessary thereto, I have showed you already in the beginning of this book, and therefore still refer you thither, when any shall put in that objection. My advice to such a lazy sinner is this: As thou art convict that this work is necessary to thy comfortable living, so resolvedly set upon it; if thy heart draw back, and be undisposed, force it on with the command of reason; and if thy reason begin to dispute the work, force it with producing the command of God; and quicken it up with the consideration of thy necessity, and the other motives before propounded; and let the enforcements that brought thee to the work, be still in thy mind to quicken thee in it: do not let such an incomparable treasure lie before thee, while thou liest still with thy hand in thy bosom: let not thy life be a continual vexation, which might be a continual delightful feasting, and all because thou wilt not be at the pains. When thou hast once tasted of the sweetness of it, and a little used thy heart to the work, thou wilt find the pains thou takest with thy backward flesh abundantly recompensed in the pleasures of thy spirit. Only sit not still with a disconsolate spirit, while comforts grow before thine eyes, like a man in the midst of a garden of flowers, or delightful meadow, that will not rise to get them, that he may partake of their sweetness. Neither is it a few formal, lazy, running thoughts that will fetch thee this consolation from above, any more than a few lazy, formal words will prevail with God instead of fervent prayer.[f] I know Christ is the fountain, and I know this, as every other gift, is of God; but yet if thou ask my advice, how to obtain these waters of consolation, I must tell thee, There is something also for thee to do: the gospel hath its conditions and works, though not such impossible ones as the law;[g] Christ hath his yoke and his burden, though easy, and thou must come to him weary, and take it up, or thou wilt never find rest to thy soul. The well is deep, and thou must get forth this water before thou canst be refreshed and delighted with it. What answer would you give a man that stands by a pump or draw-well, and should ask you, How shall I do to get out the water? Why you must draw it up, or labour at the pump, and that not a motion or two, but you must pump till it comes, and then hold on till you have enough. Or, if a man were lifting at a heavy weight, or would move a stone to the top of a mountain, and should ask you, How he should get it up? Why what should you say, but that he must put to his hands, and put forth his strength? And what else can I say to you, in directing you to this art of a heavenly life, but this: You must deal roundly with your hearts, and drive them up, and spur them on, and follow them close till the work be done; as a man will do a lazy, unfaithful servant, who will do nothing longer than your eye is on him; or as you will your horse or ox at his labour, who will not stir any longer than he is driven: and if your heart lie down in the midst of the work, force it up again till the work be done, and let it not prevail by its lazy policies. I know so far as you are spiritual, you need not all this striving and violence, but that is but in part, and in part you are carnal; and as long as it is so, there is no talk of ease. Though your renewed nature do delight in this work, yea, no delight on earth so great, yet your nature so far as it is fleshly and unrenewed, will draw back and resist, and necessitate your industry. It was the Parthians' custom, that none must give their children any meat in the morning, before they saw the sweat on their faces with some labour: and you shall find this to be God's most usual course, not to give his children the tastes of his delights, till they begin to sweat in seeking after them.[h] Therefore lay them both together, and judge whether a heavenly life or thy carnal case be better, and, as a wise man, make thy choice accordingly. Yet this let me say to encourage thee, Thou needest not expend thy thoughts more than now thou dost; it is but only to employ them better: I press thee not to busy thy mind much more than thou dost, but to busy it upon better and more pleasant objects. As Socrates said to a lazy fellow that would fain go up to Olympus, but that it was so far off; "Why," saith he, "walk but as far every day as thou dost up and down about thy house, and in so many days thou wilt be at Olympus."[i] So say I to thee; Employ but so many serious thoughts every day upon the excellent glory of the life to come, as thou now employest on thy necessary affairs in the world, nay, as thou daily losest on vanities and impertinences, and thy heart will be at heaven in a very short space.

To conclude this, As I have seldom known christians perplexed with doubts about their state for want of knowing right evidences to try by, so much as for want of skill and diligence in using them; so have I seldom known a christian that wants the joys of this heavenly life, for want of being told the means to get it, but for want of a heart to set upon the work, and painfully to use the means they are directed to. It is the field of the slothful that is overgrown with weeds, Prov. xxiv. 30—34; and the desire of the slothful killeth his joys, because his hands refuse to labour, Prov. xxi. 25. While he lies wishing, his soul lies starving. He saith, There is a lion (there is difficulty) in the way, and turneth himself on the bed of his ease, as a door turneth on the hinges: he hideth his hand in his bosom, and it grieveth him to bring it to his mouth, (Prov. xxvi. 13—16,) though it be to feed himself with the food of life. What is this but despising the feast prepared, and setting light by the dear-bought pleasures, and consequently by the precious blood that bought them, and throwing away our own consolations? For the Spirit hath told us, "that he also that is slothful in his work, is brother to him that is a great waster," Prov. xviii. 9. Apply this to thy spiritual work, and study well the meaning of it.

Sect. VII. 7. It is also a dangerous and secret hindrance to content ourselves with the mere preparatives to this heavenly life, while we are utter strangers to the life itself. When we take up with the mere studies of heavenly things, and the notions

pectus et pateat. Quantum illuc fidei capaces afferimus, tantum gratiæ inundantis haurimus. Cyprian. Epist. i. ad Donat. p. 3.

[f] In omni disciplina infirma est artis præceptio sine summa assiduitate exercitationis. Cicer. ad Heren.

[g] If therefore they take away the positive law, it must needs follow that every one be led by his own lust, and obey his pleasures, and neglect that which is right and honest, and despise God; and being without fear, will be both ungodly and unjust, as having forsaken the truth. Clem. Alexand. Stromat. lib. ii. paulo post init.

[h] Quid est enim quod cum labore meminimus, sine labore obliviscimur? cum labore discimus, sine labore nescimus? cum labore strenui, sine labore inertes sumus? nonne hinc apparet in quid velut pondere suo proclivis, et prona sit vitiosa natura, et quanta ope ut hinc liberetur indigeat? Aug. de Civit. lib. xxii. p. 22.

[i] Erasm. Apoth. lib. iii.

and thoughts of them in our brain, or the talking of them with one another, as if this were all that makes us heavenly people: there is none in more danger of this snare than those that are much in public duty, especially preachers of the gospel. Oh, how easily may they be deceived here, while they do nothing more than read of heaven, and study of heaven, and preach of heaven, and pray and talk of heaven! What! is not this the heavenly life? Oh that God would reveal to our hearts the dangers of this snare! Alas! all this is but mere preparation; this is not the life we speak of, but it is indeed a necessary help hereto. I entreat every one of my brethren in the ministry, that they search and watch against this temptation: alas! this is but gathering the materials, and not the erecting of the building itself; this is but gathering our manna for others, and not eating and digesting ourselves: as he that sits at home may study geography, and draw most exact descriptions of countries, and yet never see them, nor travel toward them; so may you describe to others the joys of heaven, and yet never come near it in your own hearts: as a man may tell others of the sweetness of meat which he never tasted, or as a blind man by learning may dispute of light and of colours; so may you study and preach most heavenly matter, which yet never sweetened your own spirits; and set forth to others that heavenly light, wherewith your own souls were never enlightened; and bring that fire for the hearts of your people, that never once warmed your own hearts.[k] If you should study of nothing but heaven while you lived, and preach of nothing but heaven to your people, yet might your own hearts be strangers to it. What heavenly passages had Balaam in his prophecies! yet little of it (it is like) in his spirit. Nay, we are under a more subtle temptation than any other men, to draw us from this heavenly life: if our employments did lie at a great distance from heaven, and did take up our thoughts upon worldly things, we should not be so apt to be so contented and deluded; but when we find ourselves employed upon nothing else, we are easier drawn to take up here. Studying and preaching of heaven is liker to a heavenly life, than thinking and talking of the world is, and the likeness is it that is like to deceive us: this is to die the most miserable death, even to famish ourselves because we have bread on our tables, which is worse than to famish when we cannot get it; and to die for thirst while we draw waters for others; thinking it enough that we have daily to do with it, though we never drink it to our souls' refreshing. All that I will say to you more of this, shall be in the words of my godly and judicious friend[l] Mr. George Abbot, which I shall transcribe, lest you have not the book at hand, in his "Vindiciæ Sabbathi," p. 147—149.

"And here let me, in a holy jealousy, annex an exhortation to some of the ministers of this land, (for, blessed be God, it needs not to all,) that they would carefully provide, and look that they do not build the tabernacle on the Lord's day; I mean, that they rest not in the *opus operatum* of their holy employments, and busying themselves about the carnal part of holy things, in putting off the studying of their sermons, or getting them by heart, (except it be to work them upon the heart, and not barely commit them to memory,) till that day; and so, though they take care to build the tabernacle of God's church, yet they in the mean time neglect the temple of their own hearts in serving God in the spirit, and not in the letter or outward performance only: but it were well if they would gather and prepare their manna, scethe it, and break it, the day before, that when the sabbath comes they might have nothing to do but to chew and concoct it into their own spirits, and so spiritually, in the experience of their own hearts, (not heads,) dish it out to their hearers, which would be a happy means to make them see better fruit of their labours; for commonly that which is notionally delivered, is notionally received; and that which is spiritually and powerfully delivered in the evidence of the Spirit, is spiritually and savingly received; for spirit begets spirit, as fire begets fire, &c. It is an easy thing to take great pains in the outward part or performance of holy things, which oft proves a snare, causing the neglect of the spirit of the inner man; for many are great labourers in the work of the Lord, that are starvelings in the Spirit of the Lord, satisfying themselves in a popish peace of conscience in the deed-doing, instead of joy in the Holy Ghost; bringing, indeed, meat to their guests, but, through haste or laziness, eating none themselves; or, like tailors, make clothes for other men to wear; so they, never assaying their own points how they fit or may suit with their own spirits, but think it is their duty to teach, and other men's duty to do." So far the author.

CHAPTER V.

SOME GENERAL HELPS TO A HEAVENLY LIFE.

SECT. 1. Having thus showed thee the blocks in thy way, and told thee what hinderances will resist thee in the work, I shall now lay thee down some positive helps, and conclude with a directory to the main duty itself.[a] But first, I expect that thou resolve against the forementioned impediments, that thou read them seriously, and avoid them faithfully, or else thy labour will be all in vain; thou dost but go about to reconcile light and darkness, Christ and Belial, and to conjoin heaven and hell in thy spirit: thou mayst sooner bring down heaven to earth, than do this. I must tell thee, also, that I expect thy promise, faithfully to set upon the helps which I shall prescribe thee, and that the reading of them will not bring heaven into thy heart, but in their constant practice the Spirit will do it. It were better for thee I had never written them, and thou hadst never seen this book, nor read them, if thou do not buckle thyself to the duty.

As thou valuest, then, the delights of these foretastes of heaven, make conscience of performing these following duties:

Sect. II. 1. Know heaven to be the only treasure, and labour to know also what a treasure it is. Be convinced once that thou hast no other happiness, and then be convinced what happiness is there. If thou do not soundly believe it to be the chiefest good, thou wilt never set thy heart upon it; and this conviction must sink into thy affections; for if it be only a notion, it will have little operation. And sure we have reason enough to be easily convinced of this, as you may see in what hath been spoken already. Read over the description and nature of this rest, in the beginning of this book, and the reasons against thy resting below, in chapter

[k] Verissimum istud Senecæ Apothegma, Nullos pejus mereri de omnibus mortalibus judico, quam qui aliter vivunt quam vivendum præcipiunt.

[l] Who died, as I understand since, about the hour that I was preaching these words, or very near.

[a] Read Perkins' Cases of Conscience, lib. i. cap. 9.

first, and conclude that this is the only happiness. As long as your judgments do undervalue it, your affections must needs be cold towards it. If your judgments do mistake blear-eyed Leah for beautiful Rachel, so will your affections also mistake them. If Eve do once suppose she sees more worth in the forbidden fruit than in the love and fruition of God, no wonder if it have more of her heart than God. If your judgments once prefer the delights of the flesh before the delights in the presence of God, it is impossible, then, your hearts should be in heaven. As it is the ignorance of the emptiness of things below that makes men so overvalue them; so it is ignorance of the high delights above, which is the cause that men so little mind them. If you see a purse of gold, and believe it to be but stones or counters, it will not entice your affections to it. It is not a thing's excellency in itself, but it is excellency known that provokes desire. If an ignorant man see a book containing the secrets of arts or sciences, yet he values it no more than a common piece, because he knows not what is in it: but he that knows it, doth highly value it; his very mind is set upon it, he can pore upon it day and night, he can forbear his meat, and drink, and sleep, to read it. As the Jews inquired after Elias, when Christ tells them that verily Elias is already come, and ye knew him not, but did unto him whatsoever ye listed, Matt. xvii. 11, 12; so men inquire after happiness and delight, when it is offered to them in the promise of rest, and they know it not, but trample it under foot: and as the Jews killed the Messiah, while they waited for the Messiah, and that because they did not know him, John i. 10; Acts xiii. 27; for had they known him, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory, 1 Cor. ii. 8; so doth the world cry out for rest, and busily seek for delight and happiness, even while they are neglecting and destroying their rest and happiness, and this because they thoroughly know it not; for did they know thoroughly what it is, they could not so slight the everlasting treasure.

Sect. III. 2. Labour as to know heaven to be the only happiness, so also to be thy happiness. Though the knowledge of excellency and suitableness may stir up that love which worketh by desire; yet there must be the knowledge of our interest or propriety, to the setting a-work of our love of complacency. We may confess heaven to be the best condition, though we despair of enjoying it; and we may desire and seek it, if we see the obtainment to be but probable and hopeful: but we can never delightfully rejoice in it, till we are somewhat persuaded of our title to it. What comfort is it to a man that is naked, to see the rich attire of others; or, to a man that hath not a bit to put in his mouth, to see a feast which he must not taste of? What delight hath a man that hath not a house to put his head in, to see the sumptuous buildings of others? Would not all this rather increase his anguish, and make him more sensible of his own misery? So, for a man to know the excellences of heaven, and not to know whether he shall ever enjoy them, may well raise desire, and provoke to seek it, but it will raise but little joy and content. Who will set his heart on another man's possessions? If your house, your goods, your cattle, your children, were not your own, you would less mind them, and delight less in them. O, therefore, christians, rest not till you can call this rest your own; sit not down without assurance; get alone, and question with thyself; bring thy heart to the bar of trial; force it to answer the interrogatories put to it; set the conditions of the gospel and qualifications of the saints on one side, and thy performance of those conditions and the qualifications of thy soul on the other side, and then judge how near they resemble. Thou hast the same word before thee, to judge thyself by now, by which thou must be judged at the great day; thou art there before told the questions that must then be put to thee. Put these questions now to thyself. Thou mayst there read the very articles upon which thou shalt be tried. Why, try thyself by those articles now. Thou mayst there know beforehand, on what terms men shall be then acquitted and condemned; why, try now whether thou art possessed of that which will acquit thee, or whether thou be upon the same terms with those that must be condemned, and accordingly acquit or condemn thyself. Yet, be sure thou judge by a true touchstone, and mistake not the Scripture description of a saint, that thou neither acquit nor condemn thyself upon mistakes: for, as groundless hopes do tend to confusion, and are the greatest cause of most men's damnation; so groundless doubtings do tend to discomforts, and are the great cause of the disquieting of the saints. Therefore lay thy grounds of trial safely and advisedly: proceed in the work deliberately and methodically: follow it to an issue resolutely and industriously: suffer not thy heart to give thee the slip, and get away before a judgment, but make it stay to hear its sentence: if once, or twice, or thrice, will not do it, nor a few days of hearing bring it to issue, follow it on with unwearied diligence, and give not over till the work be done, and till thou canst say knowingly off or on, either thou art, or art not, a member of Christ; either that thou hast, or that thou hast not yet, title to this rest. Be sure thou rest not in wilful uncertainties. If thou canst not despatch the work well thyself, get the help of those that are skilful. Go to thy minister, if he be a man of experience; or go to some able, experienced friend; open thy case faithfully, and wish them to deal plainly; and thus continue till thou hast got assurance: not but that some doubtings may still remain; but yet thou mayst have so much assurance as to master them, that they may not much interrupt thy peace. If men did know heaven to be their own inheritance, we should less need to persuade their thoughts unto it, or to press them to set their delight in it. Oh! if men did truly know that God is their own Father, and Christ their own Redeemer and Head, and that those are their own everlasting habitations, and that there it is that they must abide and be happy for ever; how could they choose but be ravished with the forethoughts thereof! If a christian could but look upon sun, and moon, and stars, and reckon all his own in Christ, and say, These are the portion that my Husband doth bestow; these are the blessings that my Lord hath procured me, and things incomparably greater than these; what holy raptures would his spirit feel! The more do they sin against their own comforts, as well as against the grace of the gospel, who are wilful maintainers of their own doubtings, and plead for their unbelief, and cherish distrustful thoughts of God, and scandalous, injurious thoughts of their Redeemer: who represent the covenant, as if it were of works and not of grace; and represent Christ as an enemy rather than as a Saviour, as if he were glad of advantages against them, and were willing that they should keep off from him, and die in their unbelief; when he hath called them so oft, and invited them so kindly, and borne the hell that they should bear. Ah! wretches that we are, that be keeping up jealousies of the love of our Lord, when we should be rejoicing and bathing our souls in his love; that can question that love which hath been so fully evidenced; and doubt still whether he

that hath stooped so low, and suffered so much, and taken up a nature and office on purpose, be yet willing to be theirs, who are willing to be his; as if any man could choose Christ before Christ hath chosen him, or any man could desire to have Christ more than Christ desires to have him, or any man were more willing to be happy than Christ is to make him happy. Fie upon these injurious, if not blasphemous thoughts! If ever thou have harboured such thoughts in thy breast, or if ever thou have uttered such words with thy tongue, spit out that venom, vomit out that rancour, cast them from thee, and take heed how thou ever entertainest them more! God hath written the names of his people in heaven, as you use to write your names in your own books, or upon your goods, or set your marks on your own sheep: and shall we be attempting to raze them out, and to write our names on the doors of hell? But blessed be our God, whose foundation is sure, (2 Tim. ii. 19,) and who keepeth us by his mighty power through faith unto salvation, 1 Peter i. 5. Well, then, this is my second advice to thee, that thou follow on the work of self-examination, till thou hast got assurance that this rest is thy own; and this will draw thy heart unto it, and feed thy spirits with fresh delights, which else will be but tormented so much the more, to think that there is such rest for others, but none for thee.

Sect. IV. 3. Another help to sweeten thy soul with the foretastes of rest, is this; Labour to apprehend how near it is, think seriously of its speedy approach.[b] That which we think is near at hand, we are more sensible of than that which we behold at a distance. When we hear of war or famine in another country, it troubleth us not so much; or if we hear it prophesied of a long time hence: so if we hear of plenty a great way off, or of a golden age that shall fall out who knows when, this never rejoiceth us. But if judgments or mercies begin to draw near, then they affect us. If we were sure we should see the golden age, then it would take with us. When the plague is in a town but twenty miles off, we do not fear it; nor much, perhaps, if it be in another street; but if once it come to the next door, or if it seize on one in our own family, then we begin to think on it more feelingly. It is so with mercies as well as judgments. When they are far off, we talk of them as marvels; but when they draw close to us, we rejoice in them as truths. This makes men think on heaven so insensibly, because they conceit it at too great a distance. They look on it as twenty, or thirty, or forty years off; and this is it that dulls their sense. As wicked men are fearless and senseless of judgment, because the sentence is not speedily executed, Eccles. viii. 11; so are the godly deceived of their comforts, by supposing them farther off than they are. This is the danger of putting the day of death far from us, when men will promise themselves longer time in the world than God hath promised them, and judge of the length of their lives by the probabilities they gather from their age, their health, their constitution and temperature: this makes them look at heaven as a great way off. If the rich fool in the gospel had not expected to have lived many years, he would sure have thought more of providing for eternity, and less of his present store and possessions, Luke xii. 17—20: and if we did not think of staying many years from heaven, we should think on it with far more piercing thoughts. This expectation of long life, doth both the wicked and the godly a great deal of wrong. How much better were it to receive the sentence of death in ourselves, and to look on eternity as near at hand! 2 Cor. i. 8—10. Surely, reader, thou standest at the door; and hundreds of diseases are ready waiting to open the door and let thee in. Are not the thirty or forty years of thy life that are past quickly gone? Are they not a very little time when thou lookest back on them; and will not all the rest be shortly so too? Do not days and nights come very thick? Dost thou not feel that building of flesh to shake, and perceive thy house of clay to totter? Look on thy glass, see how it runs; look on thy watch, how fast it getteth. What a short moment is between us and our rest; what a step is it from hence to everlastingness! While I am thinking and writing of it, it hasteth near, and I am even entering into it before I am aware. While thou art reading this it posteth on, and thy life will be gone as a tale that is told. Mayst thou not easily foresee thy dying time, and look upon thyself as ready to depart? It is but a few days till thy friends shall lay thee in the grave, and others do the like for them. If you verily believed you should die to-morrow, how seriously would you think of heaven to-night! The condemned prisoner knew before that he must die, and yet he was then as jovial as any; but when he hears the sentence, and knows he hath not a week to live, then how it sinks his heart within him: so that the true apprehensions of the nearness of eternity doth make men's thoughts of it be quick and piercing, and put life into their fears and sorrows, if they are unfitted, and into their desires and joys, if they have assurance of its glory.[c] When the witch's Samuel had told Saul, By to-morrow this time thou shalt be with me, (1 Sam. xxviii. 19,) this quickly worked to his very heart, and laid him down as dead on the earth. And if Christ should say to a believing soul, By to-morrow this time thou shalt be with me, this would be a working word indeed, and would bring him in spirit to heaven before. As Melancthon was wont to say of his uncertain station, because of the persecution of his enemies, *Ego jam sum hic, Dei beneficio, 40 annos, et nunquam potui dicere aut certus esse, me per unam septimanam mansuram esse;* i. e. I have now been here these forty years, and yet could never say, or be sure, that I shall tarry here for one week: so may we all say of our abode on earth. As long as thou hast continued out of heaven, thou canst not say thou shalt be out of it one week longer. Do but suppose that you are still entering in it, and you shall find it will much help you more seriously to mind it.

Sect. V. 4. Another help to this heavenly life, is, to be much in serious discoursing of it, especially with those that can speak from their hearts, and are seasoned themselves with a heavenly nature.[d] It is pity, saith Mr. Bolton, that christians should ever meet together without some talk of their meeting in heaven, or the way to it, before they part; it is pity so much precious time is spent among christians in vain discourses, foolish janglings, and useless disputes, and not a sober word of heaven among them. Methinks we should meet together of purpose to

[b] Vita optime instituitur, cum quispiam mortuis concolor sit, ut Zeno.

[c] There is a great Arbiter of all things, that can thunder the proud emperor under his bed, and write the great king at three or four words into trembling; that can send a fly to fetch the triple crown before his tribunal; and make a hair, or the kernel of a raisin, as mortal as Goliath's spear; that can unspeak the whole world into nothing, and blow down a great bubble with an easy breath; that by drawing one nail, can throw down the stateliest building; and undress your souls, by unpinning one pin, &c. Mr. Vines' Essex Hearse, p. 12.

[d] Ego hoc vel præcipuum vitæ meæ officium debere me Deum conscius sum, dum omnis sermo meus et sensus loquatur. Hilarius, referente Aquin. cont. Gentil. lib. i. cap. 2.

warm our spirits with discoursing of our rest. To hear a minister, or other private christian, set forth that blessed, glorious state, with power and life, from the promises of the gospel, methinks should make us say, as the two disciples, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he was opening to us the Scripture," (Luke xxiv. 32,) while he was opening to us the windows of heaven? If a Felix, or wicked wretch, will tremble, when he hears his judgment powerfully denounced, Acts xxiv. 25; why should not the believing soul be revived when he hears his eternal rest revealed? Get then together, fellow-christians, and talk of the affairs of your country and kingdom, and comfort one another with such words, 1 Thess. iv. 18. If worldlings get together, they will be talking of the world; when wantons are together, they will be talking of their lusts, and wicked men can be delighted in talking of wickedness; and should not christians, then, delight themselves in talking of Christ, and the heirs of heaven in talking of their inheritance? This may make our hearts revive within us, as it did Jacob's to hear the message that called him to Goshen, and to see the chariots that should bring him to Joseph. Oh that we were furnished with skill and resolution to turn the stream of men's common discourse to these more sublime and precious things; and when men begin to talk of things unprofitable, that we could tell how to put in a word for heaven, and say, as Peter, of his bodily food, "Not so, for I eat not that which is common and unclean," (Acts x. 14,) this is nothing to my eternal rest. Oh, the good that we might both do and receive by this course! If it had not been needful to deter us from unfruitful conference, Christ would not have talked of giving an account of every idle word at judgment, Matt. xii. 36. Say then, as David, when you are in conference, "Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chiefest mirth," Psal. cxxxvii. 5, 6; and then you shall find the truth of that, "A wholesome tongue is a tree of life," Prov. xv. 4.

Sect. VI. 5. Another help to this heavenly life is this; Make it thy business in every duty to wind up thy affections nearer heaven. A man's attainments and receivings from God are answerable to his own desires and ends; that which he sincerely seeks he finds: God's end in the institution of his ordinances was, that they be as so many stepping-stones to our rest, and as the stairs by which, in subordination to Christ, we may daily ascend unto it in our affections. Let this be thy end in using them, as it was God's end in ordaining them, and doubtless they will not be unsuccessful. Though men be personally far asunder, yet they may even by letters have a great deal of intercourse. How have men been rejoiced by a few lines from a friend, though they could not see him face to face! What gladness have we when we do but read the expressions of his love; or if we read of our friend's prosperity and welfare! Many a one that never saw the fight, hath triumphed and shouted, made bonfires, and rung bells, when they have but heard and read of the victory: and may not we have intercourse with God in his ordinances, though our persons be yet so far remote? May not our spirits rejoice in the reading of those lines which contain our legacy and charter for heaven? With what gladness may we read the expressions of love, and hear of the state of our celestial country! With what triumphant shoutings may we applaud our inheritance, though yet we have not the happiness to behold it! Men that are separated by sea and land, can yet, by the mere intercourse of letters, carry on both great and gainful trades, even to the value of their whole estate; and may not a christian, in the wise improvement of duties, drive on this happy trade for rest? Come not, therefore, with any lower ends to duties; renounce formality, customariness, and applause. When thou kneelest down in secret or public prayer, let it be in hope to get thy heart nearer God before thou risest off thy knees. When thou openest thy Bible, or other books, let it be with this hope, to meet with some passage of divine truth, and some such blessings of the Spirit with it, as may raise thine affections nearer heaven, and give thee a fuller taste thereof. When thou art setting thy foot out of thy door, to go to the public ordinance and worship, say, I hope to meet with somewhat from God, that may raise my affections before I return; I hope the Spirit will give me the meeting, and sweeten my heart with those celestial delights; I hope that Christ will appear to me in the way, shine about me with light from heaven, and let me hear his instructing and reviving voice, and cause the scales to fall from mine eyes, that I may see more of that glory than ever I yet saw; I hope, before I return to my house, my Lord will take my heart in hand, and bring it within the view of rest, and set it before his Father's presence, that I may return, as the shepherds, from the heavenly vision, glorifying and praising God for all the things I have heard and seen, (Luke ii. 20,) and say, as those that beheld his miracles, "We have seen strange things to-day," Luke v. 26. Remember also to pray for thy teacher, that God would put some divine message into his mouth, which may leave a heavenly relish on thy spirit.

If these were our ends, and this our course, when we set to duty, we should not be so strange as we are to heaven.

When the Indians first saw the use of letters by our English, they thought there was sure some spirit in them, that men should converse together by a paper. If christians would take this course in their duties, they might come to such a holy fellowship with God, and see so much of the mysteries of the kingdom, that it would make the standers-by admire what is in those lines, what is in that sermon, what is in this praying, that fills his heart so full of joy, and that so transports him above himself. Certainly, God would not fail us in our duties, if we did not fail ourselves, and then experience would make them sweeter to us.

Sect. VII. 6. Another help is this, Make an advantage of every object thou seest, and of every passage of divine providence, and of every thing that befalls in thy labour and calling, to mind thy soul of its approaching rest. As all providences and creatures are means to our rest, so do they point us to that as their end. Every creature hath the name of God, and of our final rest, written upon it, which a considerate believer may as truly discern, as he can read upon a post or hand, in a cross-way, the name of the town or city which it points to. This spiritual use of creatures and providences is God's great end in bestowing them on man; and he that overlooks this end must needs rob God of his chiefest praise, and deny him the greatest part of his thanks. The relation that our present mercies have to our great eternal mercies, is the very quintessence and spirits of all these mercies; therefore do they lose the very spirits of all their mercies, and take nothing but the husks and bran, who do overlook this relation, and draw not forth the sweetness of it in their contemplations. God's sweetest dealings with us at the present would not be half so sweet as they are if they did not intimate some further sweetness. As ourselves have a fleshly and a spiritual substance, so have our mercies a fleshly and a spi-

ritual use, and are fitted to the nourishing of both our parts. He that receives the carnal part, and no more, may have his body comforted by them, but not his soul. It is not all one to receive sixpence merely as sixpence, and to receive it in earnest of a thousand pounds: though the sum be the same, yet surely the relation makes a wide difference. Thou takest but the bare earnest, and overlookest the main sum, when thou receivest thy mercies, and forgettest thy crown. Oh, therefore, that christians were skilled in this art! You can open your Bibles, and read there of God and of glory; O learn to open the creatures, and to open the several passages of providence, to read of God and glory there. Certainly, by such a skilful, industrious improvement, we might have a fuller taste of Christ and heaven in every bit of bread that we eat, and in every draught of beer we drink, than most men have in the use of the sacrament. If thou prosper in the world, and thy labour succeed, let it make thee more sensible of thy perpetual prosperity: if thou be weary of thy labours, let it make thy thoughts of rest more sweet: if things go cross and hard with thee in the world, let it make thee the more earnestly desire that day when all thy sorrows and sufferings shall cease.[e] Is thy body refreshed with food or sleep? remember the unconceivable refreshings with Christ. Dost thou hear any news that makes thee glad? remember what glad tidings it will be to hear the sound of the trump of God, and the absolving sentence of Christ, our Judge. Art thou delighting thyself in the society of the saints? remember the everlasting amiable fraternity thou shalt have with perfected saints in rest. Is God communicating himself to thy spirit? why, remember that time of thy highest advancement, when thy joy shall be full, as thy communion is full. Dost thou hear the raging noise of the wicked, and the disorders of the vulgar, and the confusions of the world, like the noise in a crowd, or the roaring of the waters? why think of the blessed agreement in heaven, and the melodious harmony in that choir of God. Dost thou hear or feel the tempest of wars, or see any cloud of blood arising? remember the day when thou shalt be housed with Christ, where there is nothing but calmness and amiable union, and where we shall solace ourselves in perfect peace, under the wings of the Prince of peace for ever. Thus you may see, what advantages to a heavenly life every condition and creature doth afford us, if we had but hearts to apprehend and improve them. As it is said of the Turks, that they will make bridges of the dead bodies of their men, to pass over the trenches or ditches in their way; so might christians of the very ruins and calamities of the times, and of every dead body or misery that they see, make a bridge for the passage of their thoughts to their rest. And as they have taught their pigeons, which they call carriers, in divers places, to bear letters of intercourse from friend to friend, at very great distance, so might a wise, industrious christian get his thoughts carried into heaven, and receive, as it were, returns from thence again by creatures of a slower wing than doves, by the assistance of the Spirit, the Dove of God. This is the right Dedalian flight; and thus we may take from each bird a feather, and make us wings, and fly to Christ.

Sect. VIII. 7. Another singular help is this; Be much in that angelical work of praise. As the most heavenly spirits will have the most heavenly employment, so the more heavenly the employment, the more will it make the spirit heavenly. Though the heart be the fountain of all our actions, and the actions will be usually of the quality of the heart, yet do those actions, by a kind of reflection, work much on the heart from whence they spring: the like also may be said of our speeches. So that the work of praising God, being the most heavenly work, is likely to raise us to the most heavenly temper. This is the work of those saints and angels, and this will be our everlasting work. If we were more taken up in this employment now, we should be liker to what we shall be then. When Aristotle was asked what he thought of music, he answers, *Jovem neque canere, neque citharam pulsare;* that Jupiter did never sing, nor play on the harp; thinking it an unprofitable art to men, which was no more delightful to God. But christians may better argue from the like ground, that singing of praise is a most profitable duty, because it is so delightful, as it were, to God himself, that he hath made it his people's eternal work; for they shall sing the song of Moses, and the song of the Lamb. As desire, and faith, and hope, are of shorter continuance than love and joy, so also preaching, and prayer, and sacraments, and all means for confirmation, and expression of faith and hope, shall cease, when our thanks, and praise, and triumphant expressions of love and joy, shall abide for ever. The liveliest emblem of heaven that I know upon earth, is, when the people of God, in the deep sense of his excellency and bounty, from hearts abounding with love and joy, do join together, both in heart and voice, in the cheerful and melodious singing of his praises. Those that deny the lawful use of singing the Scripture psalms in our times, do disclose their unheavenly, unexperienced hearts, I think, as well as their ignorant understandings. Had they felt the heavenly delights that many of their brethren in such duties have felt, I think they would have been of another mind. And whereas they are wont to question whether such delights be genuine, or any better than carnal or delusive; surely, the very relish of God and heaven that is in them, the example of the saints in Scripture, whose spirits have been raised by the same duty, and the command of Scripture for the use of this means, one would think, should quickly decide the controversy. And a man may as truly say of these delights, as they use to say of the testimony of the Spirit, that they witness themselves to be of God, and bring the evidence of their heavenly parentage along with them. And whereas they allow only extemporate psalms, immediately dictated to them by the Spirit,[f] when I am convinced that

[e] Socrates, quum ex urbe Allina in vicinos agros, longe amœnissimos, invitaretur, fertur respondisse, Id sibi non esse integrum quia sit discendi cupidus; homines vero, non arbores docere. Equidem Socrati id laudi vertendum ideo existimarem, quia publici boni causa frequenter conspiciebatur in publico, et alios docendo meliores efficere: et dictis ac factis prodesse omnibus, obesse nemini, studio illi erat. Sed tamen et illud fatendum, natura rerum considerationem quasi quendam ducem esse ad Dei conditoris, voluntatisque ejus agnitionem. Jac. Grynæus in Prefat. ante Comment. in Hebr. Nam eum oculi ideireo dati sunt corpori, ut per eos intueamur creaturam, ac per hujusmodi mirabilem harmoniam agnoscamus opificem: auresque itidem ut per eas eloquia divina et Dei leges audiamus; anima relicta bonorum speculatione, agilitate motus sui, ad illa jam quæ sunt contraria, movetur errans. Athanasius in lib. i. contra Gentil. Experto crede, aliquid amplius invenires in sylvis, quam in angulis. Ligna et lapides docebunt te, quod a magistris audire non possis, inquit vir contemplativus Bernardus, referente Grynæo, ubi supra. Augustinus pie dixit, Creaturarum species, sunt quædam voces laudantium Deum: præstat nos carum concentum, quam ἀσυμφωνίαν impiorum quorundam hominum attente audire. Testantur illæ, Deum summum bonum sapientem, et hominum amantem; omnia condidisse, et tantisper dum eidem visum est, conservare, ut hominum usibus, et opificis gloriæ inserviant. Ibid.

[f] Scio tamen etiam temporibus Tertul. hoc in ecclesiis post cœnas dilectionis fuisse usitatum, in imitationem, viz.

the gift of extemporate singing is so common to the church, that any man who is spiritually merry can use it, (James v. 13,) and when I am convinced that the use of Scripture psalms is abolished or prohibited, then I shall more regard their judgment. Certainly, as large as mine acquaintance hath been with men of this spirit, I never yet heard any of them sing a psalm extempore, that was better than David's; yea, or that was tolerable to a judicious hearer, and not rather a shame to himself and his opinion. But sweet experience will be a powerful argument, and will teach the sincere christian to hold fast his exercise of this soul-raising duty.

Little do we know how we wrong ourselves, by shutting out of our prayers the praises of God, or allowing them so narrow a room as we usually do, while we are copious enough in our confessions and petitions. Reader, I entreat thee, remember this: Let praises have a larger room in thy duties; keep ready at hand matter to feed thy praise, as well as matter for confession and petition. To this end, study the excellences and goodness of the Lord, as frequently as thy own necessities and vileness; study the mercies which thou hast received, and which are promised, both their own proper worth and their aggravating circumstances, as often as thou studiest the sins thou hast committed. O, let God's praise be much in your mouths, for in the mouths of the upright his praise is comely, Psal. xxxiii. 1. Seven times a day did David praise him, Psal. cxix. 164. Yea, his praise was continually of him, Psal. lxxi. 6. As he that offereth praise glorifieth God, (Psal. l. 23,) so doth he most rejoice and glad his own soul, Psal. xcviii. 4. Offer, therefore, the sacrifice of praise continually, Heb. xiii. 15. In the midst of the church, let us sing his praise, Heb. ii. 12. Praise our God, for he is good; sing praises unto his name, for it is pleasant, Psal. cxxxv. 3; cxlvii. 1. Yea, let us rejoice and triumph in his praise, Psal. cvi. 47.

Do you think that David had not a most heavenly spirit, who was so much employed in this heavenly work? Doth it not sometimes very much raise your hearts, when you do but seriously read that divine song of Moses, Deut. xxxii. and those heavenly iterated praises of David, having almost nothing sometimes but praise in his mouth? How much more would it raise and refresh us, to be skilled and accustomed in the work ourselves! I confess, to a man of a languishing body, where the heart doth faint, and the spirits are feeble, the cheerful praising of God is more difficult; because the body is the soul's instrument, and when it lies unstringed, or untuned, the music is likely to be accordingly but dull. Yet a spiritual cheerfulness there may be within, and the heart may praise, if not the voice. But where the body is strong, the spirits lively, and the heart cheerful, and the voice at command, what advantage have such for this heavenly work! With what alacrity and vivacity may they sing forth praises! Oh the madness of healthful youth, that lay out this vigour of body and mind upon vain delights and fleshly lusts, which is so fit for the noblest work of man! And oh the sinful folly of many of the saints, who drench their spirits in continual sadness, and waste their days in complaints and groans, and fill their bodies with wasting diseases, and so make themselves both in body and mind unfit for this sweet and heavenly work! That when they should join with the people of God in his praises, and delight their souls in singing to his name, they are questioning their worthiness, and studying their miseries, or raising scruples about the lawfulness of the duty, and so rob God of his praise, and themselves of their solace. But the greatest destroyer of our comfort in this duty, is our sticking in the carnal delight thereof, and taking up in the tune and melody, and suffering the heart to be all the while idle, which must perform the chiefest part of the work, and which should make use of the melody, for its reviving and exhilarating.

Sect. IX. 8. If thou wouldst have thy heart in heaven, keep thy soul still possessed with true believing thoughts of the exceeding, infinite love of God. Love is the attractive of love.[g] No man's heart will be set upon him that hates him, were he never so excellent, nor much upon him that doth not much love him. There are few so vile, but will love those that love them, be they never so mean. No doubt it is the death of our heavenly life, to have hard and doubtful thoughts of God; to conceive of him as a hater of the creature, (except only of obstinate rebels,) and as one that had rather damn us than save us, and that is glad of an opportunity to do us a mischief, or at least hath no great good-will to us: this is to put the blessed God into the similitude of Satan. And who, then, can set his heart and love upon him? When in our vile unbelief and ignorance we have drawn the most ugly picture of God in our imaginations, then we complain that we cannot love him, and delight in him. This is the case of many thousand christians. Alas! that we should thus belie and blaspheme God, and blast our own joys, and depress our spirits! Love is the very essence of God. The Scripture tells us, that "God is love;" it telleth us, that fury dwelleth not in him; that he delighteth not in the death of him that dieth, but rather that he repent and live, 1 John iv. 16; Isa. xxvii. 4; Ezek. xviii. 32; xxxiii. 11. Much more, that he testifieth his love to his chosen; and his full resolution effectually to save them. Oh, if we could always think of God but as we do of a friend; as of one that doth unfeignedly love us, even more than we do ourselves; whose very heart is set upon us to do us good, and hath therefore provided us an everlasting dwelling with himself; it would not then be so hard to have our heart still with him! Where we love most heartily, we shall think most sweetly, and most freely; and nothing will quicken our love more than the belief of his love to us. Get therefore a truer conceit of the loving nature of God, and lay up all the experiences and discoveries of his love to thee; and then see if

ecclesiæ apostolicæ, quam dona extraordinaria nondum cessavere. Sic Tertul. Apologet. cap. 39. Post aquam manualem et lumina, ut quisque de Scripturis Sanctis vel de proprio ingenio potest, provocatur in medium Deo canere. Hinc probatur quomodo biberit. Vid. etiam Epiphan. sub finem lib. iii. advers. Hæres.; et Plinium Secundum, lib. x. epist. 2; Euseb. Histor. lib. ii. cap. 16, et lib. v. cap. 28; Basil. apud Ruffinum, Hist. Eccles. lib. ii. cap. 9; Athanas. Apolog.

[g] All our love is moved from some good which we apprehend in the party loved; when the ground and motive of our love faileth, the affection must needs cease. Bishop Hall's Select Thoughts, sect. lv. p. 158. God hath put that pity into a righteous man, as to be merciful to his very beast, and love his enemy; and yet people look on God as more cruel to those that are willing to obey him. Even Pythagoras could not find in his heart to kill and feed on the flesh of the creatures; and yet men think the God of love delights in the damnation of those that would fain be such as he would have them be. Semiferi nos homines, quinimo feri, quos infœlix necessitas et malus usus edocuit cibos ex his carpere; miseratione interdum commovemur illorum, arguimus nos ipsos; penitusque revisa atque inspecta damnamus, quod humanitatis jure deposito naturalis initii consortia reperimus. Deos aliquis credit pios, beneficos, mites, cæde pecorum delectari? &c. Quanto minus damnatione hominum? Arnobius adver. Gent. lib. vii. p. 252. It seems Arnobius was of Pythagoras's mind, against killing the creatures to eat. And Minut. Fœlix saith, that then christians ate no blood, p. 390.

it will not further thy heavenly-mindedness. I fear, most christians think higher of the love of a hearty friend, than of the love of God: and then what wonder if they love their friends better than God, and trust them more confidently than God, and had rather live with them than with God, when they take them for better and trustier friends than God, and of more merciful and compassionate nature!

Sect. X. 9. Another thing I would advise you to, is this;[h] Be a careful observer of the drawings of the Spirit, and fearful of quenching its motions, of resisting its workings; if ever thy soul get above the earth, and get acquainted with this living in heaven, the Spirit of God must be to thee as the chariot to Elijah; yea, the very living principle by which thou must move and ascend. O, then, grieve not thy guide, quench not thy life, (Eph. iv. 30; 1 Thess. v. 19,) knock not off thy chariot-wheels! If thou do, no wonder if thy soul be at a loss, and all stand still, or fall to the earth. You little think how much the life of all your graces, and the happiness of your souls, doth depend upon your ready and cordial obedience to the Spirit. When the Spirit urgeth thee to secret prayer, and thou refusest obedience; when he forbids thee thy known transgressions, and yet thou wilt go on; when he telleth thee which is the way, and which not, and thou wilt not regard; no wonder if heaven and thy soul be strange. If thou wilt not follow the Spirit while it would draw thee to Christ,[i] and to thy duty, how should it lead thee to heaven, and bring thy heart into the presence of God? Oh, what supernatural help, what bold access, shall that soul find in its approaches to the Almighty, that is accustomed to a constant obeying of the Spirit! And how backward, how dull, and strange, and ashamed will he be to these addresses, who hath long used to break away from the Spirit that would have guided him! Even as stiff and unfit will they be for this spiritual motion, as a dead man to a natural. I beseech thee, christian reader, learn well this lesson, and try this course; let not the motions of thy body only, but also the very thoughts of thy heart, be at the Spirit's beck. Dost thou not feel sometimes a strong impulsion to retire from the world, and draw near to God? O do not thou disobey, but take the offer, and hoist up sail while thou mayst have this blessed gale. When this wind blows strongest, thou goest fastest, either backward or forward. The more of this Spirit we resist, the deeper will it wound; and the more we obey, the speedier is our pace; as he goes heaviest that hath the wind in his face, and he easiest that hath it in his back.

10. Lastly, I advise as a further help to this heavenly work, that thou neglect not the due care for the health of thy body, and for the maintaining a vigorous cheerfulness in thy spirits; nor yet overpamper and please thy flesh: learn how to carry thyself with prudence to thy body. It is a useful servant if thou give it its due, and but its due: it is a most devouring tyrant, if thou give it the mastery, or suffer it to have what it unreasonably desireth. And it is as a blunted knife, as a horse that is lame, as thy ox that is famished, if thou injuriously deny it what is necessary to its support. When we consider how frequently men offend on both extremes, and how few use their bodies aright, we cannot wonder if they be much hindered in their heavenly conversing. Most men are very slaves to their sensitive appetite, and can scarce deny any thing to the flesh, which they can give it on easier rates, without much shame, or loss, or grief. The flesh thus used is as unfit to serve you as a wild colt to ride on. When such men should converse in heaven, the flesh will carry them out to an ale-house, or to their sports, to their profits, or credit, or vain company; to wanton practices, or sights, or speeches, or thoughts: it will thrust a whore, or a pair of cards, or a good bargain, into their minds, instead of God. Look to this specially, you that are young, and healthful, and lusty: as you love your souls, remember that in Rom. xiii. 14, which converted Austin, Make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil its desires; and that in Rom. viii. 4—8, 12—14. Some few others do much hinder their heavenly joy, by over-rigorous denying the body its necessaries, and so making it unable to serve them. But the most, by surfeiting and excess, do overthrow and disable it.[k] You love to have your knife keen, and every instrument you use in order: when your horse goes lustily, how cheerfully do you travel! As much need hath the soul of a sound and chearful body. If they who abuse their bodies, and neglect their health,[l] did wrong the flesh only, the matter were small, but they wrong the soul also: as he that spoils the house, doth wrong the inhabitant. When the body is sick, and the spirits do languish, how heavily move we in these meditations and joys! Yet where God denieth this mercy, we may the better bear it, because he oft occasioneth our benefit by the denial.

CHAPTER VI.

CONTAINING THE DESCRIPTION OF THE GREAT DUTY OF HEAVENLY CONTEMPLATION.

SECT. I. Though I hope what is already spoken be not unuseful, and that it will not by the reader be cast aside; yet I must tell you, that the main thing intended is yet behind, and that which I aimed at when I set upon this work. I have observed the maxim, that my principal end be last in execution, though it was first in my intention. All that I have said is but for the preparation to this: the doctrinal part is but to instruct you for this; the rest of the uses are but introductions to this; the motives I have laid down, are but to make you willing for this; the hinderances mentioned were but so many blocks in

[h] Hear a heathen:—Prope est a te Deus, tecum est, intus est. Ita dico; intra nos Spiritus sedet, malorum bonorumque vestrorum observator; et custos hic prout a nobis tractatus est, ita nos ipse tractat. Bonus vir sine Deo nemo est. An potest aliquis supra fortunam nisi ab illo adjutus exsurgere? Seneca, epist. 41.

[i] I speak not of any drawing of the Spirit above or contrary to the word, but its enforcing the precepts and prohibitions of the word upon our hearts. And that not persuading the will, I think, immediately by himself, but exciting, and so using our reason and conscience as the instruments to persuade the will, and affect the heart.

[k] It is ill with men when they cram into their bellies as if they were laying provision in a garner, rather than eating for digestion; and when they are so curious, and must have their devouring appetite so pleased, that the cook is got in more esteem than the husbandman: this is called λαιμαργία, a madness in the throat. Clemens Alexandr. Pædagog. lib. ii. cap. 1. Humanus animus quando corporibus nulla familiaritate conjungitur, nihilque extrinsecus habet concupiscentiæ carnalis admixtum, sed totus secum, ut ab initio conditus, et in se habitat, tunc sensibilia et mortalia cuncta transcendens in auras veræ libertatis evadit, et verbum intuens, in eo etiam ipsum patrem videt. Athanas. cont. Gentil. lib. i.

[l] Those who are prone to excess or daintiness of diet, they nourish their own diseases, and are led by the great glutton the devil, whom I will not fear to call the belly-devil; which indeed is the worst and most pernicious of all devils. And it is better to be happy than to have a devil dwelling in you. Clemens Alexandr. Pædagog. lib. ii. cap. III.

the way to this; the general helps which I last delivered, are but the necessary attendants of this: so that, reader, if thou neglect this that follows, thou dost frustrate the main end of my design, and makest me lose (as to thee) the chief of my labour. I once more entreat thee, therefore, as thou art a man that makest conscience of a revealed duty, and that darest not wilfully resist the Spirit; as thou valuest the high delights of a saint, and the soul-ravishing exercise of heavenly contemplation; as all my former moving considerations seem reasonable to thee, and as thou art faithful to the peace and prosperity of thine own soul; that thou diligently study these directions following, and that thou speedily and faithfully put them into practice: practice is the end of all sound doctrine, and all right faith doth end in duty. I pray thee, therefore, resolve before thou readest any further, and promise here, as before the Lord, that if the following advice be wholesome to thy soul, thou wilt conscionably follow it, and seriously set thyself to the work; and that no laziness of spirit shall take thee off, nor the lesser business interrupt thy course, but that thou wilt approve thyself a doer of this word, and not an idle hearer only. Is this thy promise; and wilt thou stand to it? Resolve, man; and then I shall be encouraged to give thee my advice: if I spread not before thee a delicious feast, if I set thee not upon as gainful a trade, and put not into thy hand as delightful an employment, as ever thou dealtest with in all thy life, then cast it away, and tell me I have deceived thee; only try it thoroughly, and then judge: I say again, if in the faithful following of this prescribed course, thou dost not find an increase of all thy graces, and dost not grow beyond the stature of common christians, and art not made more serviceable in thy place, and more precious in the eyes of all that are discerning; if thy soul enjoy not more fellowship with God, and thy life be not fuller of pleasure and solace, and thou have not comfort readier by thee at a dying hour, and when thou hast greatest need;[a] then throw these directions back in my face, and exclaim against me as a deceiver for ever: except God should leave thee uncomfortable for a little season, for the more glorious manifestation of his attributes and thy integrity, and single thee out as he did Job, for an example and mirror of constancy and patience, which would be but a preparative for thy fuller comfort. Certainly, God will not forsake this his own ordinance thus conscionably performed, but will be found of those that thus diligently seek him. God hath, as it were, appointed to meet thee in this way; do not thou fail to give him the meeting, and thou shalt find by experience that he will not fail.

The duty which I press upon thee so earnestly, I shall now describe and open to thee; for I suppose, by this time, thou art ready to inquire, What is this so highly extolled work? Why, it is the set and solemn acting of all the powers of the soul upon this most perfect object, rest, by meditation.

Description. Sect. II. I will a little more fully explain the meaning of this description, that so the duty may lie plain before thee. 1. The general title that I give this duty is meditation; not as it is precisely distinguished from thought, consideration, and contemplation; but as it is taken in the larger and usual sense for thinking on things spiritual, and so comprehending consideration and contemplation.

That meditation is a duty of God's ordaining, not only in his written law, but also in nature itself, I never met with a man that would deny; but that it is a duty constantly and conscionably practised even by the godly, so far as my acquaintance extends, I must, with sorrow, deny it. It is in word confessed to be a duty by all, but by the constant neglect denied by most; and, I know not by what fatal customary security, it comes to pass that men that are very tender-conscienced towards most other duties, yet do as easily overslip this, as if they knew it not to be a duty at all. They that are presently troubled in mind, if they omit but a sermon, a fast, a prayer in public or private, yet were never troubled that they have omitted meditation, perhaps all their life-time to this very day; though it be that duty by which all other duties are improved, and by which the soul digesteth truths, and draweth forth their strength for its nourishment and refreshing. Certainly, I think that as a man is but half an hour in chewing and taking into his stomach that meat which he must have seven or eight hours at least to digest; so a man may take into his understanding and memory more truth in one hour than he is able well to digest in many. A man may eat too much, but he cannot digest too well. Therefore, God commanded Joshua, that the book of the law depart not out of his mouth, but that he meditate therein day and night; that he may observe to do according to that which is written therein, Josh. i. 8. As digestion is the turning of the raw food into chyle and blood, and spirits and flesh, so meditation, rightly managed, turneth the truths received and remembered, into warm affection, raised resolution, and holy and upright conversation. Therefore, what good those men are like to get by sermons or providences, who are unacquainted with, and unaccustomed to, this work of meditation, you may easily judge. And why so much preaching is lost among us, and professors can run from sermon to sermon, and are never weary of hearing or reading, and yet have such languishing, starved souls, I know no truer or greater cause than their ignorance and unconscionable neglect of meditation. If a man have the lientery, that his meat passes from him as he took it in; or, if he vomits it up as fast as he eats it; what strength and vigour of body and senses is this man like to have? Indeed, he may well eat more than a sounder man, and the small abode that it makes in the stomach may refresh it at the present, and help to draw out a lingering, languishing, uncomfortable, unprofitable life; and so do our hearers that have this disease; perhaps they hear more than otherwise they needed, and the clear discovery and lively delivery of the truth of God, may warm and refresh them a little, while they are hearing, and perhaps an hour or two after; and, it may be, linger out their grace in a languishing, uncomfortable, unprofitable life: but if they did hear one hour, and meditate seven; if they did as constantly digest their sermons as they hear them, and not take in one sermon before the former is well concocted, they would find another kind of benefit by sermons, than the ordinary sort of the forwardest christians do. I know many carnal persons do make this an argument against frequent preaching and hearing, who do it merely from a loathing of the word, and know far less how to meditate than they know how understandingly to hear; only they pretend meditation against often hearing, because, that being a duty of the mind, you cannot so easily discern their omission of it. These are sick of the anorexia and apepsia; they have neither appetite nor digestion. The other of the boulimia; they have appetite, but no digestion.

Sect. III. But because meditation is a general

[a] Tamen hæc via et scientia non discitur ex libris, sed desursum est: et cui vult participat eam Pater luminum; his quidem clarius, his vero obscurius. Gerson, in Alphabet. Divini Amoris, part. 3. cap. 14.

word, and it is not all meditation that I here intend, I shall therefore lay thee down the difference whereby this meditation that I am urging thee to, is distinguished from all other kinds; and the difference is taken from the act, and from the object of it.

1. From the act, which I call the set and solemn acting of all the powers of the soul.

1. I call it the acting of them; for it is action that we are directing you in now, and not relations or dispositions; yet these also are neeessarily presupposed. It must be a soul that is qualified for the work by the supernatural renewing grace of the Spirit, which must be able to perform this heavenly exercise.[b] It is the work of the living, and not of the dead; it is a work of all other most spiritual and sublime, and therefore not to be well performed by a heart that is merely carnal and terrene. Also, they must necessarily have some relation to heaven before they can familiarly there converse. I suppose them to be the sons of God, when I persuade them to love him; and to be of the family of God, yea, the spouse of his Son, when I persuade them to press into his presence, and to dwell with him. I suppose them to be such as have title to rest, when I persuade them to rejoice in the meditations of rest. These, therefore, being all presupposed, are not the duties here intended and required, but it is the bringing of their sanctified dispositions into act, and the delightful reviewing of their high relations. Habits and powers are but to enable us to action. To say, I am able to do this, or I am disposed to it, doth neither please God, nor advantage ourselves, except withal we really do it. God doth not regenerate thy soul that it may be able to know him, and not know him; or that it may be able to believe, and yet not believe; or that it may be able to love him, and yet not to love him; but he therefore makes thee able to know, to believe, and love, that thou mayst indeed both know, believe, and love him. What good doth that power which is not reduced into act? Therefore, I am not now exhorting thee to be an able christian, but to be an active christian, according to the degree of that ability which thou hast. As thy store of money, or food, or raiment, which thou lettest lie by thee, and never usest, doth thee no good but please thy fancy, or raise thee to an esteem in the eyes of others, so all thy gifts, and powers, and habits, which lie still in thy soul, and are never acted, do profit or eomfort thee little or nothing, but in satisfying thy fancy, and raising thee to the repute of an able man, so far as they are discernible to the standers-by.

Sect. IV. 2. I eall this meditation "the aeting of the powers of the soul," meaning the soul as rational, to difference it from the cogitations of the soul as sensitive: the sensitive soul hath a kind of meditation by the common sense, the fantasy and estimation.[c] The fleshly man mindeth the things of the flesh, Rom. viii. If it were the work of the ear, or the eye, or the tongue, or the hands, whieh I am setting you on, I doubt not but you would more readily take it up; but it is the work of the soul, for bodily exercise doth here profit but little. The soul hath its labour and its ease, its business and its idleness, its intention and remission, as well as the body; and diligent students are usually as sensible of the labour and weariness of their spirits and brain, as they are of that of the members of the body. This action of the soul is it I persuade thee to.

Sect. V. 3. I call it the acting of "all" the powers of the soul, to difference it from the eommon meditation of students, which is usually the mere employment of the brain. It is not a bare thinking that I mean, nor the mere use of invention or memory, but a business of a higher and more excellent nature. When truth is apprehended only as truth, this is but an unsavoury and loose apprehension; but when it is apprehended as good, as well as true, this is a fast and delightful apprehension. As a man is not so prone to live according to the truth he knows, except it do deeply affect him, so neither doth his soul enjoy its sweetness, except speculation do pass to affection. The understanding is not the whole soul, and therefore cannot do the whole work. As God hath made several parts in man to perform their several offices for his nourishing and life, so hath he ordained the faculties of the soul to perform their several offices for his spiritual life: the stomach must chylify, and prepare for the liver; the liver and spleen must sanguify, and prepare for the heart and brain; and these must beget the vital and animal spirits, &c.; so the understanding must take in truths, and prepare them for the will, and it must receive them, and commend them to the affections. The best digestion is in the bottom of the stomach; the affections are, as it were, the bottom of the soul; and therefore the best digestion is there. While truth is but a speculation swimming in the brain, the soul hath not half received it, nor taken fast hold of it: Christ and heaven have various excellences, and therefore God hath formed the soul with a power of apprehending divers ways, that so we might be capable of enjoying those divers exeellences in Christ. Even as the creatures having their several uses, God hath given us several senses, that so we might enjoy the delights of them all. What the better had we been for the pleasant, odoriferous flowers and perfumes, if we had not possessed the sense of smelling? or what good would language or musie have done us, if God had not given us the sense of hearing? or what delight should we have found in meats, or drinks, or sweetest things, if we had been deprived of the sense of tasting? So also, what good could all the glory of heaven have done us; or what pleasure should we have had, even in the goodness and perfection of God himself; if we had been without the affections of love and joy, whereby we are capable of being delighted in that goodness? And what benefit of strength or sweetness canst thou possibly receive by thy meditations on eternity, while thou dost not exercise those affections which are the senses of the soul, by which it must receive this sweetness and strength?

This is it that hath deceived christians in this business; they have thought that meditation is nothing but the bare thinking on truths, and the rolling of them in the understanding and memory; when every school-boy can do this, or persons that hate the things which they think on.

Therefore this is the great task in hand, and this is the work that I would set thee on: to get these truths from thy head to thy heart, and that all the sermons which thou hast heard of heaven, and all the notions that thou hast conceived of this rest, may be turned into the blood and spirits of affection, and thou mayst feel them revive thee, and warm thee at the heart, and mayst so think of heaven as heaven should be thought on.

There are two accesses of contemplation, said Bernard; one in intellection, the other in affection;

[b] God will have us to be saved by ourselves, viz. under God. This, therefore, is the nature of the soul, to be impelled, or driven on, and incited by itself. Clemens Alexandr. Stromat. lib. vi.

[c] Vita est vis per quam aliquid in seipso ex seipso agere potest; plurimum vero ipsum actum quo aliquid vivit, declarat. Mat. Martinius Cathol. Fid. lib. iii. p. 721.

one in light, the other in heat; one in acquisition, the other in devotion.[d] If thou shouldst study of nothing but heaven while thou livest, and shouldst have thy thoughts at command, to turn them hither on every occasion, and yet shouldst proceed no further than this; this were not the meditation that I intend, nor would it much advantage or better thy soul: as it is thy whole soul that must possess God hereafter, so must the whole, in a lower matter, possess him here. I have shown you in the beginning of this treatise, how the soul must enjoy the Lord in glory; to wit, by knowing, by loving, and joying in him: why, the very same way must thou begin thy enjoyment here.

So much as thy understanding and affections are sincerely acted upon God, so much dost thou enjoy him: and this is the happy work of this meditation. So that you see here is somewhat more to be done than barely to remember and think of heaven. As running, ringing, and moving, and such-like labours, do not only stir a hand or foot, but do strain and exercise the whole body, so doth meditation the whole soul.

As the affections of sinners are set on the world, and turned to idols, and fallen from God, as well as the understanding, so must the affections of men be reduced to God, and taken up with him, as well as the understanding; and as the whole was filled with sin before, so the whole must be filled with God now. As St. Paul saith of knowledge, and gifts, and faith to remove mountains, that if thou have all these without love, "thou art but as sounding brass, or as a tinkling cymbal," 1 Cor. xiii. 1, 2; so I may say of the exercise of these, if in this work of meditation thou do exercise knowledge, and gifts, and faith of miracles, and not exercise love and joy, thou dost nothing; thou playest the child, and not the man; the sinner's part, and not the saint's. For so will sinners do also. If thy meditation tends to fill thy note-book with notions, and good sayings, concerning God, and not thy heart with longings after him, and delight in him, for aught I know thy book is as much a christian as thou. Mark but David's description of the blessed man: "His delight is in the law[e] of the Lord, and therein doth he meditate day and night," Psal. i. 3.

Sect. VI. 4. I call this meditation "set and solemn," to differenee it from that which is occasional and cursory. As there is prayer which is solemn, when we set ourselves wholly to the duty, and prayer which is sudden and short, commonly called ejaculations, when a man, in the midst of other business, doth send up some brief request to God; so also there is meditation solemn, when we apply ourselves only to that work; and there is meditation which is short and cursory, when in the midst of our business we have some good thoughts of God in our minds: and as solemn prayer is either first set, when a christian, observing it as a standing duty, doth resolvedly practise it in a constant course; or, secondly, occasionally, when some unusual occasion doth put us upon it at a season extraordinary; so also meditation admits of the like distinction. Now, though I would persuade you to that meditation which is mixed with your common labours in your callings, and to that which special occasions do direct you to, yet these are not the main things which I here intend; but that you would make it a constant, standing duty, as you do by hearing, and praying, and reading the Scripture; and that you would solemnly set yourselves about it, and make it for that time your whole work, and intermix other matters no more with it than you would do with prayer or other duties. Thus you see, as it is differenced by its act, what kind of meditation it is that we speak of; viz. it is the set and solemn acting of all the powers of the soul.

Sect. VII. The second part of the difference is drawn from its object, which is "rest," or the most blessed state of man in his everlasting enjoyment of God in heaven. Meditation hath a large field to walk in; and hath as many objects to work upon, as there are matters, and lines, and words in the Scripture, as there are known creatures in the whole creation, and as there are particular discernible passages of providence in the government of the persons and actions through the world; but the meditation that I now direct you in, is only of the end of all these, and of these as they refer to that end. It is not a walk from mountains to valleys, from sea to land, from kingdom to kingdom, from planet to planet; but it is a walk from mountains and valleys to the holy mount Zion; from sea and land to the land of the living; from the kingdoms of this world to the kingdom of saints; from earth to heaven; from time to eternity. It is a walking upon sun, and moon, and stars; it is a walking in the garden and paradise of God. It may seem far off; but spirits are quick, whether in the body or out of the body; their motion is swift; they are not so heavy or dull as these earthly lumps, nor so slow of motion as these clods of flesh. I would not have you cast off your other meditations, but, surely, as heaven hath the pre-eminence in perfection, so should it have the pre-eminence also in our meditations. That which will make us most happy when we possess it, will make us most joyful when we meditate upon it, especially when that meditation is a degree of possession, if it be such affecting meditation as I here describe.

You need not here be troubled with the fears of the world, lest studying so much on these high matters should craze your brains, and make you mad, unless you would go mad with delight and joy, and that of the purest and most solid kind. If I set you to meditate as much on sin and wrath, and to study nothing but judgment and damnation, then you might justly fear such an issue. But it is heaven, and not hell, that I would persuade you to walk in. It is joy, and not sorrow, that I persuade you to exercise. I would urge you to look upon no deformed object, but only upon the ravishing glory of saints, and the unspeakable excellences of the God of glory, and the beams that stream from the face of his Son. Are these such sadding and madding thoughts? Will it distract a man to think of his only happiness? Will it distract the miserable to think of mercy, or the captive or prisoner to foresee deliverance, or the poor to think of riches and honour approaching? Neither do I persuade your thoughts to matters of great difficulty, or to study thorny and knotty controversies of heaven, or to search out things beyond your reach. If you should thus set your wit and invention upon the tenters, you might be quickly distracted or distempered indeed. But it is your affections more than your wits and inventions, which must be used in this heavenly employment we speak of. They are truths which are commonly known and professed, that your souls must draw forth and feed upon. The resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting, are articles of your creed, and not nicer controversies. Methinks it should be liker to make a man mad, to think of living in a world of woe, to think of abiding in poverty and

[d] Contemplationis accessus duo sunt, unus in intellectu, alter in affectu; unus in lumine, alter in fervore; unus in acquisitione, alter in devotione. Bernard. in Cant. ser. 46

[e] Heb. doctrine.

sickness, among the rage of wicked men, than to think of living with Christ in bliss. Methinks, if we be not mad already, it should sooner distract us, to hear the tempests and roaring waves, to see the billows, and rocks, and sands, and gulfs, than to think of arriving safe at rest. But wisdom is justified of all her children, Matt. xi. 19; Luke vii. 35. Knowledge hath no enemy but the ignorant. This heavenly course was never spoke against by any, but those that never either knew it, or used it. I more fear the neglect of men that do approve it, than the opposition or arguments of any against it. Truth loseth more by loose friends than by sharpest enemies.

CHAPTER VII.

CONTAINING THE FITTEST TIME AND PLACE FOR THIS CONTEMPLATION, AND THE PREPARATION OF THE HEART UNTO IT.

Sect. I. Thus I have opened to you the nature of this duty, and by this time I suppose you partly apprehend what it is that I so press upon you; which, when it is opened more particularly, you will more fully discern. I now proceed to direct you in the work: where I shall, First, Show you how you must set upon it; and, Secondly, How you must behave yourself in it; and, Thirdly, How you shall shut it up. And here I suppose thee to be a man that dost conscionably avoid the forementioned hinderances, and conscionably use the forementioned helps, or else it is in vain to set thee a higher lesson, till thou hast first learned that; which, if thou have done, I then further advise thee, First, Somewhat concerning the time and season; Secondly, Somewhat concerning the place; and, Thirdly, Somewhat concerning the frame of thy spirit.

And, First, For the time, I advise thee that, as much as may be, it may be set and constant. Proportion out such a part of thy time to the work.

Stick not at their scruple, who question the stating of times as superstitious. If thou suit out thy time to the advantage of the work, and place no more religion in the time itself, thou needest not to fear lest this be superstition. As a workman in his shop will have a set place for every one of his tools and wares, or else when he should use it, it may be to seek; so a christian should have a set time for every ordinary duty, or else when he should practise it, it is ten to one but he will be put by it. Stated time is a hedge to duty, and defends it against many temptations to omission. God hath stated none but the Lord's day himself, but he hath left it to be stated and determined by ourselves, according to every man's condition and occasions, lest otherwise his law should have been a burden or a snare. Yet hath he left us general rules, which, by the use of reason and christian prudence, may help us to determine of the fittest times. It is as ridiculous a question of them that ask us where Scripture commands to pray so oft, or at such hours, privately, or in families; as if they asked where the Scripture commands that the church-house, or temple, stand in such a place, or the pulpit in such a place, or my seat in such a place; or where it commands a man to read the Scriptures with a pair of spectacles, &c. Most that I have known to break the bond of duty, and to argue against a stated time, have at last grown careless of the duty itself, and showed more dislike against the work than the time. If God give me so much money or wealth, and tell me not in Scripture how much such a poor man must have, nor how much my family, nor how much in clothes, and how much in expenses; is it not lawful, yea, and necessary, that I make the division myself, and allow to each the due proportion? So, if God bestow on me a day or week of time, and give me such and such work to do in this time, and tell me not how much I shall allot to each work, certainly I must make the division myself, and cut my coat according to my cloth, and proportion it wisely and carefully too, or else I am like to leave something undone. Though God hath not told you at what hour you shall rise in the morning, or at what hours you shall eat and drink, yet your own reason and experience will tell you that, ordinarily, you should observe a stated time. Neither let the fear of customariness and formality deter you from this. That argument hath brought the Lord's supper from once a week to once a quarter, or once a year; and it hath brought family duties, with too many of late, from twice a day to once a week, or once a month; and if it were not that man, being proud, is naturally of a teaching humour, and addicted to works of popularity and ostentation, I believe it would diminish preaching as much: and will it deal any better with secret duties, especially this of holy meditation? I advise thee, therefore, if well thou mayst, to allow this duty a stated time, and be as constant in it as in hearing and praying. Yet be cautious in understanding this. I know this will not prove every man's duty. Some have not themselves and their time at command, and therefore cannot set their hours. Such are most servants, and many children of poor and carnal parents; and many are so poor that the necessity of their families will deny them this freedom. I do not think it the duty of such to leave their labours for this work just at certain set times; no, nor for prayer, or other necessary worship. No such duty is at all times a duty. Affirmatives, especially positive, bind not *semper et ad semper*. When two duties come together, and cannot both be performed, it were then a sin to perform the lesser. Of two duties we must choose the greater, though of two sins we must choose neither. I think such persons were best to be watchful, to redeem time as much as they can, and take their vacant opportunities as they fall, and especially to join meditation and prayer, as much as they can, with the very labours of their callings. There is no such enmity between labouring and meditating, or praying in the spirit, but that both may conveniently be done together. Yet, I say, (as Paul, in another case,) if thou canst be free, use it rather. Those that have more spare time from worldly necessaries, and are masters to dispose of themselves and their time, I still advise that they keep this duty to a stated time: and, indeed, it were no ill husbandry, nor point of folly, if we did so by all other duties. If we considered of the ordinary works of the day, and suited out a fit season and proportion of time to every work, and fixed this in our memory and resolution, or wrote it in a table, and kept it in our closets, and never break it but upon unexpected extraordinary cause; if every work of the day had thus its appointed time, we should be better skilled, both in redeeming time and performing duty.

Sect. II. 2. I advise thee also, concerning thy time for this duty, that as it be stated, so it be frequent: just how oft it should be, I cannot determine, because men's several conditions may vary it; but in general, that it be frequent, the Scripture requireth, when it mentioneth meditating continually, and day and night, Psal. i. 2; cxix. 97, 148. Circumstances of our condition may much vary the

circumstance of our duties. It may be one man's duty to hear or pray oftener than another, and so it may be in this of meditation. But for those that can conveniently omit other business, I advise, that it be once a day at least. Though Scripture tells us not how oft in a day we should eat or drink; yet prudence and experience will direct us twice or thrice a day, aeeording to the temper and necessities of our bodies. Those that think they should not tie themselves to order or number of duties, but should then only meditate or pray, when they find the Spirit provoking them to it, do go upon uncertain and unchristian grounds. I am sure, the Scripture provokes us to frequency, and our necessity secondeth the voice of Scripture; and if through my own neglect, or resistancc of the Spirit, I do not find it so to excite and quicken me, I dare not therefore disobey the Scripture, nor neglect the necessities of my own soul. I should suspect that spirit which would turn my soul from constancy in duty:[a] if the Spirit in Scripture bid me meditate or pray, I dare not forbear it, because I find not the Spirit within me to second the command: if I find not incitation to duty before, yet I may find assistance while I wait in performance. I am afraid of laying my corruptions upon the Spirit, or blaming the want of the Spirit's assistance, when I should blame the backwardness of my own heart; nor dare I make one corruption a plea for another; nor urge the inward rebellion of my nature, as a reason for the outward disobedienee of my life: and for the healing of my nature's backwardness, I more expect that the Spirit of Christ should do it in a way of duty, (which I still find to be his ordinary season of working,) than in a way of disobedience, and neglect of duty. Men that fall on duty, according to the frame of their spirits only, are like our ignorant vulgar, (or if you will, like the swine,) who think their appetite should be the only rule of their eating; when a wise man judgeth both of quantity and quality, by reason and experience; lest when his appetite is depraved, he should either surfeit or famish. Our appetite is no sure rule for our times of duty; but the word of God in general, and our spiritual reason, experience, necessity, and convenience in particular, may truly direct us.

Three reasons especially should persuade thee to frequency in this meditation on heaven.

1. Because seldom eonversing with him will breed a strangeness betwixt thy soul and God: frequent society breeds familiarity, and familiarity increaseth love and delight, and maketh us bold and confident in our addresses. This is the main end of this duty; that thou mayst have acquaintance and fellowship with God therein; therefore, if thou come but seldom to it, thou wilt keep thyself a stranger still, and so miss of the end of the work. Oh! when a man feels his need of God, and must seek his help in a time of necessity, when nothing else can do him any good, you would little think what an encouragement it is, to go to a God that we know, and are acquainted with. Oh! saith the heavenly christian, I know both whither I go, and to whom; I have gone this way many a time before now; it is the same God that I daily conversed with; it is the same way that was my daily walk; God knows me well enough, and I have some knowledge of him. On the other side, what a horror and discouragement to the soul will it be, when it is forced to fly God in straits: to think, Alas! I know not whither to go; I never went the way beforc; I have no acquaintance at the court of heaven, my soul knows not that God that I must speak to; and I fear he will not know my soul! But especially when we come to die, and must immediately appear before this God, and expect to enter into his eternal rest, then the difference will plainly appear; then what a joy will it be to think, I am going to the place that I daily conversed in; to the place from whence I tasted so frequent delights; to that God whom I have met in my meditation so oft! My heart hath been at heaven before now, and tasted the sweetness that hath oft revived it; and (as Jonathan by his honey) if my eyes were so enlightened, and my mind refreshed, when I tasted but a little of that sweetness, what will it be when I shall feed on it freely? 1 Sam. xiv. 29. On the other side, what a terror must it be to think, I must die, and go I know not whither; from a place where I am acquainted, to a place where I have no familiarity or knowledge! O sirs, it is an inexpressible horror to a dying man, to have strange thoughts of God and heaven; I am persuaded there is no cause so common, that makes death even to godly men unwelcome and uncomfortable. Therefore, I persuade thee to frequency in this duty, that seldomness breed not estrangedness from God.

2. And besides that, seldomness will make thee unskilful in the work, and strange to the duty, as well as to God. How unhandsomely and clumsily do men set their hands to a work that they are seldom employed in! Whereas frequency will habituate thy heart to the work, and thou wilt better know the way which thou daily walkest, yea, and it will be more easy and delightful also: the hill which made thee pant and blow at the first going up, thou mayst run up easily when thou art once accustomed to it. The heart, which of itself is naturally backward, will contract a greater unwillingness through disuse; and as an untamed colt not used to the hand, it will hardly come to hand when thou shouldst use it.

3. And lastly, Thou wilt lose that heat and life by long intermissions, which with much ado thou didst obtain in duty. If thou eat but a meal in two or three days, thou wilt lose thy strength as fast as thou gettest it; if in holy meditation thou get near to Christ, and warm thy heart with the fire of love, if thou then turn away and come but seldom, thou wilt soon return to thy former coldness. If thou walk or labour till thou hast got thee heat, and then sit idle all day after, wilt thou not surely lose thy heat again? Especially, it being so spiritual a work, and so against the bent of nature, we shall be still inclining to our natural temper.

If water that is heated be long from the fire, it will return to its coldness, because that is its natural temper. I advise thee, therefore, that thou be as oft as may be in this soul-raising duty, lest when thou hast long rowed hard against the stream, or tide, and wind, the boat should go farther down by thy intermission, than it was got up by all thy labour: and lest, when thou hast been long rolling thy stony heart towards the top of the hill, it should go faster down when thou dost slack thy diligence. It is true, the intermixed use of other duties may do much to the keeping thy heart above, especially secret prayer; but meditation is the life of most other duties; and the view of heaven is the life of meditation.

Sect. III. 3. Concerning the time of this duty, I advise thee that thou choose the most seasonable time.[b] All things are beautiful and excellent in

[a] In the same sense as Justin Martyr said, He would not believe Christ himself, if he had preached any other god, besides him who is the Creator of all; so may I say, I would not believe the Spirit that should take me off my duty and obedience to God. Vid. Nicephor. Eccles. Histor. lib. iv. cap. 6.

[b] De tempore precandi vide quæ scripsit Cypri. de Orationc Dominica, sect. 25—27. p. (Edit. Pamel. c. Goulart.) 318.

their season. Unseasonableness may lose thee the fruit of thy labour; it may raise up disturbances and difficulties in the work; yea, it may turn a duty to sin: when the seasonableness of a duty doth make it easy, doth remove impediments, doth imbolden us to the undertaking, and doth ripen its fruit.

The seasons of this duty are either, First, Extraordinary; or, Secondly, Ordinary.

1. The ordinary season for your daily performance cannot be particularly determined by man; otherwise God would have determined it in his word. But men's conditions of employment, and freedom, and bodily temper, are so various, that the same may be a seasonable hour to one, which may be unseasonable to another. If thou be a servant, or a hard labourer, that thou hast not thyself nor thy time at command, thou must take that season which thy business will best afford thee. Either as thou sittest in the shop at thy work, or as thou travellest on the way, or as thou liest waking in the night. Every man best knows his own time, even when he hath the least to hinder him of his business in the world. But for those whose necessities tie them not so close, but that they may well lay aside their earthly affairs, and choose what time of the day they will, my advice to such is, that they carefully observe the temper of their body and mind, and mark when they find their spirits most active and fit for contemplation, and pitch upon that as the stated time. Some men are freest for duties when they are fasting, and some are then unfittest of all. Some are fit for duties of humiliation at one season, and for duties of exultation at another. Every man is the meetest judge for himself. Only give me leave to tender you my observation, which time I have always found fittest for myself; and that is, the evening, from sun-setting to twilight; and sometimes in the night, when it is warm and clear. Whether it be any thing from the temperature of my body, I know not; but I conjecture that the same time would be seasonable to most tempers, for several natural reasons, which I will not now stand to mention. Neither would I have mentioned my own experience in this, but that I was encouraged hereunto by finding it suit with the experience of a better and wiser man than myself, and that is Isaac: for it is said in Gen. xxiv. 63, that he went to meditate in the field at the eventide. And his experience I dare more boldly recommend unto you than my own; and, as I remember, Dr. Hall, in his excellent treatise of meditation, gives you the like account of his own experience.

Sect. IV. 2. The Lord's day is a time exceeding seasonable for this exercise. When should we more seasonably contemplate on rest, than on that day of rest which doth typify it to us? Neither do I think that typifying use is ceased, because the antitype is not fully yet to come; however, it being a day appropriated to worship and spiritual duties, methinks we should never exclude this duty which is so eminently spiritual. I think, verily, this is the chiefest work of a christian sabbath, and most agreeable to the intent of its positive institution. What fitter time to converse with our Lord than on that day which he hath appropriated to such employment, and therefore called it the Lord's day? What fitter day to ascend to heaven than that on which our Lord did arise from earth, and fully triumph over death and hell, and take possession of heaven for us? The fittest temper for a true believer is to be in the Spirit on the Lord's day; this was St. John's temper on that day, Rev. i. 13; and what can bring us to this ravishment in the Spirit but the spiritual beholding of our ravishing glory? Surely, though an outward ordinance may delight the ear, or tickle the fancy, yet it is the view of God that must ravish the soul. There is a great deal of difference betwixt the receiving of the word with joy, (Matt. xiii. 20,) and being in the Spirit on the Lord's day, Rev. i. 10.

Two sorts of christians I would entreat to take notice of this especially.

1. Those that spend the Lord's day only in public worship, either through the neglect of this spiritual duty of meditation, or else by their over-much exercise of the public, allowing no time to private duty. Though there be few that offend in this last kind, yet some there are, and a hurtful mistake to the soul it is. They will grow but in gifts, and common accomplishments, if they exercise but their gifts in outward performances.

2. Those that have time on the Lord's day for idleness and vain discourse, and find the day longer than they know how well to spend: were these but acquainted with this duty of contemplation, they would need no other recreation or pastime; they would think the longest day short enough, and be sorry that the night hath shortened their pleasure.

Whether this day be of positive divine institution, and so to us christians of necessary observation, is out of my way to handle here.[c] I refer those that doubt to what is in print on that subject, especially Master George Abbot against Broad; and, above all, Master Cawdry, and Master Palmer, their "Sabbatum Redivivum." It is an encouragement to the doubtful, to find the generality of its rational opposers to acknowledge the usefulness, yea, the necessity, of a stated day, and the fitness of this above all other days. I would I could persuade those that are convinced of its morality, to spend a greater part of it in this true spirituality. But we do in this as in most things else, think it enough that we believe our duty, as we do the articles of our faith, and let who will put it in practice: we will dispute for duty, and let others perform it. As I have known some drunkards upon the ale-bench will plead for godly men, while themselves are ungodly; so do too many for the observation of the Lord's day, who themselves are unacquainted with this spiritual part of its observation. Christians, let heaven have some share in your sabbaths, where you must shortly keep your everlasting sabbath. As you go from stair to stair, till you come to the top, so use your sabbaths as steps to glory, till you have passed them all, and are there arrived. Especially you that are poor men, and servants, that cannot take time in the week as you desire, see that you well improve this day. Now your labour lies not so much upon you, now you are unyoked from your common business, be sure, as your bodies rest from their labours, that your spirit

[c] I confess it a very great confirmation to me, that the Lord's day was of divine separation, to find it so exceeding clear and certain that the church hath still observed it ever since the apostles' days; not that I take my faith from antiquity. But this, as to the case of fact, is a clear proof that the apostles used it, and so a fuller exposition of Scripture concerning its institution. Ignatius frequently presseth it. Or if any doubt of his writings, yet Justin Martyr is a witness beyond exception, who, in the end of his second Apology, tells us, that the christians still met on that day, and shows how they spent it in reading, exhortation, prayer, sacrament, &c. See also Tertul. Apologet. cap. 16; et Lib. de Idololatria, cap. xiv. p. (edit. Pamel.) 173. n. 109; et Lib. de Coron. Milit. p. 206. n. 38, et 208. n. 129; et Cyprian. Epist. 59. ad Fidem; Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. iv. cap. 17, et lib. iii. cap. 27; et August. Epist. 119. ad Januar. et Clement. Constitut. Apostol. lib. ii. cap. 63; Basil. de Spir. Sanct. cap. 27; Cyril. in Joan. lib. xii. cap. 58; Ambros. Serm. 62; Hieron. in Vit. Paul; Idem Epist. ad Eustach. Concil. Constantinop. can. 8; Chrysost. Serm. 5. de Resurrect.; August. Epist. 87. ad Basil.

seek after rest with God. I admonish all those that are possessed with the censorious devil, that if they see a poor christian walking privately in the fields on the Lord's day, they would not pharisaically conclude him a sabbath-breaker, till they know more. It may be he takes it as the opportunest place to withdraw himself from the world to God. Thou seest where his body walks, but thou seest not where he is walking in spirit. Hannah was censured for a woman drunk, till Eli heard her speak for herself; and when he knew the truth, he was ashamed of his censure. The silent, spiritual worshipper is most liable to their censure, because he gives not the world an account of his worship.

Thus I have directed thee to the fittest season for the ordinary performance of this heavenly work.

Sect. V. 2. For the extraordinary performance, these following are seasonable times. 1. When God doth extraordinarily revive and enable thy spirit. When God hath enkindled thy spirit with fire from above, it is that it may mount aloft more freely.[d] It is a choice part of a christian's skill, to observe the temper of his own spirit, and to observe the gales of grace, and how the Spirit of Christ doth move upon his. Without Christ we can do nothing, John xv. 5; therefore, let us be doing when he is doing; and be sure not to be out of the way, nor asleep, when he comes. The sails of the windmill stir not without the wind; therefore, they must set them a-going when the wind blows. Be sure that thou watch this wind and tide, if thou wouldst have a speedy voyage to heaven. A little labour will set thy heart a-going at such a time as this, when another time thou mayst study and take pains to little purpose. Most christians do sometimes find a more than ordinary reviving and activeness of spirit: take this as sent from heaven to raise thee thither; and when the Spirit is lifting thy heart from the earth, be sure thou then lift at it thyself. As when the angel came to Peter in his prison and irons, and smote him on the side, and raised him up, saying, "Arise up quickly, gird thyself, bind on thy sandals, and cast thy garments about thee, and follow me," and Peter arose and followed till he was delivered, Acts xii. 7, 8, &c.; so when the Spirit finds thy heart in prison and irons, and smites it, and bids thee "Arise quickly, and follow me," be sure thou then arise and follow, and thou shalt find thy chains fall off, and all doors will open, and thou wilt be at heaven before thou art aware.

Sect. VI. 2. When thou art cast into perplexing troubles of mind, through sufferings, or fear, or care, or temptations, then is it seasonable to address thyself to this duty. When should we take our cordials but in our times of fainting? When is it more seasonable to walk to heaven, than when we know not in what corner on earth to live with comfort; or when should our thoughts converse above, but when they have nothing but grief to converse with below? Where should Noah's dove be, but in the ark, when the waters do cover the earth, and she cannot find rest for the sole of her foot? Gen. viii. 8, 9. What should we think on but our Father's house, when we want even the husks of the world to feed on? Surely, God sends thee thy afflictions to this very purpose. Happy, thou poor man, if thou make this use of thy poverty; and thou that art sick, if thou so improve thy sickness. It is seasonable to go to the promised land, when our burdens and tasks are increased in Egypt, and when we endure the dolours of a grievous wilderness. Believe it, reader, if thou knewest but what a cordial in thy griefs and cares the serious views of glory are, thou wouldst less fear these harmless troubles, and more use that preserving, reviving remedy. I would not have thee, as mountebanks, take poison first, and then their antidote, to show its power; to create thy affliction to try this remedy: but if God reach thee forth the bitterest cup, drop in but a little of the taste of heaven, and I warrant thee it will sufficiently sweeten it to thy spirit. If the case thou art in seem never so dangerous, take but a little of this antidote of rest, and never fear the pain or danger. I will give thee to confirm this, but the example of David and the opinion of Paul, and desire thee thoroughly to consider of both. "In the multitude of my thoughts within me," saith David, "thy comforts delight my soul," Psal. xciv. 19. As if he should say, I have multitudes of sadding thoughts which crowd upon me; thoughts of my sins, and thoughts of my foes; thoughts of my dangers, and thoughts of my pains; yet, in the midst of all this crowd, one serious thought of the comforts of thy love, and especially of the comfortable life in glory, doth so dispel the throng, and scatter my cares, and disperse the clouds which my troubles had raised, that they do even revive and delight my soul. And Paul, when he had cast up his full accounts, gives thee the sum in Rom. viii. 18, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." Study these words well, for every one of them is full of life. If these true sayings of God were truly and deeply fixed in thy heart, and if thou couldst, in thy sober meditation, but draw out the comfort of this one scripture, I dare affirm it would sweeten the bitterest cross, and in a sort make thee forget thy trouble, as Christ saith "a woman forgets her travail, for joy that a man is born into the world," John xvi. 21; yea, and make thee rejoice in thy tribulation. I will add but one text more: "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward is renewed day by day. For our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal," 2 Cor. iv. 16, 17.

Sect. VII. 4. Another fit season for this heavenly duty is, when the messengers of God do summon us to die; when either our gray hairs, or our languishing bodies, or some such-like forerunners of death, do tell us that our change cannot be far off. When should we more frequently sweeten our souls with the believing thoughts of another life, than when we find that this is almost ended, and when flesh is raising fears and terrors? Surely no men have greater need of supporting joys than dying men; and those joys must be fetched from our eternal joy. Men that have earthly pleasures in their hands, may think they are well, though they taste no more; but when a man is dying, and parting with all other pleasures, he must then fetch his pleasure from heaven, or have none; when health is gone, and friends lie weeping by our beds; when houses, and lands, and goods, and wealth cannot afford us the least relief, but we are taking our leave of earth for ever, except a hole for our bodies to rot in; when we are daily expecting our final day, it is now time to look to heaven, and to fetch in comfort and support from thence. And as heavenly delights are sweetest when they are unmixed and pure, and have no earthly delights conjoined with them; so therefore the delights of dying christians are ofttimes the sweetest that ever they had: therefore have the

[d] As Gerson, in the forecited place, saith, This art or way of meditation is not learned chiefly out of books; but the Spirit of God bestoweth it as he pleaseth, on some more plentifully, and on some more sparingly.

saints been generally observed to be then most heavenly when they were nearest dying. What a prophetical blessing hath Jacob for his sons when he lay a dying! and so Isaac. What a heavenly song, what a divine benediction, doth Moses conclude his life withal! Deut. xxxii. xxxiii. Nay, as our Saviour increased in wisdom and knowledge, so did he also in their blessed expressions, and still the last the sweetest. What a heavenly prayer, what a heavenly advice, doth he leave his disciples, when he is about to leave them! When he saw he must leave the world and go to the Father, how doth he wean them from worldly expectations! How doth he mind them of the mansions in his Father's house; and remember them of his coming again to fetch them thither; and open the union they shall have with him, and with each other; and promise them to be with him to behold his glory! There is more worth in those four chapters, John xiv.—xvii. than in all the books in the world beside. When blessed Paul was ready to be offered up, what heavenly exhortation doth he give the Philippians; what advice to Timothy; what counsel to the elders of the Ephesian church! Acts xx. How near was St. John to heaven in his banishment in Patmos, a little before his translation to heaven! What heavenly discourse had Luther in his last sickness! How close was Calvin to his divine studies in his very sickness, that when they would have dissuaded him from it, he answers, *Vultisne me otiosum a Domino apprehendi?* What! would you have God find me idle? I have not lived idly, and shall I die idly? The like may be said of our famous Reignolds. When excellent Bucholcer was near his end, he wrote his book "De Consolatione Decumbentium." Then it was that Tossanus wrote his "Vade mecum." Then Doctor Preston was upon the "Attributes of God." And then Mr. Bolton was on the "Joys of Heaven." It were endless to enumerate the eminent examples of this kind. It is the general temper of the spirits of the saints, to be then most heavenly when they are nearest to heaven. As we used to say of the old and the weak, that they have one foot in the grave already; so we may say of the godly, when they are near their rest, they have one foot, as it were, in heaven already. When should a traveller look homewards with joy, but when he is come within the sight of his home? It is true, the pains of our bodies and the fainting of our spirits, may somewhat abate the liveliness of our joy; but the measure we have will be the more pure and spiritual, by how much the less it is kindled from the flesh. Oh that we, who are daily languishing, could learn this daily heavenly conversing, and could say as the apostle in the forecited place, 2 Cor. iv. 16—18. Oh that every gripe that our bodies feel, might make us more sensible of future ease; and that every weary day and hour might make us long for our eternal rest! that as the pulling down of one end of the balance is the lifting up of the other, so the pulling down of our bodies might be the lifting up of our souls; that as our souls were usually at the worst when our bodies were at the best, so now they might be at the best when our bodies are at the worst. Why should we not think thus with ourselves? Why, every one of these gripes that I feel, are but the cutting of the stiches for the ripping off mine old attire, that God may clothe me with the glory of his saints. Had I rather live in these rotten rags, than be at the trouble and pains to shift me? Should the infant desire to stay in the womb, because of the straitness and pains of the passage; or because he knows not the world that he is to come into; nor is acquainted with the fashions and inhabitants thereof? Am not I nearer to my desired rest than ever I was? If the remembrance of these griefs will increase my joy, when I shall look back upon them from above, why then should not the remembrance of that joy abate my griefs when I look upwards to it from below? And why should the present feeling of these dolours so much diminish the foretastes of glory, when the remembrance of them will then increase it? All these gripes and woes that I feel, are but the farewell of sin and sorrows. As nature useth to struggle hard a little before death, and as the devil cast the man to the ground and tore him, when he was going out of him, Mark ix. 26; so this tearing and troubling which I now feel, is but at the departure of sin and misery: for as the effects of grace are sweetest at last, so the effects of sin are bitterest at the last, and this is the last that ever I shall taste of it; when once the whirlwind and earthquake is past, the still voice will next succeed, and God only will be in the voice, though sin also was in the earthquake and whirlwind.

Thus, christian, as every pang of sickness should mind the wicked of their eternal pangs, and make them look into the bottom of hell, so should all thy woe and weakness mind thee of thy near approaching joy, and make thee look as high as heaven; and, as a ball, the harder thou art smitten down to earth, the higher shouldst thou rebound up to heaven. If this be thy case, who readest these lines, (and if it be not now, it will be shortly,) if thou lie in consuming, painful sickness, if thou perceive the dying time draw on, O where should thy heart be now but with Christ? Methinks thou shouldst even behold him, as it were, standing by thee, and shouldst bespeak him as thy father, thy husband, thy physician, thy friend. Methinks thou shouldst even see, as it were, the angels about thee waiting to perform their last office to thy soul, as thy friends wait to perform theirs to thy body: those angels which disdained not to bring the soul of a scabbed beggar to heaven, will not think much to conduct thee thither. O, look upon thy sickness as Jacob did on Joseph's chariots, and let thy spirit revive within thee, and say, It is enough that Joseph, that Christ is yet alive; for because he lives, I shall live also, John xiv. 19. As thou art sick, and needest the daintiest food and choicest cordials, so here are choicer than the world affords. Here is the food of angels and glorified saints; here are all the joys that heaven doth yield, even the vision of God, the sight of Christ, and whatsoever the blessed there possess: this table is spread for thee to feed on in thy sickness; these dainties are offered thee by the hand of Christ: he hath written thee the receipt in the promises of the gospel; he hath prepared thee all the ingredients in heaven; only put forth the hand of faith, and feed upon them, and rejoice and live. The Lord saith to thee, as he did to Elias, "Arise and eat, because the journey is too great for thee," 1 Kings xix. 7. Though it be not long, yet the way is foul: I counsel thee, therefore, that thou obey his voice, and arise and eat, and in the strength of that meat thou mayst walk till thou come to the mount of God. Die not in the ditch of horror or stupidity; but, as the Lord said to Moses, "Go up into the mount, and see the land that the Lord hath promised, and die in the mount," Deut. xxxii. 49, 50. And as old Simeon, when he saw Christ in his infancy in the temple, so do thou behold him in the temple of the new Jerusalem as in his glory, and take him in the arms of thy faith, and say, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eye (of faith) hath seen thy salvation." As thou wast never so near to heaven as now, so let thy spirit be nearer it now than ever.

So you have seen which is the fittest season for this duty:[e] I should here advise thee also of some times unseasonable, but I shall only add this one caution, The unseasonable urging of the most spiritual duty, is more from the tempter than from the Spirit of God! When Satan sees a christian in a condition wherein he is unable and unfit for a duty, or wherein he may have more advantage against us by our performance of it than by our omitting it, he will then drive on as earnestly to duty, as if it were the very Spirit of holiness; that so upon our omitting, or ill performance, he may have somewhat to cast in our teeth, and to trouble us with. And this is one of his ways of deceiving, when he transforms himself into an angel of light.. It may be, when thou art on thy knees in prayer, thou shalt have many good thoughts will come into thy mind; or when thou art hearing the word, or at such unseasonable times. Resist these good thoughts as coming from the devil, for they are formally evil, though they are materially good; even good thoughts in themselves may be sinful to thee. It may be, when thou shouldst be diligent in thy necessary labours, thou shalt be moved to cast aside all, that thou mayst go to meditation or to prayer; these motions are usually from the spirit of delusion: the Spirit of Christ doth nothing unseasonably; God is not the God of confusion, but of order.

Sect. VIII. Thus much I thought necessary to advise thee concerning the time of this duty. It now follows that I speak a word of the fittest place.[f] Though God is everywhere to be found by a faithful soul; yet some places are more convenient for a duty than others.

1. As this is a private and spiritual duty, so it is most convenient that thou retire to some private place: our spirits had need of every help, and to be freed from every hinderance in the work: and the quality of these circumstances, though to some they may seem small things, doth much conduce to our hinderance or our help. Christ himself thought it not vain to direct in this circumstance of private duty, Matt. vi. 4, 6, 18. If in private prayer we must shut our door upon us, that our Father may hear us in secret, so is it also requisite in this meditation. How oft doth Christ himself depart to some mountain, or wilderness, or other solitary place! For occasional meditation I give thee not this advice, but for this daily set and solemn duty I advise that thou withdraw thyself from all society, yea, though it were the society of godly men, that thou mayst awhile enjoy the society of Christ: if a student cannot study in a crowd, who exercises only his invention and memory, much less when thou must exercise all the powers of thy soul, and that upon an object so far above nature: when thy eyes are filled with the persons and actions of men, and thine ears with their discourse, it is hard then to have thy thoughts and affections free for this duty. Though I would not persuade thee to Pythagoras's cave, nor to the hermit's wilderness, nor to the monk's cell; yet I would advise thee to frequent solitariness, that thou mayst sometimes confer with Christ, and with thyself, as well as with others. We are fled so far from the solitude of superstition, that we have cast off the solitude of contemplative devotion. Friends use to converse most familiarly in private, and to open their secrets and let out their affections most freely. Public converse is but common converse. Use, therefore, as Christ himself did, (Mark i. 35,) to depart sometimes into a solitary place, that thou mayst be wholly vacant for this great employment. See Matt. xiv. 23; Mark vi. 47; Luke ix. 18, 36; John vi. 15, 16. We seldom read of God's appearing, by himself, or his angels, to any of his prophets or saints in a throng, but frequently when they were alone.[g]

And as I advise thee to a place of retiredness, so also that thou observe more particularly, what place and posture best agreeth with thy spirit; whether within doors or without; whether sitting still or walking. I believe Isaac's example in this, also, will direct us to the place and posture which will best suit with most, as it doth with me, viz. his walking forth to meditate in the field at the eventide. And Christ's own example in the places forecited give us the like direction. Christ was so used to a solitary garden, that even Judas, when he came to betray him, knew where to find him, John xviii. 1, 2. And though he took his disciples thither with him, yet did he separate himself from them for more secret devotions, Luke xxii. 41. And though his meditation be not directly named, but only his praying, yet it is very clearly implied, Matt. xxvi. 38, 39. His soul is first made sorrowful with the bitter meditations on his death and sufferings, and then he poureth it out in prayer, Mark xiv. 34. So that Christ had his accustomed place, and consequently accustomed duty, and so must we. Christ hath a place that is solitary, whither he retireth himself even from his own disciples, and so must we: Christ's meditations do go further than his thoughts, they affect and pierce his heart and soul, and so must ours. Only there is a wide difference in the object: Christ meditates on the suffering that our sins had deserved, that the wrath of his Father even passed through his thoughts upon all his soul: but the meditation that we speak of, is on the glory he hath purchased; that the love of the Father, and the joy of the Spirit, might enter at our thoughts, and revive our affections, and overflow our souls. So that, as Christ's meditation was the sluice or floodgate, to let

e Read Master Symonds's Deserted Soul, p. 225—227.

f Every place is truly holy where we receive the knowledge and cogitations of God. Clemen. Alex. Stromat. lib. vii. Vide Gerson, ubi infra, cap. 24. Dominos docet nos, ut opera sua imitemur, et sicut ipse fecit ita et nos faciamus: ecce oraturus erat, et ascendit in montem; oportet etiam nos a negotiis otiosos orare, et non in medio multorum; sed pernoctantes ne statim ut cœperimus cessemus. Theophylact. in Luke, cap. 6. Yet the principal secrecy and silence must be in the soul within, rather than without; that is, that the soul shut out of itself all human, worldly cares, all vain and hurtful thoughts, and whatsoever may hinder it from reaching to the end which it doth intend. For it oft falls out that a man is alone, separated from the company of men, and yet by fantasies, thoughts, and melancholies, doth suffer the most grievous and burdensome company in himself; which fantasies do beget in him various tumults, and conferences, and prattlings; bring before the eyes of his understanding, sometimes one thing, sometimes another: leading him sometimes into the kitchen, sometimes into the market; bringing thence to him the unclean delights of the flesh; showing him dances, and beauties, and songs, and such kind of vanities drawing to sin: as St. Jerome humbly confesseth of himself, that when he was in the wilderness, without any company save wild beasts and scorpions, yet he was oft, in his thoughts, in dances, and in the company of the ladies at Rome. So these fantasies will make the soul, even when it is alone, to be angry, and quarrel with some one that is absent, as if he were present; to be counting money; it will pass over the seas; it will fly abroad the land; sometimes it will be in high dignities: and so of innumerable fancies the like. Such a soul is not secret, nor alone: nor is a devout soul in contemplation alone; for it is never less alone. It is in the best company, even with God and saints by holy desires and cogitations. Gerson, part iii. fol. 382. De Monte Contemplationis, cap. 23.

g Chrysostomus ait: Solitudo est locus idoneus ad philosophiam; referente Jac. Grynæo. Magisterio suo Dominus secreto orare nos præcepit; in abditis et semotis locis, in cubiculis ipsis, quod magis convenit fidei. Ut sciamus, Deum ubique esse præsentem, audire omnes et videre, et majestatis suæ plenitudine in abdita quæque et occulta penetrare. Cyprian. de Oratione Domine, sect. ii. p. (mihi) 309.

in hell to overflow his affeetions, so our meditation should be the sluice to let in heaven into our affections.

Sect. IX. So much concerning the time and place of this duty. I am next to advise thee somewhat concerning the preparations of thy heart. The success of the work doth much depend on the frame of thy heart. When man's heart had nothing in it that might grieve the Spirit, then was it the delightful habitation of his Maker. God did not quit his residence there, till man did repel him by unworthy provocations. There grew no strangeness, till the heart grew sinful, and too loathsome a dungeon for God to delight in. And were this soul reduced to its former innocency, God would quickly return to his former habitation: yea, so far as it is renewed and repaired by the Spirit, and purged of its lusts, and beautified with his image, the Lord will yet acknowledge it his own, and Christ will manifest himself unto it, and the Spirit will take it for his temple and residence. So far as the soul is qualified for conversing with God, so far it doth aetually, for the most part, enjoy him. Therefore, with all diligence keep thy heart, for from thence are the issues of life, Prov. iv. 23.

More particularly, when thou settest on this duty, First, Get thy heart as clear from the world as thou canst; wholly lay by the thoughts of thy business, of thy troubles, of thy enjoyments, and of every thing that may take up any room in thy soul. Get thy soul as empty as possibly thou canst, and so it may be the more capable of being filled with God. It is a work, as I have said, that will require all the powers of thy soul, if they were a thousand times more capacious and active than they are; and therefore you have need to lay by all other thoughts and affections, while you are busied here. If thou eouldst well perform some outward duty with a piece of thy heart, while the other is absent, yet this above all I am sure thou canst not. Surely, if thou once address thyself to the business indeed, thou wilt be as the covetous man at the heap of gold, that when he might take as much as he could carry away, lamented that he was able to bear no more. So when thou shalt get into the mount in contemplation, thou wilt find there as much of God and glory, as thy narrow heart is able to contain; and almost nothing to hinder thy full possession, but only the uncapableness of thy own spirit. Oh then (wilt thou think) that this understanding were larger, that I might conceive more! that these affections were wider, to contain more! it is more my own unfitness than any thing else, which is the eause that even this place is not my heaven! God is in this place, and I know it not. This mount is full of the angels of God, but mine eyes are shut, and eannot see them. Oh the words of love that Christ hath to speak! Oh the wonders of love that he hath to show! But, alas! I cannot bear them yet: heaven is here ready at hand for me, but my uncapable heart is unready for heaven! Thus wouldst thou lament, that the deadness of thy heart doth hinder thy joys; even as a siek man is sorry that he wants a stomaeh when he sees a feast before him.

Therefore, reader, seeing it is much in the eapacity and frame of thy heart, how much thou shalt enjoy of God in this eontemplation, be sure that all the room thou hast be empty; and, if ever, seek him here with all thy soul: thrust not Christ into the stable and the manger, as if thou hadst better guests for the chiefest rooms. Say to all thy worldly business and thoughts, as Christ to his disciples, "Sit you here, while I go and pray yonder," Matt. xxvi. 36. Or, as Abraham, when he went to sacrifice Isaae, left his servant and ass below the mount, saying, "Stay you here, and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and eome again to you;" so say thou to all thy worldly thoughts, "Abide you below, while I go up to Christ, and then I will return to you again." Yea, as God did terrify the people with his threats of death, if any one should dare to come to the mount, when Moses was to receive the law from God; so do thou terrify thy own heart, and use violence against thy intruding thoughts, if they offer to accompany thee to the mount of contemplation. Even as the priests thrust Uzziah the king out of the temple, where he presumed to burn incense, when they saw the leprosy to arise upon him; so do thou thrust these thoughts from the temple of thy heart, which have the badge of God's prohibition upon them. As you will beat back your dogs, yea, and leave your servants behind you, when yourselves are admitted into the prince's presence, so also do by these. Yourselves may be welcome, but such followers may not.

Sect. X. 2. Be sure thou set upon this work with the greatest seriousness that possibly thou canst. Customariness here is a killing sin. There is no trifling in holy things: God will be sanctified of all that draw near him. These spiritual, excellent, soul-raising duties are the most dangerous, if we miscarry in them, of all. The more they advance the soul, being well used, the more they destroy it, being used unfaithfully: as the best meats corrupted, are the worst. To help thee therefore to be serious when thou settest on this work; First, Labour to have the deepest apprehensions of the presence of God, and of the incomprehensible greatness of the Majesty which thou approachest. If Rebecea veil her face at her approach to Isaac; if Esther must not draw near till the king hold forth the sceptre; if dust and worms'-meat must have such respect, think, then, with what reverence thou shouldst approach thy Maker: think thou art addressing thyself to Him that made the worlds with the word of his mouth; that upholds the earth as in the palm of his hand; that keeps the sun, and moon, and heaven, in their courses; that bounds the raging sea with the sands, (Jer. v. 22,) and saith, "Hitherto go, and no further:" thou art going about to converse with Him, before whom the earth will quake, and devils tremble; before whose bar thou must shortly stand, and all the world with thee, to receive their doom. O think, I shall then have lively apprehensions of his majesty; my drowsy spirits will then be awakened, and my stupid irreverence be laid aside: why should I not now be roused with a sense of his greatness, and the dread of his name possess my soul?

Secondly, Labour to apprehend the greatness of the work which thou attemptest, and to be deeply sensible both of its weight and height, of its coneernment and excellency. If thou wert pleading for thy life at the bar of a judge, thou wouldst be serious; and yet that were but a trifle to this: if thou wert engaged in such a work as David was against Goliath, whereon the kingdom's deliverance did depend, in itself considered, it were nothing to this. Suppose thou wert going to such a wrestling as Jaeob's; suppose thou wert going to see the sight which the three disciples saw in the mount; how seriously, how reverently wouldst thou both approach and behold! If the sun do suffer any notable eclipse, how seriously do all run out to see it! If some angel from heaven should but appoint to meet thee, at the same time and place of thy eontemplations, how dreadfully, how apprehensively, wouldst thou go to meet him! Why, consider then with what a spirit thou shouldst meet the Lord, and with what seriousness and dread thou shouldst daily con-

verse with him: when Manoah had seen but an angel, he cries out, "We shall surely die, because we have seen God," Judg. xiii. 22.

Consider also the blessed issue of the work: if it do succeed, it will be an admission of thee into the presence of God; a beginning of thy eternal glory on earth; a means to make thee live above the rate of other men, and admit thee into the next room to the angels themselves; a means to make thee both live and die both joyfully and blessedly: so that the prize being so great, thy preparation should be answerable. There is none on earth that live such a life of joy and blessedness as those that are acquainted with this heavenly conversation. The joys of all other men are but like a child's play, a fool's laughter; as a dream of health to the sick, or as a fresh pasture to a hungry beast. It is he that trades at heaven that is the only gainer, and he that neglecteth it that is the only loser; and, therefore, how seriously should this work be done!

CHAPTER VIII.

OF CONSIDERATION, THE INSTRUMENT OF THIS WORK; AND WHAT FORCE IT HATH TO MOVE THE SOUL.

SECT. I. Having showed thee how thou must set upon this work, I come now to direct thee in the work itself, and to show thee the way which thou must take to perform it. All this has been but to set the instrument (thy heart) in tune, and now we are come to the music itself: all this hath been but to get thee an appetite; it follows now that thou approach unto the feast; that thou sit down and take what is offered, and delight thy soul as with marrow and fatness. Whoever you are that are children of the kingdom, I have this message to you from the Lord; "Behold, the dinner is prepared; the oxen and fatlings are killed: come, for all things are now ready," Matt. xxii. 4; Luke xiv. 17. Heaven is before you; Christ is before you; the exceeding, eternal weight of glory is before you; come, therefore, and feed upon it. Do not make light of this invitation, (Matt. xxii. 5,) nor put off your own mercies with excuses, Luke xiv. 18; whatever thou art, rich or poor, though in alms-houses or hospitals, though in highways or hedges, my commission is, if possible, to compel you to come in: "And blessed is he that eateth bread in the kingdom of God," Luke xiv. 15. The manna lieth about your tents; walk forth into the wilderness, gather it up, take it home, and feed upon it. So that the remaining work is only to direct you how to use your understandings for the warming of your affections, and to fire your hearts by the help of your heads; and herein it will be necessary that I observe this method: First, to show you what instrument it is that you must work by. Secondly, Why and how this way of working is like to succeed, and attain its end. Thirdly, What powers of the soul should here be acted, and what are the particular affections to be excited, and what objective considerations are necessary thereto, and in what order you should proceed. Fourthly, By what acts you must advance to the height of the work. Fifthly, What advantages you must take, and what helps you must use, for the facilitating your success. Sixthly, In what particulars you must look narrowly to your hearts through the whole. And I will be the briefer in all, lest you should lose my meaning in a crowd of words, or your thoughts be carried from the work itself, by an over-long and tedious explication of it.

Sect. II. 1. The great instrument that this work is done by, is ratiocination, reasoning the case with yourselves, discourse of mind, cogitation, or thinking; or, if you will, call it consideration. I here suppose you to know the things to be considered, and therefore shall wholly pass over that meditation of students which tends only to speculation, or knowing. They are known truths that I persuade you to consider, for the grossly ignorant that know not the doctrine of everlasting life, are for the present uncapable of this duty.

Man's soul, as it receives and retains the ideas or shapes of things, so hath it a power to choose out any of these deposited ideas, and draw them forth, and act upon them again and again; even as a sheep can fetch up his meat for rumination: or otherwise nothing would affect us but while the sense is receiving it, and so we should be somewhat below the brutes. This is the power that here you must use. To this choice of ideas or subjects for your cogitations, there must necessarily concur the act of the will,[a] which indeed must go along in the whole work; for this must be a voluntary, not a forced cogitation. Some men do consider whether they will or no, and are not able to turn away their own thoughts: so will God make the wicked consider of their sins, when he shall set them all in order before them, Psal. l. 21, 22; and so shall the damned consider of heaven, and of the excellency of Christ whom they once despised, and of the eternal joys which they have foolishly lost. But this forced consideration is not that I mean, but that which thou dost willingly and purposely choose: but though the will be here requisite, yet still consideration is the instrument of the work.

Sect. III. 2. Next, let us see what force consideration hath for the moving the affections, and for the powerful imprinting of things in the heart.

Why, First, Consideration doth, as it were, open the door between the head and the heart; the understanding having received truths, lays them up in the memory; now, consideration is the conveyer of them from thence to the affections. There are few men of so weak understanding or memory, but they know and can remember that which would strangely work upon them, and make great alterations in their spirits, if they were not locked up in their brain, and if they could but convey them down to their heart: now, this is the great work of consideration. Oh what rare men would they be, who have strong heads, and much learning and knowledge, if the obstructions between the head and the heart were but opened, and their affections did but correspond to their understanding! Why, if they would but bestow as much time and pains in studying the goodness and the evil of things, as they bestow in studying the truth and falsehood of enunciations, it were the readiest way to obtain this. He is usually the best scholar, who hath the most quick, clear, and tenacious apprehension; but he is usually the best christian, who hath the deepest, piercing, and affecting apprehension. He is the best scholar who hath the readiest passage from the ear to the brain;[b] but he is the best christian who hath the readiest passage from the brain to the heart; now, consideration is that on our parts that must open the passage,

[a] For (as Aquinas and others) the will is the beginner of our actions, *quoad exercitium actus*, though the understanding be the beginner, *quoad actus specificationem*. However that stand, yet they must concur here.

[b] Paucis opus est ad bonam mentem literis, sed nos ut cætera in supervacuum diffundimus, ita philosophiam ipsam; quem admodum omnium, sic literarum quoque intemperantia laboramus. Non vitæ sed scholæ discimus, inquit Seneca.

though the Spirit open as the principal cause: inconsiderate men are stupid and senseless.

Sect. IV. Secondly, Matters of great weight, which do nearly concern us, are aptest to work most effectually upon the heart; now, meditation draweth forth these working objects, and presents them to the affections in their worth and weight: the most delectable object doth not please him that sees it not; nor doth the joyfullest news affect him that never hears it; now, consideration presents before us those objects that were as absent, and brings them to the eye and the ear of the soul. Are not Christ, and glory, think you, affecting objects? Would not they work wonders upon the soul, if they were but clearly discovered; and strangely transport us, if our apprehensions were any whit answerable to their worth? Why, by consideration it is that they are presented to us: this is the prospective glass of the christian, by which he can see from earth to heaven.

Sect. V. 3. As consideration draweth forth the weightiest objects, so it presenteth them in the most affecting way, and presseth them home with enforcing arguments. Man is a rational creature, and apt to be moved in a reasoning way, especially when reasons are evident and strong: now, consideration is a reasoning the case with a man's own heart; and what a multitude of reasons, both clear and weighty, are always at hand for to work upon the heart! When a believer would reason his heart to this heavenly work, how many arguments do offer themselves! From God, from the Redeemer, from every one of the divine attributes, from our former estate, from our present estate, from promises, from seals, from earnest, from the evil we now suffer, from the good we partake of, from hell, from heaven; every thing doth offer itself to promote our joy. Now, meditation is the hand to draw forth all these: as when you are weighing a thing in the balance, you lay on a little more, and a little more, till it weigh down; so if your affections do hang in a dull indifferency, why, due meditation will add reason after reason, till the scales do turn: or, as when you are buying any thing of necessity for your use, you bid a little more, and a little more, till at last you come to the seller's price; so when meditation is persuading you to joy, it will first bring one reason, and then another, till it have silenced all your distrust and sorrows, and your cause to rejoice lies plain before you. If another man's reasons will work so powerfully with us, though we are uncertain whether his heart do concur with his speeches, and whether his intention be to inform us or deceive us; how much more should our own reasons work with us, when we are acquainted with the right intentions of our own hearts! Nay, how much more rather should God's reasons work with us, which we are sure are neither fallacious in his intent, nor in themselves, seeing he did never yet deceive, nor was ever deceived! Why, now, meditation is but the reading over and repeating God's reasons to our hearts, and so disputing with ourselves in his arguments and terms. And is not this then likely to be a prevailing way? What reasons doth the prodigal plead with himself, why he should return to his father's house! And as many and strong have we to plead with our affections, to persuade them to our Father's everlasting habitations; and by consideration it is that they must all be set a-work.

Sect. VI. 4. Meditation puts reason in its authority and pre-eminence. It helpeth to deliver it from its captivity to the senses, and setteth it again upon the throne of the soul. When reason is silent, it is usually subject; for when it is asleep the senses domineer. Now, consideration awakeneth our reason from its sleep, till it rouse up itself, as Samson, and break the bonds of sensuality wherewith it is fettered; and then, as a giant refreshed with wine, it bears down the delusions of the flesh before it. What strength can the lion put forth when he is asleep? What is the king more than another man, when he is once deposed from his throne and authority? When men have no better judge than the flesh, or when the joys of heaven go no further than their fantasies, no wonder if they work but as common things. Sweet things to the eye, and beautiful things to the ear, will work no more than bitter and deformed; every thing worketh in its own place, and every sense hath its proper object. Now, it is spiritual reason, excited by meditation, and not the fantasy or fleshly sense, which must savour and judge of these superior joys. Consideration exalteth the objects of faith, and disgraceth comparatively the objects of sense. The most inconsiderate men are the most sensual men. It is too easy and ordinary to sin against knowledge; but against sober, strong, continued consideration, men do more seldom offend.[c]

Sect. VII. 5. Meditation also putteth reason into his strength. Reason is at the strongest, when it is most in action. Now, meditation produceth reason into act. Before, it was a standing water, which can move nothing else when itself moveth not; but now it is as the speedy stream which violently bears down all before it. Before, it was as the still and silent air, but now it is as the powerful motion of the wind, and overthrows the opposition of the flesh and the devil. Before, it was as the stones which lay still in the brook; but now, when meditation doth set it to work, it is as the stone out of David's sling, which smites the Goliath of our unbelief in the forehead. As wicked men continue wicked, not because they have not reason in the principle, but because they bring it not into act and use; so godly men are uncomfortable and sad, not because they have no causes to rejoice, nor because they have not reason to discern those causes, but because they let their reason and faith lie asleep, and do not labour to set them a-going, nor stir them up to action by this work of meditation. You know that our very dreams will deeply affect. What fears, what sorrows, what joy, will they stir up! How much more, then, would serious meditation affect us!

Sect. VIII. 6. Meditation can continue this dis-

[c] Voluntas bifariam moveri et flecti potest: aut ab interno principio et agente, vel ab externo. Interius principium est tum naturalis inclinatio in suum objectum, tum Deus ipse talis naturalis inclinationis author. Ideireo nemo potest voluntatem ut interius agens movere nisi Deus, et ipse cujus est voluntas. Externum movens duplex, unum ipsum voluntatis objectum, bonum; viz. ab intellectu apprehensum, et voluntati efficaciter oblatum. Alterum sunt ipsæ passiones, concupiscentia, aliique affectus, qui in appetitu degunt sensitivo. Ab iis enim sæpe voluntas ad aliquid volendum seducitur atque efficitur. Nam efficiunt hæ passiones ut multa quæ mala sunt, videantur voluntati bona; ita ut ea in hæc inclinet. Ita dæmones possunt affectus turbare, commovere, afficere: et per hos voluntatem. Zanchius de Pot. Dæm. cap. 11. p. 169. Nothing more common than for a drunkard to take a forbidden cup, or a fornicator his whore, while his conscience tells him that it is a sin, and that, *hic et nunc*, it is better to forbear; the good of honesty being to be preferred before the pleasure. For when sense is violent, it is not a bare knowing, or concluding against sin, that will restrain, except it be also strong, and serious, and constant, in acting of our judgment, as is sufficient to bear down the violence of passion. And this is the work of deep consideration. I conclude, therefore, that the saving or losing of men's souls lies most in the well or ill-managing of this work of consideration. This is the great business that God calls men to for their salvation, and which he so blesseth, that I think we may say, that every well-considering man is a godly man, that useth it on true grounds, seriously and constantly; and every wicked man is an inconsiderate man.

cursive employment. That may be accomplished by a weaker motion continued, which will not by a stronger at the first attempt. A plaster that is never so effectual to cure, must yet have time to do its work, and not be taken off as soon as it is on. Now, meditation doth hold the plaster to the sore; it holdeth reason and faith to their works, and bloweth the fire till it thoroughly burn. To run a few steps will not get a man heat, but walking an hour together may. So, though a sudden occasional thought of heaven will not raise our affections to any spiritual heat, yet meditation can continue our thoughts, and lengthen our walk till our hearts grow warm.

And thus you see what force meditation or consideration hath for the effecting of this great elevation of the soul, whereto I have told you it must be the instrument.

CHAPTER IX.

WHAT AFFECTIONS MUST BE ACTED, AND BY WHAT CONSIDERATIONS AND OBJECTS, AND IN WHAT ORDER.

Sect. I. Thirdly, To draw the heart yet nearer to the work. The third thing to be discovered to you is, what powers of the soul must here be acted; what affections excited; what considerations of their objects are necessary thereto, and in what order we must proceed. I join all these together, because, though in themselves they are distinct things, yet, in the practice, they all concur to the same action.

The matters of God which we have to think on, have their various qualifications, and are presented to the soul of man in divers relative and modal considerations. According to the several considerations of the objects, the soul itself is distinguished into its several faculties, powers, and capacities; that as God hath given man five senses to partake of the five distinct excellences of the objects of sense, so he hath diversified the soul of man, either into faculties, powers, or ways of acting, answerable to the various qualifications and considerations of himself and the inferior objects of this soul. And as, if there be more sensible excellences in the creatures, yet they are unknown to us who have but these five senses to discern them by; so whatever other excellences are in God and our happiness, more than these faculties or powers of the soul can apprehend, must needs remain wholly unknown to us, till our souls have senses, as it were, suitable to those objects, even as it is known to a tree or a stone, what sound, and light, and sweetness are, or that there are any such things in the world at all.

Now, these matters of God are primarily diversified to our consideration, under the distinction of true and good: accordingly, the primary distinction concerning the soul, is into the faculties of understanding and will; the former having truth for its object, and the latter goodness. This truth is sometimes known by evident demonstration, and so it is the object of that we call knowledge, which also admits of divers distinctions, according to several ways of demonstration, which I am loth here to puzzle you with. Sometimes it is received from the testimony of others, which receiving we call belief. When any thing else would obscure it, or stands up in competition with it, then we weigh their several evidences, and accordingly discover and vindicate the truth; and this we call judgment. Sometimes by the strength, the clearness, or the frequency of the understanding's apprehensions, this truth doth make a deeper impression, and so is longer retained; which impression and retention we call memory. And as truth is thus variously presented to the understanding, and received by it; so also is the goodness of the object variously represented to the will, which doth accordingly put forth its various acts. When it appeareth only as good in itself, and not good for us, or suitable, it is not the object of the will at all; but only this enunciation, "It is good," is passed upon it by the judgment, and withal it raiseth an admiration at its excellency. If it appear evil to us, then we nill it: but if it appear both good in itself, and to us, or suitable, then it provoketh the affection of love. If the good thus loved do appear as absent from us, then it exciteth the passion of desire. If the good so loved and desired do appear possible and feasible in the attaining, then it exciteth the passion of hope, which is a compound of desire and expectation: when we look upon it as requiring our endeavour to attain it, and as it is to be had in a prescribed way, then it provokes the passion of courage or boldness, and concludes in resolution. Lastly, If this good be apprehended as present, then it provoketh to delight or joy. If the thing itself be present, the joy is greatest. If but the idea of it, either through the remainder or memory of the good that is past, or through the fore-apprehension of that which we expect, yet even this also exciteth our joy. And this joy is the perfection of all the rest of the affections, when it is raised on the full fruition of the good itself.[a]

Sect. II. So that by this time I suppose you see, both what are the objects that must move our affections, and what powers of the soul apprehend these objects. You see also, I doubt not, what affections you must excite, and in what order it is to be done: yet, for your better assistance, I will more fully direct you in the several particulars.

1. Then you must, by cogitation, go to the memory, which is the magazine or treasure of the understanding; thence you must take forth those heavenly doctrines which you intend to make the subject of your meditation: for the present purpose, you may look over any promise of eternal life in the gospel, any description of the glory of the saints, or the very articles of the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. Some one sentence concerning those eternal joys, may afford you matter for many years' meditation; yet it will be a point of wisdom here, to have always a stock of matter in our memory, that so, when we should use it, we may bring forth out of our treasury things new and old. For a good man hath a good treasury in his heart, from whence he bringeth forth good things, Luke vi. 45; and out of this abundance of his heart he should speak to himself as well as to others. Yea, if we took things in order, and observed some

[a] Lege Gibieuf de Libertat. lib. ii. cap. 20. s. 7. p. 427. Ut perspicue solideque expediatur hæc quæstio, perinde nos philosophari debemus ac si intellectus et voluntas una eademque essent, aut etiam ab essentia minime distinguerentur, &c. Bonum et malum sive coram, arripit nos, sive absens, provocat aut revocat, aut vocat; sc. aut præsens, aut futurum, aut præteritum, aut possibile est. Ubique voluntas quietem quærens inquietat bonum. Undique illam malum inquietat. Isthinc distribuuntur affectus pro boni obtentione aut cautione. Amor recto et simplici obtutu in bonum ruit. Cum istud præsens videt, transformatur in lætitium: cum futurum putat, facessit in spem; cum præteritum, aut possibile est in desiderium distenditur. Eus. Noremburg. de Arte Voluntatis, lib. iv. p. 265. Vide ultra.

method in respect of the matter, and did meditate, first on one truth concerning eternity, and then another, it would not be amiss. And if any should be barren of matter through weakness of memory, they may have notes or books of this subject for their furtherance.

Sect. III. 2. When you have fetched from your memory the matter of your meditation, your next work is to present it to your judgment. Open there the case as fully as thou canst, set forth the several ornaments of the crown, the several dignities belonging to the kingdom, as they are partly laid open in the beginning of this book. Let judgment deliberately view them over, and take as exact a survey as it can. Then put the question, and require a determination: Is there happiness in all this, or not? Is not here enough to make me blessed? Can he want any thing who fully possesseth God? Is there any thing higher for a creature to attain? Thus urge thy judgment to pass an upright sentence, and compel it to subscribe to the perfection of thy celestial happiness, and to leave this sentence as under its hand upon record. If thy senses should here begin to mutter, and to put in a word for fleshly pleasure or profits, let judgment hear what each can say. Weigh the arguments of the world and flesh in one end, and the arguments for the pre-eminence of glory in the other end, and judge impartially which should be preferred. Try whether there be any comparison to be made; which is more excellent, which is more manly, which is more satisfactory, and which more pure, which freeth most from misery, and advanceth us highest. And which dost thou think is of longer continuance? Thus let deliberate judgment decide it, and let not flesh carry it by noise and by violence: and when the sentence is passed and recorded in thy heart, it will be ready at hand to be produced upon any occasion, and to silence the flesh in its next attempt, and to disgrace the world in its next competition.

Thus exercise thy judgment in the contemplation of thy rest; thus magnify and advance the Lord in thy heart, till a holy admiration hath possessed thy soul.

Sect. IV. 3. But the great work, which you may either premise, or subjoin to this, as you please, is, to exercise thy belief of the truth of thy rest; and that, both in respect of the truth of the promise, and also the truth of thy own interest and title. As unbelief doth cause the languishing of all our graces, so faith would do much to revive and actuate them, if it were but revived and actuated itself; especially our belief of the verity of the Scripture, I conceive as needful to be exercised and confirmed, as almost any point of faith. But of this I have spoken in the second part of this book, whither I refer thee for some confirming arguments. Though few complain of their not believing Scripture, yet I conceive it to be the commonest part of unbelief, and the very root of bitterness, which spoileth our graces. Perhaps thou hast not a positive belief of the contrary, nor dost not flatly think that the Scripture is not the word of God: that were to be a downright infidel indeed. And yet thou mayst have but little belief that Scripture is God's word; and that both in regard of the habit and the act. It is one thing not to believe Scripture to be true, and another thing positively to believe it to be false. Faith may be idle, and suspend its exercise towards the truth, though it do not yet act against the truth. It may stand still, when it goes not out of the way. It may be asleep, and do you little service, though it do not directly fight against you. Besides, a great deal of unbelief may consist with a small degree of faith. If we did soundly believe that there is such a glory, that within a few days our eyes shall behold it;[b] oh, what passions would it raise within us, were we thoroughly persuaded that every word in the Scripture concerning the unconceivable joys of the kingdom, and the unexpressible blessedness of the life to come, were the very word of the living God, and should certainly be performed to the smallest tittle! Oh, what astonishing apprehensions of that life would it breed! What amazing horror would seize upon our hearts, when we found ourselves strangers to the conditions of that life, and utterly ignorant of our portion therein! What love, what longings, would it raise within us! Oh, how it would actuate every affection! How would it transport us with joy upon the least assurance of our title! If I were as verily persuaded that I shall shortly see those great things of eternity promised in the word, as I am that this is a chair that I sit in, or that this is paper that I write on, would it not put another spirit within me? Would it not make me forget and despise the world, and even forget to sleep, or to eat, and say, as Christ, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of," John iv. 32. O sirs! you little know what a thorough belief would work. Not that every one hath such affections who hath a true faith; but thus would the acting and improvement of our faith advance us.

Therefore let this be a chief part of thy business in meditation. Produce the strong arguments for the truth of Scripture; plead them against thy unbelieving nature; answer and silence all the cavils of infidelity; read over the promises; study all confirming providences; call forth thine own recorded experiences; remember the Scriptures already fulfilled both to the church and saints in the former ages, and eminently to both in this present age, and those that have been fulfilled particularly to thee; get ready the clearest and most convincing arguments, and keep them by thee, and frequently thus use them. Think it not enough that thou wast once convinced, though thou hast now forgot the arguments that did it. No; nor that thou hast the arguments still in thy book, or in thy brain. This is not the acting of thy faith; but present them to thy understanding in thy frequent meditations, and urge them home till they force belief. Actual convincing, when it is clear and frequent, will work those deep impressions on the heart, which an old, neglected, forgotten conviction will not. Oh, if you would not think it enough that you have faith in the habit, and that you did once believe, but would be daily setting this first wheel a-going; surely all the inferior wheels of the affections would more easily move. Never expect to have love and joy move when the foregoing grace of faith stands still.

And as you should thus act your assent to the promise, so also your acceptation, your adherence, your affiance, and your assurance. These are the four steps of application of the promise to ourselves. I

[b] Tu perire Deo credis, si quid oculis nostris hebetibus substrahitur? Corpus omne sive arescit in pulverem, sive in humorem solvitur, vel in cinerem comprimitur, vel in nidorem, tenuatur, subducitur nobis. Sed Deo elementorum custodis reservatur. Nec ullum damnum sepulturæ timeas, &c. Vide quam in solatium nostri resurrectionem futuram omnis natura meditetur. Sol demergit et nascitur, astra labuntur et redeunt; flores occidunt et reviviscunt; post senium arbusta frondescunt; semina non nisi corrupta revirescunt. Ita corpus in seculo ut arbores in hyberno occultant virorem aridi-tate mentita. Quid festinas ut cruda adhuc hyeme reviviscat et redeat? Expectandum nobis etiam corporis ver est. Minut. Fælix, Octav. p. 396.

have said somewhat among the helps to move you to get assurance, but that which I here aim at is, that you would daily exercise it. Set before your faith the freeness and the universality of the promise. Consider of God's offer, and urging it upon all; and that he hath excepted from the conditional covenant no man in the world; nor will exclude any from heaven who will accept of his offer. Study also the gracious disposition of Christ, and his readiness to entertain and welcome all that will come. Study all the evidences of his love, which appeared in his sufferings, in his preaching the gospel, in his condescension to sinners, in his easy conditions, in his exceeding patience, and in his urgent invitations. Do not all these discover his readiness to save? Did he ever yet manifest himself unwilling? Remember also his faithfulness to perform his engagements. Study also the evidences of his love in thyself; look over the works of his grace in thy soul: if thou do not find the degree which thou desirest, yet deny not that degree which thou findest; look after the sincerity more than the quantity. Remember what discoveries of thy state thou hast made formerly in the work of self-examination; how oft God hath convinced thee of the sincerity of thy heart. Remember all the former testimonies of the Spirit, and all the sweet feelings of the favour of God, and all the prayers that he hath heard and granted, and all the rare preservations and deliverances, and all the progress of his Spirit in his workings on thy soul, and the disposals of providence, conducing to thy good; the vouchsafing of means, the directing thee to them; the directing of ministers to meet with thy state; the restraint of those sins that thy nature was most prone to. And though one of these considered alone, may be no sure evidence of his special love, which I expect thou shouldst try by more infallible signs, yet lay them all together, and then think with thyself whether all these do not testify the good-will of the Lord concerning thy salvation, and may not well be pleaded against thine unbelief. And whether thou mayst not conclude with Samson's mother, when her husband thought they should surely die, "If the Lord were pleased to kill us, he would not have received an offering at our hands; neither would he have showed us all these things, nor would, as at this time, have told us such things as these," Judges xiii. 22, 23.

Sect. V. 2. When thy meditation has thus proceeded about the truth of thy happiness, the next part of the work is to meditate of its goodness; that when the judgment hath determined, and faith hath apprehended, it may then pass on to raise the affections.

1. The first affection to be acted is love; the object of it, as I have told you, is goodness. Here, then, here, christian, is the soul-reviving part of thy work: go to thy memory, thy judgment, and thy faith, and from them produce the excellences of thy rest; take out a copy of the record of the Spirit in Scripture, and another of the sentence registered in thy spirit, whereby the transcendent glory of the saints is declared; present these to thy affection of love; open to it the cabinet that contains the pearl; show it the promise, and that which it assureth. Thou needest not look on heaven through a multiplying glass; open but one casement, that love may look in; give it but a glimpse of the back parts of God, and thou wilt find thyself presently in another world; do but speak out, and love can hear; do but reveal these things, and love can see. It is the brutish love of the world that is blind; divine love is exceeding quicksighted. Let thy faith, as it were, take thy heart by the hand, and show it the sumptuous buildings of thy eternal habitation, and the glorious ornaments of thy Father's house; show it those mansions which Christ is preparing, and display before it the honours of the kingdom. Let faith lead thy heart into the presence of God, and draw as near as possibly thou canst, and say to it,[c] Behold the Ancient of days; the Lord Jehovah, whose name is, I AM. This is he who made the worlds with his word; this is the Cause of all causes, the Spring of action, the Fountain of life, the First Principle of the creature's motions, who upholds the earth, who ruleth the nations, who disposeth of events, and subdueth his foes; who governeth the depths of the great waters, and boundeth the rage of her swelling waves; who ruleth the winds, and moveth the orbs, and causeth the sun to run its race, and the several planets to know their courses. This is he that loved thee from everlasting, that formed thee in the womb, and gave thee this soul; who brought thee forth, and showed thee the light, and ranked thee with the chiefest of his earthly creatures; who endued thee with thy understanding, and beautified thee with his gifts; who maintaineth thee with life, and health, and comforts; who gave thee thy preferments, and dignified thee with thy honours, and differenced thee from the most miserable and vilest of men. Here, O here, is an object, now, worthy thy love; here shouldst thou even put out thy soul in love; here thou mayst be sure thou canst not love too much. This is the Lord that hath blessed thee with his benefits; that hath spread thy table in the sight of thine enemies, and caused thy cup to overflow, Psal. xxiii. 4, 5. This is he that angels and saints do praise, and the host of heaven must magnify for ever.

Thus do thou expatiate in the praises of God, and open his excellences to thine own heart, till thou feel the life begin to stir, and the fire in thy breast begin to kindle: as gazing upon the dusty beauty of flesh doth kindle the fire of carnal love; so this gazing on the glory and goodness of the Lord will kindle this spiritual love in thy soul. Bruising will make the spices odoriferous, and rubbing the pomander will bring forth the sweetness. Act therefore thy soul upon this delightful object; toss these cogitations frequently in thy heart, rub over all thy affections with them, as you will do your cold hands till they begin to warm: what though thy heart be rock and flint, this often striking may bring forth the fire. But if yet thou feelest not thy love to work, lead thy heart further, and show it yet more: show it the Son of the living God, whose name is Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The prince of peace, Isa. ix. 6: show it the King of saints on the throne of his glory, who is the First and the Last, who is, and was, and is to come; who liveth and was dead, and behold, he lives for evermore; who hath made thy peace by the blood of his cross, and hath prepared thee, with himself, a habitation of peace: his office is to be

[c] He that doubteth whether the philosophers themselves did acknowledge these divine excellences, let him read Fernel. de Abditis Rerum Causis, c. 9. Plato in Epinom.: Deos asserit scire, videre, audireque omnia; nihil ipsos fugere, quod aut sensu aut mente percipi posset. Eos omnia posse quæcunque mortales immortalesve possunt. Bonos illos, immo optimos esse. Quicquid mortale est, quicquid vivit et spirat, quicquid usquam est, cœlum, terram, maria, ab iis omnia et facta esse et possideri. Et in Parmenide: Nullum nisi Deum supremam habere rerum scientiam, neque illarum cognitione privandum. Et in Epinomide: Ego assero, Deum causam omnium esse, nec aliter fieri posse. Lege etiam Aristotel. de Cœlo, lib. i. sum. nona.

the great peace-maker; his kingdom is a kingdom of peace; his gospel is the tidings of peace; his voice to thee now is the voice of peace. Draw near and behold him: dost thou not hear his voice? Luke xxiv. 36—39. He that called Thomas to come near, and to see the print of the nails, and to put his finger into his wounds, He it is that calls to thee, Come near and view the Lord thy Saviour, and be not faithless, but believing, John xx. 27. Peace be unto thee, fear not, it is I, John xx. 19—21. He that calleth, Behold me, behold me, to a rebellious people that calleth not on his name, (Isa. lix. 1,) doth call out to thee a believer to behold him: he that calls to them who pass by, to behold his sorrow in the day of his humiliation, (Lam. i. 12,) doth call now to thee to behold his glory in the day of his exaltation: look well upon him; dost thou not know him? Why, it is He that brought thee up from the pit of hell: it is He that reserved the sentence of thy damnation; that bore the curse which thou shouldst have borne, and restored thee to the blessing that thou hast forfeited and lost, and purchased the advancement which thou must inherit for ever: and yet dost thou not know him? Why, his hands were pierced, his head was pierced, his sides were pierced, his heart was pierced, with the sting of thy sins, that by these marks thou mightest always know him. Dost thou not remember when he found thee lying in thy blood, and took pity on thee, and dressed thy wounds, and brought thee home, and said unto thee, "Live?" Ezek. xvi. 6—9; Luke x. 30, &c. Hast thou forgotten since he wounded himself to cure thy wounds, and let out his own blood to stop thy bleeding? Is not the passage to his heart yet standing open? If thou know him not by the face, the voice, the hands, if thou know him not by the tears and bloody sweat, yet look nearer, thou mayst know him by the heart; that broken-healed heart is his; that dead-revived heart is his; that soul-pitying, melting heart is his; doubtless, it can be none's but his. Love and compassion are its certain signatures; this is He, even this is He, who would rather die than thou shouldst die, who chose thy life before his own, who pleads his blood before his Father, and makes continual intercession for thee. If he had not suffered, oh what hadst thou suffered! What hadst thou been, if he had not redeemed thee! Whither hadst thou gone, if he had not recalled thee! There was but a step between thee and hell, when he stepped in, and bore the stroke; he slew the bear, and rescued the prey, he delivered thy soul from the roaring lion. And is not here yet fuel enough for love to feed on? Doth not this loadstone snatch thy heart unto it, and almost draw it forth of thy breast? Canst thou read the history of love any further at once? Doth not thy throbbing heart here stop to ease itself? And dost thou not, as Joseph, seek for a place to weep in? Or do not the tears of thy love bedew these lines? Go on then, for the field of love is large, it will yield thee fresh contents for ever, and be thine eternal work to behold and love: thou needest not then want work for thy present meditation. Hast thou forgotten the time when thou wast weeping, and he wiped the tears from thine eyes? when thou wast bleeding, and he wiped the blood from thy soul? when pricking cares and fears did grieve thee, and he did refresh thee, and draw out the thorns? Hast thou forgotten when thy folly did wound thy soul, and the venomous guilt did seize upon thy heart, when he sucked forth the mortal poison from thy soul, though therewith he drew it into his own?[d] I remember it is written of good Melancthon, that, when his child was removed from him, it pierced his heart to remember, how he once sat weeping with the infant on his knee, and how lovingly it wiped away the tears from his father's eyes; how then should it pierce thy heart to think how lovingly Christ hath wiped away thine! Oh how oft hath he found thee sitting weeping, like Hagar, while thou gavest up thy state, thy friends, thy life, yea, thy soul for lost; and he opened to thee a well of consolation, and opened thine eyes also that thou mightest see it! Gen. xxi. 15—19. How oft hath he found thee in the posture of Elias, sitting down under the tree forlorn and solitary, and desiring rather to die than to live; and he hath spread thee a table of relief from heaven, and sent thee away refreshed, and encouraged to his work! 1 Kings xix. 9. How oft hath he found thee in the trouble of the servant of Elisha, crying out, "Alas! what shall we do, for an host doth compass the city?" 2 Kings vi. 15—17; and he hath opened thine eyes to see more for thee than against thee, both in regard of the enemies of thy soul and thy body. How oft hath he found thee in such a passion as Jonas, in thy peevish frenzy, weary of thy life! and he hath not answered passion with passion, though he might, indeed, have done well to be angry, but hath mildly reasoned thee out of thy madness, and said, "Dost thou well to be angry, or to repine against me?" How oft hath he set thee on watching and praying, on repenting and believing, and when he hath returned, hath found thee fast asleep, Matt. xiv. 37; Luke xxii. 45, 46; and yet he hath not taken thee at the worst, but instead of an angry aggravation of thy fault, he hath covered it over with the mantle of love, and prevented thy over-much sorrow with a gentle excuse, "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak!" Matt. xxvi. 41. He might have done by thee as Epaminondas by his soldier, who, finding him asleep upon the watch, ran him through with his sword, and said, "Dead I found thee, and dead I leave thee:" but he rather chose to awake thee more gently, that his tenderness might admonish thee, and keep thee watching. How oft hath he been traduced in his cause, or name, and thou hast like Peter denied him, (at least by thy silence,) whilst he hath stood in sight! yet all the revenge he hath taken, hath been a heart-melting look, and a silent remembering thee of thy fault by his countenance, Luke xxii. 61. How oft hath law and conscience haled thee before him, as the Pharisees did the adulterous woman, and laid thy most heinous crimes to thy charge! and when thou hast expected to hear the sentence of death, he hath shamed away thy accusers, and put them to silence, and taken on him he did not hear thy indictment, and said to thee, "Neither do I accuse thee; go thy way, and sin no more."

And art thou not yet transported and ravished with love? Can thy heart be cool when thou thinkest of

[d] If the love of God in us were but as the love of the world in others, it would make us wholly despise this world, and forget it, as worldly love maketh men forget God; and it would be so strong, and ardent, and rooted in a man's heart, that he would not be able voluntarily and freely to think of any thing else. He would not fear contempt, nor care for disgrace, or reproaches, or persecutions; nor would he be afraid of death itself, because of this love of God. And all the things of the world, which he seeth and heareth, would bring God to his memory, and themselves would seem to him but as a dream, or a fable, and he would esteem them as nothing in respect of God and his glory. And (to be short) in the judgment of the world he would be taken for a fool or a drunken man, because he so little careth for the things of the world. This is that love of God to which we should aim to attain by this contemplative life. Gerson de Monte Contemplationis, in parte operum tertia, p. 382. Memini cum infantula mihi lachrymas a genis detergeret suo indusiolo, quo uno erat induta mane: hic gestus penetravit in animum meum, &c. Melancthon, epist. 457.

this? or can it hold when thou rememberest those boundless compassions? Remembrest thou not the time when he met thee in thy duties; when he smiled upon thee, and spake comfortably to thee? when thou didst sit down under his shadow with great delight, and when his fruit was sweet to thy taste? when he brought thee to his banqueting-house, and his banner over thee was love? when his left hand was under thy head, and with his right hand he did embrace thee? And dost thou not yet cry out, "Stay me, comfort me, for I am sick of love?" Cant. ii. 3—5. Thus, reader, I would have thee deal with thy heart; thus hold forth the goodness of Christ to thy affections. Plead thus the case with thy frozen soul, till thou say as David in another case, "My heart was hot within me; while I was musing the fire burned," Psal. xxxix. 3. If these forementioned arguments will not rouse up thy love, thou hast more, enough of this nature at hand. Thou hast all Christ's personal excellences to study; thou hast all his particular mercies to thyself, both special and common; thou hast all his sweet and near relations to thee, and thou hast the happiness of thy perpetual abode with him hereafter: all these do offer themselves to thy meditation, with all their several branches and adjuncts. Only follow them close to thy heart, ply the work, and let it not cool. Deal with thy heart, as Christ did with Peter when he asked thrice over, "Lovest thou me?" till he was grieved, and answers, "Lord, thou knowest that I love thee," John xxi. 15—17. So say to thy heart, Lovest thou thy Lord? and ask it the second time, and urge it the third time, Lovest thou thy Lord? till thou grieve it, and shame it out of its stupidity, and it can truly say, Thou knowest that I love him.

And thus I have showed you how to excite the affection of love.

Sect. VI. 2. The next grace or affection to be excited, is desire. The object of it is goodness, considered as absent, or not yet attained. This being so necessary an attendant of love, and being excited much by the same forementioned objective considerations, I suppose you need the less direction to be here added, and therefore I shall touch but briefly on this; if love be hot, I warrant your desire will not be cold.

When thou hast thus viewed the goodness of the Lord, and considered of the pleasures that are at his right hand, then proceed on with thy meditation thus: think with thyself, Where have I been; what have I seen? O the incomprehensible, astonishing glory! O the rare, transcendent beauty! O blessed souls that now enjoy it; that see a thousand times more clearly what I have seen but darkly at this distance, and scarce discerned through the interposing clouds! What a difference is there betwixt my state and theirs! I am sighing, and they are singing: I am sinning, and they are pleasing God: I have an ulcerated, cancerous soul, like the loathsome bodies of Job or Lazarus, a spectacle of pity to those that behold me; but they are perfect and without blemish: I am here entangled in the love of the world, when they are taken up with the love of God: I live indeed amongst the means of grace, and I possess the fellowship of my fellow-believers; but I have none of their immediate views of God, nor any of that fellowship that they possess. They have none of my cares and fears; they weep not in secret; they languish not in sorrows; these tears are wiped away from their eyes.[e] O happy, a thousand times happy souls! Alas! that I must dwell in dirty flesh, when my brethren and companions do well with God! Alas! that I am lapt in earth, and tied as a mountain down to this inferior world, when they are got above the sun, and have laid aside their lumpish bodies! Alas! that I must lie, and pray and wait, and wait and pray, as if my heart were in my knees; when they do nothing but love and praise, and joy and enjoy, as if their hearts were got into the very breast of Christ, and were closely conjoined to his own heart. How far out of sight and reach and hearing of their high enjoyments do I here live, when they feel them, and feed and live upon them! What strange thoughts have I of God! what strange conceivings! what strange affections! I am fain to superscribe my best services, as the blind Athenians, to the unknown God, when they are as well acquainted with him as men that live continually in his house; and as familiar in their holy praises, as if they were all one with him! What a little of that God, that Christ, that Spirit, that life, that love, that joy, have I! And how soon doth it depart and leave me in sadder darkness! Now and then a spark doth fall upon my heart, and while I gaze upon it, it straight goes out; or rather, my cold, resisting heart doth quench it: but they have their light in his light, and live continually at the spring of joys. Here are we vexing each other with quarrels, and troubling our peace with discontents, when they are one in heart and voice, and daily sound forth their hallelujahs to God with full delightful harmony and consent. Oh what a feast hath my faith beheld; and oh what a famine is yet in my spirit! I have seen a glimpse into the court of God, but, alas! I stand but as a beggar at the doors, when the souls of my companions are admitted in. O blessed souls! I may not, I dare not envy your happiness: I rather rejoice in my brethren's prosperity, and am glad to think of the day when I shall be admitted into your fellowship; but I cannot but look upon you as a child doth on his brother, who sits in the mother's lap while himself stands by, and wish that I were so happy as to be in your place; not to displace you, but to rest there with you. Why must I stay, and groan, and weep, and wait? My Lord is gone, he hath left this earth, and is entered into his glory. My brethren are gone; my friends are there; my house, my hope, my all is there! And must I stay behind to sojourn here? What precious saints have left this earth! of whom I am ready to say as Amerbachius, when he heard of the death of Zuingerus, *Piget me vivere post tantum virum, cujus magna fuit doctrina, sed exigua si cum pietate conferatur;*[f] It is irksome to me to live after such a man whose learning was so great, and yet compared with his godliness, very small. If the saints were all here, if Christ were here, then it were no grief for me to stay; if the Bridegroom were present, who would mourn? But when my soul is so far distant from my God, wonder not what aileth me if I now complain; an ignorant Micah will do so for his idol, and shall not then my soul do so for God? Judg. xviii. 14. And yet if I had no hope of enjoying, I would go and hide myself in the deserts, and lie and howl in some obscure wilderness, and spend my days in fruitless wishes. But seeing

[e] Facilius possumus dicere quid non sit in vita illa æterna, quam quid sit. Non est ibi mors, non est ibi luctus, non est ibi lassitudo, non est infirmitas; non est fames, nulla sitis, nullus æstus, nulla corruptio, nulla indigentia, nulla molestia, nulla tristitia: ecce diximus quid ibi non sit. Quid autem ibi sit vis nosse? Hæc nec oculus vidit, nec auris audivit, nec in cor hominis ascendit, quæ præparavit Deus diligentibus se. Si in cor hominis non ascendit, cor hominis illuc ascendat; cor ibi habeamus. Sursum corda levemus ne putrescant in terra; quoniam placet nobis quod ibi agunt angeli. August. de Symb. lib. iii. cap. 11.

[f] Melch. Adam in Vita Zuingeri inter vitas medicorum Germanorum.

it is the promised land of my rest, and the state that I must be advanced to myself, and my soul draws near, and is almost at it, I will love and long; I will look and desire; I will breathe out blessed Calvin's motto, *Usquequo Domine!* How long, Lord, how long! how long, Lord, holy and true, wilt thou suffer this soul to pant and groan? And wilt not open and let him in, who waits and longs to be with thee?[g]

Thus, christian reader, let thy thoughts aspire: thus whet the desires of thy soul by these meditations; till thy soul long, as David's for the waters of Bethlehem, and say, Oh that one would give me to drink of the wells of salvation! 2 Sam. xxiii. 15; and till thou canst say as he, "I have longed for thy salvation, O Lord," Psal. cxix. 174. And as the mother and brethren of Christ, when they could not come at him because of the press, sent to him, saying, "Thy mother and brethren stand without, desiring to see thee;" send thou up the same message; tell him thou standest here without desiring to see him; he will own thee even in these near relations; for he hath said, they that hear his word, and do it, are his mother and his brethren, Luke viii. 20, 21. And thus I have directed you in the acting of your desire after your rest.

Sect. VII. 3. The next affection to be acted is hope. This is of singular use to the soul. It helpeth exceedingly to support it in sufferings; it encourageth to adventure upon the greatest difficulties; it firmly establisheth it in the most shaking trials; and it mightily enlivens the soul in duties; and is the very spring that sets all the wheels a-going: who would preach, if it were not in hope to prevail with poor sinners for their conversion and confirmation? who would pray, but for his hope to prevail with God? who would believe, or obey, or strive, or suffer, or do any thing for heaven, if it were not for the hope that he hath to obtain it? Would the mariner sail, and the merchant adventure, if they had not hope of safety and success? Would the husbandman plough, and sow, and take pains, if he had not hope of increase at harvest? Would the soldier fight, if he hoped not for victory? Sure no man doth adventure upon known impossibilities.[h] Therefore is it that they who pray merely from custom, or merely from conscience, considering it as a duty only, but looking for no great matters from God by their prayers, are generally formal and heartless therein; whereas the christian that hath observed the wonderful success of prayer, and as verily looks for benefit by it, and thriving to his soul in the use of it, as he looks for benefit by his labours, and thriving to his body in the use of his food, how faithfully doth he follow it; and how cheerfully go through it! Oh how willingly do we ministers study; how cheerfully do we preach; what life doth it put into our instructions and exhortations, when we have but hope that our labour will succeed! When we discern a people attend to the word, and regard the message, and hear them inquire what they shall do, as men that are willing to be ruled by God, and as men that would fain have their souls to be saved; you would not think how it helpeth us, both for invention and expression! Oh! who can choose but pray heartily for, and preach heartily to, such a people? As the sucking of the young one doth draw forth the milk, so will the people's desires and obedience draw forth the word: so that a dull people make dull preachers, and a lively people make a lively preacher. So great a force hath hope in all our duties. As hope of speeding increaseth, so doth diligence in seeking increase; besides the great conducement of it to our joy. Even the false hope of the wicked doth much support, and maintain a kind of comfort answerable to their hope; though, it is true, their hope and joy will both die with them: how much more will the saints' hopes refresh and support them! All this I have said, to show you the excellency and necessity of this grace, and so to provoke you to the more constant acting of it. If your hope dieth, your duties die, your endeavours die, your joys die, and your souls die. And if your hope be not acted, but lie asleep, it is next to dead, both in likeness and preparation.

Therefore, christian reader, when thou art winding up thy affections to heaven, do not forget to give one lift at thy hope; remember to wind up this peg also. The object of hope hath four qualifications; First, It must be good; Secondly, Future; Thirdly, Difficult; Fourthly, Yet possible. For the goodness of thy rest, there is somewhat said before, which thou mayst transfer hither as thou findest it useful; so also of the difficulty and futurity. Let faith then show thee the truth of the promise, and judgment the goodness of the thing promised; and what then is wanting for the raising of thy hope? Show thy soul, from the word, and from the mercies, and from the nature of God, what possibility, yea, what probability, yea, what certainty thou hast of possessing the crown. Think thus, and reason thus, with thine own heart: Why should I not confidently and comfortably hope, when my soul is in the hands of so compassionate a Saviour; and when the kingdom is at the disposal of so bounteous a God? Did he ever manifest any backwardness to my good, or discover the least inclination to my ruin? hath he not sworn the contrary to me in his word, that he delights not in the death of him that dieth, but rather that he should repent and live? Ezek. xviii. 32; xxxiii. 11. Have not all his dealings with me witnessed the same? did he not mind me of my danger, when I never feared it? and why was this, if he would not have me to escape it? Did he not mind me of my happiness, when I had no thoughts of it? and why was this, but that he would have me to enjoy it? How oft hath he drawn me to himself, and his Christ, when I have drawn backward, and would have broken from him! what restless importunity hath he used in his suit! how hath he followed me from place to place; and his Spirit incessantly solicited my heart, with winning suggestions and persuasions for my good! And would he have done all this, if he had been willing that I should perish? If my soul were in the hands of my mortal foes, then, indeed, there were small hopes of my salvation; yea, if it were wholly in my own hands, my flesh and my folly would betray it to damnation. But have I as much cause to distrust God, as to distrust my foes, or to distrust myself? sure I have not. Have I not a sure promise to build and rest on, and the truth of God engaged to fulfil it? would I not hope, if an honest man had made me a promise of any thing in his power; and shall I not hope, when I have the covenant and the oath of God? It is true, the glory is out of sight; we have not beheld the mansions of the saints: who hath ascended up to discover it, and descended to tell us what he had seen? Why, but the word is near me: have I not Moses and the prophets, Christ and his apostles? is not the promise of God more certain than our

[g] Beza in Vit. Calvin.

[h] Fides intuetur verbum rei: spes autem rem verbi; ut optime distinguit Lutherus. Fides et spes concurrunt in idem rerum sperandarum objectum; fides tamen intelligendo, assentiendo, representando, id facit; spes autem patienter earum complementum expectando, id peragit quod sui muneris est. Jacob. Grynæus in Heb. xi. lect. 23. p. 600.

sight? It is not by sight, but by hope, that we must be saved; and hope that is seen is not hope; for if we see it, why do we yet hope for it? "But if we hope for what we see not, then do we with patience wait for it," Rom. viii. 24, 25. I have been ashamed of my hope in the arm of flesh, but hope in the promise of God maketh not ashamed, Rom. v. 5. I will say, therefore, in my greatest sufferings, with the church, "The Lord is my portion, therefore will I hope in him. The Lord is good to them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him: it is good that I both hope, and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord. It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth. I will sit alone and keep silence, because I have borne it upon me. I will put my mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope. For the Lord will not cast off for ever; but though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies," Lam. iii. 24, &c. Though I languish and die, yet will I hope; for he hath said, "The righteous hath hope in his death," Prov. xiv. 32. Though I must lie down in dust and darkness, yet there "my flesh shall rest in hope," Psal. xvi. 9. And when my flesh hath nothing in which it may rejoice, yet will I keep "the rejoicing of hope firm to the end," Heb. iii. 6. For he hath said, "The hope of the righteous shall be gladness," Prov. x. 28. Indeed, if I had lived still under the covenant of works, and been put myself to the satisfying of that justice, then there had been no hope; but Christ hath taken down these impossibilities, and hath brought in a better hope, by which we may now draw nigh to God, Heb. vii. 19. Or, if I had to do with a feeble creature, there were small hope, for how could he raise this body from the dust, and lift me up above the sun? But what is it to the Almighty power, who made the heavens and earth of nothing? cannot the same power that raised Christ, raise me; and that hath glorified the Head, also glorify the members? Doubtless, by the blood of Christ's covenant will God send forth his prisoners from the pit wherein is no water; therefore will I turn to this strong hold, as a prisoner of hope, Zech. ix. 11, 12.

And thus you see how meditation may excite your hope.

Sect. VIII. 4. The next affection to be acted is courage, or boldness, which leadeth to resolution, and concludeth in action. When you have thus mounted your love, and desire, and hope, go on, and think further thus with yourselves: And will God indeed dwell with men, and is there such a glory within the reach of hope? Oh! why do I not then lay hold upon it? Where is the cheerful vigour of my spirit? Why do I not gird up the loins of my mind, and play the man for such a prize? Why do I not run with speed the race before me, and set upon mine enemies on every side, and valiantly break through all resistance? Why do I not take this kingdom by force, and my fervent soul catch at the place? Do I yet sit still, and heaven before me? 1 Tim. vi. 12, 19; 1 Pet. i. 13; Heb. xii. 1; 1 Cor. ix. 24; Matt. xi. 12. If my beast do but see his provender, if my greedy senses perceive but their delightful objects, I have much ado to stave them off; and should not my soul be as eager for such a blessed rest? Why, then, do I not undauntedly fall to work? What should stop me, or what should dismay me? Is God with me or against me in the work? Will Christ stand by me, or will he not? If it were a way of sin that leads to death, then I might expect that God should resist me, and stand in my way with the drawn sword of his displeasure; or at least overtake me to my grief at last. But is he against the obeying of his own commands? Is perfect good against any thing but evil? Doth he bid me seek, and will he not assist me in it? Doth he set me a-work, and urge me to it, and will he after all be against me in it? It cannot be. And if he be for me, who can be against me? Rom. viii. 31. In the work of sin all things almost are ready to help us, and God only, and his servants, against us; and how ill doth that work prosper in our hands! But in my course to heaven, almost all things are against me; but God is for me; and how happily still doth the work succeed! Do I set upon this work in my own strength, or rather in the strength of Christ my Lord; and cannot I do all things through him that strengtheneth me? Was he ever foiled or subdued by an enemy? He hath been assaulted indeed, but was he ever conquered? Can they take the sheep till they have overcome the shepherd? Why then doth my flesh lay open to me the difficulties, and urge me so much with the greatness and troubles of the work? It is Christ that must answer all these objections; and what are the difficulties that can stay his power? Is any thing too hard for the omnipotent God? May not Peter boldly walk on the sea, if Christ do but give the word of command; and if he begin to sink, is it from the weakness of Christ, or the smallness of his faith? The water, indeed, is but a sinking ground to tread on; but if Christ be by, and countenance us in it, if he be ready to reach us his hand, who would draw back for fear of danger? Is not sea and land alike to him? Shall I be driven from my God, and from my everlasting rest, as the silly birds are frighted from their food with a man of clouts, or a loud noise, when I know before there is no danger in it? How do I see men daily in these wars adventure upon armies, and forts, and cannons, and cast themselves upon the instruments of death; and have not I as fair a prize before me, and as much encouragement to adventure as they? What do I venture? My life at most; and in these prosperous times there is not one of many that ventures that. What do I venture on? Are they not unarmed foes? A great hazard, indeed, to venture on the hard thoughts of the world; or on the scorns and slanders of a wicked tongue! Sure these serpents' teeth are out; these vipers are easily shaken into the fire; these adders have no stings; these thorns have lost their prickles. As all things below are silly comforters, so are they silly, toothless enemies; bugbears to frighten fools and children, rather than powerful, dreadful foes. Do I not well deserve to be turned into hell, if the scorns and threats of blinded men, if the fear of silly, rotten earth, can drive me thither? Do I not well deserve to be shut out of heaven, if I will be frighted from it with the tongues of sinners? Surely my own voice must needs condemn me, and my own hand subscribe the sentence, and common reason would say that my damnation were just. What if it were father, or mother, or husband, or wife, or the nearest friend that I have in the world, if they may be called friends that would draw me to damnation, should I not run over all that would keep me from Christ? Will their friendship countervail the enmity of God, or be any comfort to my condemned soul? Shall I be yielding and pliable to the desires of men, and only harden myself against the Lord? Let men, let angels beseech me upon their knees, I will slight their tears, I will scorn to stop my course to behold them, I will shut mine ears against their cries; let them flatter, or let them frown, let them draw forth tongues and swords against me, I am resolved to break through in the might of Christ, and to look upon them all as naked dust. If they would entice me with preferment, with the kingdoms of the world,

I will no more regard them than the dung of the earth. O blessed rest! O most invaluable, glorious state! Who would sell thee for dreams and shadows? Who would be enticed or affrighted from thee? Who would not strive, and fight, and watch, and run, and that with violence, even to the last breath, so he might but have hope at last to obtain thee? Surely, none but those that know thee not, and believe not thy glory. Thus you see with what kind of meditations you may excite your courage, and raise your resolutions.

Sect. IX. 5. The last affection to be acted is joy. This is the end of all the rest; love, desire, hope, and courage, do all tend to the raising of our joy. This is so desirable to every man by nature, and is so essentially necessary to the constituting of his happiness, that I hope I need not say much to persuade you to any thing that would make your life delightful. Supposing you, therefore, already convinced, that the pleasures of the flesh are brutish and perishing, and that your solid and lasting joy must be from heaven; instead of persuading, I shall proceed in directing.

Well, then, by this time, if thou hast managed well the former work, thou art got within the ken of thy rest; thou believest the truth of it; thou art convinced of the excellency of it; thou art fallen in love with it; thou longest after it; thou hopest for it; and thou art resolved courageously to venture for the obtaining it: but is here any work for joy in this? We delight in the good which we do possess. It is present good that is the object of joy; but thou wilt say, Alas! I am yet without it! Well, but yet think a little further with thyself. Though the real presence do afford the choicest joy, yet the presence of its imperfect idea, or image in thy understanding, may afford me a great deal of true delight. Is it nothing to have a deed of gift from God? Are his infallible promises no ground of joy? Is it nothing to live in daily expectation of entering into the kingdom? Is not my assurance of being glorified one of these days a sufficient ground for inexpressible joy? Is it no delight to the heir of a kingdom to think of what he must hereafter possess, though at present he little differ from a servant? Gal. iv. 1. Am I not commanded to rejoice in hope of the glory of God? Rom. v. 2; xii. 12.

Here, then, reader, take thy heart once again, as it were, by the hand; bring it to the top of the highest mount; if it be possible, to some atlas above the clouds. Show it the kingdom of Christ, and the glory of it. Say to it, All this will thy Lord bestow upon thee, who hast believed in him, and been a worshipper of him. It is the Father's good pleasure to give thee this kingdom. Seest thou this astonishing glory above thee? Why, all this is thy own inheritance; this crown is thine; these pleasures are thine; this company, this beauteous place is thine; all things are thine, because thou art Christ's, and Christ is thine; when thou wast married to him, thou hadst all this with him.

Thus, take thy heart into the land of promise, show it the pleasant hills and fruitful valleys; show it the clusters of grapes which thou hast gathered; and by those convince it that it is a blessed land, flowing with better than milk and honey: enter the gates of the holy city, walk through the streets of the new Jerusalem, walk about Sion, go round about her, tell the towers thereof, mark well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, that thou mayst tell it to thy soul, Psal. xlviii. 12, 13. Hath it not the glory of God, and is not her light like to a stone most precious? See the twelve foundations of her walls, and the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb therein. The building of the walls of it are of jasper, and the city of pure gold, as clear as glass. The foundation is garnished with precious stones, and the twelve gates are twelve pearls. Every several gate is of one pearl, and the street of the city is pure gold, as it were transparent glass; there is no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb, are the temple of it. It hath no need of sun or moon to shine in it, for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof, and the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it. These sayings are faithful and true, and the Lord God of the holy prophets hath sent his angels and his own Son, to show unto his servants the things that must shortly be done, Rev. xxi. 11—13, &c. to the end, and xxii. 6. What sayest thou now to all this? This is thy rest, O my soul, and this must be the place of thy everlasting habitation. "Let all the sons of Sion then rejoice, and the daughters of Jerusalem be glad: for great is the Lord, and greatly is he praised in the city of our God: beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Sion: God is known in her palaces for a refuge," Psalm xlviii. 11, 1—3.

Yet proceed on: *Anima quæ amat ascendit*, &c. The soul, saith Austin, that loves, ascends frequently, and runs familiarly through the streets of the heavenly Jerusalem, visiting the patriarchs and prophets, saluting the apostles, admiring the armies of martyrs and confessors, &c. So do thou; lead on thy heart as from street to street, bringing it into the palace of the great King; lead it, as it were, from chamber to chamber; say to it, Here must I lodge, here must I live, here must I praise, here must I love, and be beloved; I must shortly be one of this heavenly choir; I shall then be better skilled in the music. Among this blessed company must I take my place. My voice must join to make up the melody. My tears will then be wiped away, my groans turned to another tune. My cottage of clay will be changed to this palace, and my prison rags to these splendid robes. My sordid, nasty, stinking flesh shall be put off, and such a sun-like spiritual body put on. For the former things are done away. "Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God," Psalm lxxxvii. 3. There it is that trouble and lamentation ceaseth, and the voice of sorrow is not heard. Oh! when I look upon this glorious place, what a dunghill and dungeon methinks is earth. Oh! what a difference betwixt a man feeble, pained, groaning, dying, rotting in the grave, and one of these triumphant, blessed, shining saints! Here shall I drink of the river of pleasure, "the streams whereof make glad the city of our God." "For the Lord will create a new Jerusalem and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. We shall be glad and rejoice for ever in that which he creates: for he will create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy: and he will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in his people, and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days," Isa. lxv. 17—20. Must Israel, on earth, under the bondage of the law, serve the Lord with joyfulness and gladness of heart, because of the abundance of all things which they possess? sure, then, I shall serve him with joyfulness and gladness, who shall have another kind of service, and of abundance in glory, Deut. xxviii. 47. Did the saints take joyfully the spoiling of their goods? Heb. xi. 34; and shall not I take joyfully the receiving of my good, and such a full reparation of all my losses? Was it such a remarkable, celebrated

day, when the Jews rested from their enemies, because it was turned to them from sorrow to joy, and from mourning into a good day? Esther ix. 22. What a day, then, will that be to my soul, whose rest and change will be so much greater! When the wise men saw but the star of Christ, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy, Matt. ii. 10; but I shall shortly see the Star of Jacob, even himself who is the bright and morning Star, Numb. xxiv. 17; Rev. xxii. 16. If they returned from the sepulchre with great joy, when they had but heard that he was risen from the dead, Matt. xxviii. 8; what joy, then, will it be to me, when I shall see him risen and reigning in his glory, and myself raised to a blessed communion with him! Then shall we have beauty for ashes indeed, and the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, Isa. lxi. 3; when he hath made Sion an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations, Isa. lx. 15.

Why do I not, then, arise from the dust, and lay aside my sad complaints, and cease my doleful, mourning note? Why do I not trample down vain delights, and feed upon the foreseen delights of glory? Why is not my life a continual joy, and the savour of heaven perpetually upon my spirit? And thus, reader, I have directed thee in acting thy joy.

Sect. X. Here also, when thou findest cause, thou hast a singular good advantage from thy meditations of heaven, for the acting of the contrary and more mixed passions: as,

1. Of thy hatred and detestation of sin, which would deprive thy soul of these immortal joys.

2. Of thy godly and filial fear, lest thou shouldst either abuse or hazard this mercy.

3. Of thy necessary grief, for such thy foolish abuse and hazard.

4. Of thy godly shame, which should cover thy face for the forementioned folly.

5. Of thy unfeigned repentance for what thou hast done against thy joys.

6. Of thy holy anger or indignation against thyself for such miscarriage.

7. Of thy zeal and jealousy over thy heart, lest thou shouldst again be drawn to the like iniquity.

8. And of thy pity toward those who are ignorantly walking in the contrary course, and in apparent danger of losing all this.

But I will confine myself to the former chief affections, and not meddle with these, lest I be too prolix, but leave them to thy own spiritual prudence.

I would here also have thee to understand that I do not place any flat necessity in thy acting of all the forementioned affections in this order at one time, or in one duty. Perhaps thou mayst sometimes feel some one of thy affections more flat than the rest, and so to have more need of exciting; or thou mayst find one stirring more than the rest, and so think it more seasonable to help it forward; or, if thy time be short, thou mayst work upon one affection one day, and upon another the next, as thou findest cause. All this I leave still to thy own prudence.

And so I have done with the third part of the direction, viz. what powers of the soul are here to be acted, what affections excited, by what objective considerations, and in what order.

CHAPTER X.

BY WHAT ACTINGS OF THE SOUL TO PROCEED IN THIS WORK OF HEAVENLY CONTEMPLATION.

FOURTHLY, The fourth part of this directory is, to show you how and by what acts you should advance on to the height of this work.

Sect. I. The first and main instrument of this work is, that cogitation, or consideration, which I before have opened, and which is to go along with us through the whole. But because mere cogitation, if it be not pressed home, will not so pierce and affect the heart; therefore we must here proceed to a second step, which is called soliloquy, which is nothing but a pleading the case with our own souls. As in preaching to others, the bare propounding and opening of truths and duties, doth seldom find that success as the lively application; so it is also in meditating and propounding truths to ourselves. The moving, pathetical pleadings with a sinner, will make him deeply affected with a common truth, which before, though he knew it, yet it never stirred him. What heart-meltings do we see under powerful application, when the naked explication did little move them! If any where there be a tender-hearted, affectionate people, it is likely under such a moving, close-applying ministry. Why, thus must thou do in thy meditation to quicken thine own heart: enter into a serious debate with it; plead with it in the most moving and affecting language; urge it with the most weighty and powerful arguments: this soliloquy, or self-conference, hath been the practice of the holy men of God in all times, Gen. xlix. 6; Judges v. 21; Psal. xvi. 2; Jer. iv. 19. How doth David plead with his soul against its dejections, and argue it into a holy confidence and comfort! "Why art thou cast down, O my soul; and why art thou so disquieted within me? Trust in God, for I shall yet give him thanks, who is the health of my countenance, and my God," Psal. xlii. 5, 11; xliii. 5. So in Psal. ciii. 1, 2, &c. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits," &c. So doth he also end the Psalm, and so doth he begin and end Psal. civ.; so Psal. cxlvi. 1; and cxvi. 7, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee." The like you may see in the meditations of holy men of latter times, as Austin, Bernard, &c.: so that this is no new path which I persuade you to tread, but that which the saints have ever used in their meditation.

Sect. II. This soliloquy hath its several parts, and its due method wherein it should be managed. The parts of it are according to the several affections of the soul, and according to the several necessities thereof, according to the various arguments to be used, and according to the various ways of arguing. So that you see if I should attempt the full handling hereof, it would take up more time and room than I intend or can allow it. Only thus much in brief: As every good master and father of a family is a good preacher to his own family, so every good christian is a good preacher to his own soul. Soliloquy is a preaching to one's self; therefore the very same method which a minister should use in his preaching to others, should a christian use in speaking to himself. Dost thou understand the best method for a public preacher? Dost thou know the right parts and order of a sermon; and which is the most effectual way of application? Why then I need to

lay it open no further; thou understandest the method and parts of this soliloquy. Mark the most affecting, heart-melting minister; observe his course, both for matter and manner; set him as a pattern before thee for thy imitation; and the same way that he takes with the hearts of his people, do thou also take with thy own heart. Men are naturally addicted to imitation, especially of those whom they most affect and approve of: how near do some ministers come in their preaching to the imitation of others, whom they usually hear, and much reverence and value! so mayst thou in this duty of preaching to thy heart. Art thou not ready sometimes when thou hearest a minister, to remember divers things which thou thinkest might be moving and pertinent, and to wish that he would have mentioned and pressed them on the hearers? Why, remember those when thou art exhorting thyself, and press them on thy own heart as close as thou canst.

As, therefore, this is accounted the most familiar method in preaching, so it is for thee in meditating:

1. Explication. First, Explain to thyself the subject on which thou dost meditate, both the terms and the subject matter; study the difficulties, till the doctrine is clear. Secondly,

2. Confirmation. Then confirm thy faith in the belief of it, by the most clear, convincing Scripture reasons.

3. Application. Thirdly, Then apply it according to its nature and thy necessity. As in the case we are upon, that there is a rest remaining for the people of God.

1. Use of information. 1. Consider of the useful consectaries, or conclusions, that thence arise, for the clearing and confirming of thy judgment, which is commonly called a use of information. Here thou mayst press them also by other confirming arguments, and adjoin the confutation of the contrary errors.

2. Use of instruction. 2. Proceed then to consider of the duties which do appear to be such from the doctrine in hand, which is commonly called a use of instruction; as also the reprehension of the contrary vices.

3. Of examination. 3. Then proceed to question, and try thyself, how thou hast valued this glory of the saints; how thou hast loved it; and how thou hast laid out thyself to obtain it. This is called a use of examination. Here thou mayst also make use of discovering signs, drawn from the nature, properties, effects, adjuncts, &c.

4. Of reproof. 4. So far as this trial hath discovered thy neglect, and other sins against this rest, proceed to the reprehension and censuring of thyself; chide thy heart for its omissions and commissions, and do it sharply till it feel the smart: as Peter preached reproof to his hearers, till they were pricked to the heart and cried out; and as a father or master will chide the child till it begin to cry and be sensible of the fault; so do thou in chiding thy own heart: this is called a use of reproof. Here also it will be very necessary that thou bring forth all the aggravating circumstances of the sin, that thy heart may feel it in its weight and bitterness; and if thy heart do evade or deny the sin, convince it by producing the several discoveries.

5. So far as thou discoverest that thou hast been faithful in the duty, turn it to encouragement to thyself, and to thanks to God; where thou mayst consider of the several aggravations of the mercy of the Spirit's enabling thee thereto.

6. So, as it respects thy duty for the future, consider how thou mayst improve this comfortable doctrine, which must be by strong and effectual persuasion with thy heart. First, By way of dehortation from the fore-mentioned sins. Secondly, By way of exhortation to the several duties. And these are either, first, internal, or secondly, external. First, therefore, admonish thy heart of its own inward neglects and contempts; Secondly, And then of the neglects and trespasses in thy practice against this blessed state of rest. Set home these several admonitions to the quick; take thy heart as to the brink of the bottomless pit; force it to look in; threaten thyself with the threatenings of the word; tell it of the torments that it draweth upon itself; tell it what joys it is madly rejecting; force it to promise thee to do so no more, and that not with a cold and heartless promise, but earnestly with most solemn asseverations and engagements. Secondly, The next and last is, to drive on thy soul to those positive duties, which are required of thee in relation to this rest: as, First, To the inward duties of thy heart: and there, First, To be diligent in making sure of this rest; Secondly, To rejoice in the expectation of it: this is called a use of consolation. It is to be furthered by first laying open the excellency of the state; and secondly, the certainty of it in itself; and thirdly, our own interest in it; by clearing and proving all these, and confuting all saddening objections that may be brought against them: Thirdly, so also for the provoking of love, of hope, and all other the affections in the way before more largely opened.

And, Secondly, Press on thy heart also to all outward duties that are to be performed in thy way to rest, whether in worship or in civil conversation, whether public or private, ordinary or extraordinary: this is commonly called a use of exhortation. Here bring in all quickening considerations, either those that may drive thee, or those that may draw; which work by fear, or which work by desire; these are commonly called motives: but above all, be sure that thou follow them home. Ask thy heart what it can say against the duty; is there weight in them, or is there not? And then, what it can say against the duty; is it necessary; is it comfortable; or is it not? When thou hast silenced thy heart, and brought it to a stand, then drive it further, and urge it to a promise, as suppose it were to the duty of meditation, which we are speaking of; force thyself beyond these lazy purposes; resolve on the duty before thou stir; enter into a solemn covenant to be faithful; let not thy heart go, till it have, without all halting and reservations, flatly promised thee, that it will fall to the work; write down this promise, show it to thy heart the next time it loiters; then study also the helps and means, the hinderances and directions, that concern thy duty. And this is in brief the exercise of this soliloquy, or the preaching of heaven to thy heart.

Sect. III. *Object.* But perhaps thou wilt say, Every man cannot understand this method; this is for ministers and learned men; every man is not able to play the preacher. I answer thee, First, There is not that ability required to this, as is to the work of public preaching: here thy thoughts may serve the turn, but there must be also the decent ornaments of language; here is needful but an honest, understanding heart, but there must be a good pronunciation, and a voluble tongue: here if thou miss of the method, thou mayst make up that in one piece of application which thou hast neglected in another; but there thy failings are injurious to many, and a scandal and disgrace to the work of God. Thou knowest what will fit thy own heart, and what arguments take best with thy own affections; but thou art not so well acquainted with the dispositions of others. Secondly, I answer further, Every man is bound to be skilful in the Scriptures as well as

ministers; kings and magistrates, Deut. xvii. 18—20; Josh. i. 8; and the people also, Deut. vi. 6—8. Do you think, if you did as is there commanded, write it upon thy heart, lay them up in thy soul, bind them upon thy hand and between thine eyes, meditate on them day and night; I say, if you did thus, would you not quickly understand as much as this? See Psal. i. 3: Deut. xi. 18; vi. 6—8. Doth not God command thee to teach them diligently to thy children; and to talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up? And if thou must be skilled to teach thy children, much more to teach thyself; and if thou canst talk of them to others, why not also to thine own heart? Certainly, our unskilfulness and disability, both in a methodical and lively teaching of our families, and of ourselves, is for the most part merely through our own negligence, and a sin for which we have no excuse; you that learn the skill of your trades and sciences, might learn this also, if you were but willing and painful.

And so I have done with this particular of soliloquy.

Sect. IV. 2. Another step to arise by in our contemplation, is, from this speaking to ourselves, to speak to God: prayer is not such a stranger to this duty, but that ejaculatory requests may be intermixed or added, and that as a very part of the duty itself. How oft doth David intermix these in his psalms, sometimes pleading with his soul, and sometimes with God, and that in the same psalm, and in the next verses! The apostle bids us to speak to ourselves in psalms and hymns; and no doubt we may also speak to God in them: this keeps the soul in mind of the divine presence, it tends also exceedingly to quicken and raise it; so that as God is the highest object of our thoughts, so our viewing of him, and our speaking to him, and pleading with him, doth more elevate the soul, and actuate the affections, than any other part of meditation can do. Men that are careless of their carriage and speeches among children and idiots, will be sober and serious with princes or grave men; so, though while we do but plead the case with ourselves, we are careless and unaffected, yet when we turn our speech to God, it may strike us with awfulness; and the holiness and majesty of him whom we speak to, may cause both the matter and words to pierce the deeper. Isaac went forth to pray, the former translation saith; to meditate, saith the latter; the Hebrew verb, saith Paræus in loc. signifieth both *ad orandum et meditandum.*[a] The men of God, both former and latter, who have left their meditations on record for our view, have thus intermixed soliloquy and prayer; sometimes speaking to their own hearts, and sometimes turning their speech to God: and though this may seem an indifferent thing, yet I conceive it very suitable and necessary, and that it is the highest step that we can advance to in the work.

Object. But why then is it not as good to take up with prayer alone, and to save all this tedious work that you prescribe us?

Answ. First, They are several duties, and therefore must be performed both. Secondly, We have need of one as well as the other, and therefore shall wrong ourselves in the neglecting of either. Thirdly, The mixture, as in music, doth more affect; the one helps on and puts life into the other. Fourthly, It is not the right order to begin at the top, therefore meditation and speaking to ourselves, should go before prayer, or speaking to God; want of this, makes prayer with most to have little more than the name of prayer, and men to speak as lightly and as stupidly to the dreadful God, as if it were to one of their companions, and with far less reverence and affection than they would speak to an angel, if he should appear to them, yea, or to a judge or prince, if they were speaking for their lives: and consequently their success and answers are often like their prayers. Oh! speaking to the God of heaven in prayer, is a weightier duty than most are aware of.

Sect. V. The ancients had a custom, by apostrophes and prosopopœias, to speak, as it were, to angels and saints departed, which, as it was used by them, I take to be lawful; but what they spoke in rhetorical figures, was interpreted by the succeeding ages to be spoken in strict propriety; and doctrinal conclusions for praying to saints and angels were raised from their speeches; therefore I will omit that course, which is so little necessary, and so subject to scandalize the less judicious readers.

And so much for the fourth part of the direction, by what steps or acts we must advance to the height of this work: I should clear all this by some examples, but that I intend shall follow in the end.

CHAPTER XI.

SOME ADVANTAGES AND HELPS, FOR RAISING AND AFFECTING THE SOUL BY THIS MEDITATION.

Sect. I. Fifthly: The fifth part of this directory is, to show you what advantages you should take, and what helps you should use, to make your meditations of heaven more quickening, and to make you taste the sweetness that is therein. For that is the main work that I drive at through all; that you may not stick in a bare thinking, but may have the lively sense of all upon your hearts: and this you will find to be the most difficult part of the work; and that it is easier barely to think of heaven a whole day, than to be lively and affectionate in those thoughts one quarter of an hour. Therefore let us yet a little further consider what may be done, to make your thoughts of heaven to be piercing, affecting, raising thoughts.

1. Fetch help from sense.

Here, therefore, you must understand, that the mere pure work of faith hath many disadvantages with us, in comparison of the work of sense. Faith is imperfect, for we are renewed but in part; but sense hath its strength, according to the strength of the flesh: faith goes against a world of resistance, but sense doth not. Faith is supernatural, and therefore prone to declining, and to languish both in the habit and exercise, further than it is still renewed and excited; but sense is natural, and therefore continueth while nature continueth. The object of faith is far off; we must go as far as heaven for our joys;[b] but the object of sense is close at hand. It is no easy matter to rejoice at that which we never saw, nor ever knew the man that did see it; and this upon a mere promise which is written in the Bible; and that when we have nothing else to rejoice in, but all our sensible comforts do fail us: but to rejoice in that which we see and feel, in that which we have hold of, and possession already, this is not difficult. Well, then, what should be done in this

[a] LXX legunt ἀδολεσχῆσαι, ad ludendum, se exercendum, sed aliene inquit Paræus.

[b] De coloribus cæcus loquelam habet, sensum autem non habet, teste Aristot. Non secus circa illa quæ divina et æterna sunt, se habet humanus intelleetus, infirmus et eæcutiens, ut vere quantum fas est, prædestinationis æternæ, et libertatis nostræ eompossibilitatem teneamus, &c. Arriba Concil. de Grat. lib. i. cap. 30. p. 188.

case? why, sure it will be a point of our spiritual prudence, and a singular help to the furthering of the work of faith, to call in our sense to its assistance:[c] if we can make us friends of these usual enemies, and make them instruments of raising us to God, which are the usual means of drawing us from God, I think we shall perform a very excellent work. Sure it is both possible and lawful, yea, and necessary too, to do something in this kind: for God would not have given us either our senses themselves, or their usual objects, if they might not have been serviceable to his own praise, and helps to raise us up to the apprehension of higher things: and it is very considerable, how the Holy Ghost doth condescend in the phrase of Scripture, in bringing things down to the reach of sense; how he sets forth the excellences of spiritual things in words that are borrowed from the objects of sense; how he describeth the glory of the new Jerusalem, in expressions that might take even with flesh itself: as that the streets and buildings are pure gold, that the gates are pearl, that a throne doth stand in the midst of it, &c. Rev. xxi. 22; that we shall eat and drink with Christ at his table in his kingdom; that he will drink with us the fruit of the vine new; that we shall shine as the sun in the firmament of our Father: these, with most other descriptions of our glory, are expressed as if it were to the very flesh and sense; which, though they are all improper and figurative, yet doubtless if such expressions had not been best, and to us necessary, the Holy Ghost would not have so frequently used them: he that will speak to man's understanding, must speak in man's language, and speak that which he is capable to conceive. And, doubtless, as the Spirit doth speak, so we must hear; and if our necessity cause him to condescend in his expressions, it must needs cause us to be low in our conceivings.[d] Those conceivings and expressions which we have of spirits, and things merely spiritual, they are commonly but second notions, without the first; but mere names that are put into our mouths, without any true conceivings of the things which they signify: or our conceivings which we express by those notions or terms, are merely negative; what things are not, rather than what they are: as, when we mention spirits, we mean they are not corporal substances, but what they are we can tell no more than we know what is Aristotle's "Materia Prima." It is one reason of Christ's assuming and continuing our nature with the Godhead, that we might know him the better, when he is so much nearer to us; and we might have more positive conceivings of him, and so our minds might have familiarity with him, who before was quite beyond our reach.

But what is my scope in all this? is it that we might think heaven to be made of gold and pearl; or, that we should picture Christ as the papists do, in such a shape;[e] or, that we should think saints and angels do indeed eat and drink? No; not that we should take the Spirit's figurative expressions to be meant according to strict propriety;[f] or have fleshly conceivings of spiritual things, so as to believe them to be such indeed: but thus to think, that to conceive or speak of them in strict propriety, is utterly beyond our reach and capacity; and therefore we must conceive of them as we are able; and that the Spirit would not have represented them in these notions to us, but that we have no better notions to apprehend them by: and therefore that we make use of these phrases of the Spirit to quicken our apprehensions and affections, but not to pervert them; and use these low notions as a glass, in which we must see the things themselves, though the representation be exceeding imperfect, till we come to an immediate perfect sight; yet still concluding, that these phrases, though useful, are but borrowed and improper. The like may be said of those expressions of God in Scripture, wherein he represents himself in the imperfections of creatures, as anger, repenting, willing what shall not come to pass, &c. Though these be improper, drawn from the manner of men, yet there is somewhat in God which we can see no better yet than in this glass, and which we can no better conceive of than in such notions, or else the Holy Ghost would have given us better.

Sect. II. 1. Go to, then, when thou settest thyself to meditate on the joys above, think on them boldly, as Scripture hath expressed them; bring down thy conceivings to the reach of sense. Excellency without familiarity doth amaze more than delight us; but love and joy are promoted by familiar acquaintance. When we go about to think of God and glory in proper conceivings, without these spectacles we are lost, and have nothing to fix our thoughts upon. We set God and heaven so far from us, that our thoughts are strange, and we look at them as things beyond our reach, and beyond our line, and are ready to say, That which is above is nothing to us: to conceive no more of God and glory, but that we cannot conceive them, and to apprehend no more, but that they are past our apprehension, will produce no more love but this,—to acknowledge that they are so far above us that we cannot love them; and no more joy but this,—that they are above our rejoicing. And therefore put Christ no farther from you than he hath put himself, lest the divine nature be again inaccessible. Think of Christ as in our own nature glorified; think of our fellow-saints as

1. Draw strong suppositions from sense.

[c] Quanta libet intentione se humana mens extenderet, etiamsi phantasias imaginum corporalium a cognitione compescat, si omnes circumscriptos spiritus ad oculos cordis admoveat, adhuc tamen in carne mortali posita videre gloriam Dei non valet, sicut est. Sed quicquid de illa quod in mente resplendet, similitudo, et non ipsa est. Greg. sup. hom. 8. Utile tamen est ut in hujusmodi rationibus quantumcunque debilimus sc mens humana exerceat, dummodo desit comprehendendi vel demonstrandi præsumptio: quia de rebus altissimis etiam parva et debili consideratione aliquid posse inspicere jucundissimum est. Aquin. cont. Gentil. lib. i. cap. 8.

[d] Æquum est meminisse, et me qui disscram, et vos qui judicabitis, homines esse, ut si probabilia dicentur, nihil ulterius requiratis. Plato in Timæo. Idem in Epistola ad Dionys. monet, ut eos tanquam barathrum declinet, qui de Diis tanquam de iis qui manibus teneri et apprehendi possunt, certas exigunt demonstrationes. Et in Phædone eo nomine gravissime reprehendit cos quod ambitiosis inter se verborum pugnis et inani demonstrationum conatu, principes se novorum et pugnantium dogmatum constituant, de rebus ipsis nihil certum, nihil stabile, nihil firmum habeant. Ipsequc suam deplorat cæcitatem, qui quæ sc prius perspicue scire existimaret, ut per umbram quidem sibi unquam visa esse compererit. Et quorum aliquam esse ratus fuerat soliditatem, ea nunc omnia non secus ac inanes somniorum imagines vanescere.

[e] Ex operibus quidem opificem, hanc causam effectoremque mundi Deum nosse datur. Ex imagine autem et simulacro (ut Socratis auditor Antisthenes dicebat) is non agnoscitur; nullis oculis conspicuus, nulli rei similis, ut ex ulla effigie nosci possit. Atque (ut a Zenophonte Socratico scriptum legimus,) qui cuncta concussat, ipse intrepidus et inconcussus. Magnus nimirum potensque esse cognoscitur. Quali autem sit facie, ignoratur. Fernelius de Abditis Rerum Causis, cap. 9.

[f] Est quidem et de communibus sensibus, sapere in Dei rebus; sed in testimonium veri, non in adjutorium falsi. Quod sit secundum divinam, non contra divinam dispositionem. Tertullian. Lib. de Resurrect. Carnis, cap. 3. p. 707. Hæc omnia ab humanis in Deum qualitatibus tracta sunt, dum ad nostræ infirmitatis verba descenditur. Ut quasi quibusdam nobis gradibus factis, et juxta nos positis per ea quæ nobis vicina conspicimus, ad summa ejus ascendere quandoque valeamus. Gregor. Moral. lib. xx. cap. 14.

men there perfected; think of the city and state as the Spirit hath expressed it, only with the cautions and limitations before mentioned.[g] Suppose thou wert now beholding this city of God, and that thou hadst been companion with John in his survey of its glory; and hadst seen the thrones, the majesty, the heavenly hosts, the shining splendour which he saw; draw as strong suppositions as may be from thy sense for the helping of thy affections. It is lawful to suppose we did see for the present, that which God hath in prophecies revealed, and which we must really see in more unspeakable brightness before long. Suppose, therefore, with thyself thou hadst been that apostle's fellow-traveller into the celestial kingdom, and that thou hadst seen all the saints in their white robes, with palms in their hands; suppose thou hadst heard those songs of Moses and of the Lamb; or didst even now hear them praising and glorifying the living God. If thou hadst seen these things, indeed, in what a rapture wouldst thou have been! And the more seriously thou puttest this supposition to thyself, the more will the meditation elevate thy heart. I would not have thee, as the papists, draw them in pictures, nor use such ways to represent them. This, as it is a course forbidden by God, so it would but seduce and draw down thy heart; but get the liveliest picture of them in thy mind that possibly thou canst; meditate of them as if thou wert all the while beholding them, and as if thou wert even hearing the hallelujahs, while thou art thinking of them; till thou canst say, Methinks I see a glimpse of the glory; methinks I hear the shouts of joy and praise; methinks I even stand by Abraham and David, Peter and Paul, and more of these triumphing souls; methinks I even see the Son of God appearing in the clouds, and the world standing at his bar to receive their doom; methinks I hear him say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father," and even see them go rejoicing into the joy of their Lord. My very dreams of these things have deeply affected me, and should not these just suppositions affect me much more? What, if I had seen, with Paul, those unutterable things, should I not have been exalted, and that, perhaps, above measure, as well as he? What, if I had stood in the room of Stephen, and seen heaven opened, and Christ sitting at the right-hand of God? Surely that one sight was worth the suffering his storm of stones. Oh that I might but see what he did see, though I also suffered what he did suffer! What if I had seen such a sight as Micaiah saw; the Lord sitting upon his throne, and all the hosts of heaven standing on his right-hand and on his left? Why, these men of God did see such things; and I shall shortly see far more than ever they saw till they were loosed from this flesh, as I must be. And thus you see how the familiar conceiving of the state of blessedness, as the Spirit hath in a condescending language expressed it, and our strong raising of suppositions from our bodily senses, will further our affections in this heavenly work.

2. Compare objects of sense with objects of faith.

Sect. III. 2. There is yet another way by which we may make our senses here serviceable to us, and that is, by comparing of the objects of sense with the objects of faith; and so forcing sense to afford us that medium, from whence we may conclude the transcendent worth of glory, by arguing from sensitive delights as from the less to the greater. And here, for your further assistance, I shall furnish you with some of these comparative arguments.

And, First, You must strongly argue with your hearts, from the corrupt delights of sensual men.[h] Think, then, with yourselves when you would be sensible of the joys above: Is it such a delight to a sinner to do wickedly, and will it not be delightful, indeed, then to live with God? Hath a very drunkard[i] such delight in his cups and his companions, that the very fears of damnation will not make him forsake them? Hath the brutish whoremaster such delight in his whore, that he will part with his credit, and estate, and salvation, rather than he will part with her? Sure then, there are high delights with God. If the way to hell can afford such pleasure, what are the pleasures of the saints in heaven! If the covetous man hath so much pleasure in his wealth, and the ambitious man in power and titles of honour, what then have the saints in the everlasting treasure! and what pleasure do the heavenly honours afford, where we shall be set above principalities and powers, and be made the glorious spouse of Christ! What pleasure do the voluptuous find in their sensual courses! How closely will they follow their hunting, and hawking, and other recreations, from morning to night! How delightfully will they sit at their cards and dice, hours and days and nights together! Oh the delight that must needs then be in beholding the face of the living God, and in singing forth praises to him and the Lamb, which must be our recreation when we come to our rest!

Sect. IV. 2. Compare also the delights above with the lawful delights of moderated senses.[k] Think

[g] Ibi jacet gratia, ibi virentibus campis terra luxurians alumna se induit gramine, et redolente pascitur flore. Ibi altum nemora tolluntur in verticem, et ibi arbor densiore coma vestitur, quicquid curvantibus ramis scena dejacens inumbrarit. Omnia illic non frigoris nec ardoris, nec uti in autumno arva requiescant, aut ut iterum vere novo tellus fœcunda parturiat. Unius cuncta sunt temporis. Unius poma feruntur æstatis; quippe cum nec mensibus suis tunc luna deserviat, nec sol per horarum momenta decurrat, aut in noctem lux fugata concedat. Habet populos quies læta. Sedes tenet placidas, ubi fons scaturiens medio sinu alvei prorumpentis emergit, et rauco per intervalla circuitu sinuosis flexibus labitur, ut in ora nascentium ibi fluminum divitatur. Cyprian. de Laude Martyr.

[h] If the men of this world, who have the spirit of the world, are so desirous to see an earthly king, at least in all his ornaments and glory, &c. how much more should they desire to see Christ; into whom the drops of the quickening Spirit of the Godhead hath instilled, and whose hearts he hath wounded with a divine love to Christ the heavenly King! They are enchained in that beauty and unspeakable glory, in that incorruptible splendour and incomprehensible riches of the true and eternal King, Christ: with desire and longings after whom they are wholly taken up, being wholly turned to him, and long to attain that unexpressible blessedness, which by the Spirit they behold; for the sake of which they esteem all the beauty, and ornaments, and glory, and riches, and honour of kings and princes, but as nothing. For they are wounded with the beauty of God, and the heavenly life of immortality hath dropped into their souls. *Ergo* do they wish for the love of the heavenly King; and having him alone before their eyes in all their desires, they rid themselves by him of all worldly love, and depart from all terrene engagements, that so they may still keep that desire alone in their hearts. Macarius, Homil. 5. a.

[i] Quæ ergo nos angit vesania, vitiorum sitire absinthium, hujus mundi sequi naufragium, vitæ præsentis pati infortunium, impiæ tyrannidis ferre dominium, et non magis convolare ad sanctorum felicitatem, ad angelorum societatem, ad solemnitatem supernæ lætitiæ, et ad jucunditatem contemplativæ vitæ, ut possimus intrare in potentias Domini, et videre superabundantes divitias bonitatis ejus? Bernard. de Præmio Pat. Cœlest.

[k] Si homines de gaudio terreno jubilant, nos de gaudio cœlesti jubilare non debemus, quod verbis vere explicare non possumus? Et quem decet ista jubilatio nisi ineffabilem Deum? Et si Deum fari non potes et tacere non debes; quid restat nisi ut jubiles? August. in Psalm xciv. Si consideremus quæ et quanta sunt quæ sanctis dabuntur in die judicii, quæ et quanta quæ nobis promittuntur in cœlis, vilescent omnia quæ habentur in terris. Terrena namque substantia, æternæ felicitati comparata, pondus est, non subsidium. Gregor. in Homil.

with thyself, How sweet is food to my taste when I am hungry, especially, as Isaac said, that which my soul loveth, that which my temperature and appetite do incline to! What delight hath the taste in some pleasant fruits, in some relished meats, and in divers junkets! Oh, what delight, then, must my soul needs have in feeding upon Christ, the living bread, and in eating with him at his table in his kingdom! Was a mess of pottage so sweet to Esau, in his hunger, that he would buy them at so dear a rate as his birth-right? how highly then should I value this never-perishing food! How pleasant is drink in the extremity of thirst! The delight of it to a man in a fever, or other drought, can scarcely be expressed. It will make the strength of Samson revive. Oh, then, how delightful will it be to my soul to drink of that fountain of living water, which whoso drinks shall thirst no more! So pleasant is wine, and so refreshing to the spirits, that it is said to make glad the heart of man: how pleasant, then, will that wine of the great marriage be; even that wine which our water was turned into; that best wine, which will be kept till then! How delightful are pleasing odours to our smell! How delightful is perfect music to the ear! How delightful are beauteous sights to the eye; such as curious pictures; sumptuous, adorned, well-contrived buildings; handsome, necessary rooms, walks, prospects; gardens stored with variety of beauteous and odoriferous flowers; or pleasant meadows, which are natural gardens! O, then, think every time thou seest or rememberest these, what a fragrant smell hath the precious ointment which is poured on the head of our glorified Saviour, and which must be poured on the heads of all his saints, which will fill all the room of heaven with its odour and perfume! How delightful is the music of the heavenly host! How pleasing will be those real beauties above, and how glorious the building not made with hands, and the house that God himself doth dwell in, and the walks and prospects in the city of God, and the beauties and delights in the celestial paradise! Think seriously what these must needs be. The like may be said of the delight of the sense of feeling, which, the philosopher saith, is the greatest of all the rest.

Sect. V. 3. Compare also the delights above with the delights that are found in natural knowledge. This is far beyond the delights of sense, and the delights of heaven are farther beyond it.[l] Think, then, can an Archimedes be so taken up with his mathematical invention, that the threats of death cannot take him off, but he will die in the midst of these his natural contemplations? Should I not much more be taken up with the delights of glory, and die with these contemplations fresh upon my soul? especially when my death will perfect my delights; but those of Archimedes die with him.[m] What a pleasure is it to dive into the secrets of nature; to find out the mysteries of arts and sciences; to have a clear understanding in logic, physics, metaphysics, music, astronomy, geometry, &c.! If we make but any new discovery in one of these, or see a little more than we saw before, what singular pleasure do we find therein! Why, think then what high delights there are in the knowledge of God, and Christ, his Son. If the face of human learning be so beautiful, that sensual pleasures are to it but base and brutish, how beautiful then is the face of God! When we light on some choice and learned book, how are we taken with it; we could read and study it day and night; we can leave meat and drink and sleep to read it. What delights then are there at God's right hand, where we shall know in a moment all that is to be known!

Sect. VI. 4. Compare also the delight above with the delights of morality, and of the natural affections. What delight had many sober heathens in the rules and practice of moral duties! so that they took him only for an honest man who did well through the love of virtue, and not only for fear of punishment. Yea, so highly did they value this moral virtue, that they thought the chief happiness of man consisted in it. Why think, then, what excellency there will be in that rare perfection which we shall be raised to in heaven; and in that uncreated perfection of God which we shall behold! What sweetness is there in the exercise of natural love, whether to children, to parents, to yoke-fellows, or to friends! The delight which a pair of special, faithful friends do find in loving and enjoying one another, is a most pleasing, sweet delight. It seemed to the philosophers to be above the delights of natural or matrimonial friendship, and I think it seemed so to David himself; so he concludes his lamentation for him:[n] "I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan. Very pleasant hast thou been unto me; thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women," 2 Sam. i. 26. Yea, the soul of Jonathan did cleave to David. Even Christ himself, as it seemeth, had some of this kind of love; for he had one disciple whom he especially loved, and who was wont to lean on his breast. Why think, then, if the delights of close and cordial friendship be so great, what delight we shall have in the friendship of the Most High; and in our mutual amity with Jesus Christ; and in the dearest love and comfort with the saints! Surely this will be a closer and stricter friendship than ever was betwixt any friends on earth. And these will be more lovely, desirable friends than any that ever the sun beheld; and both our affections to our Father and our Saviour, but especially his affection to us, will be such as here we never knew: as spirits are so far more powerful than flesh, that one angel can destroy a host, so also are their affections more strong and powerful. We shall then love a thousand times more strongly and sweetly than now we can; and as all the attributes and works of God are incomprehensible, so is the attribute and work of love. He will love us many thousand times more than we even at the perfectest are able to love him. What joy, then, will there be in this mutual love!

Sect. VII. 5. Compare also the excellences of heaven with those glorious works of the creation which our eyes do now behold. What a deal of

[l] Cœlestia horum principia Deo nota sunt, atque ei qui Dei sit amicus, inquit Plato in Timæo. Docti ab indoctis perinde differunt, ut a viventibus mortui, ut sentit Aristoteles. Hoc interest inter doctum et indoctum, quod inter equum domitum et indomitum, ut Aristippus. Homini docto constat quando sit loquendum, quando tacendum, ut Jac. Grynæus in Aphorismis.

[m] Ferunt magnum Melancthonem dicere solitum, non credere se in universa Germania reperiri posse ullum, qui unicam integram paginam in Aristotelis organo recte intelligat. Cum hæc promissio complebitur, quid erimus? quales erimus? Quæ bona in illo regno accepturi sumus, qui Christo moriente pro nobis tale jam pignus accepimus? Qualis erit spiritus hominis nullum omnino habens vitium, nec sub quo jaceat, nec cui cedat, nec contra quod dimicet, pacatissima virtute perfectus! Rerum ibi omnium quanta, quam speciosa, quam certa scientia! Sine errore aliquo, vel labore, ubi Dei sapientia de ipso suo fonte potabitur cum summa felicitate, sine ulla difficultate? Aug. de Civitat. lib. xxii. cap. 24. p. 11. De felicitate inter libros commorantis, lege Senecam suavissime disserentem, lib. de Brevit. Vitæ, cap. 14, 15.

[n] Ibi hymnidici angelorum chori; ibi societas civium supernorum; ibi dulcis solemnitas a peregrinationis hujus tristi labore redeuntium; ibi festivitas sine fine, æternitas sine labe, serenitas sine nube. August. in Johan

wisdom, and power, and goodness, appeareth in and through them to a wise observer! What a deal of the majesty of the great Creator doth shine in the face of this fabric of the world! Surely his works are great and admirable, sought out of them that have pleasure therein.[o] This makes the study of natural philosophy so pleasant, because the works of God are so excellent. What rare workmanship is in the body of a man, yea, in the body of every beast, which makes the anatomical studies so delightful! What excellency in every plant we see! in the beauty of flowers; in the nature, diversity, and use of herbs; in fruits, in roots, in minerals, and what not! But especially if we look to the greater works; if we consider the whole body of this earth, and its creatures, and inhabitants; the ocean of waters, with its motions and dimensions; the variation of the seasons, and of the face of the earth; the intercourse of spring and fall, of summer and winter; what wonderful excellency do these contain! Why think, then, in thy meditations, if these things, which are but servants to sinful man, are yet so full of mysterious worth; what, then, is that place where God himself doth dwell, and is prepared for the just who are perfected with Christ! When thou walkest forth in the evening, look upon the stars how they glisten, and in what number they bespangle the firmament:[p] if in the day-time, look up to the glorious sun. View the wide-expanded, encompassing heavens, and say to thyself, What glory is in the least of yonder stars! what a vast, what a bright resplendent body hath yonder moon, and every planet! oh, what an unconceivable glory hath the sun! Why, all this is nothing to the glory of heaven! Yonder sun must there be laid aside as useless, for it would not be seen for the brightness of God. I shall live above all yonder glory; yonder is but darkness to the lustre of my Father's house. I shall be as glorious as that sun myself; yonder is but as the wall of the palace-yard; as the poet saith,

> "If in heaven's outward courts such beauty be,
> What is the glory which the saints do see!"

So think of the rest of the creatures. This whole earth is but my Father's footstool: this thunder is nothing to his dreadful voice: these winds are nothing to the breath of his mouth. So much wisdom and power as appeareth in all these; so much, and far much more greatness, and goodness, and loving delights, shall I enjoy in the actual fruition of God. Surely, if the rain which rains, and the sun which shines, on the just and unjust, be so wonderful; the Sun, then, which must shine on none but saints and angels, must needs be wonderful and ravishing in glory.[q]

Sect. VIII. 6. Compare the things which thou shalt enjoy above, with the excellency of those admirable works of providence which God doth exercise in the church and in the world. What glorious things hath the Lord wrought! and yet we shall see more glorious than these. Would it not be an astonishing sight to see the sea stand as a wall on the right-hand and on the left, and the dry land appear in the midst, and the people of Israel pass safely through, and Pharaoh and his people swallowed up? What if we should see but such a sight now? If we had seen the ten plagues of Egypt, or had seen the rock to gush forth streams, or had seen manna or quails rained down from heaven, or had seen the earth open, and swallow up the wicked, or had seen their armies slain with hailstones, with an angel, or by one another; would not all these have been wondrous, glorious sights? But we shall see far greater things than these: and as our sights shall be more wonderful, so also they shall be more sweet: there shall be no blood nor wrath intermingled. We shall not then cry out as David, "Who can stand before this holy Lord God?" Would it not have been an astonishing sight to have seen the sun stand still in the firmament, or to have seen Ahaz's dial go ten degrees backward? Why, we shall see when there shall be no sun to shine at all; we shall behold for ever a sun of more incomparable brightness. Were it not a brave life, if we might still live among wonders and miracles; and all for us, and not against us: if we could have drought or rain at our prayers, as Elias; or if we could call down fire from heaven to destroy our enemies; or raise the dead to life, as Elisha; or cure the diseased, and speak strange languages, as the apostles? Alas! these are nothing to the wonders which we shall see and possess with God; and all those wonders of goodness and love. We shall possess that pearl and power itself, through whose virtue all these works were done: we shall, ourselves, be the subjects of more wonderful mercies than any of these. Jonas was raised but from a three days' burial, from the belly of the whale in the deep ocean; but we shall be raised from many years' rottenness and dust; and that dust exalted to a sun-like glory, and that glory perpetuated to all eternity. What sayest thou, christian? Is not this the greatest of miracles or wonders? Surely, if we observe but common providences; the motions of the sun, the tides of the sea, the standing of the earth, the warming it, the watering it with rain as a garden, the keeping in order a wicked, confused world, with multitudes the like; they are all very admirable. But then to think of the Sion of God, of the vision of the divine Majesty, of the comely order of the heavenly host; what an admirable sight must that needs be! Oh what rare and mighty works have we seen in Britain; what clear discoveries of an Almighty arm; what magnifying of weakness; what casting down of strength; what wonders wrought by most improbable means; what bringing to hell, and bringing back; what turning of tears and fears into safety and joy; such hearing of earnest prayers, as if God could have denied us nothing that we asked! All these were wonderful, heart-rising works. But, oh! what are these to our full deliverance; to our final conquest; to our eternal triumph; and to that great day of great things?

Sect. IX. 7. Compare also the mercies which thou shalt have above, with those particular providences which thou hast enjoyed thyself, and those observable mercies which thou hast recorded through thy life.[r] If thou be a christian indeed, I know thou hast, if not in thy book, yet certainly in thy

[o] Psal. xcii. 4, 5; cxi. 2; cxlv. 6—12; x. 7, 22; cxxxvi. 4—6, &c.; Job xxxvi. 24—26.

[p] In civitate Dei, rex veritas, lex charitas, dignitas æquitas, pax felicitas, vita æternitas. Aug. de Civ. Dei.

[q] This month of April (in which Christ rose again, this resurrection-month) is the first month in the year; this rejoiceth all the creatures; this clotheth the naked trees; it openeth the earth; it gladdeth every living thing. This is the first month of christians, even the time of the resurrection, when their bodies shall be glorified by that light which now lies hid within them; that is, the Spirit, which then will be to them both clothing, meat, and drink, and joy, and peace, and ornament, and eternal life. Macarius, homil. 5.

[r] Temporalis vita æternæ comparata, mors est dicenda potius quam vita. Ipse enim quotidianus defectus corruptionis, quid est aliud quam prolixitas mortis? Quæ autem lingua dicere, vel quis intellectus capere sufficit illa supernæ civitatis quanta sint gaudia? Angelorum choris interesse, cum beatissimis spiritibus gloriæ conditoris assistere; præsentem Dei vultum cernere, incircumscriptum lumen videre, nullo mortis dolore affici, incorruptionis perpetuæ munere lætari? Gregor. in Homil.

heart, a great many precious favours upon record: the very remembrance and rehearsal of them is sweet; how much more sweet was the actual enjoyment! But all these are nothing to the mercies which are above. Look over the excellent mercies of thy youth and education, the mercies of thy riper years or age, the mercies of thy prosperity and of thy adversity, the mercies of thy several places and relations; are they not excellent and innumerable? Canst not thou think on the several places thou hast lived in, and remember that they have each had their several mercies; the mercies of such a place, and such a place; and all of them very rich and engaging mercies? Oh! how sweet was it to thee, when God resolved thy last doubts; when he overcame and silenced thy fears and unbelief; when he prevented the inconveniences of thy life, which thy own counsel would have cast thee into; when he eased thy pains; when he healed thy sickness, and raised thee up as from the very grave and death; when thou prayedst and wept as Hezekiah, and saidst, "My days are cut off; I shall go to the gates of the grave; I am deprived of the residue of my years. I said, I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord in the land of the living: I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world. Mine age is departed and removed from me as a shepherd's tent: I have cut off, like a weaver, my life. He will cut me off with pining sickness: from day to day wilt thou make an end of me, &c. Yet did he, in love to thy soul, deliver it from the pit of corruption, and cast thy sins behind his back, and set thee among the living, to praise him as thou dost this day; that the fathers to the children might make known his truth. The Lord was ready to save thee, that thou mightest sing the songs of praise to him in his house all the days of thy life," Isa. xxxviii. 10—20. I say, were not all these most precious mercies? Alas! these are but small things for thee in the eyes of God; he intended thee far greater things than these, even such as these are scarce a taste of. It was a choice mercy, that God hath so notably answered thy prayers; and that thou hast been so oft and evidently a prevailer with him. But, oh! think, then, are all these so sweet and precious, that my life would have been a perpetual misery without them? Hath his providence lifted me so high on earth, and his merciful kindness made me great? How sweet, then, will the glory of his presence be; and how high will his eternal love exalt me; and how great shall I be made in communion with his greatness! If my pilgrimage and warfare have such mercies, what shall I find in my home, and in my triumph! If God will communicate so much to me while I remain a sinner, what will he bestow when I am a perfect saint! If I have had so much in this strange country, at such a distance from him; what shall I have in heaven in his immediate presence, where I shall ever stand about his throne!

Sect. X. 8. Compare the comforts which thou shalt have above, with those which thou hast here received in the ordinances. Hath not the written word been to thee as an open fountain, flowing with comforts day and night? When thou hast been in trouble, there thou hast met with refreshing; when thy faith hath staggered, it hath there been confirmed. What suitable scriptures hath the Spirit set before thee! what seasonable promises have come into thy mind, so that thou mayst say with David, "If thy word had not been my delight, I had perished in my trouble!" Think, then, if the word be so full of consolations, what overflowing springs shall we find in God! If his letters are so comfortable, what are the words that flow from his blessed lips, and the beams that stream from his glorious face! If Luther would not take all the world for one leaf of the Bible, what would he take for the joys which it revealeth! If the promise be so sweet, what is the performance! If the testament of our Lord, and our charter for the kingdom, be so comfortable, what will be our possession of the kingdom itself! Think further, what delights have I also found in this word preached, when I have sat under a heavenly, heart-searching teacher; how hath my heart been warmed within me; how hath he melted me, and turned my bowels! methinks I have felt myself almost in heaven: methinks I could have been content to have sat and heard from morning to night; I could even have lived and died there. How oft have I gone to the congregation troubled in spirit, and returned home with quietness and delight! How oft have I gone doubting, concluding damnation against my own soul; and God hath sent me home with my doubts resolved, and satisfied me, and persuaded me of his love in Christ! How oft have I gone with darkness and doubtings in my judgment, and God hath opened to me such precious truths, and opened also my understanding to see them, that his light hath been exceeding comfortable to my soul! What cordials have I met with in my saddest afflictions! What preparatives to fortify me for the next encounter! Well then, if Moses's face do shine so gloriously, what glory is in the face of God! If the very feet of the messengers of these tidings of peace be beautiful, how beautiful is the face of the Prince of peace![s] If the word in the mouth of a fellow-servant be so pleasant, what is the living Word himself! If this treasure be so precious in earthen vessels, what is that treasure laid up in heaven! Think with thyself, If I had heard but such a divine prophet as Isaiah, or such a persuading, moving prophet as Jeremy, or such a worker of miracles as Elijah or Elisha; how delightful a hearing would this have been! If I had heard but Peter, or John, or Paul, I should rejoice in it as long as I lived; but what would I give, that I had heard one sermon from the mouth of Christ himself! Sure I should have felt the comfort of it in my very soul: why, but, alas! all this is nothing to what we shall have above.[t] Oh blessed are the eyes that see what there is seen, and the ears that hear the things that there are heard! there shall I hear Elias, Isaiah, Daniel, Peter, John, not preaching to an obstinate people in imprisonment, in persecutions, and reproach, but triumphing in the praises of him that hath advanced them. Austin was wont to wish these three wishes: First, That he might have seen Christ in the flesh: Secondly, That he might

[s] Duræus cum diem recordaretur quo primo Melancthonem legentem audisset, illud recitare solebat, quod in suis initiationibus canunt pontificii. Quem vidi, quem amavi, quem dilexi.

[t] Patriam nostram paradisum computamus, parentes patriarchas habere jam cœpimus. Quid non properamus et currimus ut patriam nostram videre, ut parentes salutare possimus? Magnus illic nos charorum numerus expectat, parentum, fratrum, filiorum, frequens nos et copiosa turba desiderat, jam de sua immortalitate secura, et adhuc de nostra salute solicita. Ad horum conspectum et complexum venire, quanta et illis et nobis in commune lætitia est? Qualis illic cœlestium regnorum voluptas, sine timore moriendi, et cum æternitate vivendi? Quam summa et perpetua fœlicitas? Illic apostolorum gloriosus chorus; illic prophetarum exultantium numerus; illic martyrum innumerabilis populus, ob certaminis et passionis victoriam coronatus; triumphantes illic virgines, quæ concupiscentiam carnis et corporis continentiæ robore subegerunt. Remunerati misericordes qui alimentis et largitionibus pauperum justitiæ opera fecerunt, &c. Cyprian. de Immortalitate.

have heard Paul preach: Thirdly, That he might have seen Rome in its glory. Alas! these are small matters all, to that which Austin now beholds: there we see not Christ in the form of a servant, but Christ in his kingdom, in majesty and glory; not Paul preach in weakness and contempt, but Paul with millions more rejoicing and triumphing; not persecuting Rome in a fading glory, but Jerusalem which is above, in perfect and lasting glory.

So also think, what a joy it is to have access and acceptance in prayer; that when any thing aileth me, I may go to God, and open my case, and unbosom my soul to him, as to my most faithful friend; especially knowing his sufficiency and willingness to relieve me! Oh, but it will be a more surpassing, unspeakable joy, when I shall receive all blessings without asking them, and when all my necessities and miseries are removed, and when God himself will be the portion and inheritance of my soul.

What consolation also have we oft received in the supper of the Lord! What a privilege is it to be admitted to sit at his table; to have his covenant sealed to me by the outward ordinance, and his special love sealed by his Spirit to my heart! Why, but all the life and comfort of these, is their declaring and assuring me of the comforts hereafter: their use is but darkly to signify and seal those higher mercies: when I shall indeed drink with him the fruit of the vine renewed, it will then be a pleasant feast indeed. Oh the difference between the last supper of Christ on earth, and the marriage supper of the Lamb at the great day! Here he is in an upper room, accompanied with twelve poor selected men, feeding on no curious dainties, but a paschal lamb with sour herbs, and a Judas at his table ready to betray him; but then his room will be the glorious heavens, his attendants all the host of angels and saints: no Judas nor unfurnished guest comes there; but the humble believers must sit down by him, and the feast will be their mutual loving and rejoicing. Yet further, think with thyself thus: The communion of the saints on earth is a most delectable mercy: what a pleasure is it to live with understanding and heavenly christians! Even David saith, they were all his delight, Psal. xvi. Oh, then, what a delightful society shall I have above! The communion of saints is there somewhat worth, where their understandings are fully cleared, and their affections so highly advanced. If I had seen but Job in his sores upon the dunghill, it would have been an excellent sight to see such a mirror of patience: what will it be then to see him in glory, praising that power which did uphold and deliver him! If I had heard but Paul and Silas singing in the stocks, it would have been a delightful hearing: what will it be then to hear them sing praises in heaven! If I had heard David sing praises on his lute and harp, it would have been a pleasing melody; and that which drove the evil spirit from Saul, would sure have driven away the dulness and sadness of my spirit, and have been to me as the music was to Elisha, that the Spirit of Christ in joy would have come upon me: why, I shall shortly hear that sweet singer in the heavenly choir advancing the King of saints; and will not that be a far more melodious hearing? If I had spoken with Paul when he was new come down from the third heavens, and he might have revealed to me the things which he had seen; oh what would I give for an hour's such conference! how far would I go to hear such a narration! Why, I must shortly see those very things myself; yea, and far more than Paul was then capable of seeing; and yet I shall see no more than I shall possess. If I had but spoken one hour with Lazarus when he was risen from the dead, and heard him describe the things which he had seen in another world, if God would permit and enable him thereto, what a joyful discourse would that have been! How many thousand books may I read, before I could know so much as he could have told me in that hour! If God would have suffered him to tell what he had seen, the Jews would have more thronged to hear him, than they did to see him: O, but this would have been nothing to the sight itself, and to the fruition of all that which Lazarus saw.[u]

Once again, think with thyself what a soul-raising employment is the praising of God, especially in consort with his affectionate saints! What if I had been in the place of those shepherds, and seen the angels, and heard the multitude of the heavenly hosts praising God, and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men," Luke ii. 13, 14; what a glorious sight and hearing would this have been! But I shall see and hear more glorious things than this. If I had stood by Christ when he was thanking his Father, (John xvii.) I should have thought mine ears even blessed with his voice; how much more when I shall hear him pronounce me blessed! If there were such great joy at the bringing back of the ark, (2 Sam. vi. 15,) and such great joy at the re-edifying the material temple, (Neh. xii. 43,) what joy will there be in the new Jerusalem! Why, if I could but see the church here in unity and prosperity, what an unspeakable joy to my soul would it be! If I could see the congregations provided with able teachers, and the people receiving and obeying the gospel, and longing for reformation in life and manners; oh what a blessed place were England! If I could see our ignorance turned into knowledge, and error turned into soundness of understanding, and shallow professors into solid believers, and brethren living in amity and in the life of the Spirit; oh what a fortunate island were this! Alas, alas! what is all this to the reformation in heaven, and to the blessed condition that we must live in there? There is another kind of change and glory than this. What great joy had the people, and David himself, to see them so willingly offer to the service of the Lord; and what an excellent psalm of praise doth David thereupon compose! 1 Chron. xxix. 9, 10, &c. When Solomon was anointed king in Jerusalem, the people rejoiced with so great joy, that the earth rent at the sound of them, 1 Kings i. 40; what a joyful shout will there be, then, at the appearing of the King to the church! If when the foundations of the earth were fastened, and the corner-stone thereof was laid, the morning-stars did sing together, and all the sons of God did shout for joy, Job xxxviii. 6, 7; why then, when our glorious world is both founded and finished, and the corner-stone appeareth to be the top-stone also, and the holy city is adorned as the bride of the Lamb; O sirs, what a joyful shout will then be heard!

Sect. XI. 9. Compare the joy which thou shalt have in heaven, with that which the saints of God have found in the way to it, and in the foretastes of it; when thou seest a heavenly man rejoice, think what it is that so affects him. It is the property of fools to rejoice in toys, and to laugh at nothing; but the people of God are wiser than so, they know what it is that makes them glad. When did God ever re-

[u] Erit ibi Deus omnia in omnibus, et illius præsentia omnes animæ et corporis implebit appetitus; cessabunt quæ de cætero consummatis omnibus, ministratorii angelicarum virtutum discursus. Et impleta ordinataque omnino civitate Dei; nec innovabitur, nec mutabitur ultra fixæ et consummatæ beatitudinis status. Cyprian. de Laude Martyr.

veal the least of himself to any of his saints, but the joy of their hearts was answerable to the revelation? Paul was so lifted up with what he saw, that he was in danger of being exalted above measure, and must have a prick in the flesh to keep him down. When Peter had seen but Christ in his transfiguration, which was but a small glimpse of his glory, and had seen Moses and Elias talking with him; what a rapture and ecstasy is he cast into! "Master," saith he, "it is good for us to be here; let us here build three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias:" as if he should say, O let us not go down again to yonder persecuting rabble; let us not go down again to yonder drossy, dirty world; let us not return to our mean and suffering state: is it not better that we stay here, now we are here; is not here better company, and sweeter pleasures? But the text saith, "He knew not what he said," Matt. xvii. 4. When Moses had been talking with God in the mount, it made his visage so shining and glorious, that the people could not endure to behold it, but he was fain to put a veil upon it: no wonder then if the face of God must be veiled, till we are come to that state where we shall be more capable of beholding him, when the veil shall be taken away, and we all beholding him with open face, shall be turned into the same image from glory to glory, 2 Cor. iii. 16—18. Alas! what are the back parts which Moses saw from the clefts of the rock, to that open face which we shall behold hereafter? what is that revelation to John in Patmos, to this revelation which we shall have in heaven? How short doth Paul's vision come of the saints' vision above with God! How small a part of the glory which we must see, was that which so transported Peter in the mount! I confess these were all extraordinary foretastes, but little to the full beatifical vision. When David foresaw the resurrection of Christ, and of himself, and the pleasures which he should have for ever at God's right hand; how doth it make him break forth and say, "Therefore my heart was glad, and my glory rejoiceth, my flesh also shall rest in hope!" Psal. xvi. 9. Why, think, then, if the foresight can raise such ravishing joy, what will the actual possession do! How oft have we read and heard of the dying saints, who, when they had scarce strength and life enough to express them, have been as full of joy as their hearts could hold; and when their bodies have been under the extremities of their sickness, yea, ready to feel the pangs of death, have yet had so much of heaven in their spirits, that their joy hath far surpassed their sorrows. And if a spark of this fire be so glorious, and that in the midst of the sea of adversity, what then is that Sun of glory itself! Oh the joy that the martyrs of Christ have felt in the midst of the scorching flames! Sure they had life and sense as we, and were flesh and blood as well as we; therefore it must needs be some excellent thing that must so rejoice their souls, while their bodies were burning: when Bilney can burn his finger in the candle, and Cranmer can burn off his unworthy right hand; when Bainham can call the papists to see a miracle, and tell them that he feels no more pain than in a bed of down, and that the fire was to him as a bed of roses; when Farrier can say, If I stir believe not my doctrine:[x] I think then, reader, with thyself in thy meditations; Sure it must be some wonderful foretasted glory that can do all this, that can make the flames of fire easy, and that can make the king of fears so welcome. Oh what then must this glory itself needs be; when the very thoughts of it can bring Paul into such a strait, that he desired to depart and be with Christ, as best of all![y] when it can make men never think themselves well, till they are dead! Oh what a blessed rest is this! Shall Sanders so delightfully embrace the stake, and cry out, "Welcome cross!" and shall not I more delightfully embrace my blessedness, and cry, "Welcome crown!" Shall blessed Bradford kiss the faggot, and shall not I then kiss the Son himself? Shall the poor martyr rejoice that she might have her foot in the same hole of the stocks that Mr. Philpot's foot had been in before her; and shall not I rejoice, that my soul shall live in the same place of glory, where Christ and his apostles are gone before me? Shall fire and faggot, shall prisons and banishment, shall scorns and cruel torments, be more welcome to others, than Christ and glory shall be to me? God forbid. What thanks did Lucius the martyr give them, that they would send him to Christ from his ill masters on earth! how desirously did Basil wish, when his persecutors threatened his death the next day, that they might not change their resolution, lest he should miss of his expectation![z] What thanks then shall I give my Lord, for removing me from this loathsome prison to his glory! and how loth should I be to be deprived thereof! When Luther thought he should die of an apoplexy, it comforted him, and made him more willing, because the good duke of Saxony, and, before him, the apostle John, had died of that disease: how much more should I be willing to pass the way that Christ hath passed, and come to the glory where Christ is gone! If Luther could thereupon say, *Feri, Domine, feri clementer; ipse paratus sum, quia verbo tuo a peccatis absolutus;* Strike, Lord, strike gently; I am ready, because by thy word I am absolved from my sins; how much more cheerfully should I cry, Come, Lord, and advance me to this glory, and repose my weary soul in rest!

Sect. XII. 10. Compare also the glory of the heavenly kingdom[a] with the glory of the imperfect church on earth, and with the glory of Christ in his state of humiliation, and you may easily conclude, if Christ under his Father's wrath, and Christ standing in the room of sinners, were so wonderful in excellences, what then is Christ at the Father's right hand? And if the church, under her sins and enemies, have so much beauty, something it will have at the marriage of the Lamb. How wonderful was the Son of God in the form of a servant! When he is born, the heavens must proclaim him by miracles; a new star must appear in the firmament, and fetch men from remote parts of the world to worship him in a manger; the angels and heavenly host must declare his nativity, and solemnize it with praising and glorifying God. When he is but a child, he must dispute with the doctors, and confute them. When he sets upon his office, his whole life is a wonder: water turned into wine; thousands fed with five loaves and two fishes; multitudes following him to see his miracles; the lepers cleansed; the sick healed; the lame restored; the blind receive their sight; the dead raised. If we had seen all this,

[x] Sancti martyres præsentem vitam non despexissent, nisi certiorem animarum vitam subsequi scirent. Greg. Dial. lib. iv.

[y] Nihil eius sentit in nervo, quum animus est in cœlo. Tertul. ad Martyr.

[z] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. xiv. cap. 17. Id. lib. xi. cap. 9.

[a] Cum Christo semper vivemus, facti per ipsum filii Dei: cum ipso exultabimus semper, ipsius cruore reparati. Erimus Christiani cum Christo simul gloriosi, de Deo Patre beati, de perpetua voluptate lætantes; semper in conspectu Dei, et agentes Deo gratias semper. Neque enim poterit nisi et lætus esse semper et gratus, qui cum morti fuisset obnoxius, factus est de immortalitate securus. Cyprian. ad Demet.

should we not have thought it wonderful? The most desperate diseases cured with a touch, with a word speaking; the blind eyes with a little clay and spittle; the devils departing by legions at command; the winds and the seas obeying his word; are not all these wonderful? Think, then, how wonderful is his celestial glory! If there be such cutting down of boughs, and spreading of garments, and crying, "Hosanna," to one that comes into Jerusalem riding on an ass, what will there be when he comes with his angels in his glory! If they that hear him preach the gospel of the kingdom, have their hearts turned within them, that they return and say, "Never man spake like this man," then sure they that behold his majesty in his kingdom will say, There was never glory like this glory. If, when his enemies come to apprehend him, the word of his mouth doth cast them all to the ground; if, when he is dying, the earth must tremble, the veil of the temple rend, the sun in the firmament must hide its face, and deny its light to the sinful world, and the dead bodies of the saints arise, and the standers-by be forced to acknowledge, "Verily this was the Son of God;" oh, then, what a day will it be when he will once more shake, not the earth only, but the heavens also, and remove the things that are shaken; when this sun shall be taken out of the firmament, and be everlastingly darkened with the brightness of his glory; when the dead must all arise, and stand before him, and all shall acknowledge him to be the Son of God, and every tongue confess him to be Lord and King! If, when he riseth again, the grave and death have lost their power, and the angels of heaven must roll away the stone, and astonish the watchmen till they are as dead men, and send the tidings to his dejected disciples; if the bolted doors cannot keep him forth; if the sea be as firm ground for him to walk on; if he can ascend to heaven in the sight of his disciples, and send the angels to forbid them gazing after him; oh what power, and dominion, and glory, then, is he now possessed of, and must we for ever possess with him! Yet think further: are his very servants enabled to do such miracles, when he is gone from them? can a few poor fishermen, and tent-makers, and the like mechanics, cure the lame, and blind, and sick; open their prisons; destroy the disobedient; raise the dead; and astonish their adversaries? oh then, what a world will that be, where every one can do greater works than these, and shall be highlier honoured than by the doing of wonders! It were much to have the devils subject to us, but more to have our names written in the book of life. If the very preaching of the gospel be accompanied with such power, that it will pierce the heart, and discover its secrets, bring down the proud, and make the stony sinner tremble; if it can make men burn their books, sell their lands, bring in the price and lay it down at the preacher's feet; if it can make the spirits of princes stoop, and the kings of the earth resign their crowns, and do their homage to Jesus Christ; if it can subdue kingdoms, and convert thousands, and turn the world thus upside down; if the very mention of the judgment, and life to come, can make the judge on the bench to tremble, when the prisoner at the bar doth preach this doctrine; oh what then is the glory of the kingdom itself! What an absolute dominion have Christ and his saints! And if they have this power and honour in the day of their abasement, and in the time appointed for their suffering and disgrace, what then will they have in their full advancement!

Sect. XIII. 11. Compare the mercies thou shalt have above with the mercies which Christ hath here bestowed on thy soul, and the glorious change which thou shalt have at last with the gracious change which the Spirit hath wrought on thy heart; compare the comforts of thy glorification with the comforts of thy sanctification. There is not the smallest grace in thee which is genuine and sincere, but is of greater worth than the riches of the Indies; not a hearty desire, and groan after Christ, but is more to be valued than the kingdoms of the world. A renewed nature is the very image of God. Scripture calleth it by the name of "Christ dwelling in us," and, "the Spirit of God abiding in us."[b] It is a beam from the face of God himself; it is the seed of God remaining in us; it is the only inherent beauty of the rational soul; it ennobleth man above all nobility; it fitteth him to understand his Maker's pleasure, to do his will, and to receive his glory: why think, then, with thyself, if this grain of mustard-seed be so precious, what is the tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God! If a spark of life, which will but strive against corruptions, and flame out a few desires and groans, be so much worth, how glorious, then, is the fountain and end of this life! If we be said to be like God, and to bear his image, and to be holy as he is holy, when, alas! we are pressed down with a body of sin; sure we shall then be much liker God, when we are perfectly holy, and without blemish, and have no such thing as sin within us! Is the desire of heaven so precious a thing, what then is the thing itself which is desired! Is the love so excellent, what then is the Beloved! Is our joy in foreseeing and believing so sweet, what will be the joy in the full possessing! Oh the delight that a christian hath in the lively exercise of some of these affections! What good doth it to his very heart, when he can feelingly say he loves his Lord! What sweetness is there in the very act of loving! Yea, even those troubling passions of sorrow and fear, are yet delightful, when they are rightly exercised. How glad is a poor christian when he feeleth his heart begin to melt, and when the thoughts of sinful unkindness will dissolve it! Even this sorrow doth yield him matter of joy. Oh what will it then be, when we shall do nothing but know God, and love, and rejoice, and praise, and all this in the highest perfection! What a comfort is it to my doubting soul, when I have a little assurance of the sincerity of my graces; when, upon examination, I can but trace the Spirit in his sanctifying works! How much more will it comfort me to find that the Spirit hath safely conducted me, and left me in the arms of Jesus Christ! What a change was it that the Spirit made upon my soul, when he first turned me from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God: to be taken from that horrid state of nature, wherein myself and my actions were loathsome to God, and the sentence of death was passed upon me, and the Almighty took me for his utter enemy; and to be presently numbered among his saints, and called his friend, his servant, his son; and the sentence revoked which was gone forth; oh what a change was this! To be taken from that state wherein I was born, and had lived delightfully so many years, and was riveted in it by custom and engagements, when thousands of sins did lie upon my score, and if I had so died I had been damned for ever; and to be justified from all these enormous crimes, and freed from all these fearful plagues, and put into the title of an heir of heaven; oh what an

[b] Hear a heathen: Inter bonos viros et Deum amicitia est, conciliante virtute. Amicitiam dico? Immo etiam necessitudo, et similitudo; quoniam bonus ipse tempore tantum a Deo differt, discipulus ejus, æmulatorque et vera progenies, quem parens ille magnificus, virtutum non lenis exactor, sicut severi patres, durius educat. Seneca, Cum bonis mala, cap. 1. p. 79.

astonishing change was this! Why, then, consider, how much greater will that glorious change then be; beyond expressing; beyond conceiving! How oft, when I have thought of this change in my regeneration, have I cried out, O blessed day, and blessed be the Lord that I ever saw it! Why, how then should I cry out in heaven, O blessed eternity, and blessed be the Lord that brought me to it! Was the mercy of my conversion so exceeding great, that the angels of God did rejoice to see it? Sure, then, the mercy of my salvation will be so great, that the same angels will congratulate my felicity. This grace is but a spark that is raked up in the ashes. It is covered with flesh from the sight of the world, and covered with corruption sometimes from mine own sight; but my everlasting glory will not be so clouded, nor my light be under a bushel, but upon a hill, even upon Sion, the mount of God.

Sect. XIV. 12. Lastly, Compare the joys which thou shalt have above, with those foretastes of it, which the Spirit hath given thee here.[c] Judge of the lion by the paw, and of the ocean of joy by that drop which thou hast tasted. Thou hast here thy strongest refreshing comforts, but as that man in hell would have had the water to cool him, a little upon the tip of the finger for thy tongue to taste, yet by this little thou mayst conjecture at the quality of the whole. Hath not God sometimes revealed himself extraordinarily to thy soul, and let a drop of glory fall upon it? Hast thou not been ready to say, Oh that it might be thus with my soul continually, and that I might always feel what I feel sometimes? Didst thou never cry out with the martyr after thy long and doleful expectations, He is come, he is come? Didst thou never, in a lively sermon of heaven, nor in thy retired contemplations on that blessed state, perceive thy drooping spirits revive, and thy dejected heart to lift up the head; and the light of heaven to break forth to thy soul, as a morning star, or as the dawning of the day? Didst thou never perceive thy heart in these duties, to be as the child that Elisha revived? to wax warm within thee, and to recover life? Why, think with thyself, then, what is the earnest to this full inheritance? Alas! all this light that so amazeth and rejoiceth me, is but a candle lighted from heaven, to lead me thither through this world of darkness! If the light of a star in the night be such, or the little glimmering at the break of the day, what then is the light of the sun at noontide? If some godly men that we read of, have been overwhelmed with joy, till they have cried out, Hold, Lord, stay thy hand; I can bear more! like weak eyes that cannot endure too great a light; oh what will then be my joys in heaven, when, as the object of my joy shall be the most glorious God, so my soul shall be made capable of seeing and enjoying him. And though the light be ten thousand times greater than the sun's, yet my eyes shall be able for ever to behold it.

Or, if thou be one that hast not felt yet these sweet foretastes, (for every believer hath not felt them,) then make use of the former delights which thou hast felt, that thou mayst the better discern what hereafter thou shalt feel.

And thus I have done with the fifth part of this directory, and showed you on what grounds to advance your meditations, and how to get them to quicken your affections, by comparing the unseen delights of heaven with those smaller which you have seen and felt in the flesh.

[c] Ibi non gustabunt quam suavis sit Deus, sed implebuntur et satiabuntur dulcedine mirifica. Nihil eis deerit; nihil aberit: omne desiderium eorum Christus præsens implebit. Non senescent, non tabescent, non putrescent amplius. Perpetua sanitas, fœlix æternitas, beatitudinis illius sufficientiam confirmabunt. Non erit concupiscentia in membris, non ultra ulla exsurget rebellio carnis: sed totus status hominis pacificus, sine omni macula et ruga permanebit. Cyprian. de Laude Martyr. Quæcunque supra cœlum sunt mentes et formæ, Olympici illius habitaculi cives, si non eadem atque Deus, illi tamen dignitate et natura proximum conditionem acceperunt. Fernel. de Abdit. Rerum Causis, cap. 9. ex Platone.

CHAPTER XII.

HOW TO MANAGE AND WATCH OVER THE HEART THROUGH THE WHOLE WORK.

Sect. I. Sixthly: The sixth and last part of this directory is, to guide you in the managing of your hearts through this work, and to show you wherein you have need to be exceeding watchful. I have showed before what must be done with your hearts in your preparations to the work, and in your setting upon it; I shall now show it you in respect of the time of performance. Our chief work will here be, to discover to you the danger, and that will direct you to the fittest remedy. Let me therefore here acquaint you beforehand, that whenever you set upon this heavenly employment, you shall find your own hearts your greatest hinderer, and they will prove false to you in one or all of these four degrees. First, They will hold off, that you will hardly get them to the work. Secondly, Or else they will betray you by their idleness in the work, pretending to do it, when they do it not. Or, Thirdly, They will interrupt the work by their frequent excursions, and turning aside to every object. Or, Fourthly, They will spoil the work by cutting it short, and be gone before you have done any good on it. Therefore I here forewarn you, as you value the invaluable comfort of this work, that you faithfully resist these four dangerous evils, or else all that I have said hitherto is in vain.

1. Thou shalt find thy heart as backward to this, I think, as to any work in the world. Oh what excuses it will make; what evasions it will find out; and what delays and demurs, when it is never so much convinced! Either it will question whether it be a duty or not; or if it be so to others, yet whether it be so to thee. It will take up any thing like reason to plead against it; it will tell thee that this is a work for ministers that have nothing else to study on; or for cloisterers or persons that have more leisure than thou hast. If thou be a minister, it will tell thee, This is the duty of the people; it is enough for thee to meditate for the instructing of them, and let them meditate on what they have heard; as if it were thy duty only to cook their meat, and serve it up, and perhaps a little to taste the sweetness, by licking thy fingers while thou art dressing it for others; but it is they only that must eat it, digest it, and live upon it. Indeed, the smell may a little refresh thee, but it must be digesting it that must maintain thy strength and life. If all this will not serve, thy heart will tell thee of other business; thou hast this company stays for thee, or that business must be done. It may be, it will set thee upon some other duty, and so make one duty shut out another; for it had rather go to any duty than to this. Perhaps it will tell thee that other duties are greater, and therefore this must give place to them, because thou

hast not time for both. Public business is of more concernment; to study, to preach for the saving of souls, must be preferred before these private contemplations: as if thou hadst no time to see to the saving of thine own soul, for looking after others; or thy charity to others were so great, that it draws thee to neglect thy comfort and salvation; or, as if there were any better way to fit us to be useful to others, than to make this experience of our doctrine ourselves! Certainly heaven, where is the Father of lights, is the best fire to light our candle at, and the best book for a preacher to study; and, if they would be persuaded to study that more, the church would be provided of more heavenly lights; and when their studies are divine, and their spirits divine, their preaching will then be also divine, and they may be fitly called divines indeed: or if thy heart have nothing to say against the work, then it will trifle away the time in delays, and promise this day and the next, but still keep off from the doing of the business: or lastly, if thou wilt not be so baffled with excuses or delays, thy heart will give thee a flat denial, and oppose its own unwillingness to thy reason; thou shalt find it come to the work as a bear to the stake, and draw back with all the strength it hath. I speak all this of the heart so far as it is carnal, (which in too great a measure is in the best,) for I know so far as the heart is spiritual, it will judge this work the sweetest in the world.

Well, then, what is to be done in the forementioned case? Wilt thou do it, if I tell thee? Why, what wouldst thou do with a servant that were thus backward to his work; or to thy beast that should draw back when thou wouldst have him go forward? Wouldst not thou first persuade, and then chide, and then spur him, and force him on; and take no denial, nor let him alone till thou hadst got him closely to fall to his work? Wouldst thou not say, Why, what should I do with a servant that will not work; or with an ox or horse that will not travel or labour? Shall I keep them to look on? Wilt thou then faithfully deal thus with thy heart? If thou be not a lazy, self-deluding hypocrite, say, I will, by the help of God, I will. Set upon thy heart roundly, persuade it to the work, take no denial; chide it for its backwardness: use violence with it; bring it to the service, willing or not willing. Art thou the master of thy flesh, or art thou a servant to it? Hast thou no command of thy own thoughts? Cannot thy will choose the subject of thy meditations, especially when thy judgment thus directeth thy will? I am sure God once gave thee mastery over thy flesh, and some power to govern thy own thoughts; hast thou lost thy authority? art thou become a slave to thy depraved nature? Take up the authority again which God hath given thee; command thy heart; if it rebel, use violence with it. If thou be too weak, call in the Spirit of Christ to thine assistance. He is never backward to so good a work, nor will deny his help to so just a cause. God will be ready to help thee, if thou be not unwilling to help thyself. Say to him, Why, Lord, thou gavest my reason the command of my thoughts and affections; the authority I have received over them is from thee, and now, behold, they refuse to obey thine authority. Thou commandest me to set them to the work of heavenly meditation, but they rebel, and stubbornly refuse the duty. Wilt thou not assist me to execute that authority which thou hast given me? Oh, send me down thy Spirit and power, that I may enforce thy commands, and effectually compel them to obey thy will.

And thus doing, thou shalt see thy heart will submit; its resistance will be brought under, and its backwardness will be turned to a yielding compliance.

Sect. II. 2. When thou hast got thy heart to the work, beware lest it delude thee by a loitering formality; lest it say, I go, and go not; lest it trifle out the time, while it should be effectually meditating. Certainly, the heart is as likely to betray thee in this, as in any one particular about the duty; when thou hast perhaps but an hour's time for thy meditation, the time will be spent before thy heart will be serious. This doing of duty as if we did it not, doth undo as many as the flat omission of it. To rub out the hour in a bare, lazy thinking of heaven, is but to lose that hour, and delude thyself. Well, what is to be done in this case? Why, do here also as you do by a loitering servant; keep thine eye always upon thy heart; look not so much to the time it spendeth in the duty, as to the quantity and quality of the work that is done. You can tell by his work whether your servant hath been painful; ask, What affections have yet been acted? how much am I yet got nearer heaven? Verily, many a man's heart must be followed as close in this duty of meditation, as a horse in a mill, or an ox at the plough, that will go no longer than you are calling or scourging. If you cease driving but a moment, the heart will stand still; and perhaps the best hearts have much of this temper.

I would not have thee of the judgment of those, who think that while they are so backward, it is better let it alone; and that if mere love will not bring them to the duty, but there must be all this violence used to compel it, that then the service is worse than the omission. These men understand not, First, That this argument would certainly cashier all spiritual obedience, because the hearts of the best being but partly sanctified, will still be resisting so far as they are carnal: Secondly, Nor do they understand well the corruptness of their own natures: Thirdly, Nor, that their sinful undisposedness will not baffle or suspend the commands of God: Fourthly, Nor one sin excuse another: Fifthly, Especially they little know the way of God to excite their affections; and that the love which should compel them, must itself be first compelled, in the same sense as it is said to compel. Love, I know, is a most precious grace, and should have the chief interest in all our duties: but there be means appointed by God to procure this love; and shall I not use those means, till I can use them from love? That were to neglect the means, till I have the end. Must I not seek to procure love, till I have it already? There are means also for the increasing of love where it is begun; and means for the exciting of it where it lieth dull; and must I not use these means, till it is increased and excited? Why this reasoning, considering duty that we are in hand with, is the most singular means, both to stir up thy love, and to increase it; and therefore stay not from the duty till thou feel thy love constrain thee, that were to stay from the fire till thou feel thyself warm; but fall upon the work till thou art constrained to love, and then love will constrain thee to further duty.

My jealousy, lest thou shouldst miscarry by these sottish opinions, hath made me more tedious in the opening of their error. Let nothing therefore hinder thee while thou art upon the work, from plying thy heart with constant watchfulness and constraint, seeing thou hast such experience of its dulness and backwardness: let the spur be never out of its side; and whenever it slacks pace, be sure to give it a remembrance.

Sect. III. 3. As thy heart will be loitering, so

will it be diverting. It will be turning aside like a careless servant, to talk with every one that passeth by. When there should be nothing in thy mind but the work in hand, it will be thinking of thy calling, or thinking of thy afflictions, or of every bird, or tree, or place thou seest, or of any impertinency, rather than of heaven. Thy heart in this also will be like the husbandman's ox or horse: if he drive not, he will not go; and if he guide not, he will not keep the furrow; and it is as good stand still, as go out of the way. Experience will tell thee thou wilt have much ado with thy heart in this point, to keep it one hour to the work, without many extravagances, and idle cogitations. The cure here is the same with that before, to use watchfulness and violence with your own imaginations, and as soon as they step out to chide them in. Say to thy heart, What! did I come hither to think of my business in the world; to think of places and persons, of news or vanity, yea, or of any thing but heaven, be it never so good? What! canst thou not watch one hour? Wouldst thou leave this world, and dwell in heaven with Christ for ever? and canst thou not leave it one hour out of thy thoughts, nor dwell with Christ in one hour's close meditation? Ask thy heart, as Absalom did Hushai, Is this thy love to thy friend? Dost thou love Christ, and the place of thy eternal, blessed abode, no more than so? When Pharaoh's butler dreamed that he pressed the ripe grapes into Pharaoh's cup, and delivered the cup into the king's hand, it was a happy dream, and signified his speedy access to the king's presence; but the dream of the baker, that the birds did eat out of the basket on his head the baked meats prepared for Pharaoh, had an ill omen, and signified his hanging, and their eating of his flesh, Gen. xl. 10, 11, &c. So when the ripened grapes of heavenly meditation are pressed by thee into the cup of affection, and this put into the hands of Christ by delightful praises, if thou take me for skilful, this is the interpretation, that thou shalt shortly be taken from this prison where thou liest, and be set before Christ in the court of heaven, and there serve up to him that cup of praise, but much fuller and much sweeter, for ever and ever. But if the ravenous fowls of wandering thoughts do devour the meditations intended for heaven, I will not say flatly, it signifies thy death; but this I will say, that so far as these intrude, they will be the death of that service; and if thou ordinarily admit them, that they devour the life and the joy of thy thoughts; and if thou continue in such a way of duty to the end, it signifies the death of thy soul, as well as of thy service. Drive away these birds of prey, then, from thy sacrifice, and strictly keep thy heart to the work thou art upon.

Sect. IV. 4. Lastly, Be sure also to look to thy heart in this, that it cut not off the work before the time, and run not away through weariness, before it have leave. Thou shalt find it will be exceeding prone to this, like the ox that would unyoke, or the horse that would be unburdened, and perhaps cast off his burden, and run away. Thou mayst easily perceive this in other duties: if in secret thou set thyself to pray, is not thy heart urging thee still to cut it short; dost thou not frequently find a motion to have done; art thou not ready to be up as soon almost as thou art down on thy knees? Why, so it will be also in thy contemplations of heaven: as fast as thou gettest up thy heart, it will be down again; it will be weary of the work; it will be minding thee of other business to be done, and stop thy heavenly walk, before thou art well warm. Well, what is to be done in this case also? Why, the same authority and resolution which brought it to the work, and observed it in the work, must also hold it to it, till the work be done. Charge it in the name of God to stay: do not so great a work by the halves: say to it, Why, foolish heart! if thou beg a while, and go away before thou hast thy alms, dost thou not lose thy labour? if thou stop before thou art at the end of thy journey, is not every step of thy travel lost? Thou camest hither to fetch a walk to heaven, in hope to have a sight of the glory which thou must inherit; and wilt thou stop when thou art almost at the top of the hill; and turn again before thou hast taken thy survey? Thou camest hither in hope to speak with God, and wilt thou go before thou hast seen him? Thou camest to bathe thyself in the streams of consolation, and to that end didst unclothe thyself of thy earthly thoughts; and wilt thou put a foot in, and so be gone? Thou camest to spy out the land of promise; O go not back with the bunch of grapes, which thou mayst show to thy brethren, when thou comest home, for their confirmation and encouragement, till thou canst tell them by experience, that it is a land flowing with wine and oil, with milk and honey. Let them see that thou hast tasted of the wine, by the gladness of thy heart; and that thou hast been anointed with the oil, by the cheerfulness of thy countenance, Psal. civ. 15: let them see that thou hast tasted of the milk of the land, by thy feeding, and by thy mild and gentle disposition; and of the honey, by the sweetness of thy words and conversation. The views of heaven would heal thee of thy sinfulness, and of thy sadness; but thou must hold on the plaster, that it may have time to work: this heavenly fire would melt thy frozen heart, and refine it from the dross, and take away the earthly part, and leave the rest more spiritual and pure; but then thou must not be presently gone, before it have time either to burn or warm. Stick, therefore, to the work, till something be done; till thy graces be acted, thy affections raised, and thy soul refreshed with the delights above; or if thou canst not obtain these ends at once, ply it the closer the next time, and let it not go till thou feel the blessing. "Blessed is that servant whom his Lord when he comes shall find so doing," Matt. xxiv. 46.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE ABSTRACT, OR SUM OF ALL, FOR THE USE OF THE WEAK.

Sect. 1. Thus I have, by the gracious assistance of the Spirit, directed you in this work of heavenly contemplation, and lined you out the best way that I know for your successful performance, and led you into the path where you may walk with God. But because I would bring it down to the capacity of the meanest, and help their memories who are apt to let slip the former particulars, and cannot well lay together the several branches of this method, that they may reduce them to practice, I shall here contract the whole into a brief sum, and lay it all before you in a narrower compass. But still, reader, I wish thee to remember, that it is the practice of a duty that I am directing thee in, and therefore, if thou wilt not practise it, do not read it.

The sum is this,—As thou makest conscience of praying daily, so do thou of the acting of thy graces in meditation; and more especially in meditating on

the joys of heaven. To this end, set apart one hour or half hour every day, wherein thou mayst lay aside all worldly thoughts, and with all possible seriousness and reverence, as if thou wert going to speak with God himself, or to have a sight of Christ, or of that blessed place; so do thou withdraw thyself into some secret place, and set thyself wholly to the following work: if thou canst, take Isaac's time and place, who went forth into the field in the evening to meditate; but if thou be a servant, or poor man, that cannot have that leisure, take the fittest time and place that thou canst, though it be when thou art private about thy labours.

When thou settest to the work, look up toward heaven; let thine eye lead thee as near as it can: remember that there is thine everlasting rest: study its excellency, study its reality, till thy unbelief be silenced, and thy faith prevail. If thy judgment be not yet drawn to admiration, use those sensible helps and advantages which were even now laid down. Compare thy heavenly joys with the choicest on earth, and so rise up from sense to faith; if yet this mere consideration prevail not, (which yet hath much force, as is before expressed,) then fall a pleading the case with thy heart: preach upon this text of heaven to thyself; convince, inform, confute, instruct, reprove, examine, admonish, encourage, and comfort thy own soul from this celestial doctrine: draw forth those several considerations of thy rest, on which thy several affections may work, especially that affection or grace which thou intendest to act. If it be love which thou wouldst act, show it the loveliness of heaven, and how suitable it is to thy condition: if it be desire, consider of thy absence from this lovely object: if it be hope, consider the possibility and probability of obtaining it: if it be courage, consider the singular assistance and encouragements which thou mayst receive from God, the weakness of thy enemy, and the necessity of prevailing: if it be joy, consider of its excellent ravishing glory, of the interest in it, and of its certainty, and the nearness of the time when thou mayst possess it. Urge these considerations home to thy heart; whet them with all possible seriousness upon each affection. If thy heart draw back, force it to the work: if it loiter, spur it on: if it step aside, command it in again: if it would slip away, and leave the work, use thine authority; keep it close to the business, till thou have obtained thine end: stir not away, if it may be, till thy love do flame, till thy joy be raised, or till thy desire or other graces be livelily acted. Call in assistance also from God; mix ejaculations with thy cogitations and soliloquies; till having seriously pleaded the case with thy heart, and reverently pleaded the case with God, thou hast pleaded thyself from a clod to a flame; from a forgetful sinner to a mindful lover; from a lover of the world, to a thirster after God; from a fearful coward, to a resolved christian; from an unfruitful sadness, to a joyful life. In a word, what will not be done one day, do it the next, till thou have pleaded thy heart from earth to heaven; from conversing below, to a walking with God; and till thou canst lay thy heart to rest, as in the bosom of Christ, in this meditation of thy full and everlasting rest.

And this is the sum of these precedent directions.

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[a] Præmium est videre Deum, vivere cum Deo, vivere de Deo, esse cum Deo, esse in Deo, qui erit omnia in omnibus, habere Deum qui est summum bonum; et ubi est summum bonum, ibi est summa felicitas, summa jucunditas, vera libertas, perfecta charitas, et æterna securitas. Bernard. de Præmio Cœlest.

CHAPTER XIV.

AN EXAMPLE OF THIS HEAVENLY CONTEMPLATION, FOR THE HELP OF THE UNSKILFUL.

There remaineth a rest to the people of God.

SECT. I. Rest; how sweet a word is this to mine ears! Methinks the sound doth turn to substance, and having entered at the ear, doth possess my brain; and thence descendeth down to my very heart: methinks I feel it stir and work, and that through all my parts and powers, but with a various work upon my various parts. To my wearied senses and languid spirits it seems a quieting, powerful opiate; to my dulled powers it is spirit and life; to my dark eyes it is both eye-salve and a prospective; to my taste it is sweetness; to mine ears it is melody; to my hands and feet it is strength and nimbleness. Methinks I feel it digest as it proceeds, and increase my native heat and moisture; and, lying as a reviving cordial at my heart, from thence doth send forth lively spirits, which beat through all the pulses of my soul. Rest,—not as the stone that rests on the earth, nor as these clods of flesh shall rest in the grave; so our beasts must rest as well as we: nor is it the satisfying of our fleshly lusts, nor such rest as the carnal world desireth: no, no; we have another kind of rest than these: rest we shall from all our labours, which were but the way and means to rest, but yet that is the smallest part. O blessed rest, where we shall never rest day or night, crying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of sabbaths:" when we shall rest from sin, but not from worship; from suffering and sorrow, but not from solace! O blessed day, when I shall rest with God;[a] when I shall rest in the arms and bosom of my Lord; when I shall rest in knowing, loving, rejoicing, and praising; when my perfect soul and body together, shall in these perfect actings perfectly enjoy the most perfect God; when God also, who is love itself, shall perfectly love me; yea, and rest in his love to me, as I shall rest in my love to him, and rejoice over me with joy and singing, (Zeph. iii. 17,) as I shall rejoice in him! How near is that most blessed, joyful day! It comes apace; even he that comes will come, and will not tarry. Though my Lord do seem to delay his coming, yet a little while and he will be here. What is a few hundred years when they are over! How surely will his sign appear, and how suddenly will he seize upon the careless world! Even as the lightning that shines from east to west in a moment, he who has gone hence will even so return. Methinks I even hear the voice of his foregoers; methinks I see him coming in the clouds, with the attendance of his angels, in majesty and in glory. O poor, secure sinners, what will you now do? Where will you hide yourselves, or what shall cover you? Mountains are gone; the earth and heavens that were, are passed away; the devouring fire hath consumed all except yourselves, who must be the fuel for ever. Oh that you could consume as soon as the earth, and melt away as did the heavens! Ah, these wishes are now but vain: the Lamb himself would have been your friend; he would have loved you and ruled you, and now have saved you; but you would not then, and now is too late. Never cry, Lord, Lord; too late, too late, man: why dost thou look

about? Can any save thee? Whither dost thou run? Can any hide thee? O wretch, that hast brought thyself to this! Now, blessed saints that have believed and obeyed, this is the end of faith and patience; this is it for which you prayed and waited: do you now repent your sufferings and sorrows, your self-denying, and holy walking? Are your tears of repentance now bitter or sweet? O, see how the Judge doth smile upon you; there is love in his looks; the titles of Redeemer, Husband, Head, are written in his amiable, shining face. Hark, doth he not call you? He bids you stand here on his right hand; fear not, for there he sets his sheep. O joyful sentence, pronounced by that blessed mouth: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundations of the world." See how your Saviour takes you by the hand; go along you must, the door is open, the kingdom is his, and therefore yours. There is your place before his throne; the Father receiveth you as the spouse of his Son; he bids you welcome to the crown of glory: never so unworthy, crowned you must be. This was the project of free redeeming grace, and this was the purpose of eternal love. O blessed grace! O blessed love! Oh, the frame that my soul will then be in! Oh, how love and joy will stir! But I cannot express it; I cannot conceive it.

This is that joy which was procured by sorrow: this is that crown which was procured by the cross. My Lord did weep, that now my tears might be wiped away; he did bleed, that I might now rejoice; he was forsaken, that I might not now be forsaken; he did then die, that I might now live. This weeping, wounded Lord shall I behold; this bleeding Saviour shall I see, and live in him that died for me. Oh, free mercy, that can exalt so vile a wretch! Free to me, though dear to Christ; free grace that hath chosen me, when thousands were forsaken; when my companions in sin must burn in hell, and I must here rejoice in rest. Here must I live with all these saints: O comfortable meeting of my old acquaintance, with whom I prayed, and wept, and suffered; with whom I spake of this day and place. I see the grave could not contain you; the sea and earth must give up their dead; the same love hath redeemed and saved you also. This is not like our cottages of clay, nor like our prisons, or earthly dwellings; this voice of joy is not like our old complainings, our groans, our sighs, our impatient moans; nor this melodious praise like our scorns and revilings, nor like the oaths and curses which we heard on earth; this body is not like the body we had, nor this soul like the soul we had, nor this life like the life that then we lived. We have changed our place, we have changed our state, our clothes, our thoughts, our looks, our language; we have changed our company for the greater part, and the rest of our company is changed itself. Before, a saint was weak and despised, so full of pride, and peevishness, and other sins, that we could scarce ofttimes discern their graces; but now how glorious a thing is a saint! Where is now their body of sin which wearied themselves and those about them? Where are now our different judgments, our reproachful titles, our divided spirits, our exasperated passions, our strange looks, our uncharitable censures? Now we are all of one judgment, of one name, of one heart, of one house, and of one glory. O sweet reconcilement! O happy union! which makes us first to be one with Christ, and then to be one among ourselves. Now, our differences shall be dashed in our teeth no more, nor the gospel reproached through our folly or scandal. O my soul, thou shalt never more lament the sufferings of the saints, never more condole the church's ruins, never bewail thy suffering friends, nor lie wailing over their death-beds, or their graves; thou shalt never suffer thy old temptations from Satan, the world, or thy own flesh; thy body will no more be such a burden to thee; thy pains and sicknesses are all now cured; thou shalt be troubled with weakness and weariness no more; thy head is not now an aching head, nor thy heart now an aching heart;[b] thy hunger, and thirst, and cold, and sleep, thy labour and study, are all gone. Oh what a mighty change is this! from the dunghill to the throne; from persecuting sinners to praising saints; from a body as vile as the carrion in the ditch, to a body as bright as the sun in the firmament; from complainings under the displeasure of God, to the perfect enjoyment of him in love; from all my doubts and fears of my condition to this possession which hath put me out of doubt; from all my fearful thoughts of death to this most blessed, joyful life! Oh what a blessed change is this! Farewell, sin and suffering, for ever; farewell, my hard and rocky heart; farewell, my proud and unbelieving heart; farewell, atheistical, idolatrous, worldly heart; farewell, my sensual, carnal heart: and now welcome, most holy, heavenly nature, which, as it must be employed in beholding the face of God, so is it full of God alone, and delighteth in nothing else but him. Oh, who can question the love which he doth so sweetly taste, or doubt of that which with such joy he feeleth! Farewell, repentance, confession, and supplication; farewell, the most of hope and faith; and welcome, love, and joy, and praise. I shall now have my harvest without ploughing or sowing, my wine without the labour of the vintage, my joy without a preacher or a promise, even all from the face of God himself. That is the sight that is worth the seeing; that is the book that is worth the reading. Whatever mixture is in the streams, there is nothing but pure joy in the fountain. Here shall I be encircled with eternity, and come forth no more; here shall I live, and ever live, and praise my Lord, and ever, ever, ever praise him. My face will not wrinkle, nor my hair be gray; but this mortal shall have put on immortality, and this corruptible, incorruption, and death shall be swallowed up in victory. O death! where is now thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory? The date of my lease will no more expire, nor shall I trouble myself with thoughts of death, nor lose my joys through fear of losing them. When millions of ages are past, my glory is but beginning; and when millions more are past, it is no nearer ending. Every day is all noontide, and every month is May or harvest, and every year is there a jubilee, and every age is full manhood; and all this is one eternity. O blessed eternity! the glory of my glory! the perfection of my perfection!

Ah, drowsy, earthy, blockish heart, how coldly dost thou think of this reviving day! Dost thou sleep, when thou thinkest of eternal rest? Art thou hanging earthward, when heaven is before thee? Hadst thou rather sit thee down in dirt and dung, than walk in the court of the palace of God? Dost thou now remember thy worldly business; art thou looking back to the Sodom of thy lusts; art thou thinking of thy delights and merry company? Wretched heart! is it better to be there, than above

[b] Qualis erit corpus, quod omnimodo spiritui subditum, et eo sufficienter vivificatum nullis alimoniis indigebit? Non enim animale, sed spirituale erit: habens quidem carnis, sed sine ulla carnali corruptione, substantiam. August. de Civ. lib. xxii. cap. 24.

with God; is the company better; are the pleasures greater? Come away, make no excuse, make no delay; God commands, and I command thee, come away; gird up thy loins; ascend the mount, and look about thee with seriousness and with faith. Look thou not back upon the way of the wilderness, except it be when thine eyes are dazzled with the glory, or when thou wouldst compare the kingdom with that howling desert, that thou mayst more sensibly perceive the mighty difference. Fix thine eye upon the sun itself, and look not down to earth as long as thou art able to behold it; except it be to discern more easily the brightness of the one, by the darkness of the other.[c] Yonder, far above yonder, is thy Father's glory; yonder must thou dwell when thou leavest this earth; yonder must thou remove, O my soul, when thou departest from this body; and when the power of thy Lord hath raised it again, and joined thee to it, yonder thou must live with God for ever.[d] There is the glorious new Jerusalem, the gates of pearl, the foundations of pearl, the streets and pavements of transparent gold. Seest thou that sun which lighteth all this world? Why, it must be taken down as useless there, or the glory of heaven will darken it, and put it out: even thyself shall be as bright as yonder shining sun. God will be the sun, and Christ the light, and in his light shalt thou have light.

What thinkest thou, O my soul, of this most blessed state? What! dost thou stagger at the promise of God through unbelief? Though thou say nothing, or profess belief, yet thou speakest so coldly and so customarily, that I much suspect thee. I know thy infidelity is thy natural vice. Didst thou believe indeed, thou wouldst be more affected with it. Why, hast thou not it under the hand, and seal, and oath of God? Can God lie; or he that is the truth itself, be false? Foolish wretch! What need hath God to flatter thee, or deceive thee; why should he promise thee more than he will perform? Art thou not his creature, a little crumb of dust, a crawling worm; ten thousand times more below him, than this fly or worm is below thee? Wouldst thou flatter a flea, or a worm? What need hast thou of them? If they do not please thee, thou wilt crush them dead, and never accuse thyself of cruelty: why, yet they are thy fellow-creatures, made of as good metal as thyself, and thou hast no authority over them but what thou hast received: how much less need hath God of thee! or why should he care, if thou perish in thy folly? Cannot he govern thee without either flattery or falsehood? Cannot he easily make thee obey his will, and as easily make thee suffer for thy disobedience? Wretched, unbelieving heart! tell a fool, or tell a tyrant, or tell some false and flattering man, of drawing their subjects by false promises, and procuring obedience by deceitful means; but do thou not dare to charge the wise, almighty, faithful God with this. Above all men, it beseems not thee to doubt, either of this Scripture being his infallible word, or of the performance of this word to thyself. Hath not argument convinced thee; may not thy own experience utterly silence thee? How oft hath this Scripture been verified for thy good! how many of the promises have been performed to thee! Hath it not quickened thee, and converted thee? hast thou not felt in it something more than human? Would God perform another promise; or would he so powerfully concur with a feigned word? If thou hadst seen the miracles that Christ and his apostles wrought, thou wouldst never sure have questioned the truth of their doctrine: why, they delivered it down by such undoubted testimony, that it may be called divine as well as human. Nay, hast thou not seen its prophecies fulfilled; hast thou not lived in an age wherein such wonders have been wrought, that thou hast now no cloak for thy unbelief; hast thou not seen the course of nature changed, and works beyond the power of nature wrought; and all this in the fulfilling of the Scripture? Hast thou so soon forgotten since nature failed me, and strength failed me, and blood, and spirits, and flesh, and friends, and all means did utterly fail; and how art and reason had sentenced me for dead; and yet how God revoked the sentence; and at the request of praying, believing saints, did turn thee to the promise which he verified to thee; and canst thou yet question the truth of this Scripture? Hast thou seen so much to confirm thy faith, in the great actions of seven years past, and canst thou yet doubt? Thou hast seen signs and wonders, and art thou yet so unbelieving? O wretched heart! hath God made thee a promise of rest, and wilt thou come short of it, and shut out thyself through unbelief? Thine eyes may fail thee, thy ears deceive thee, and all thy senses prove delusions, sooner than a promise of God can delude thee. Thou mayst be surer of that which is written in the word, than if thou see it with thine eyes, or feel it with thy hands. Art thou sure thou livest, or sure that this is earth which thou standest on? Art thou sure thine eyes do see the sun? As sure is all this glory to the saints, as sure shall I be higher than yonder stars, and live for ever in the holy city, and joyfully sound forth the praise of my Rédeemer, if I be not shut out by this evil heart of unbelief, causing me to depart from the living God.

And is this rest so sweet, and so sure? Oh, then, what means the careless world? Do they know what it is they so neglect; did they ever hear of it, or are they yet asleep, or are they dead? Do they know for certain that the crown is before them, while they thus sit still, or follow trifles? Undoubtedly they are quite beside themselves, to mind so much their provision in the way, and strive, and care, and labour for trifles, when they are hasting so fast to another world, and their eternal happiness lies at stake. Were there left one spark of wit or reason, they would never sell their rest for toil, or sell their glory for worldly vanities, nor venture heaven for the pleasure of a sin. Ah, poor men! that you would once consider what you hazard, and then you would scorn these tempting baits. Oh, blessed for ever be that love that hath rescued me from this mad, bewitching darkness!

Love acted.

Draw nearer yet, then, O my soul, bring forth thy strongest burn-

[c] That even the philosophers understood that there was a heaven, see Fernelius De Abdit. Rer. Caus. cap. 9, and Aristot. De Cœlo, lib. ii. cap. 9. Manifestum est quod neque locus, neque vacuum, neque tempus est extra cœlum. In omni cuim loco corpus esse possibile est: vacuum autem esse dicunt, in quo non est corpus, possibile autem est esse. Tempus autem est numerus motus; motus autem sine naturali corpore non est, &c. Quapropter neque quæ illic sunt, nata sunt in loco esse; neque tempus ipsa facit senescere, neque ulla transmutatio ullius eorum est, quæ super extima disposita sunt latione, sed inalterabilia et impassibilia, optimam habentia vitam et per se sufficientissimam, persevcrant toto ævo, &c.

[d] Nec mirceres si Deum non videas; vento et flatibus omnia impelluntur, vibrantur, agitantur, et sub oculis tamen non venit ventus et flatus. Solem, qui videndi omnibus causa est, intueri non possumus; radiis acies submovetur; obtutus intuentis hebetatur; et si diutius inspicias, omnis visus extinguitur. Qui ipsum solis artificem, illum luminis fontem possis sustincre, cum te ab ejus fulgoribus avertas, a fulminibus abscondas? Deum oculis carnalibus vis videre, cum ipsam animam tuam, qua vivificaris et loqueris, nec aspicere possis, nec tueri? Minutius Fælix Octav. p. 393.

ing love; here is matter for it to work upon; here is something truly worth thy loving. Oh see what beauty presents itself! is it not exceeding lovely? is not all the beauty in the world contracted here? is not all other beauty deformity to it? dost thou need to be persuaded how to love?[e] Here is a feast for thine eyes; a feast for all the powers of thy soul: dost thou need to be entreated to feed upon it? canst thou love a little shining earth; canst thou love a walking piece of clay; and canst thou not love that God, that Christ, that glory, which is so truly and unmeasurably lovely? Thou canst love thy friend, because he loves thee; and is the love of thy friend like the love of Christ? Their weeping or bleeding for thee, doth not ease thee, nor stay the course of thy tears or blood: but the tears and blood that fell from thy Lord, have all a sovereign healing virtue, and are waters of life, and balsam to thy faintings and thy sores. O my soul, if love deserve and should procure love, what incomprehensible love is here before thee! Pour out all the store of thy affections here; and all is too little. Oh that it were more! Oh that it were many thousand times more! Let him be first served, that served thee first. Let him have the first-born and strength of thy love, who parted with strength and life in love to thee. If thou hast any to spare when he hath his part, let it be imparted then to standers-by. See what a sea of love is here before thee; cast thyself in, and swim with the arms of thy love in this ocean of his love. Fear not lest thou shouldst be drowned or consumed in it. Though it seem as the scalding furnace of lead, yet thou wilt find it but mollifying oil:[f] though it seem a furnace of fire, and the hottest that ever was kindled upon earth, yet it is the fire of love and not of wrath; a fire most effectual to extinguish fire; never intended to consume, but to glorify thee: venture into it, then, in thy believing meditations, and walk in these flames with the Son of God: when thou art once in, thou wilt be sorry to come forth again.[g] O my soul! what wantest thou here to provoke thy love? Dost thou love for excellency? Why, thou seest nothing below but baseness, except as they relate to thy enjoyments above. Yonder is the Goshen, the region of light; this is a land of palpable darkness. Yonder twinkling stars, that shining moon, the radiant sun, are all but as the lanterns hanged out at thy Father's house, to light thee while thou walkest in the dark streets of the earth: but little dost thou know (ah, little indeed!) the glory and blessed mirth that is within! Dost thou love for suitableness? Why, what person more suitable than Christ? His Godhead, his manhood, his fulness, his freeness, his willingness, his constancy, do all proclaim him thy most suitable friend. What state more suitable to thy misery, than that of mercy; or to thy sinfulness and baseness, than that of honour and perfection? What place more suitable to thee than heaven? Thou hast had a sufficient trial of this world. Dost thou find it agree with thy nature or desires; are these common abominations, these heavy sufferings, these unsatisfying vanities, suitable to thee? Or dost thou love for interest and near relation? Why, where hast thou better interest than in heaven; or where hast thou nearer relation than there? Dost thou love for acquaintance and familiarity? Why, though thine eyes have never seen thy Lord, yet he is never the farther from thee; if thy son were blind, yet he would love thee his father, though he never saw thee. Thou hast heard the voice of Christ to thy very heart; thou hast received his benefits; thou hast lived in his bosom; and art thou not yet acquainted with him? It is he that brought thee seasonably and safely into the world: it is he that nursed thee up in thy tender infancy, and helped thee when thou couldst not help thyself: he taught thee to go, to speak, to read, to understand: he taught thee to know thyself and him: he opened thee that first window whereby thou sawest into heaven. Hast thou forgotten since thy heart was careless, and he did quicken it; and hard and stubborn, and he did soften it, and make it yield; when it was at peace, and he did trouble it; and whole, till he did break it; and broken, till he did heal it again? Hast thou forgotten the time, nay, the many, very many times, when he found thee in secret all in tears; when he heard thy dolorous sighs and groans, and left all to come and comfort thee; when he came in upon thee, and took thee up, as it were in his arms, and asked thee, Poor soul, what aileth thee? Dost thou weep, when I have wept so much?[h] Be of good cheer; thy wounds are saving, and not deadly. It is I that have made them, who mean thee no hurt: though I let out thy blood, I will not let out thy life.

O methinks I remember yet his voice, and feel those embracing arms that took me up: how gently did he handle me! how carefully did he dress my wounds, and bind them up! Methinks I hear him still saying to me, Poor sinner, though thou hast dealt unkindly with me, and cast me off, yet will not I do so by thee; though thou hast set light by me and all my mercies, yet both I and all are thine: what wouldst thou have, that I can give thee; and what dost thou want that I cannot give thee? If any thing I have will pleasure thee, thou shalt have it: if any thing in heaven or earth will make thee happy, why it is all thine own. Wouldst thou have pardon? thou shalt have it; I freely forgive thee all the debt. Wouldst thou have grace and peace? thou shalt have them both. Wouldst thou have myself? why, behold, I am thine, thy friend, thy lord, thy brother, thy husband, and thy head. Wouldst thou have the Father? why I will bring thee to him; and thou shalt have him in and by me. These were my Lord's reviving words: these were the melting, healing, raising, quickening passages of love. After all this, when I was doubtful of his love, methinks I yet remember his overcoming and convincing arguments. Why, sinner, have I done so much to testify my love, and yet dost thou doubt? Have I made thy believing it the condition of enjoying it, and yet dost thou doubt? Have I offered thee myself and love so long, and yet dost thou question

[e] Pondus meum amor meus; eo feror, quocunque feror. Ibi nos collocavit voluntas bona, ut nihil velimus aliud quam permanere illic in æternum. Confession 13th, commonly called Austin's.

[f] In which it is said St. John was cast, and came out anointed only.

[g] Subtilius naturam amoris contemplemur. Totam compositam et quadrantem Deo inveniemus; nulli alicui rei aptius, nulli decentius, nulli fruetuosius cohærere: imo cæteris perdite, turpiter, inæqualiter. Quid infœlicius quam amator, et non Dei! Amor est quidam sui exitus; quædam a se peregrinatio, cum quodam spontaneo interitu. Voluntaria mors est; et quoddam sine necessitate fatum. A se abest qui amat; etenim de se cogitat nihil, providet nihil: et eum cogitet de se, nec in se, neque secum cogitabit. Illud est arcanum ingeniosi affectus, mori eum fœnore; perire cum lucro vitæ: si amare scias, si ames inquam Deum, ista est amandi ars. Quod restat ex amante, amatus est. Niremberg. de Arte Volunt. lib. iv. c. 23, 24. p. 287, 288.

[h] Voluntas seu amor vivificatur amore amoris; a quo habet ut sit volens seu libere amens, seu eligens.——Et si recte advertis, amor Dei non est quasi quis amet aliquod amatum, aliud ab amore; seu ubi non coincidit amor et amatum. Deus est amor; qui Deum amat, amorem amat. Card. Cusanus Exercitat. vol. 2. lib. vii. p. 132. B.

my willingness to be thine? Why, what could I have done more than I have done; at what dearer rate should I tell thee that I love thee? Read yet the story of my bitter passion; wilt thou not believe that it proceeded from love? Did I ever give thee cause to be so jealous of me, or to think so hardly of me, as thou dost? Have I made myself in the gospel a lion to thine enemies, and a lamb to thee; and dost thou so overlook my lamb-like nature? Have I set mine arms and heart there open to thee, and wilt thou not believe but they are shut? Why, if I had been willing to let thee perish, I could have done it at a cheaper rate. What need I then have done and suffered so much; what need I follow thee with so long patience, and entreating? What dost thou tell me of thy wants; have I not enough for me and thee? and why dost thou foolishly tell me of thy unworthiness, and thy sin? I had not died, if man had not sinned: if thou wert not a sinner, thou wert not for me; if thou wert worthy thyself, what shouldst thou do with my worthiness? Did I ever invite the worthy and the righteous; or did I ever save or justify such; or is there any such on earth? Hast thou nothing; art thou lost and miserable; art thou helpless and forlorn? Dost thou believe that I am a sufficient Saviour, and wouldst thou have me? Why then take me; lo! I am thine; if thou be willing, I am willing, and neither sin nor devils shall break the match.

These, O these were the blessed words which his Spirit from his gospel spoke unto me, till he made me cast myself at his feet, yea, into his arms, and to cry out, My Saviour and my Lord, thou hast broke my heart, thou hast revived my heart, thou hast overcome, thou hast won my heart; take it, it is thine: if such a heart can please thee, take it; if it cannot, make it such as thou wouldst have it. Thus, O my soul, mayst thou remember the sweet familiarity thou hast had with Christ; therefore, if acquaintance will cause affection, O then let out thy heart unto him: it is he that hath stood by thy bed of sickness, that hath cooled thy heats, and eased thy pains, and refreshed thy weariness, and removed thy fears; he hath been always ready, when thou hast earnestly sought him; he hath given thee the meeting in public and in private; he hath been found of thee in the congregation, in thy house, in thy chamber, in the field, in the way as thou wast walking, in thy waking nights, in thy deepest dangers. Oh, if bounty and compassion be an attractive of love, how unmeasurably, then, am I bound to love him! All the mercies that have filled up my life do tell me this; all the places that ever I did abide in, all the societies and persons that I have had to deal with, every condition of life that I have passed through, all my employments, and all my relations, every change that hath befallen me, all tell me that the fountain is overflowing goodness. Lord! what a sum of love am I indebted to thee, and how doth my debt continually increase! How should I love again for so much love! But what! shall I dare to think of making thee requital; or of recompensing all thy love with mine? Will my mite requite thee for thy golden mines; my seldom wishes for thy constant bounty; or mine which is nothing, or not mine, for thine which is infinite, and thine own? Shall I dare to contend in love with thee; or set my borrowed, languid spark, against the element and sun of love? Can I love as high, as deep, as broad, as long as Love itself?[i] as much as he that made me, and that made me love, that gave me all that little which I have? Both the heart, the hearth where it is kindled, the bellows, the fire, the fuel, and all were his: as I cannot match thee in the works of thy power, nor make, nor preserve, nor guide the world, so why should I think any more of matching thee in love? No, Lord, I yield, I am unable, I am overcome. O blessed conquest! go on victoriously, and still prevail, and triumph in thy love; the captive of love shall proclaim thy victory when thou leadest me in triumph from earth to heaven, from death to life, from the tribunal to the throne. Myself, and all that see it, shall acknowledge that thou hast prevailed, and all shall say, "Behold, how he loved him!" Yet let me love thee in subjection to thy love, as thy redeemed captive, though not thy peer. Shall I not love at all, because I cannot reach thy measure? Or at least, let me heartily wish to love thee. Oh that I were able! Oh that I could feelingly say, I love thee, even as I feel I love my friend and myself! Lord, that I could do it! but, alas! I cannot; fain I would, but, alas! I cannot. Would I not love thee, if I were but able? Though I cannot say, as thy apostle, Thou knowest that I love thee, yet can I say, Lord, thou knowest that I would love thee. But I speak not this to excuse my fault; it is a crime that admits of no excuse, and it is my own; it dwelleth as near me as my very heart; if my heart be my own, this sin is my own, yea, and more my own than my heart is. Lord, what shall this sinner do; the fault is my own, and yet I cannot help it. I am angry with my heart that it doth not love thee, and yet I feel it love thee never the more; I frown upon it, and yet it cares not; I threaten it, but it doth not feel; I chide it, and yet it doth not mend; I reason with it, and would fain persuade it, and yet I do not perceive it stir; I rear it up as a carcass upon its legs, but it neither goes nor stands; I rub and chafe it in the use of thine ordinances, and yet I feel it not warm within me.[k] O miserable man that I am! Unworthy soul! is not thine eye now upon the only lovely object? and art thou not beholden to the ravishing glory of the saints? and yet dost thou not love? and yet dost thou not feel the fire break forth? Why, art thou not a soul; a living spirit? and is not thy love the choicest piece of thy life? Art thou not a rational soul? and shouldst thou not love according to reason's conduct? And doth it not tell thee that all is dirt and dung to Christ; that earth is a dungeon to the celestial glory? Art thou not a spirit thyself, and shouldst thou not love spiritually; even God, who is a Spirit, and the Father of spirits? Doth not every creature

[i] Quemadmodum umbram nostram superare non datur; quippe quæ tantum præit quantum progredimur, et æqua portione semper antecedit; neque supra caput esse potest corporis magnitudo, cum illud semper corpori superpositum sit: sic neque Deum largiendo vincere possumus. Neque enim quippiam largimur quod illius non sit, aut magnificentiam et liberalitatem antecedat; considera unde sit tibi id ipsum quod es, quod spiras, quod sapis, et id quod maximum est, quod Deum cognoscis, quod speras regnum cœlorum, æqualem angelis dignitatem, puram perfectamque gloriæ quam nunc in speculis et ænigmatibus cernis contemplationem; quod factus es filius Dei, cohæres Christi (audacter dicam) et Deus ipse. Nazianz. in Orat. de Pauper. Amand. &c.

[k] Quamdiu præsentem vitam vivimus, tamdiu cor nostrum, nec Deo perfecte plenum, nec omnino subjectum: unde innumera sunt quæ extra Deum amamus, et si Deum amantes et sitientes. At in cœlesti patria, subjectio ad Deum est omnimoda, et talis cui nihil amplius addi queat. Omnis metus actualis beati, in Deum fertur. Et sicut Deus nihil novit nec amat nisi seipsum, aut in seipso: ita sanctus quia plane Deiformis, nihil novit nec amat nisi Deum aut in Deo. Deus cuilibet sanctorum sicut sibi sufficientia est, plenitudo est, omnia est; et omnem rationalis mentis potentialitatem adimplet. Quod non erit profecto, si sanctos aliquid extra Deum videre dicas: si enim aliquid extra Deum amant, illud ipsum cum Deo in eorum corde hospitabitur. Et quomodo Deus, O homo, tibi sufficientia, plenitudo, omnia est, si ita est? Gibieuf, lib. ii. c. 27. sect. 7. p. 483.

love their like? Why, my soul, art thou like to flesh, or gold, or stately buildings? Art thou like to meat and drink, or clothes? Wilt thou love no higher than thy horse or swine? Hast thou nothing better to love than they? What is the beauty that thou hast so admired? Canst thou not even wink or think it all into darkness or deformity? When the night comes, it is nothing to thee; while thou hast gazed on it, it hath withered away; a botch or scab, the wrinkles of consuming sickness, or of age, do make it as loathsome as it was before delightful. Suppose but that thou sawest that beautiful carcass lying on the bier, or rotting in the grave, the skull dug up, and the bones scattered, where is now thy lovely object? Couldst thou sweetly embrace it when the soul is gone; or take any pleasure in it, when there is nothing left that is like thyself? Ah! why then dost thou love a skinful of dirt, and canst love no more the heavenly glory? What thinkest thou? Shalt thou love when thou comest there; when thou seest; when thou dost enjoy; when the Lord shall take thy carcass from the grave, and make thee shine as the sun in glory, and when thou shalt everlastingly dwell in the blessed presence? Shalt thou then love, or shalt thou not? Is not the place a meeting of lovers? Is not the life a state of love? Is it not the great marriage-day of the Lamb, when he will embrace and entertain his spouse with love? Is not the employment there the work of love, where the souls with Christ do take their fill? O, then, my soul, begin it here. Be sick of love now, that thou mayst be well with love there, Cant. v. 8; Rom. viii. 35; keep thyself now in the love of God, (Jude 21,) and let neither life nor death nor any thing separate thee from it, and thou shalt be kept in the fulness of love for ever, and nothing shall imbitter or abate thy pleasure; for the Lord hath prepared a city of love, a place for the communicating of love to his chosen, and those that love his name shall dwell there, Psalm lxix. 36.

Away, then, O my drowsy soul! Who but an owl or mole would love this world's uncomfortable darkness, when they are called forth to live in light? To sleep under the light of grace is unreasonable, much more in the approach of the light of glory. The night of thy ignorance and misery is past, the day of glorious light is at hand; this is the day-break betwixt them both. Though thou see not yet the sun itself appear, methinks the twilight of promise should revive thee. Come forth, then, O my dull, congealed spirits, and leave these earthly cells to dumpish sadness, and hear thy Lord that bids thee rejoice, and again rejoice! Thou hast lain here long enough in thy prison of flesh, where Satan hath been thy gaoler, and the things of this world have been the stocks for the feet of thy affections; where cares have been thy irons, and fears thy scourge, and the bread and water of affliction thy food; where sorrows have been thy lodging, and thy sins and foes have made the bed; and a carnal, hard, unbelieving heart have been the iron gates and bars that have kept thee in, that thou couldst scarce have leave to look through the lattices, and see one glimpse of the immortal light. The Angel of the covenant now calls thee, and strikes thee, and bids thee arise and follow him. Up, O my soul, and cheerfully obey, and thy bolts and bars shall all fly open. Do thou obey, and all will obey; follow the Lamb which way soever he leads thee. Art thou afraid because thou knowest not whither? Can the place be worse than where thou art? Shouldst thou fear to follow such a guide? Can the sun lead thee to a state of darkness; or can he mislead thee, that is the light of every man that cometh into the world? Will he lead thee to death, who died to save thee from it; or can he do thee any hurt, who for thy sake did suffer so much? Follow him, and he will show thee the paradise of God; he will give thee a sight of the new Jerusalem; he will give thee a taste of the tree of life. Sit no longer, then, by the fire of earthly, common comforts, whither the cold of carnal fears and sorrows did drive thee: thy winter is past, and wilt thou house thyself still in earthly thoughts, and confine thyself to drooping and dulness? Even the silly flies will leave their holes when the winter is over, and the sun draws near them; the ants will stir, the fishes rise, the birds will sing, the earth look green, and all with joyful note will tell thee the spring is come. Come forth, then, O my drooping soul, and lay aside thy winter mourning robes; let it be seen in thy believing joys and praise, that the day is appearing, and the spring is come, and as now thou seest thy comforts green, thou shalt shortly see them white and ripe for harvest; and then thou who art now called forth to see and taste, shalt be called forth to reap, and gather, and take possession. Shall I suspend and delay my joys till then? Should not the joys of the spring go before the joys of harvest? Is title nothing before possession? Is the heir in no better a state than the slave? My Lord hath taught me to rejoice in hope of his glory, and to see it through the bars of a prison; and even when I am persecuted for righteousness' sake, when I am reviled, and all manner of evil sayings are said against me falsely for his sake, then he hath commanded me to rejoice, and be exceeding glad, because of this my great reward in heaven, Rom. v. 2; Matt. v. 10—12. How justly is an unbelieving heart possessed by sorrow, and made a prey to cares and fears, when itself doth create them, and thrust away its offered peace and joy! I know, it is the pleasure of my bounteous Lord, that none of his family should want for comfort, nor live such a poor and miserable life, nor look with such a famished, dejected face. I know, he would have my joys exceed my sorrows; and as much as he delights in the humble and contrite, yet doth he more delight in the soul as it delighteth in him. I know, he taketh no pleasure in my self-procured sadness; nor would he call on me to weep and mourn but that it is the only way to these delights. Would I spread the table before my guest, and bring him forth my best provision, and bid him sit down and eat and welcome, if I did not unfeignedly desire he should do so? Hath my Lord spread me a table in this wilderness, and furnished it with the promises of everlasting glory, and set before me angels' food, and broached for me the side of his beloved Son, that I might have a better wine than the blood of the grape? Doth he so frequently, importunately invite me to sit down, and draw forth my faith, and feed, and spare not; nay, hath he furnished me to that end with reason, and faith, and a rejoicing disposition; and yet is it possible that he should be unwilling of my joys? Never think it, O my unbelieving soul, nor dare to charge him with thy uncomfortable heaviness, who offered thee the foretaste of the highest delight that heaven doth afford, and God can bestow. Doth he not bid thee delight thyself in the Lord, and promise to give thee then the desires of thy heart? Psal. xxxvii. 4. Hath he not charged thee to rejoice evermore, 1 Thess. v. 16; yea, to sing aloud and shout for joy? Psal. xxxii. 11; xlvii. 1. Why should I then draw back discouraged? My God is willing, if I were but willing. He is delighted in my delights. He would fain have it my constant frame and daily business, to be near to him in my believing meditations, and to

Joy acted.

live in the sweetest thoughts of his goodness, and to be always delighting my soul in himself. O blessed work; employment fit for the sons of God!

But, ah! my Lord, thy feast is nothing to me without an appetite; thou must give a stomach as well as meat. Thou hast set the dainties of heaven before me, but, alas! I am blind, and cannot see them; I am sick, and cannot relish them; I am so benumbed, that I cannot put forth a hand to take them. What is the glory of sun and moon to a clod of earth? Thou knowest I need thy subjective grace, as well as thine objective, and that thy work upon mine own distempered soul, is not the smallest part of my salvation; I therefore humbly beg this grace, that as thou hast opened heaven unto me in thy blessed word, so thou wouldst open mine eyes to see it, and my heart to affect it; else heaven will be no heaven to me. Awake, therefore, O thou Spirit of life, and breathe upon thy graces in me; blow upon the garden of my heart, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my Beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits, Cant. iv. 16; and take me by the hand, and lift me up from earth thyself; that I may fetch one walk in the garden of glory, and see by faith what thou hast laid up for them that love thee and wait for thee.

Away, then, you soul-tormenting cares and fears! Away, you importunate, heart-vexing sorrows! At least forbear me a little while; stand by, and trouble not my aspiring soul; stay here below whilst I go up and see my rest. The way is strange to me, but not to Christ. There was the eternal dwelling of his glorious Deity, and thither hath he also brought his assumed glorified flesh. It was his work to purchase it; it is his work to prepare it, and to prepare me for it, and to bring me to it. The eternal God of truth hath given me his promise, his seal, and his oath to assure me, that believing in Christ, I shall not perish, but have everlasting life, John iii. 16. Thither shall my soul be speedily removed, and my body very shortly follow. It is not so far but he that is every-where can bring me thither; nor so difficult and unlikely, but omnipotency can effect it.[l] And though this unbelief may diminish my delights, and much abate my joys in the way, yet shall it not abate the love of my Redeemer, nor make the promise of none effect. And can my tongue say, that I shall shortly and surely live with God, and yet my heart not leap within me? Can I say it believingly, and not rejoicingly? Ah! faith, how sensibly do I now perceive thy weakness! Ah! unbelief, if I had never heard or known it before, yet how sensibly now do I perceive thy malicious tyranny! But though thou darken my light, and dull my life, and suppress my joys, yet shalt thou not be able to conquer and destroy me. There shall I and my joys survive when thou art dead; and though thou envy all my comforts, yet some in despite of thee I shall even here receive: but were it not for thee, what abundance might I have! the light of heaven would shine into my heart, and I might be as familiar there as I am on earth.

Come away, my soul, then, stop thine ears to the ignorant language of infidelity. Thou art able to answer all its arguments, or if thou be not, yet tread them under thy feet. Come away, stand not looking on that grave, nor turning those bones, nor reading thy lesson now in the dust; those lines will soon be wiped out; but lift up thy head and look to heaven, and read thy instructions in those fixed stars. Or yet look higher than those eyes can see, into that foundation which standeth sure,[m] and see thy name in golden letters, written before the foundations of the world, in the book of life, of the slain Lamb. What if an angel from heaven should tell thee that there is a mansion prepared for thee; that it shall certainly be thine own, and thou shalt possess it for ever; would not such a message make thee glad? and dost thou make light of the infallible word of promises, which were delivered by the Spirit, and by the Son himself? Suppose thou hadst seen a fiery chariot come for thee, and fetch thee up to heaven like Elias, would not this rejoice thee? Why, my Lord hath acquainted me, and assured me, that the soul of a Lazarus, a beggar, goes not forth of its corrupted flesh, but a convoy of angels are ready to attend it, and bring it to the comforts in Abraham's bosom. Shall a drunkard be so merry among his cups; and a glutton in his delicious fare; and the proud in his bravery and dignity; and the lustful wanton in the enjoyment of his mate? and shall not I rejoice who must shortly be in heaven? How glad is voluptuous youth of their play-times and holidays! Why, in heaven I shall have an everlasting holiday of pleasure. Can meat and drink delight me when I hunger and thirst? Can I find pleasure in walks, and gardens, and convenient dwellings? Can beauteous sights delight mine eyes, and odours my smell, and melody mine ears? and shall not the forethought of the celestial bliss delight me? My beast is glad of his fresh pasture, and his liberty, and his rest; and shall not I? What delight have I found in my private studies, especially when they have prospered to the increase of my knowledge! Methinks I could bid the world farewell, and immure myself among my books, and look forth no more (were it a lawful course); but, as Heinsius in his library at Leyden, shut the doors upon me, and as in the lap of eternity, among those divine souls, employ myself in sweet content, and pity the rich and great ones who know not this happiness. Sure then it is a high delight indeed which in the true lap of eternity is enjoyed. If Lipsius thought, when he did but read Seneca, that he was even upon Olympus' top, above mortality and human things; what a case shall I be in, when I am beholding Christ! If Julius Scaliger thought twelve verses in Lucan better than the whole German empire, what shall I think mine inheritance worth! If the mathematics alone are so delectable, that their students do profess that they should think it sweet to live and die in those studies; how delectable, then, will my life be, when I shall fully and clearly know those things which the most learned do not know but doubtfully and darkly! In one hour shall I see all difficulties vanish; and all my doubts in physics, metaphysics, politics, medicine, &c. shall be resolved: so happy are the students of that university! Yea, all the depths of divinity will be uncovered to me, and all difficult knots untied, and the book unsealed, and mine eyes opened. For in knowing God, I shall know all things that are fit or good for the creature.

[l] Multi nobis videmur, sed Deo admodum pauci sumus: nos gentes nationesque distinguimus, sed Deo una domus est mundus hic totus. Reges tantum regni sui per officia ministrorum universa novere; Deo indiciis opus non est. Non solum in oculis ejus, sed in sinu vivimus. Min. Fælix, Octav. p. 394.

[m] 2 Tim. ii. 19; Rev. xiii. 8; Luke x. 20. As defined habitations are distributed by order to blessed spirits, so holy souls shall be set in holy places; and being transported wholly from the whole, shall come to a better condition in better places; not embracing the divine contemplation as in or by a glass; but being welcomed at the everlasting feast of the most evident, truly pure, sincere, and everlasting contemplation of God, with which the souls that abound with love can never be satisfied, and enjoying unmeasurable joys for ever and for ever, they remain honoured, as I may say, with the identity of the universal excellency. Clem. Alex. Stromat. lib. vii. prope init.

to know. There Commenius's attempt is perfected, and all the sciences reduced to one. Seneca thought that he who lived without books, was buried alive; but had he known what it is to enjoy God in glory, he would have said indeed, that to live without him is to be buried alive in hell.

If Apollonius travelled into Ethiopia and Persia to consult with the learned there; and if Plato and Pythagoras left their country to see those wise Egyptian priests; and if, as Hierom saith, many travelled a thousand miles to see and speak with eloquent Livy; and if the queen of Sheba came from Ethiopia to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and see his glory; oh how gladly should I leave this country, how cheerfully should I pass from earth to heaven, to see the glory of that eternal Majesty; and to attain myself that height of wisdom, in comparison of which the most learned on earth are but silly, brutish fools and idiots! If Bernard were so ravished with the delights of his monastery, where he lived in poverty, without the common pleasures of the world, because of its green banks and shady bowers, and herbs, and trees, and various objects to feed the eyes, and fragrant smells, and sweet and various tunes of birds, together with the opportunity of devout contemplations, that he cries out in admiration, Lord! what abundance of delights dost thou provide, even for the poor! how then shall I be ravished with the description of the court of heaven, where, instead of herbs, and trees, and birds, and bowers, I shall enjoy God and my Redeemer, angels, saints, and inexpressible pleasures! and therefore should, with more admiration, cry out, Lord, what delights hast thou provided for us miserable and unworthy wretches that wait for thee! If the heaven of glass, which the Persian emperor framed, were so glorious a piece; and the heaven of silver, which the emperor Ferdinand sent to the great Turk, because of their rare artificial representations and motions; what will the heaven of the heavens then be, which is not formed by the art of man, nor beautified like these childish toys, but is the matchless palace of the great King, built by himself for the residence of his glory, and the perpetual entertainment of his beloved saints! Can a poor deluded Mahometan rejoice in expectation of a feigned, sensual paradise; and shall not I rejoice in expectation of a certain glory?[n] If the honour of the ambitious or the wealth of the covetous person do increase, his heart is lifted up with his estate, as a boat that riseth with the rising of the water. If they have but a little more land or money than their neighbours, how easily you may see it in their countenance and carriage! How high do they look; how big do they speak; how stately and lofty do they demean themselves! and shall not the heavenly loftiness and height of my spirit discover my title to this promised land? Shall I be the adopted son of God, and co-heir with Christ of that blessed inheritance, and daily look when I am put into possession; and shall not this be seen in my joyful countenance? What if God had made me commander of the earth? What if the mountains would remove at my command? What if I could heal all diseases with a word or a touch? What if the infernal spirits were all at my command? Should I not rejoice in such privileges and honours as these? Yet is it my Saviour's command not to rejoice that the devils are subject to us; but in this to rejoice, that our names are written in heaven.

I cannot here enjoy my parents, or my near and beloved friends, without some delight; especially when I did too freely let out my affections to my friend, how sweet was that very exercise of my love! Oh, what will it then be to live in the perpetual love of God! For brethren here to live together in unity, how good and pleasant a thing is it! To see a family live in love; husband, wife, parents, children, servants, doing all in love to one another. To see a town live together in love, without any envyings, brawlings, heart-burnings, or contentions, scorns, law-suits, factions, or divisions; but every man loving his neighbour as himself, and thinking they can never do too much for one another, but striving to go beyond each other in love. Oh! how happy and delectable a sight is this! O sweetest bands, saith Seneca, which bind so happily, that those who are so bound do love their binders, and desire still to be bound more closely, and even reduced into one! Oh! then, what a blessed society will be the family of heaven, and those peaceable inhabitants of the new Jerusalem; where is no division, nor dissimilitude, nor differing judgments, nor disaffection, nor strangeness, nor deceitful friendship; never an angry thought or look, never a cutting, unkind expression; but all are one in Christ, who is one with the Father, and live in the love of Love himself.[o] Cato could say that the soul of a lover dwelleth in the person whom he loveth: and therefore we say, The soul is not more where it liveth and enliveneth, than where it loveth.[p] How near, then, will my soul be closed to God, and how sweet must that conjunction be, when I shall so heartily, strongly, and uncessantly love him! As the bee lies sucking and satiating herself with the sweetness of the flower; or rather, as the child lies sucking the mother's breast, enclosed in her arms, and sitting in her lap; even so shall my loving soul be still feeding on the sweetness of the God of love. Ah! wretched, fleshly, unbelieving heart, that can think of such a day, and work, and life as this, with so low, and dull, and feeble joys! but my enjoying joys will be more lively.

How delectable is it to me to behold and study these inferior works of God! to read those anatomical lectures of Du Bartas, upon this great dissected body! What a beautiful fabric is this great house which here we dwell in! The floor so dressed with various herbs, and flowers, and trees, and watered with springs, and rivers, and seas! The roof so wide expanded, so admirably adorned, such astonishing workmanship in every part! The studies of a hundred ages more, if the world should last so long, would not discover the mysteries of divine skill, which are to be found in the narrow compass of our bodies. What anatomist is not amazed in his search and observations! What wonders, then, do sun, and moon, and stars, and orbs, and seas, and winds, and fire, and air, and earth, &c. afford us! And hath God prepared such a house for our silly, sinful, corruptible flesh, and for a soul imprisoned? and doth he bestow so many millions of wonderful rarities, even upon his enemies? Oh, then, what a dwelling must that needs be, which he prepareth for pure, re-

[n] Th' imperial palace, where th' eternal treasures
Of neetar flow; where everlasting pleasures
Are heaped up; where an immortal May
In blissful beauties flourisheth for aye:
Where life still lives; where God his 'sizes holds;
Environ'd round with seraphims and souls,
Bought with his precious blood, whose glorious flight
Yerst mounted earth above the heavens bright.
Du Bartas in the 2nd day of the 1st week.

[o] Boeth. lib. ii. met. 8. O fœlix hominum genus, Si vestros animos amor, Quo cœlum regitur, regat!

[p] Eras. Apothegm.: Anima est ubi amat, non ubi animat; which Gibieuf expoundeth thus: Quandoquidem id ipsum quod amat est et actus et anima, id autem quod animat subjicitur ei, ut actui potentia: major vero est dependentia potentiæ sive subjecti ab actu, quam contra actus a subjecto et potentia. Gibieuf de Libertate Dei, lib. ii. c. 26. sect. 8. p. 175.

fined, spiritual, glorified ones; and which he will bestow only upon his dearly beloved children, whom he hath chosen out, to make his mercy on them glorified and admired! As far as our perfected, glorified bodies will excel this frail and corruptible flesh, so far will the glory of the new Jerusalem exceed all the present glory of the creatures. The change upon our mansion will be proportionable to the change upon ourselves. Arise, then, O my soul, by these steps in thy contemplation, and let thy thoughts of that glory, were it possible, as far in sweetness exceed thy thoughts of the excellences below. Fear not to go out of this body, and this world, when thou must make so happy a change as this; but say as Zuingerus, when he was dying, "I am glad, and even leap for joy, that at last the time is come, wherein that, even that mighty Jehovah, whose majesty, in my search of nature, I have admired; whose goodness I have adored; whom in faith I have desired; whom I have sighed for; will now show himself to me face to face:" and let that be the unfeigned sense of my heart, which Camerarius left in his will should be written on his monument, *Vita mihi mors est, mors mihi vita nova est;* Life is to me a death, death is to me a new life.[q]

Moreover, how wonderful and excellent are the works of Providence, even in this life! To see the great God to engage himself, and set a-work his attributes, for the safety and advancement of a few humble, despicable, praying persons! Oh what a joyful time will it then be, when so much love, and mercy, and wisdom, and power, and truth, shall be manifested and glorified in the saints' glorification!

How delightful is it to my soul, to review the working of Providence for myself, and to read over the records and catalogues of those special mercies wherewith my life hath been adorned and sweetened! How oft have my prayers been heard, and my tears regarded, and my groaning, troubled soul relieved, and my Lord hath bid me be of good cheer! He hath healed me when in respect of means I was uncurable. He hath helped me when I was helpless. In the midst of my supplications hath he eased and revived me. He hath taken me up from my knees, and from the dust where I have lain in sorrow and despair: even the cries which have been occasioned by distrust, hath he regarded. What a support are these experiences to my fearful, unbelieving heart! These clear testimonies of my Father's love, do put life into my afflicted, drooping spirit.

Oh, then, what a blessed day will that be, when I shall have all mercy, perfection of mercy, nothing but mercy, and fully enjoy the Lord of mercy himself! when I shall stand on the shore, and look back upon the raging seas which I have safely passed! when I shall, in safe and full possession of glory, look back upon all my pains and troubles, and fears and tears, and upon all the mercies which I here received; and then shall behold the glory enjoyed there, which was the end of all this! Oh, what a blessed view will that be! O glorious prospect which I shall have on the celestial mount Zion! Is it possible that there should be any defect of joy; or my heart not raised, when I am so raised? If one drop of lively faith were mixed with these considerations, oh! what work would they make in my breast; and what a heaven-ravished heart should I carry within me! Fain would I believe; "Lord, help my unbelief."

Yet further, consider, O my soul, how sweet have the very ordinances been unto thee! what raptures hast thou had in prayer, and under heavenly sermons! what gladness in days of thanksgiving, after eminent deliverances to the church, or to thyself! what delight do I find in the sweet society of the saints; to be among my humble, faithful neighbours and friends; to join with them in the frequent worship of God; to see their growth and stability, and soundness of understanding; to see those daily added to the church which shall be saved! Oh then what delight shall I have to see the perfected church in heaven, and to join with these and all the saints in another kind of worship than we can here conceive of! How sweet is it to join in the high praises of God in the solemn assemblies! How glad have I been to go up to the house of God, especially after long restraint by sickness, when I have been as Hezekiah released, and re-admitted to join with the people of God, and to set forth the praises of my great Deliverer! How sweet is my work in preaching the gospel, and inviting sinners to the marriage feast of the Lamb, and opening to them the treasures of free grace! Especially when God blesseth my endeavours with plenteous success, and giveth me to see the fruit of my labours; even this alone hath been a greater joy to my heart, than if I had been made the lord of all the riches on earth.

Oh how can my heart then conceive that joy, which I shall have in my admittance into the celestial temple, and into the heavenly host, that shall do nothing but praise the Lord for ever! when we shall say to Christ, "Here am I, and the children thou hast given me;" and when Christ shall present us all to his Father, and all are gathered, and the body completed! If the very word of God were sweeter to Job than his necessary food, Job xxiii. 12; and to Jeremy, was the very joy and rejoicing of his heart, Jer. xv. 16; and to David, was sweeter than the honey and honeycomb, so that he crieth out, O how I love thy law! it is my meditation continually: and if thy law had not been my delight, I had perished in my troubles, Psal. cxix. 97; 92, 70, 77, &c. Oh then how blessed a day will that be, when we shall fully enjoy the Lord of this word; and shall need these written precepts and promises no more; but shall, instead of these love-letters, enjoy our Beloved, and instead of these promises, have the happiness in possession, and read no book but the face of the glorious God! How far would I go to see one of those blessed angels which appeared to Abraham, to Lot, to John, &c.; or to speak with Enoch, or Elias, or any saint who had lived with God; especially if he would resolve all my doubts, and describe to me the celestial habitations! How much more desirable must it needs be to live with these blessed saints and angels, and to see and possess as well as they! It is written of Erastus, that he was so desirous to learn, that it would be sweet to him even to die, so he might but be resolved of those doubtful questions wherein he could not satisfy himself.[r] How sweet then should it be to me to die, that I may not only be resolved of all my doubts, but also know what I never before did think of, and enjoy what before I never knew! It was a happy dwelling that the twelve apostles had with Christ; to be always in his

[q] Gaudeo ego atque adeo exulto, jam tandem illuxisse tempus quo ille, ille præpotens Jehova, cujus majestatem in naturæ indagatione miratus sum, veneratus quoque bonitatem, quem fide desideravi, quem suspiravi, a facie jam se mihi ad faciem visendum exhibebit. Melchior Adam. in Vitis Germanorum Medicorum, p. 416.

[r] Discendi adeo fuit cupidus, ut mori fuerit ipsi suave, modo ex dubiis quæstionibus in quibus sibi ipse satisfacere non poterat, se posset expedire. Melch. Adam. in vita Erasti. Debent velle addiscere etiam qui alterum in sepulchro pedem habent, inquit Calvinus Julian. I. C.

company, and see his face, and hear him open to them the mysteries of the kingdom: but it will be another kind of happiness to dwell with him in glory. It was a rare privilege of Thomas to put his fingers into his wounds to confirm his faith; and of John to be called the disciple whom Jesus loved, on whose breast at supper he was wont to lean: but it will be another kind of privilege which I shall enjoy when I shall see him in his glory, and not in his wounds; and shall enjoy a fuller sense of his love than John then did; and shall have the most hearty entertainment that heaven affordeth. If they that heard Christ speak on earth, were astonished at his wisdom and answers, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded from his mouth; how shall I be affected then to behold him in his majesty!

Rouse up thyself, O my soul, and consider; can the foresight of this glory make others embrace the stake, and kiss the faggot, and welcome the cross, and refuse deliverance; and can it not make thee cheerful under lesser sufferings; can it sweeten the flames to them; and can it not sweeten thy life, or thy sickness, or natural death? If a glimpse could make Moses's face to shine, and Peter on the mount so transported, and Paul so exalted, and John so rapt up in the Spirit, why should it not somewhat revive me with delight?[s] Doubtless it would, if my thoughts were more believing. Is it not the same heaven which they and I must live in; is not their God, their Christ, their crown, and mine, the same? Nay, how many a weak woman, or poor despised christian, have I seen, mean in parts, but rich in faith, who could rejoice and triumph in hope of this inheritance! and shall I look upon it with so dim an eye, so dull a heart, so dejected a countenance? Some small foretastes also I have had myself, though indeed small and seldom, through mine unbelief, and how much more delightful have they been than ever was any of these earthly things! The full enjoyment then will sure be sweet. Remember then this bunch of grapes which thou hast tasted of, and by them conjecture the fruitfulness of the land of promise. A grape in a wilderness cannot be like the plentiful vintage.

Consider also, O my soul, what a beauty is there in the imperfect graces of the Spirit here, Col. iii. 10; so great that they are called the image of God. And can any created excellency have a more honourable title? Alas, how small a part are these of what we shall enjoy in our perfect state! Oh how precious a mercy should I esteem it, if God would but take off my bodily infirmities, and restore me to any comfortable measure of health and strength, that I might be able with cheerfulness to go through his work! How precious a mercy then will it be, to have all my corruptions quite removed, and my soul perfected, and my body also raised to so high a state as I now can neither desire nor conceive! Surely, as health of body, so health of soul doth carry an unexpressible sweetness along with it. Were there no reward besides, yet every gracious act is a reward and comfort. Never had I the least stirring of loving God, but I felt a heavenly sweetness accompany it; even the very act of loving was unexpressibly sweet. What a happy life should I here live, could I but love as much as I would, and as oft, and as long as I would! Could I be all love, and always loving, O my soul, what wouldst thou give for such a life! O had I such true and clear apprehensions of God, and such a true understanding of his word, as I desire; could I but trust him as fully in all my straits; could I have that life which I would have in every duty; could I make God my constant desire and delight; I would not then envy the world their honours or pleasures; nor change my happiness with a Cæsar or Alexander. O my soul, what a blessed state wilt thou shortly be in, when thou shalt have far more of these than thou canst now desire! and shalt exercise all thy perfect graces upon God in presence and open sight, and not in the dark, and at a distance, as now!

And as there is so much worth in one gracious soul, so much more in a gracious society, and most of all in the whole body of Christ on earth: if there be any true beauty on earth, where should it be so likely as in the spouse of Christ? It is her that he adorneth with his jewels, and feasteth at his table; and keepeth for her always an open house and heart: he revealeth to her his secrets, and maintaineth constant converse with her: he is her constant guardian, and in every deluge encloseth her in his ark: he saith to her, Thou art all beautiful, my beloved! And is his spouse, while black, so comely? is the afflicted, sinning, weeping, lamenting, persecuted church so excellent? Oh what then will be the church, when it is fully gathered and glorified; when it is ascended from the valley of tears to mount Sion; when it shall sin no more, nor weep, nor groan, nor suffer any more![t] The stars, or the smallest candle, are not darkened so much by the brightness of the sun, as the excellences of the first temple will be by the celestial temple. The glory of the old Jerusalem will be darkness and deformity, to the glory of the new. It is said in Ezra iii. 12, that when the foundations of the second temple were laid, many of the ancient men who had seen the first house, did weep, i. e. because the second did come so far short of it: what cause then shall we have to shout for joy, when we shall see how glorious the heavenly temple is, and remember the meanness of the church on earth!

But, alas! what a loss am I at in the midst of my contemplation! I thought my heart had all this while followed after; but I see it doth not: and shall I let my understanding go on alone, or my tongue run on without affections? What life is in empty thoughts and words? neither God nor I find pleasure in them.

Rather let me run back again, and look, and find, and chide this lazy, loitering heart, that turneth off from such a pleasant work as this; where hast thou been, unworthy heart, while I was opening to thee the everlasting treasures? Didst thou sleep, or wast thou minding something else? or, dost thou think that this is all but a dream or fable, or as uncertain as the predictions of a presumptuous astrologer? or, hast thou lost thy life and rejoicing power? Art thou not ashamed to complain so much of an uncomfortable life, and to murmur at God for filling thee

[s] If thy first glance so powerful be,
A mirth but open'd and seal'd up again;
What wonders shall we feel, when we shall see
Thy full-eyed love!
When thou shalt look us out of pain,
And one aspect of thine send in delight,
More than a thousand suns disburse in light
In heaven above.
Herbert's Poems, The Glance.

[t] With cloudy cares th' one's muffled up somewhiles,
The other's face is full of pleasing smiles:
For never grief, nor fear of any fit
Of the least care, shall dare come near to it:
'Tis the grand jubilee, the feast of feasts,
Sabbath of sabbaths, endless rest of rests;
Which with the prophets and apostles zealous,
The constant martyrs, and our christian fellows,
God's faithful servants, and his chosen sheep,
In heav'n we hope within short time to keep.
Du Bartas in the 7th Day of the 1st Week, p. 187.

with sorrows, when he offereth thee in vain the delights of angels, and when thou treadest under foot these transcendent pleasures? Thou wilfully pinest away in grief, and art ready to charge thy Father with unkindness for making thee only a vessel of displeasure, a sink of sadness, a skin-full of groans, a snow-ball of tears, a channel for waters of affliction to run in, the fuel of fears, and the carcass which cares do consume and prey upon, when in the mean time thou mightest live a life of joy; hadst thou now but followed me close, and believingly applied thyself to that which I have spoken, and drunk in but half the comfort which those words hold forth, it would have made thee revive and leap for joy, and forget thy sorrows, and diseases, and pains of the flesh: but seeing thou judgest thyself unworthy of comfort, it is just that comfort should be taken from thee.

Lord, what is the matter that this work doth go on so heavily? did I think my heart had been so backward to rejoice? If it had been to mourn, and fear, and despair, it were no wonder: I have been lifting up at this stone, and it will not stir; I have been pouring aqua vitæ into the mouth of the dead: I hope, Lord, by that time it comes to heaven, this heart, by thy Spirit, will be quickened and mended, or else even those joys will scarce rejoice me.

But besides my darkness, deadness, and unbelief, I perceive there is something else that forbids my full-desired joys. This is not the time and place where so much is given: the time is our winter, and not our harvest; the place is called the valley of tears. There must be great difference betwixt the way and the end, the work and wages, the small foretastes and full fruition.

But, Lord, though thou hast reserved our joys for heaven, yet hast thou not so suspended our desires; they are most suitable and seasonable in this present life: therefore, O help me to desire till I may possess; and let me long when I cannot as I would rejoice. There is love in desire as well as in delight; and if I be not empty of love, I know I shall not long be empty of delight.

Rouse up thyself once more, then, O my soul, and try and exercise thy spiritual appetite; though thou art ignorant and unbelieving, yet art thou reasonable, and therefore must needs desire a happiness and rest: nor canst thou sure be so unreasonable as to dream of attaining it here on earth. Thou knowest, to thy sorrow, that thou art not yet at thy rest, and thy own feeling doth convince thee of thy present unhappiness: and dost thou know that thou art restless, and yet art willing to continue so; art thou neither happy in deed nor in desire; art thou neither well nor wouldst be well? When my flesh is pained and languisheth under consuming sickness, how heartily and frequently do I cry out, Oh! when shall I be eased of this pain? when shall my decaying strength be recovered? There is no dissembling or formality in these desires and groans. How then should I long for my final, full recovery! There is no sickness, nor pain, nor weeping, nor complaints. Oh when shall I arrive at that safe and quiet harbour, where is none of these storms, and waves, and dangers; when I shall never more have a weary, restless night or day? Then shall not my life be such a medley or mixture of hope and fear, of joy and sorrow, as now it is; nor shall flesh and spirit be combating within me, nor my soul be still as a pitched field, or a stage of contention, where faith and unbelief, affiance and distrust, humility and pride, do maintain a continual distracting conflict: then shall I not live a dying life for fear of dying, nor my life be made uncomfortable with the fears of losing it. Oh when shall I be past these soul-tormenting fears, and cares, and griefs, and passions? when shall I be out of this frail, this corruptible, ruinous body; this soul-contradicting, insnaring, deceiving flesh? when shall I be out of this vain and vexatious world, whose pleasures are mere deluding dreams and shadows; whose miseries are real, numerous, and uncessant?[u] How long shall I see the church of Christ lie trodden under the feet of persecutors; or else, as a ship in the hands of foolish guides, though the supreme Master doth moderate all for the best? Alas! that I must stand by and see the church and cause of Christ, like a foot-ball in the midst of a crowd of boys, tossed about in contention from one to another; every one running and sweating with foolish violence, and labouring the downfal of all that are in his way, and all to get it into his own power, that he may have the managing of the work himself, and may drive it before him which way he pleaseth; and when all is done, the best usage it may expect from them, is but to be spurned about in the dirt, till they have driven it on to the goal of their private interests, or deluded fancies. There is none of this disorder in the heavenly Jerusalem; there shall I find a government without imperfection, and obedience without the least unwillingness or rebellion; even an harmonious consent of perfected spirits, in obeying and praising their everlasting King. Oh how much better is it to be a door-keeper there and the least in that kingdom, than to be the conqueror or commander of this tumultuous world![x] There will our Lord govern all immediately by himself, and not put the reins in the hands of such ignorant riders, nor govern by such foolish and sinful deputies,[y] as the best of the sons of men now are. Dost thou so mourn for these inferior disorders, O my soul, and yet wouldst thou not be out of it? How long hast thou desired to be a member of a more perfect reformed church, and to join with more holy, humble, sincere souls, in the purest and most heavenly worship! Why, dost thou not see that on earth thy desires fly from thee? Art thou not as a child that thinketh to travel to the sun, when he seeth it rising or setting, as it were close to the earth; but as he travelleth toward it, it seems to go from him; and when he hath long wearied himself, it is as far off as ever, for the thing he seeketh is in another world?[z] Even such hath been thy labour in

[u] False glorious pleasures; casks of happiness;
Foolish night-fires; women's and children's wishes;
Chases in arras; gilded emptiness;
Embroider'd lies; nothing between two dishes:
These are the pleasures here.

True earnest sorrows; rooted miseries;
Anguish in grain; vexations ripe and blown;
Sure-footed griefs; solid calamities;
Plain demonstrations, evident and clear,
Fetching their proof even from the very bone:
These are the sorrows here.

But, O the folly of distracted men,
Who griefs in earnest, joys in jest pursue!
Preferring like brute beasts a loathsome den
Before a court; even that above so clear;
Where are no sorrows, but delights more true
Than miseries are here.
Herbert's Poems, Dotage.

[x] Antonius cum audiret se a vetula propter opes et dignitatem beatum prædicari; Mea matercula, inquit, si nosses quantis malis hic panniculus (viz. diadema) sit refertus, ne in sterquilinio quidem jacentem tolleres.

[y] Lætissima forma reipublicæ est, cui ad summam libertatem nihil deest, nisi pereundi licentia. Seneca de Clement. lib. i. cap. 1.

[z] Read Bishop Hall's Soul's Farewell to Earth.

seeking for so holy, so pure, so peaceable a society, as might afford thee a contented settlement here. Those that have gone as far as America for satisfaction, have confessed themselves unsatisfied still. When wars, and calamities attending them, have been over, I have said, Return now, my soul, unto thy rest, Psal. cxvi.; but how restless a condition hath next succeeded! When God had given me the enjoyment of peace and friends, and liberty of the gospel; and had settled me even as my own heart desired; I have been ready to say, Soul, take thy ease and rest; but how quickly hath Providence called me fool, and taught me to call my state by another name! When did I ever begin to congratulate my flesh on its felicity, but God did quickly turn my tune, and made almost the same breath to end in groaning, which did begin in laughter! I have thought ofttimes on the folly of my prosperity, Now I will have one sweet draught of solace and content, but God hath dropped in the gall, while the cup was at my mouth. We are still weary of the present condition, and desire a change, and when we have it, it doth not answer our expectation; but our discontent and restlessness is still unchanged. In time of peace we thought that war would deliver us from our disquietments, and when we saw the iron red-hot, we catched it inconsiderately, thinking that it was gold, till it burned us to the very bone, and so stuck to our fingers, that we scarce know yet whether we are rid of it or not. In this our misery we longed for peace; and so long were we strangers to it, that we had forgotten its name, and began to call it rest, or heaven; but as soon as we are again grown acquainted with it, we shall better betnink us, and perceive our mistake. Oh why am I then no more weary of this weariness? and why do I forget my resting-place? Jer. l. 6. Up, then, O my soul, and thy most raised and fervent desires! stay not till this flesh can desire with thee; its appetite hath a lower and baser object. Thy appetite is not sensitive, but rational; distinct from its; and therefore look not that sense apprehend thy blessed object, and tell thee what and when to desire. Believing reason in the glass of Scripture may discern enough to raise the flame; and though sense apprehend not that which must draw thy desires, yet that which may drive them it doth easily apprehend. It can tell thee that thy present life is filled with distress and sorrows, though it cannot tell thee what is in the world to come. Thou needest not Scripture to tell thee, nor faith to discern, that thy head acheth, and thy stomach is sick, thy bowels griped, and thy heart grieved; and some of these, or such-like, are thy daily case. Thy friends about thee are grieved to see thy griefs, and to hear thy dolorous groans and lamentations, and yet art thou loth to leave this woeful life! Is this a state to be preferred before the celestial glory; or is it better to be thus miserable from Christ, than to be happy with him;[a] or canst thou possibly be so unbelieving, as to doubt whether that life be any better than this? O my soul, doth not the dulness of thy desires after rest, accuse thee of most detestable ingratitude and folly? Must thy Lord procure thee a rest at so dear a rate, and dost thou no more value it? Must he purchase thy rest by a life of labour and sorrow, and by the pangs of a bitter, cursed death; and when all is done, hadst thou rather be here without it? Must he go before to prepare so blessed a mansion for such a wretch, and art thou now loth to go to possess it? Must his blood, and care, and pains be lost? O unthankful, unworthy soul! shall the Lord of glory be willing of thy company, and art thou unwilling of his? Are they fit to dwell with God, that had rather stay from him? Must he crown thee and glorify thee against thy will; or must he yet deal more roughly with thy darling flesh, and leave thee never a corner in thy ruinous cottage for to cover thee, but fire thee out of all, before thou wilt away? Must every sense be an inlet to thy sorrows; and every friend become the scourge, and Job's messengers be the daily intelligencers, and bring thee the currantos of thy multiplied calamities, before that heaven will seem more desirable than this earth? Must every joint be the seat of pain, and every member deny thee a room to rest in, and thy groans be indited from the very heart and bones, before thou wilt be willing to leave this flesh? Must thy heavy burdens be bound upon thy back; and thy so intolerable paroxysms become incessant; and thy intermittent aguish woes be turned into continual burning fevers; yea, must earth become a very hell to thee, before thou wilt be willing to be with God? O impudent soul, if thou be not ashamed of this! What is loathing, if this be love? Look about thee, O my soul; behold the most lovely creature, or the most desirable state, and tell me where wouldst thou be if not with God? Poverty is a burden, and riches a snare. Sickness is little pleasing to thee, and usually health as little safe; the one is full of sorrow, and the other of sin. The frowning world doth bruise thy heel, and the smiling world doth sting thee to the heart. When it seemeth ugly, it causeth loathing; when beauteous, it is thy bane. When thy condition is bitter, thou wouldst fain spit it out; and when delightful, it is but sugared misery and deceit: the sweetest poison doth often bring the surest death. So much as the world is loved and delighted in, so much it hurteth and endangereth the lover;[b] and if it may not be loved, why should it be desired? If thou be applauded, it proves the most contagious breath; and how ready are the sails of pride to receive such winds! so that it frequently addeth to thy sin, but not one cubit to the stature of thy worth; and if thou be vilified, slandered, or unkindly used, methinks this should not entice thy love. Never didst thou sit by the fire of prosperity and applause, but thou hadst with it the smoke that drew water from thy eyes: never hadst thou the rose without the pricks; and the sweetness hath been expired, and the beauty faded, before the fears which thou hadst in gathering it were healed. Is it not as good to be without the

[a] The things of this world do nothing delight me, nor any temporal kingdom. It is better for me to die in Jesus Christ, than to reign in the ends of the earth. For I desire after the Lord, the Son of the true God, and the Father of Jesus Christ. Him I seek, and him that died and rose for us. Spare me, brethren, hinder me not from life, for Jesus is the Life of the faithful; do not wish me to die, for life without Christ is death. Being resolved to be God's, I may not please the world. Suffer me to behold the pure light. When I come thither, I shall be a man of God. Let me alone, that I may be an imitator of the sufferings of my God. He that would have him in himself, let him know what I would have, and suffer with me, as knowing what is in me, saith Ignatius in Epist. ad Roman. edit. Usserii, p. 87.

[b] Quibus argenti et auri maximum pondus et pecuniarum ingentium vel extructi aggeres, vel defossæ strues: hos etiam inter divitias suas trepidos cogitationis incertæ solicitudo discruciat, ne prædo vastet, ne percussor infestet, ne inimica cujusque locupletioris invidia calumniosis litibus inquietet. Non cibus securo somnusve contingit; suspirat ille in convivio, bibat licet gemmas: et cum epulis marcidum corpus torus mollior alto sinu condiderit, vigilat in pluma. Nec intelligit miser sibi speciosa esse supplicia: auro se alligatum teneri, et possideri magis quam possidere divitias atque opes. O detestabilis cæcitas mentium! Et cupiditatis insanæ profunda caligo! Cum exonerare se posset, et levare ponderibus, pergit magis fortunis augentibus incubare, pergit pœnalibus cumulis pertinaciter adhærere! Cyprian. ad Donat. ep. 1. p. 5.

honey, as to have it with so many smarting stings? The highest delight thou hast found in any thing below, hath been in thy successful labours and thy godly friends; and have these indeed been so sweet, as that thou shouldst be so loth to leave them? If they seem better to thee than a life with God, it is time for God to take them from thee. Thy studies have been sweet, and have they not been also bitter? My mind hath been pleased, but my body pained, and the weariness of the flesh hath quickly abated the pleasures of the spirit. When by painful studies I have not discovered the truth, it hath been but a tedious way to a grievous end; discontent and trouble purchased by toilsome, wearying labours. And if I have found out the truth by divine assistance, I have found but an exposed, naked orphan, that hath cost me much to take in, and clothe, and keep, which, though of noble birth, yea, a divine offspring, and amiable in mine eyes, and worthy I confess of better entertainment, yet, from men that know not its descent, hath drawn upon me their envy and furious opposition; and hath brought the blinded Sodomites, with whom I lived at some peace before, to crowd about me,[c] and assault my doors, that I might prostitute my heavenly guests to their pleasure, and again expose them, whom I had so gladly and lately entertained; yea, the very tribes of Israel have been gathered against me, thinking that the altar which I built for the interest of truth,[d] and unity, and peace, had been erected to the introduction of error and idolatry: and so the increase of knowledge hath been the increase of sorrow. My heart, indeed, is ravished with the beauty of naked truth, and I am ready to cry out, I have found it, or, as Aquinas, *Conclusum est contra*, &c.; but when I have found it, I know not what to do with it. If I confine it to my own breast, and keep it secret to myself, it is as a consuming fire, shut up in my heart and bones. I am as the lepers without Samaria, or as those that were forbidden to tell any man of the works of Christ: I am weary of forbearing, I cannot stay. If I reveal it to the world,[e] I can expect but an unwelcome entertainment, and an ungrateful return; for they have taken up their standing in religious knowledge already, as if they were at Hercules' pillars, and had no farther to go, nor any more to learn. They dare be no wiser than they are already, nor receive any more of truth than they have already received, lest thereby they should accuse their ancestors and teachers of ignorance and imperfection, and themselves should seem to be mutable and unconstant, and to hold their opinions in religion with reserves.[f] The most precious truth not apprehended, doth seem to be error and fantastic novelty: every man that readeth what I write, will not be at the pains of those tedious studies to find out the truth as I have been, but think it should meet their eyes in the very reading. If the mere writing of truth, with its clearest evidence, were all that were necessary to the apprehension of it by others, then the lowest scholar in the school might be quickly as good as the highest. So that if I did see more than others, to reveal it to the lazy, prejudiced world, would but make my friends turn enemies, or look upon me with a strange and jealous eye: and yet truth is so dear a friend itself, and he that sent it much more dear, that whatsoever I suffer I dare not stifle or conceal it. Oh what then are these bitter sweet studies and discoveries to the everlasting views of the face of the God of truth! The light that here I have is but a knowing in part, and yet it costeth me so dear, that in a temptation I am almost ready to prefer the quiet, silent night before such a rough, tempestuous day.[g] But there I shall have light and rest together, and the quietness of the night without its darkness. I can never now have the lightning without the thunder, which maketh it seem more dreadful than delightful. And shouldst thou be loth, then, O my soul, to leave this for the eternal perfect light; and to change thy candle for the glorious sun; and to change thy studies, and preaching, and praying, for the harmonious praises and fruition of the blessed God?

Nor will thy loss be greater in the change of thy company than of thine employment. Thy friends here have been indeed thy delight;[h] and have they not been also thy vexation and thy grief? They are gracious, and are they not also sinful; they are kind and loving, and are they not also peevish, froward, and soon displeased? They are humble, but withal, alas! how proud! They will scarce endure to hear plainly of their disgraceful faults; they cannot bear undervaluing or disrespect; they itch after the good thoughts and applause of others; they love those best that highliest esteem them. The missing of courtesy; a supposed slighting or disrespect; the contradicting of their words or humours; a difference in opinion, yea, the turning of a straw, will quickly show thee the pride and the uncertainty of thy friend. Their graces are sweet to thee, and their gifts are helpful, but are not their corruptions bitter, and their imperfections hurtful? Though at a distance they seem to thee most holy and innocent, yet when they come nearer thee, and thou hast thoroughly tried them, alas! what silly, frail, and froward pieces are the best of men![i] Then the knowledge which thou didst admire, appeareth clouded with ignorance, and the virtues that so shined as a glow-worm in the night, are scarcely to be found when thou seekest them by daylight.

[c] Memini quid Bucholcerus de Melancthone convitiis lacerato dicere solebat; Quidam sunt anathema secundum dici, quidam secundum esse: mallem ego cum Philippo anathema secundum dici, quam cum illo secundum esse. Josh. xxii.; Eccles. i. 18; Jer. xx. 9.

[d] Nostram opinionem cum dico, non alligo me ad unum aliquem e proceribus. Est et mihi censendi jus. Itaque aliquem sequar: aliquem jubebo sententiam dividere. Fortasse, et post omnes citatus, nihil improbabo ex his quæ priores decreverint; et dicam, Hoc amplius sentio. Sencca de Vita Beata, cap. 3.

[e] Nihil modo quietis aut seeuritatis invenire possumus, dum adhuc in nobis ipsis ingemiscimus gravati, adoptionem expectantes: cum autem mortale hoc induerit immortalitatem, tunc nulla erit diabolicæ fraudis impugnatio, nullum hereticæ pravitatis dogma, nulla infidelis populi impietatis: omnibus ita pacatis et compositis, ut in tabernaculis justorum sola audiatur vox exultationis et salutis. Greg. in 7 Psal. Pœn.

[f] Docibilis ille est, qui est ad discendi patientiam lenis et mitis. Oportet enim episcopum non tantum docere, sed et discere. Quia et ille melius docet, qui quotidie crescit et proficit discendo meliora. I would God would humble ministers to learn this excellent lesson. It is in Cyprian's Epist. 74. Ad Pomp. that famous destructory of the Roman usurpation, and of unwritten traditions.

[g] Et ego indignor, quia non novi justitiam Dei? Si homo sum, non indignor. Excedam hominem si possum, et forte attingam; sed etsi attigero, homini non dicam: excedat et ipse, et attingat mecum. August. de Verb. Apostol. serm. 20. cap. 3. Nullus enim suavior animo cibus est, quam cognitio veritatis, ut Lactantius, Institut. lib. i. cap. 1.

[h] Amabile est præesse civibus, sed placere difficile. Multum enim et inter cognatos, semper dura constantia est. Symmach. Theod. lib. x. epist. 16.

[i] Vetus dictum est, A lasso iram quæri æque et ab esuriente et sitiente, et ab omni homine quem aliqua res urit. Nam ut ulcera ad levem tactum, deinde etiam ad suspicionem tactus condolescunt; ita animus affectus minimis offenditur, adeo ut quosdam salutatio, epistola, oratio, et interrogatio, ad litem evocent: nunquam sine querela ægra tanguntur. (How true have I proved this, when I have dealt plainly and faithfully with the most seemingly humbled!) Seneca de Ira, lib. iii. cap. 10. p. (mihi) 443.

When temptations are strong, how quickly do they yield! what wounds have they given to religion by their shameful falls! Those that have been famous for their holiness, have been as infamous for their notorious, heinous wickedness: those that have been thy dearest bosom friends, that have prayed and conferred with thee, and helped thee toward heaven, and by their fervour, forwardness, and heavenly lives, have shamed thy coldness, and earthliness, and dulness; whom thou hast singled out as the choicest from a world of professors, whom thou madest the daily companions and delights of thy life; are not some of them fallen to drunkenness, and some to whoredom, some to pride, perfidiousness, and rebellion, and some to the most damnable heresies and divisions?[k] And hath thy very heart received such wounds from thy friends, and yet art thou so loth to go from them to thy God? Thy friends that are weak, are little useful or comfortable to thee; and those that are strong, are the abler to hurt thee; and the best, if not heedfully used, will prove the worst. The better and keener the knife is, the sooner and deeper will it cut thy fingers, if thou take not heed. Yea, the very number of thy friends is a burden and trouble to thee. Every one supposeth he hath some interest in thee; yea, the interest of a friend, which is not little; and how insufficient art thou to satisfy all their expectations, when it is much if thou canst answer the expectations of one! If thou wert divided among so many, as each could have but little of thee, so thyself and God, who should have most, will have none. And almost every one that hath not more of thee than thou canst spare for all, is ready to censure thee as unfriendly, and a neglecter of the duty or respects which thou owest them;[l] and shouldst thou please them all, the gain will not be great, nor art thou sure that they will again please thee.

Awake then, O my drowsy soul, and look above this world of sorrow. Hast thou borne the yoke of thy afflictions from thy youth, and so long felt the smarting rod, and yet canst no better understand its meaning? Is not every stroke to drive thee hence; and is not the voice of the rod like that to Elijah, What doest thou here? Up and away. Dost thou forget that sure prediction of thy Lord, "In the world ye shall have trouble, but in me ye shall have peace." The first thou hast found true by long experience, and of the latter thou hast had a small foretaste, but the perfect peace is yet before, which, till it be enjoyed, cannot be clearly understood.

Ah! my dear Lord, I feel thy meaning. It is written in my flesh: it is engraven in my bones. My heart thou aimest at; thy rod doth drive, thy silken cord of love doth draw, and all to bring it to thyself. And is that all, Lord? is that the worst? Can such a heart be worth thy having? Make it so, Lord, and then it is thine; take it to thyself, and then take me. I can but reach it toward thee, and not unto thee. I am too low, and it is too dull. This clod hath life to stir, but not to rise; legs it hath, but wings it wanteth. As the feeble child to the tender mother, it looketh up to thee, and stretcheth out the hands, and fain would have thee take it up. Though I cannot so freely say, My heart is with thee, my soul longeth after thee; yet can I say, I long for such a longing heart. The twins are yet a striving in my bowels: the spirit is willing, the flesh is weak; the spirit longs, the flesh is loth. The flesh is unwilling to lie rotting in the earth; the soul desires to be with thee. My spirit crieth, Let thy kingdom come; or else, let me come unto thy kingdom: but the flesh is afraid lest thou shouldst hear my prayer, and take me at my word. What frequent contradictions dost thou find in my requests! because there is such contradiction in myself. My prayers plead against my prayers, and one part begs a denial to the other. No wonder if thou give me such a dying life, when I know not whether to ask for life or death. With the same breath do I beg for a reprieval and removal; and the same groan doth utter my desires and my fears. My soul would go, my flesh would stay. My soul would fain be out, my flesh would have thee hold the door. O, blessed be the grace that makes advantages of my corruptions, even to contradict and kill themselves. For I fear my fears, and sorrow for my sorrows, and groan under my fleshly groans: I loathe my lothness, and I long for greater longings. And while my soul is thus tormented with fears and cares, and with the tedious means for attaining my desires; it addeth so much to the burden of my troubles, that my weariness thereby is much increased, which makes me groan to be at rest. Indeed, Lord, my soul itself also is in a strait, and what to choose I know not well, but yet thou knowest what to give: to depart, and be with thee, is best; but yet to be in the flesh seems needful. Thou knowest I am not weary of thy work, but of sorrow and sin I must needs be weary: I am willing to stay while thou wilt here employ me, and to despatch the work which thou hast put into my hands, till these strange thoughts of thee be somewhat more familiar, and thou hast raised me into some degree of acquaintance with thyself: but I beseech thee, stay no longer when this is done. Stay not till sin shall get advantage, and my soul grow earthly by dwelling on this earth, and my desires and delights in thee grow dead: but while I must be here, let me be still amending and ascending; make me still better, and take me at the best. I dare not be so impatient of living, as to importune thee to cut off my time, and urge thee to snatch me hence unready; because I know my everlasting state doth so much depend on the improvement of this life. Nor yet would I stay when my work is done; and remain here sinning, when my brethren are triumphing. I am drowning in tears, while they swim in joys; I am weeping, while they are singing; I am under thy feet, while they are in thy bosom; thy footsteps bruise and break this worm, while those stars do shine in the firmament of glory. Thy frowns do kill me, while they are quickened by thy smiles: they are ever living, and I am daily dying: their joys are raised by the knowledge of their endlessness; my griefs are enlarged by still expecting more: while they possess but one continued pleasure, I bear the successive assaults of fresh calamities. One billow falls in the neck of another; and when I am rising up from under one, another comes and strikes me down. Yet I am thy child, as well as they; Christ is my head, as well as theirs: why is there then so great a distance? How differently dost thou use us, when thou art Father to us all! They sit at thy table, while I must stand without the doors. But I acknowledge the equity of thy ways. Though we are

[k] Offendet te superbus contemptu, dives contumelia, petulans injuria, lividus malignitate, pugnax contentione, ventosus et mendax vanitate. Non feres a suspicioso timeri; a pertinace vinci; a delicato fastidiri. Elige simplices, faciles, moderatos, qui iram tuam non evocent, sed ferant. Magis adhuc proderunt submissi, et humani, et dulces; non tamen usque in adulationem. Seneca de Ira, lib. iii. cap. 8. p. 438.

[l] Ingratitudinem cave tanquam maximum crimen; ne admittas: ignosce tanquam levissimo, si admissum est. Hæc est enim injuria summa: beneficium perdidisti? Salvum est tibi ex illo quod est optimum, dedisti. Seneca de Benefic. lib. i. cap. 10. p. 386.

all children, yet I am the prodigal, and therefore meeter in this remote country to feed on husks; while they are always with thee, and possess thy glory. Though we are all members, yet not the same; they are the tongue, and fitter to praise thee; they are the hands, and fitter for thy service; I am the feet, and therefore meeter to tread on earth, and move in dirt, but unfit to stand so near the head as they. They were once themselves in my condition, and I shall shortly be in theirs: they were of the lowest form, before they came to the highest; they suffered, before they reigned: they came out of great tribulation, who now are standing before thy throne; and shall not I be content to come to the crown as they did; and to drink of their cup, before I sit with them in the kingdom? The blessed souls of David, Paul, Austin, Calvin, &c. with all the spirits of the just made perfect, were once on earth, as I am now; as far from the sight of thy face and glory, as deep in sorrows, as weak, and sick, and full of pains, as I. Their souls were longer imprisoned in corruptible flesh: I shall go but the way that they did all go before me: their house of clay did fall to dust, and so must mine. The world they are now in, was as strange to them before they were there as it is to me.[m] And am I better than all these precious souls? I am contented, therefore, O my Lord, to stay thy time, and go thy way; so thou wilt exalt me also in thy season, and take me into thy barn when thou seest me ripe. In the mean time I may desire, though I am not to repine; I may look over the hedge, though I may not break over; I may believe and wish, though not make any sinful haste; I am content to wait, but not to lose thee. And when thou seest me too contented with thine absence, and satisfying and pleasing myself here below, O quicken up then my dull desires, and blow up the dying spark of love; and leave me not till I am able unfeignedly to cry out, As the hart panteth after the brooks, and the dry land thirsteth for the water-streams, so thirsteth my soul after thee, O God: when shall I come and appear before the living God? Psal. xlii. 1, 2: till my daily conversation be with thee in heaven, and from thence I may longingly expect my Saviour, Phil. iii. 20, 21: till my affections are set on things above, where Christ is reigning, and my life is hid, Col. iii. 1—4; till I can walk by faith, and not by sight; willing rather to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord, 2 Cor. v. 1, 6—8. What interest hath this empty world in me? and what is there in it that may seem so lovely, as to entice my desires and delight from thee, or make me loth to come away? When I look about me with a deliberate, undeceived eye, methinks this world is a howling wilderness, and most of the inhabitants are untamed, hideous monsters. All its beauty I can wink into blackness, and all its mirth I can think into sadness; I can drown all its pleasures in a few penitent tears, and the wind of a sigh will scatter them away.[n] When I look on them without the spectacles of flesh, I call them nothing, as being vanity, or worse than nothing, as vexation. O let not this flesh so seduce my soul, as to make it prefer this weary life, before the joys that are about thy throne: and though death of itself be unwelcome to nature, yet let thy grace make thy glory appear to me so desirable, that the king of terrors may be the messenger of my joy. O let not my soul be ejected by violence, and dispossessed of its habitation against its will, but draw it forth to thyself by the secret power of thy love, as the sunshine in the spring draws forth the creatures from their winter cells;[o] meet it half way, and entice it to thee, as the loadstone doth the iron, and as the greater flame doth attract the less; dispel therefore the clouds that hide from me thy love, or remove the scales that hinder mine eyes from beholding thee: for only the beams that stream from thy face, and the foresight or taste of thy great salvation, can make a soul unfeignedly to say, Now let thy servant depart in peace;[p] reading and hearing will not serve. My meat is not sweet to my ear or my eye; it must be a taste or feeling that must entice away my soul: though arguing is the means to bend my will, yet if thou bring not the matter to my hand, and by the influence of thy Spirit make it not effectual, I shall never reason my soul to be willing to depart. In the winter, when it is cold and dirty without, I am loth to leave my chamber and fire; but in the summer, when all is warm and green, I am loth to be so confined; show me but the summer fruits and pleasures of thy paradise, and I shall freely quit my earthly cell. Some pleasure I have in my books, my friends, and in thine ordinances: till thou hast given me a taste of something more sweet, my soul will be loth to part with these: the traveller will hold his cloak the faster when the winds do bluster, and the storms assault him; but when the sun shines hot, he will cast it off as a burden; so will my soul, when thou frownest, or art strange, be lother to leave this garment of flesh; but thy smiles would make me leave it as my prison. But it is not thy ordinary discoveries that will here suffice; as the work is greater, so must be thy help. O turn these fears into strong desires, and this lothness to die into longings after thee![q] While I must be absent from thee, let my soul as heartily groan under thine absence, as my pained body doth under its want of health: and let not those groans be counterfeit, or constrained, but let them come from a longing, loving heart, unfeignedly judging it best to depart, and be with Christ: and if I have any more time to spend on earth, let me live as without the world in thee, as I have sometime lived as without thee in the world. O suffer me not to spend in strangeness to thee another day of this my pilgrimage! While I have a thought to think, let me not forget thee; while I have a tongue to move, let me mention thee with delight; while I have a breath to breathe, let it be after thee, and for thee; while I have a knee to bend, let it bow daily at thy footstool; and when by sickness thou confinest me to my couch, do thou make my bed, and number my pains, and put all my tears into thy bottle. And as when

[m] It befalls us bigger children as you see it oft befalls our children; those whom they love, and are accustomed to, and play with, yet they are afraid of if they see them disguised. We must remove the vizard, not from persons only, but also from things, that we may see them barefaced. Tell not me of swords and fire, and a company of tormentors raging about thee. Take away the vizard of that pomp which covers it and frighteth fools, and all is but death; which my servant lately despised. Seneca ad Luc. epist. 24. p. 560.

[n] Not that we may not here
Taste of the cheer;
But as birds drink, and then lift up the head,
So must we sip, and think
Of better drink
We may attain to after we are dead.
Herbert in Temple.

[o] Nihil est stultius, nihil indignius, quam ad præmia cœlestia, non obsequio voluntatis accurrere, sed necessitatis vinculo invitum trahi. Gomarus in Oratione Funebri pro Junio.

[p] Accipe, quod sentitur antequam discitur, nec per moras temporum longa agnitione colligitur; sed compendio gratiæ maturantis hauritur, ut Cyprian. ad Donat. epist. 1. p. 1.

[q] Mortalitas ista, ut Judæis, Gentilibus, et Christi hostibus pestis est; ita Dei servis salutaris excessus est. Junius Moriens.

my spirit groaned for my sins, the flesh would not second it, but desired that which my spirit did abhor; so now, when my flesh doth groan under its pains, let not my spirit second it, but suffer the flesh to groan alone, and let me desire that day which my flesh abhorreth, that my friends may not with so much sorrow wait for the departure of my soul, as my soul with joy shall wait for its own departure; and then let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be as his, even a removal to that glory that shall never end. Send forth thy convoy of angels for my departing soul, and let them bring it among the perfect spirits of the just, and let me follow my dear friends that have died in Christ before; and when my friends are weeping over my grave, let my spirit be reposed with thee in rest, and when my corpse shall lie there rotting in the dark, let my soul be in the inheritance of the saints in light. And O thou that numberest the very hairs of my head, do thou number all the days that my body lies in the dust: and thou that writest all my members in thy book, do thou keep an account of all my scattered bones. And hasten, O my Saviour, the time of thy return; send forth thine angels, and let that dreadful, joyful trumpet sound: delay not, lest the living give up their hopes: delay not, lest earth should grow like hell, and lest thy church by division be crumbled all to dust, and dissolved by being resolved into individual units: delay not, lest thine enemies get advantage of thy flock, and lest pride, and hypocrisy, and sensuality, and unbelief, should prevail against thy little remnant, and share among them thy whole inheritance, and when thou comest thou find not faith on the earth: delay not, lest the grave should boast of victory; and having learned rebellion of its guest, should plead prescription, and refuse to deliver thee up thy due. O hasten that great resurrection-day! when thy command shall go forth, and none shall disobey; when the sea and earth shall yield up their hostages, and all that sleep in the grave shall awake, and the dead in Christ shall first arise; when the seed that thou sowest corruptible shall come forth incorruptible; and graves that received but rottenness, and retained but dust, shall return thee glorious stars and suns: therefore dare I lay down my carcass in the dust, intrusting it not to a grave but to thee, and therefore my flesh shall rest in hope, till thou raise it to the possession of the everlasting rest. Return, O Lord; how long? O let thy kingdom come! Thy desolate bride saith, Come; for thy Spirit within her saith, Come, who teacheth her thus to pray with groanings after thee which cannot be expressed: the whole creation saith, Come, waiting to be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God: thyself hath said, Surely I come. Amen. Even so come, Lord Jesus.

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[a] Eece ut sine exemplo est in hominibus perfecta justitia: et tamen impossibilis non est. Fieret enim si tanta voluntas adhiberetur, quanta sufficit tantæ rei. Esset autem tanta, si et nihil eorum quæ pertinent ad justitiam nos lateret. Et ea sic delectarent animum, ut quicquid aliud voluptas, sive dolor impedit, delectatio illa superaret. Aug. de Spir. et Lit. cap. 34, 35.

[b] Suppose thyself awhile taken up into the high top of a steep mountain, and thence behold the face of all things that are done below thee; and being there, free thyself from the blusterings of the raging world, dost cast thine eyes all abroad; thou wouldst then pity the world, and remember thyself, and be more thankful to God, and exceeding glad that thou hast escaped it. Behold thence the highways stopped with robbers, the seas beset with pirates, and wars all abroad in horrid bloodshed of armies. The world is drenched in the blood of one another; and murder, which is a crime when single men commit it, is called valour, or a virtue, when it is publicly performed. They escape the punishment of their wickedness, not by innocency, but by the greatness and might of their cruelty. Cyprian. ad Donat. epist. 1. Lege ultra.

THE CONCLUSION.

Thus, reader, I have given thee my best advice for the attaining and maintaining a heavenly conversation. The manner is imperfect, and too much mine own, but, for the main matter, I dare say I received it from God. From him I deliver it to thee, and his charge I lay upon thee that thou entertain and practise it. If thou canst not do it methodically and fully, yet do it as thou canst; only, be sure thou do it seriously and frequently. If thou wilt believe a man that hath made some small trial of it, thou shalt find it will make thee another man, and elevate thy soul, and clear thine understanding, and polish thy conversation, and leave a pleasant savour upon thy heart; so that thy own experience will make thee confess that one hour thus spent will more effectually revive thee than many in bare external duties; and a day in these contemplations will afford thee truer content than all the glory and riches of the earth.[a] Be acquainted with this work, and thou wilt be, in some remote sort, acquainted with God. Thy joys will be spiritual, and prevalent, and lasting, according to the nature of their blessed object; thou wilt have comfort in life, and comfort in death. When thou hast neither wealth nor health nor the pleasures of this world, yet wilt thou have comfort. Comfort, without the presence or help of any friend, without a minister, without a book; when all means are denied thee, or taken from thee, yet mayst thou have vigorous, real comfort. Thy graces will be mighty, and active, and victorious; and the daily joy which is thus fetched from heaven, will be thy strength. Thou wilt be as one that standeth on the top of an exceeding high mountain; he looks down upon the world as if it were quite below him.[b] How small do the fields, and woods, and countries, seem to him! cities and towns seem but little spots. Thus despicably wilt thou look on all things here below. The greatest princes will seem below thee but as grasshoppers, and the busy, contentious, covetous world, but as a heap of ants. Men's threatenings will be no terror to thee, nor the honours of this world any strong enticement. Temptations will be more harmless, as having lost their strength; and afflictions less grievous, as having lost their sting; and every mercy will be better known and relished.

Reader, it is under God in thine own choice now, whether thou wilt live this blessed life or not, and whether all this pains which I have taken for thee shall prosper or be lost. If it be lost through thy laziness, which God forbid, be it known to thee thou wilt prove the greatest loser thyself. If thou value not this heavenly, angelical life, how canst thou say that thou valuest heaven? And if thou value it not, no wonder if thou be shut out. The power of godliness lieth in the actings of the soul; take heed that thou stick not in the vain, deluding form. O man, what hast thou to mind but God and heaven! Art thou not almost out of this world already? Dost thou not look every day, when one disease or other

will let out thy soul? Doth not the bier stand ready to carry thee to the grave; and the worms wait to feed upon thy face and heart? What if thy pulse must beat a few strokes more; and what if thou have a few more breaths to fetch before thou breathe out thy last; and what if thou have a few more nights to sleep before thou sleep in the dust? Alas! what will this be when it is gone? and is it not almost gone already? Verily, shortly thou wilt see thy glass run out, and say thyself, My life is done; my time is gone; it is past recalling; there is nothing now but heaven or hell before me. O, where then should thy heart be now but in heaven! Didst thou but know what a dreadful thing it is to have a strange and doubtful thought of heaven when a man lies a dying, it would sure rouse thee up. And what other thoughts, but strange, can that man have, that never thought seriously of heaven till then? Every man's first thoughts are strange about all things; familiarity and acquaintance come not in a moment, but is the consequent of custom, and frequent converse: and strangeness naturally raiseth dread, as familiarity doth delight. What else makes a fish or a wild beast flee from a man, when domestic creatures take pleasure in his company? So wilt thou flee from God, if thou knewest how, who should be thy only happiness, if thou do not get this strangeness removed in thy life-time. And is it not pity that a child should be so strange to his own Father, as to fear nothing more than to go into his presence; and to think himself best when he is furthest from him; and to flee from his face as a wild creature will do from the face of a man? Alas! how little do many godly ones differ from the world, either in their comforts or willingness to die! and all because they live so strange to the place and fountain of their comforts. Besides a little verbal or other outside duties, or talking of controversies and doctrines of religion, or forbearing the practice of many sins, how little do the most of the religious differ from other men, when God hath prepared so vast a difference hereafter! If a word of heaven fall in now and then in their conference, alas! how slighty is it, and customary, and heartless! And if their prayers or preaching have heavenly expressions, they usually are fetched from their mere invention, or memory, or books, and not from the experience or feeling of their hearts. Oh what a life might men live if they were but willing and diligent! God would have our joys to be far more than our sorrows, yea, he would have us to have no sorrow but what tendeth to joy, and no more than our sins have made necessary for our good. How much do those christians wrong God and themselves, that either make their thoughts of God the inlet of their sorrows, or let these offered joys lie by, as neglected or forgotten! Some there be that say it is not worth so much time and trouble, to think of the greatness of the joys above; so we can make sure they are ours, we know they are great. But as these men obey not the command of God, which requireth them to have their conversation in heaven, and to set their affections on things above, so do they wilfully make their own lives miserable, by refusing the delights that God hath set before them. And yet, if this were all, it were a smaller matter: if it were but loss of their comforts, I would not say so much; but see what abundance of other mischiefs do follow the absence of these heavenly delights.

First, It will damp, if not destroy, our very love to God:[c] so deeply as we apprehend his bounty and exceeding love to us, and his purpose to make us eternally happy, so much will it raise our love: love to God, and delight in him, are still conjunct. They that conceive of God as one that desireth their blood and damnation, cannot heartily love him.

Secondly, It will make us have seldom and unpleasing thoughts of God, for our thoughts will follow our love and delight. Did we more delight in God than in any thing below, our thoughts would as freely run after him, as now they run from him.

Thirdly, And it will make men to have as seldom and unpleasing speech of God; for who will care for talking of that which he hath no delight in? What makes men still talking of worldliness, or wickedness, but that these are more pleasant to them than God?

Fourthly, It will make men have no delight in the service of God, when they have no delight in God, nor any sweet thoughts of heaven, which is the end of their services.[d] No wonder if such christians complain that they are still backward to duty; that they have no delight in prayer, in sacraments, or in Scripture itself. If thou couldst once delight in God, thou wouldst easily delight in duty, especially that which bringeth thee into the nearest converse with him. But, till then, no wonder if thou be weary of all, further than some external excellency may give thee a carnal delight. Doth not this cause many christians to go on so heavily in secret duties? Like the ox in the furrow, that will go no longer than he is driven, and is glad when he is unyoked.

Fifthly, Yea, it much endangereth the perverting of men's judgments, concerning the ways of God, and means of grace, when they have no delight in God and heaven. Though it be said, *perit omne judicium cum res transit in affectum*, that judgment perisheth when things pass into affection; yet, that is but when affection leadeth the judgment, and not when it followeth. Affection holdeth its object faster than bare judgment doth. The soul will not much care for that truth which is not accompanied with suitable goodness; and it will more easily be drawn to believe that to be false which it doth not delightfully apprehend to be good; which doubtless is no small cause of the ungodly's prejudice against the ways of God, and of many formal men's dislike of extemporate prayers, and of a strict observation of the Lord's day. Had they a true delight in God and heavenly things, it would reetify their judgments better than all the arguments in the world. Lose this delight once, and you will begin to quarrel with the ordinances and ways of God, and to be more offended at the preacher's imperfections than profited by the doctrine.

Sixthly, And it is the want of these heavenly delights in God that makes men so entertain the delights of the flesh.[e] This is the cause of most men's voluptuousness and flesh-pleasing. The soul will not rest without some kind of delights. If it had nothing to delight in, either in hand or in hope, it

[c] Quis nesciat, non esse in hominis potestate quid sciat? Nec esse consequens, ut quod appetendum cognitum fuerit, appetatur; nisi tantum delectet, quantum diligendum est. Hoc autem sanitas est animæ. August. de Spir. et Lit. cap. 34, 35.

[d] Tunc bonum concupisci incipit cum dulcescere cœperit: quando autem timore pœnæ, non amore justitiæ fit bonum, nondum bene fit bonum: nec fit in corde, quod fieri videtur in opere, quando mallet homo non facere, si posset impune. Ergo benedictio dulcedinis est gratia Dei, qua sit in nobis, ut nos delectet, et cupiamus, hoc est, amemus, quod præcipit nobis. August. ad Bonif. lib. ii.

[e] Ab hac necessitate servitutis ille liberat, qui non solum dat præcepta per legem, verum etiam donat per spiritum charitatem, cujus delectatione vincatur delectatio peccati: alioquin perseverat invicta, et servum suum tentat. August. Oper. Imperf. lib. i. cap. 109. Et fide justus vivit: justeque vivit in quantum non cedit malæ concupiscentiæ, vincente delectatione justitiæ. Aug. Enchir. cap. 118.

would be in a kind of hell on earth, vexing itself with continual sorrow and despair. If a dog have lost his master, he will follow somebody else. Men must have their sweet cups, or delicious fare, or gay apparel, or cards, or dice, or fleshly lusts, to make up their want of delight in God. How well these will serve instead of God, our wanton youths will be better able to tell me, when we meet at judgment. If men were acquainted with this heavenly life, there would need no laws against sabbath-breaking and riotousness; nor would men need to go for mirth to an ale-house or a tavern; they would have a far sweeter pastime and recreation nearer hand.

Seventhly, Also, this want of heavenly delights will leave men under the power of every affliction; they will have nothing to comfort them and ease them in their sufferings, but the empty, uneffectual pleasures of the flesh; and when that is gone, where then is their delight?

Eighthly, Also, it will make men fearful, and unwilling to die: for who would go to a God or a place that he hath no delight in? or who would leave his pleasure here, except it were to go to better? Oh, if the people of God would learn once this heavenly life, and take up their delight in God whilst they live, they would not tremble and be disconsolate at the tidings of death.

Ninthly, Yea, this want of heavenly delight doth lay men open to the power of every temptation. A little thing will tice a man from that which he hath no pleasure in.

Tenthly, Yea, it is a dangerous preparative to total apostasy. A man will hardly long hold on in a way that he hath no delight in, nor use the means, if he have no delight in the end; but, as a beast, if you drive him in a way that he would not go, will be turning out at every gap. If you be religious in your actions, and be come over to God in your outward conversation, and not in your delight, you will shortly be gone if your trial be strong. How many young people have we known, who by good education, or the persuasion of friends, or for fear of hell, have been awhile kept up among prayers, and sermons, and good company, as a bird in a cage, when, if they durst, they had rather have been in an ale-house, or at their sports; and at last they have broken loose, when their restraint was taken off, and have forsaken the way that they never took pleasure in! You see then, that it is not a matter of indifferency, whether you entertain these heavenly delights or not; nor is the loss of your present comfort all the inconvenience that follows the neglect.

And now, christian friends, I have here lined you out a heavenly, precious work: would you but do it, it would make you mend indeed. To delight in God is the work of angels, and the contrary is the work of devils. If God would persuade you now to make conscience of this duty, and help you in it by the blessed influence of his Spirit, you would not change your lives with the greatest prince on earth. But I am afraid, if I may judge of your hearts by the backwardness of my own, that it will prove a hard thing to persuade you to the work, and that much of this my labour will be lost. Pardon my jealousy; it is raised upon too many and sad experiments. What say you? Do you resolve on this heavenly course or no? Will you let go all your sinful, fleshly pleasures, and daily seek after these higher delights? I pray thee, reader, here shut the book, and consider of it; and resolve on the duty before thou go farther. Let thy family perceive, let thy neighbours perceive, let thy conscience perceive, yea, let God perceive it, that thou art a man that hast thy daily conversation in heaven. God hath now offered to be thy daily delight. Thy neglect is thy refusal. What! refuse delight; and such a delight? If I had propounded you only a course of melancholy, and fear, and sorrow, you might better have demurred on it. Take heed what thou dost: refuse this, and refuse all. Thou must have heavenly delights, or none that are lasting. God is willing that thou shouldst daily walk with him, and fetch in consolation from the everlasting fountain. If thou be unwilling, even bear thy loss; and one of these days, when thou liest dying, then seek for comfort where thou canst get it, and make what shift for contentment thou canst. Then see whether thy fleshly delights will stick to thee, or give thee the slip; and then conscience, in despite of thee, shall make thee remember, that thou wast once persuaded to a way for more excellent pleasures, that would have followed thee through death and have lasted thee to everlasting. What man will go in rags, that may be clothed with the best; or feed on pulse, that may feed of the best; or accompany with the vilest, that may be a companion to the best, and admitted into the presence and favour of the greatest? And shall we delight so much in our clothing of flesh, and feed so much on the vain pleasures of earth, and accompany so much with sin and sinners, when heaven is set open, as it were, to our daily view, and God doth offer us daily admittance into his presence? Oh how is the unseen God neglected, and the unseen glory forgotten, and made light of! And all because they are unseen, and for want of that faith which is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things that are not seen, Heb. xi. 1.

But for you, sincere believers, whose hearts God hath weaned from all things here below, I hope you will value his heavenly life, and fetch one walk daily in the new Jerusalem. I know God is your love, and your desire; and I know you would fain be more acquainted with your Saviour; and I know it is your grief that your hearts are not more near him; and that they do no more freely and passionately love him, and delight in him. As ever you would have all this mended, and enjoy your desires, O try this life of meditation on your everlasting rest! Here is the mount Ararat, where the fluctuated ark of your souls must rest. Oh! let the world see, by your heavenly lives, that religion lieth in something more than opinions and disputes, and a task of outward duties; let men see in you, what a life they must aim at. If ever a christian be like himself, and answerable to his principles and profession, it is when he is most serious and lively in his duty: when as Moses, before he died, went up into mount Nebo, to take a survey of the land of Canaan; so the christian doth ascend this mount of contemplation, and take a survey, by faith, of his rest. He looks upon the glorious, delectable mansions, and saith, "Glorious things are" deservedly "spoken of thee, O thou city of God." He heareth, as it were, the melody of the heavenly choir, and beholdeth the excellent employment of those spirits, and saith, "Blessed are the people that are in such a case; yea, blessed are they that have the Lord for their God." He next looketh to the glorified inhabitants of that region, and saith, "Happy art thou, O the Israel of God, a people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy strength, the sword of thine excellency." When he looketh upon the Lord himself, who is their glory, he is ready with the rest to fall down and worship him that liveth for ever, and say, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come: thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power." When he looks on the glorified Saviour of the saints, he is ready to say Amen to that new song, "Bless-

ing, honour, glory, and power, be to him that sitteth on the throne and to the Lamb for ever and ever; for he hath redeemed us out of every nation by his blood, and made us kings and priests to God." When he looketh back on the wilderness of this world, he blesseth the believing, patient, despised saints; he pitieth the ignorant, obstinate, miserable world; and for himself, he saith, as Peter, "It is good to be here;" or, as David, "It is good for me to draw near to God:" for all those that are far from him shall perish.

Thus as Daniel in his captivity did three times a day open his window toward Jerusalem, though far out of sight, when he went to God in his devotions; so may the believing soul, in this captivity to the flesh, look towards Jerusalem which is above: and as Paul was to the Colossians, so may he be, with the glorified spirits, absent in the flesh, but present in spirit, joining in beholding their heavenly order, Col. ii. 5. And as divine Bucholcer, in his last sermon before his death, did so sweetly descant upon those comfortable words, "Whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life," (John iii. 16,) that he raised and ravished the hearts of his otherwise sad hearers; so may the meditating believer do, through the Spirit's assistance, by his own heart. And as the pretty lark doth sing most sweetly, and never ceaseth her pleasant ditty, while she hovereth aloft, as if she were there gazing into the glory of the sun, but is suddenly silenced when she falleth to the earth; so is the frame of the soul most delectable and divine while it keepeth in the views of God by contemplation: but alas! we make there too short a stay, but down again we fall, and lay by our music.

But, O Thou, the merciful Father of spirits, the attractive of love, and ocean of delights, draw up these drossy hearts unto thyself, and keep them there till they are spiritualized and refined; and second these thy servant's weak endeavours, and persuade those that read these lines to the practice of this delightful, heavenly work. And, O suffer not the soul of thy most unworthy servant to be a stranger to those joys which he unfoldeth to thy people, or to be seldom in that way which he hath lined out here to others; but O keep me while I tarry on this earth, in daily serious breathings after thee, and in a believing, affectionate walking with thee: and when thou comest, O let me be found so doing, not hiding my talent, nor serving my flesh, nor yet asleep with my lamp unfurnished, but waiting and longing for my Lord's return: that those who shall read these heavenly directions, may not reap only the fruit of my studies, and the product of my fancy, but the breathings of my active hope and love: that if my heart were open to their view, they might there read the same most deeply engraven with a beam from the face of the Son of God; and not find vanity, or lust, or pride within, where the words of life appear without: that so these lines may not witness against me; but proceeding from the heart of the writer, may be effectual, through thy grace, upon the heart of the reader; and so be the savour of life to both. Amen.

Glory be to God in the highest;
On earth peace:
Good-will towards men.

BROUGHTON

IN THE

CONCLUSION OF HIS CONSENT OF SCRIPTURE,

CONCERNING THE NEW JERUSALEM, AND THE EVERLASTING SABBATISM, MEANT IN MY TEXT, AS BEGUN HERE, AND PERFECTED IN HEAVEN.

THE company of faithful souls called to the blessed marriage of the Lamb, are a Jerusalem from heaven, Apoc. iii. and xxi.; Heb. xii. Though such glorious things are spoken concerning this city of God, the perfection whereof cannot be seen in this vale of tears; yet here God wipeth all tears from our eyes, and each blessing is here begun. The name of this city much helpeth Jew and gentile to see the state of peace, for this is called Jerusalem, and that in Canaan hath Christ destroyed: this name should clearly have taught both the Hebrews not to look and pray daily for to return to Canaan, and pseudo-catholics, not to fight for special holiness there. We live in this by faith, and not by eye-sight, and by hope we behold the perfection: of this city, salvation is a wall, goodly as jasper, clear as crystal: the foundations are in number twelve, of twelve precious stones, such as Aaron wore on his breast, all the work of the Lamb's twelve apostles: the gates are twelve, each of pearl, upon which are the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, of whose faith all must be which enter in; twelve angels are conductors from east, west, north, and south, even the stars of the churches: the city is square; of burgesses settled for all turns. Here God sitteth upon a throne like jasper and ruby, comfortable and just: the Lamb is the temple, that a third temple should not be looked for to be built. Thrones twice twelve are for all the christians born of Israel's twelve, or taught by the apostles, who for dignity are seniors, for infinity are termed but four and twenty, in regard of so many tribes and apostles. Here the majesty is honourable, as at the delivery of the law, from whose throne, thunder, voices, and lightnings do proceed: here oil of grace is never wanting, but burning with seven lamps, the Spirit of Messias,[a] of wit and wisdom, of counsel and courage, of knowledge and understanding, and of the fear due to the Eternal: here the valiant, patient, witty, and speedy, with sharp sight, are winged as those seraphims that waited on Christ, when ten calamities and utter destruction was told for the low Jerusalem: they of this city are not as Israel after the flesh, which would not see, for all the wonders that our Lord did; but these redeemed with his precious blood are full of eyes lightened by lamps, the glory of Jehovah, and behold Christ through all the prophets, a Performer of our faith, sealed of God, Sealer of all visions, Opener of seals or the stories of the church, John vi.; Dan. ix. 24; Apoc. vi. Here is the true light, where the saved walk, Isa. lx.; hither kingdoms bring their glory; hither the blessed nations carry their jewels, Apoc. xxi. This is a kingdom uncorrupted, which shall not be given to a strange and unclean people; they must be written in the book of the Lamb, and chosen of eternity, sanctified of God, which here are citizens, Ephes. i. 4; ii. 19: through this there gusheth a stream better than the four in Eden, a stream of lively waters by belief in Christ, as those waters

[a] Talmud. in Sanhedrim. Cha. Chelec. p. 73. b.

flowing from Lebanon, Cant. iv. 15: here is that Tree of Life in the midst of the paradise of God, with leaves to heal the nations that will be cured, while it is said to-day, with twelve fruits to give food continually to such as feed also upon the hidden manna, who after death receive the crown of justice and life, the morning-star, white clothing, and the white stone, wherein a name is written equal to all the law, Deut. xxvii. 2. The first seat of the first Adam in the first paradise was glorious; this is better; and as Moses began with the terrestrial, so the holy word ends in the celestial; that to wheels full of eyes may the writ of truth be compared: the full consent and melody of prophets and apostles, how their harps are tuned on mount Sion, (Apoc. xiv.) it will fully appear in the full sight of peace, when our bodies are made conformable to Christ's glorious body, (Phil. iii. 21,) in the world to come, and our eyes shall see the Lord in that Sion. For that coming, "O thou whom my soul loveth, be like to the roes upon the mountains," Cant. i. 7; ii. 17. Amen. Even so come, Lord Jesus. Then shall we in perfect holiness worship thee, to whom the angels always give holy worship, saying, "Praise, and glory, and wisdom, and thanks, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for evermore." Amen.

A POEM

OF

MASTER G. HERBERT, IN HIS "TEMPLE."

HOME.

Come, Lord, my head doth burn, my heart is sick,
While thou dost ever, ever stay,
Thy long deferrings wound me to the quick;
My spirit gaspeth night and day.
O show thyself to me,
Or take me up to thee.

How canst thou stay, considering the pace
The blood did make which thou didst waste?
When I behold it trickling down his face,
I never saw thing make such haste.
O show thyself to me,
Or take me up to thee.

When man was lost, thy pity look'd about,
To see what help in th' earth or sky;
But there was none, at least no help without,
The help did in thy bosom lie.
O show thyself to me,
Or take me up to thee.

There lay thy Son; and must he leave that nest,
That hive of sweetness, to remove
Thraldom from those, who would not at a feast
Leave one poor apple for thy love?
O show thyself to me,
Or take me up to thee.

He did, he came. O my Redeemer dear,
After all this canst thou be strange?
So many years baptiz'd, and not appear?
As if thy love could fail or change.
O show thyself to me,
Or take me up to thee.

Yet if thou stayest still, why must I stay?
My God, what is the world to me?
This world of woe. Hence, all ye clouds, away;
Away: I must get up and see.
O show thyself to me,
Or take me up to thee.

What is this weary world? this meat and drink,
That chains us by the teeth so fast?
What is this womankind, which I can wink
Into a blackness and distaste?
O show thyself to me,
Or take me up to thee.

With one small sigh thou gav'st me th' other day,
I blasted all the joys about me;
And scowling on them as they pin'd away,
Now come again, said I, and flout me.
O show thyself to me,
Or take me up to thee.

Nothing but drought and dearth, but bush and brake,
Which way soe'er I look, I see;
Some may dream merrily, but when they awake,
They dress themselves, and come to thee.
O show thyself to me,
Or take me up to thee.

We talk of harvests; there are no such things,
But when we leave our corn and hay:
There is no fruitful years, but that which brings
The last and lov'd, though dreadful day.
O show thyself to me,
Or take me up to thee.

O loose this frame; this knot of man untie,
That my free soul may use her wing,
Which is now pinion'd with mortality,
As an entangl'd, hamper'd thing.
O show thyself to me,
Or take me up to thee.

What have I left that I should stay and groan;
The most of me to heaven is fled:
My thoughts and joys are all pack'd up and gone,
And for their old acquaintance plead.
O show thyself to me,
Or take me up to thee.

Come, dearest Lord, pass not this holy season;
My flesh and bones and joints do pray;
And ev'n my verse, when by the rhyme and reason
The word is Stay, says ever, Come.
O show thyself to me,
Or take me up to thee.

AN ADDITION

TO

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER OF THE THIRD PART OF THE SAINTS' REST.

It hath seemed meet to Mr. K. to second Mr. Crandon, by an impetuous opposition of my poor labours; and having in his first volume against Mr. G. assaulted my "Aphorisms;" in the second, to fall upon my "Method for Peace of Conscience," and my book of "Rest;" against the twelfth chapter (misprinted the eleventh) of the third part, he hath a copious digression, which I will not now characterize, either as to the intellectuals or morals, the judgment or honesty appearing in it; having reserved that to a second and plain admonition to himself. But because I intended these writings for ordinary capacities, I would have nothing remain in them which

may be an occasion of their stumbling; for the sake therefore of such readers as would neither err, nor be puzzled with contentious janglings about mere words, I shall give them this brief advertisement following. It is so far from my desire to teach men to build the peace of their consciences upon any nice philosophical controversies, much less on any errors or singular opinions of mine, that I desire nothing more than to lead them to, and leave them on, the plain, infallible word of God. My own judgment concerning that sincere, saving grace, which we may safely try our estates by, I have as plainly as I could laid down in that chapter, and my "Directions for Peace;" and in sect. 39, to sect. 53, of my "Reply to Mr. Blake:" from whence I must desire the reader to fetch it, and not from the interpretations of Mr. K. which so seldom hath the hap to be acquainted with the truth, and who professeth himself that he doth not understand me: whether it be long of me or himself I determine not. To these I shall now add only these few words.

The everlasting enjoyment of God in glory by perfected man, is the felicity which all should desire and seek. This is propounded to us by God in his word, and the necessary mean thereto prescribed; even Jesus Christ, and faith in him, and obedience to him, and to God in and by him. The distempered, sensual appetite, and depraved will of man, do incline to inferior sensual delights. God hath resolved that these shall not be their felicity, and that they shall never be happy in the enjoyment of him, except they take him for their chief good, and so far forsake inferior good which would draw the heart from him: and except also they give up themselves to his Son Jesus Christ, and to his Spirit, to be recovered unto him. Though all men by nature desire to be happy; yet all do not desire God as their happiness. Nor do the regenerate themselves yet perfectly desire him, or perfectly forsake that inferior good; which was their supposed happiness before they were renewed. The understanding is commonly acknowledged to have three kinds of acts: 1. A simple apprehension of the mere entity of a thing, or of a simple term; 2. Judgment, or the conception of a complex term; 3. Discourse. The first alone moves not the will, because it concludes not of the goodness or evil of the thing apprehended. The second, judgment, is either about the end or the means: and either absolute or comparative. Several things are commonly called man's end, how properly I now inquire not. 1. Felicity in general: 2. Himself the subject, commonly called the *finis cui:* 3. The natural and moral perfection of his person: 4. The act of fruition, or perfect complacency in the blessed object upon a full vision; commonly called, our formal felicity: 5. The object itself, that is, the blessed God, commonly called our objective felicity, and our *finis qui*, or *cujus*, whether fitly, we shall better know hereafter. The two first nature hath tied us to; but not to the object, nor to the perfection of the soul in a spiritual suitableness thereto. The first absolute judgment produceth in the will a simple complacency or displacency; this is the first motion of the will. The comparative judgment, where it is necessary, produceth intention and election, or else refusal, and resolves the fluctuating will. Where there is but one good propounded, either one objective end, or one means of absolute necessity, or wherever there is *omnimoda ratio boni*, nothing but good apparent in the object, there is no work for consultation, or the comparative act of judgment, and consequently for election: but the absolute judgment would proceed to be practical, and carry out the will to intention and prosecution: were not man's soul blinded and depraved, there should be no deliberation about his end, and so no choosing of God as our end, but an absolute intending him, as having no competitor: and it cannot be without great sin for the judgment to make any question or comparison, and so to deliberate, Whether God or the creature be our felicity? and, Whether God or our carnal selves should be our end? But seeing our depraved judgment and will, and vitiated senses, and the tempter's setting the creature in competition with God, do necessitate a comparative judgment and deliberation, even about our end itself; therefore there is a kind of election of God as before the creature, or a consent or resolution so to prefer him, that is necessary, before or with a right intention and prosecution of that end: besides, the election of the new means, that is necessary; seeing Satan and our flesh are so ready to propound wrong means, in competition with the means of God's prescribing. All this being so, I further add, that the same will that hath a complacency in a thing as judged simply good, may yet reject and nill it, or refuse to seek or receive it, if it be judged either a lesser good inconsistent with a greater, or any way to have more evil in it than good: and as the understanding doth at once apprehend it as good absolutely, or in some respect; and evil in other respects, and comparatively less good; so doth the will at once continue to love or will it so far as it is apprehended as good; and to nill and reject it as inconsistent with a greater good, or a hinderer of it. But if it fall out that the inconsistency of these is not discerned or believed, or but imperfectly, then may the will, by a practical volition, will them both.

To apply this. The understanding of the unregenerate may know that God is good, and good to them, and that in very many and weighty respects he is desirable. They may know that worldly things will shortly leave them, and then if they have not God's favour they shall perish; but if they have, they shall attain both perfection of body, (which they may desire,) and perfection of mind, (which they do desire in general, and may submit to in the particular way of holiness, as more tolerable than hell,) besides some imperfect, ineffectual knowledge of a beauty and desirableness in holiness itself, accompanied with an answerable motion of the will: but every unrenewed man hath more prevalent apprehensions of the goodness of the creature, partly by unmastered sense, and partly by perverted reason, and therefore apprehendeth God as evil to him; so far as he would hinder his enjoyment thereof, or would punish him for a sinful adhering to it. So that, 1. His highest practical estimation is of the creature, yet not without some esteem of God: 2. And his prevailing will is to the creature, but not without some will to God. And, ordinarily, such men are so fully convinced of the impossibility of enjoying the creature for ever, and being happy any other way than in God, that, though they could wish an everlasting fulness of the creature, yet, seeing none but fools do intend an end which they know impossible to be attained, they do therefore compound a felicity in their own fancies, of the world for a time, and heaven for everlasting: one part standing in the enjoyment of the delights of the flesh, while they live here, and the other in the deliverance from hell and blessedness in heaven hereafter; hoping that these are not inconsistent, but they may have heaven when they can enjoy the world no longer: because they see that many saints possess abundance of earthly blessings, and persecution is not now so common as it hath been, therefore they suppose they may possess the like: upon which

expectation they enjoy what the godly do but use, and so give it the pre-eminence in their hearts: or if they be convinced of the inconsistency of a carnal mind, (in a prevalent degree,) with an interest in the happiness of the life to come, they will either persuade themselves that they are not carnally-minded when they are, or, one way or other, will underprop their hopes of enjoying both: but still their fleshly mind is predominant, and therefore they will cast their salvation upon the adventure of such hopes as have nothing but their own delusions to support them.

On the other side, the regenerate being here imperfect in all their graces, are imperfectly taken off those carnal ends which they intended in their unsanctified state, and imperfectly inclined to God as their end: so are they also, both in discerning and choosing the fittest means, even Christ himself and obedience to him; so that the best are carnally-minded, in some degree, but not in a prevalent degree, for then they should die. The flesh and world have still some interest in the saints, but not the strongest; as God and the Redeemer may have some interest, though not the chiefest, in the practical judgment and will of the unsanctified. Whether you will say, that the same man hath two distinct inconsistent ends, one as regenerate, the other so far as he is still carnal; or whether you will give the name of an end only to that good which hath the greatest interest in him, I will not contend about a word. If that only be called our end, which is prevalently intended in the main course of our lives, then it is God only that is our end; but if that may be called a man's end which is intended in his distempers and deviations, then the creature may be called our end so far as we are still carnal: for it is not only as a wrong-chosen means to our right end, that we sinfully adhere to the creature; but it is more as it stands in competition with our right end, and as we will and love our flesh-pleasing for itself. It is true, the sensual appetite may desire it for itself, because it belongs not to it to carry us higher, and to intend an end; but the rational power must subordinate both creatures and our natural delight in them to God. And I do not think that it is by the mere brutish irrational motion that the godly adhere too much to the creature.

I did therefore deliver my thoughts on this point thus: that as the act is denominated from the object, and specified by it, so the grace that is saving must, as to the acts, consist not only in the absolute, but comparative judgment, and in that choice or comparative willing that follows thereupon; and though there be forty intricate, philosophical controversies about man's willing the end and means, which stand in their way that would make the most exact discussion of this point, yet every christian may safely go on these grounds, and conclude that when Christ's interest is predominant, or greatest in the soul, there is saving grace; but where it is not, there is none, though yet he may have some interest there. Here is a double pre-eminence that Christ must have, or a double prevalency of grace, that it may be saving. 1. The object must be preferred before that which stands in competition with it. 2. The act must be prevalent in degree against its contrary, so far as that the heart and life may be denominated from it. 1. The absolute act of the judgment makes no comparison; therefore in that only the latter must be looked after. Assent to God's word upon his authority, must be prevalent against our dissent; and that will appear in our serious obeying it, &c. 2. In the comparative act of the judgment there must be both. God must be valued and esteemed above all creatures; and our esteem must be prevalent against our slighting and disesteem of him. 3. The main point of trial is the will, and there must be both these prevalencies before mentioned. God must be willed as better than all creatures; and our willing of him must be in a prevalent degree against our nilling or unwilling. For there is in the best on earth some remainders of averseness to God, which may be called a hating of him, so far as they are carnal; though they are not therefore fitly to be called haters of God, but lovers of him, because they must be denominated from the prevalent part. The like may be said of all the affections, so far as they are of the rational part; for of the sensitive passions there is not so sure a judgment to be made, as I expressed p. 64, and in my "Method for Peace of Conscience." In the choice of means all this is clear, if not much more. Christ must be preferred before all competitors, and all rejected for him; and our willingness must be in a degree that is prevalent against our unwillingness, and our faith as prevalent against unbelief, and our subjection must prevail against our rebellion, and our obedience against our disobedience in the course of our lives. He must have the main bent of our hearts and endeavours, though in a particular act the flesh may prevail. This is it that I have asserted, and with a consent to this I am satisfied. As for the point of specification of our acts, I never look to see the schools agreed about it, how confidently soever Mr. K. talks, as if they all conspired with him. Call the difference gradual or specifical, as you please, so we agree in the sense, I am content. I choose to call it a moral, specifical difference, and in that sense do maintain, that the faith of the best of the unsanctified is not specifically the same with that of the sanctified, and so of love and other graces. As to that saving faith, all other is but analogically called faith, as I have showed in the section before cited against Mr. Blake. But yet I am not of Mr. K.'s opinion about the natural specification of acts, for all his confidence. I yet think that acts are naturally, and not only morally, specified from their objects, considered physically; and are morally specified by those objects, as related to the laws that command, forbid, threaten, promise, and so by the laws themselves; which Dr. Twiss will needs say are no species of acts, though vulgarly so called, Vind. Grat. lib. ii. par. 2. digres. 9. p. 410.

I now desire no more of the reader than to consent, 1. To the express words of Scripture which I cited in that chap. xi. sect. 15, which I desire him to review; 2. And to that which Mr. K. and I are agreed in. I hope you will take this for a reasonable motion, it being unlike that the Cretian pen of so bold a man, so self-conceited, and superciliously scornful, should grant me much more than he needs must. Let us examine his concessions for matter and words. 1. For sense, he confesseth, p. 137, thus: "I am of Mr. Baxter's mind, that no sober divine will tell us, that if we love God never so little without dissembling, yet he will accept it, though we love our lusts before him." So oft he yieldeth that all sincere love to God doth prefer him before all other. Where then is our difference? Why, he thinks that no others believe or love God at all but those that love him above all. I did affirm, that as to that same moral species of faith and love, they do not at all believe and love God, but as to another species they do, and truly do it. How oft doth Scripture say of the unsanctified, that they believe in Christ, at least for a time? But I shall leave it till I speak to Mr. K. himself, to prove that men unrenewed may have faith and love to Christ, though not saving. And whereas, our doctor, according to the complexion of his conscience, doth prefer me to succeed Pelagius

in his chair, for affirming that a carnal man, by the greatest help of common grace, as I opened my meaning, may have weak inclinations to spiritual and superior good, while he hath stronger to inferior, I would have him to review his sobriety, in making all divines and churches of Christ, since the apostles' days, so far as I am able to discern by my small reading, or by reports, to be Pelagians. I never heard of any that thought so basely of the highest measure of that grace which is not proper to the saints as this man doth. If it no whit lead to God, how is it grace? If this doctor dare warrant his hearers that they shall all be saved that have the least faith, or love, or inclination to God, I dare not imitate him. Except they love him above all, I dare not tell them that they are true disciples. Nor do I think that nature itself is averted from God in the highest degree, nor all the wicked of one degree of sinfulness, nor yet as bad as they shall be in hell. Our divines that tell us how far hypocrites may go, do not talk in the strain of this doctor.

Well, but how far are we yet disagreed even in terms? Why, I said, that it is not a natural, but a moral, specific difference, and so doth he. Page 109, he saith, "But against whom, I pray, do you dispute then? &c. I dare be bold to say there is not one that affirms a natural or physical difference, as you call it, between acts of common and saving grace in this your sense." And is not it pity that this doctor, that is so well agreed with me for sense and terms, should be put to the trouble of so tedious a digression? Forsooth, I did unhappily express myself, because I used not his term "appretiative," which though I neglected, I think, on sufficient reason, yet, to please him, I will use it when I think on it, and have no better. And so we were best part while we are friends.

TO THE READER.

READER,

I AM so loth to leave thee under any mistake of my meaning in this point, that I shall yet make some further attempt for the explaining of it. And whereas I understand that some readers say that this nice distinguishing doth but puzzle men; and others still fear not falsely to give out, that I make common grace and special to differ only gradually, and not specifically, in despite of my express asserting of the contrary, I entreat the first sort to tear that leaf out of the book which speaks of this subject, that it may not trouble them; or to be patient while we speak a few words to others that understand that which they are but puzzled with. And I desire the second sort once more to remember, 1. That I still affirm, that common grace and special do differ by a moral specific difference, and not a gradual only. 2. But that this moral specific difference doth materially consist in a physical, gradual difference. 3. And it being a moral subject that we have in hand, our terms must be accordingly used and understood; and therefore it is most proper, when we speak of any unsanctified man, to say, that he is not a believer, he hath no faith, he hath no love to God, &c. because we are supposed to speak only of a true christian saving faith, love, &c. 4. But yet, when it is known that we speak of another faith and love, we may well say that an unsanctified man hath these; and when we inquire of the difference, we must be as exact as possible, in showing wherein it lieth, lest we delude the hypocrite, and trouble the regenerate. That the faith, and love, and sanctity of the ungodly are but equivocally, or analogically, so called, in respect to the faith and love of the saints, I have proved in my Fifth Disputation of Right to Sacraments.

That which I shall now add to make my sense as plain as I can, shall be these following distinctions and propositions.

We must distinguish between, 1. Those gracious acts that are about our end, and those that are about their means. 2. Between God considered generally as God, and considered in his several properties and attributes distinctly. And Christ considered personally, and considered fully in the parts of his office, whether the essential or integral parts. 3. Between the goodness of God in himself considered, and as suitable unto us. 4. Between the simple act of the intellect, and the comparing act. 5. Between the simple velleity of the will, and the choice that followeth the comparate act of the intellect. 6. Between the speculative and practical act of the intellect. 7. And between the acts of the will that answer these two. 8. Between an end that is ultimate, but not principal and prevalent, and an end that is ultimate and chief also.

Prop. 1. An unsanctified man may love him that is the true God, and believe in that person who is Jesus Christ, the Redeemer. This is past controversy among us.

Prop. 2. An ungodly man may love God as the cause of his prosperity in the world.

Prop. 3. He may know that his everlasting happiness is at the disposal of God, and may believe him to be merciful, and ready to do good, and that to him; and consequently may have some love to him as thus gracious and merciful.

Prop. 4. He may by a simple apprehension know that God is good in himself, and goodness itself, and preach this to others; and consequently may have in his will a consent or willingness hereof, that God be what he is, even infinite goodness.

Prop. 5. He may have a simple apprehension that God should be glorified, and honoured by the creatures: and so may have a simple velleity that he may be glorified.

Prop. 6. He may have a general dim apprehension, that everlasting happiness consists in the sight of the glory of God, and in his love, and favour, and heavenly kingdom, and so may have some love to him as thus apprehended.

Prop. 7. He may compare God and the creature together, and have a speculative or superficial knowledge that God is better than the creature, and better to him; and may write and preach this to others: and so may have an answerable, superficial, ineffectual velleity or love to him, even as thus considered.

Prop. 8. One and the same man may have two contrary ultimate ends of his particular actions; even the pleasing of God, and the pleasing of his flesh: proved.

Argument 1. If the same heart may be partly sanctified, and partly unsanctified, (that is, in some degree,) then it may have two contrary ends; or, if the same man may have flesh and spirit, then he may have two contrary ultimate ends. But the antecedent is certain; therefore, so far as man is carnal and unsanctified, flesh-pleasing and carnal self is his end.

Argument 2. If the same man might not have two contrary ultimate ends, then the godly should never sin but in the mischoosing of the means, or abating the degrees of love to God: but the consequent is false, and against experience; therefore—Peter did not only mischoose a means to God's glory when he

denied his Master. A godly man, when he is drawn to eat or drink too much, doth it not only as a mistaken means to glorify God, but ultimately to please his flesh. Either David, in adultery, did desire flesh-pleasing for itself, or for some other end. If for itself, then it was his ultimate end in that act: if for somewhat else, as his end; for what? No one will say his end was God's glory; and there is nothing else to be it.

Prop. 9. There is a continual striving between these two contrary ends where they are; one drawing one way, and the other the other way; and sometimes one, sometimes the other, prevailing in particular acts.

Prop. 10. But yet, every man hath one only prevalent ultimate end, which is to be called *finis hominis*, or is the chief ultimate end of the habitual predominant inclination or disposition of his soul, and of the tenor or bent of his course of life. And that which goes against his habitual bent, is said to be the act not of him, but of something in him, that is, not of that predominant disposition which should denominate the man to be godly or ungodly, but of some subdued disposition that, by accident, hath got some advantage.

Prop. 11. As godly men have God for their end, as to the predominant habit of their souls and bent of their lives, so all wicked men in the world have the creature and carnal self for their end, as to the predominant habit of their hearts and bent of their lives; so that this is simply to be called their several end which is the ruling end, and hath the greatest interest in them; but yet, as carnal self is a subdued, resisting end in the godly, prevailing in some particular actions, as is too sure, so God and salvation may be a stifled, abused, subjected end of the ungodly that have but common grace, and may prevail against the flesh in some particular outward actions.

This is evident in the foregoing propositions. If a man by common grace may have such a simple and superficial apprehension of God as is before mentioned, knowing him to be good in himself; yea, best, and good and best to him; when yet, at the same time, he hath a more deep, predominant, habitual apprehension that the creature is best for him; then certainly he may have a subdued love to God as best in himself, and to him, that is answerable to this superficial knowledge, and consisteth with a predominant, habitual love to the creature and carnal self. I would desire every divine to beware that he tell not the unsanctified, that whoever hath the least degree of love to God for himself, and not as a means to carnal ends, shall certainly be saved; for he would certainly deceive many thousand miserable souls that should persuade them of this. He that believeth that there is a God, believeth that he is the chief good, and best for him if he could see his glory, and fully enjoy his love for ever: and many a wicked man doth preach all this, and thinks as he speaks; but it is all but with a superficial, opinionative belief, which is mastered by more strong apprehensions of a contrary good; and so they love but with a superficial love, that is answerable to a mere opinionative belief, and is conquered by a more potent love to the contrary. So that, strictly, if you denominate not that single act, nor the person as thus disposed, but the bent of his affections, or the person, according to what indeed he is in the predominant habit of his soul, so it is fittest to say, that the godly loveth not the world, nor the things of the world, and the wicked loveth not God, nor the things of God, as such.

Prop. 12. The sincere intending of the end doth concur to constitute a sincere choice of the means. And therefore the schoolmen say, that charity, or love to God, informeth all other graces; not being the form of them as such or such acts or habits, but as gracious means. As the means are essentially as means for the end, and so animated by it, so the mediate acts of grace, as mediate, are essentially animated by the love of the end, and participate of it. In this sense their doctrine of the informing of other graces by love, is not only true, but of very great weight, and giveth light to many other points. And thus, as men of common grace have only an abused, subdued will or love to God as their end, that is conquered by the contrary; so they have but an unanswerable faith in Christ as the way to God the Father, and an unanswerable use of all other means, which will never bring them to attain the end that is so superficially and uneffectually apprehended and intended. I desire the learned reader to peruse well the first disputation of Rada for Scotus on this question.

Prop. 13. The acts of love or faith are considerable, 1. Physically. 1. In general, as faith and love. 2. In special, as this faith and love about this object, the Father and Son. And thus, by common grace men may have true faith and love; that is, such as is physically a true or real act. 2. They are considerable morally; and that, 1. Either as duty answering a precept, "Believe and love God;" and thus they have an analogical, defective morality in them, and so are thus far sincere or true; but not that same true love or faith, *in specie morali*, which the command requireth. For it commandeth us to love God above all, &c. 2. They are considerable as conditions of the promises and evidences of spiritual life in the soul; and thus wicked men, by common grace, are never made partakers of them. They have not the things themselves. Their faith and love is not the same thing which hath the promises made to them in the gospel, and so are not true or sincere.

Prop. 14. By common grace men may love God under the notion of the chiefest good and most desirable end, and yet not with that love which the chiefest good must be loved with, and therefore it is not morally sincere or saving.

Prop. 15. There is no notion whatsoever that a true christian hath of God, and no word that he can speak of him, but an unregenerate man may have some apprehension of that same notion, and speak those words, and know every proposition concerning God and Christ, as Redeemer, which a godly man may know; and so may have some love to God or faith in Christ in that same notion, though not with such a clear effectual apprehension, and lively powerful love, as the sanctified have.

Object. He cannot love God as his end. *Answ.* I have proved before that he may with a superficial, uneffectual, subdued love.

Object. He cannot love him as the chief good. *Answ.* I have proved that he may love him under that notion, though not with that love which the chief good must be loved with.

Object. He cannot believe in Christ, or desire him as a Saviour to free him from every sin. *Answ.* Not with a prevalent faith or desire, for still he hath more love than averseness to that sin, and therefore more averseness than love to Christ as such; but as in general he may wish to be free from all sin, so in particular he may have effectual wishes to be free from his most beloved sin in several respects.

Object. But not to be free from sin as sin, or as against God. *Answ.* Yes; a man by common grace may know that sin as sin is evil, and therefore may have uneffectual wishes to be freed from it as such;

but at the same time he hath stronger apprehensions of the pleasure, profit, or credit that it brings him, and this prevaileth. Indeed, men's carnal interest, which in sin they love, is not its opposition to God, nor the formal nature of sin. Doubtless all men that are ungodly, do not therefore love sin because it is sin, and against God; at least this is not so total in them, but that there may be a subdued mind to the contrary, and dislike of sin as against God. Many a common drunkard I have known, that when he hath heard or talked of sin as sin, and as against God, hath cried out against himself, and wept as if he abhorred it, and yet gone on in it, for the pleasure of the flesh.

Object. But where, then, is man's natural enmity to God and holiness? *Answ.* 1. It is doubtful whether man naturally have an enmity to God and holiness considered simply, or only considered as being against man's carnal interest. 2. But were the former proved, yet common grace abateth that enmity, and gives men more than corrupted nature doth.

Object. But the experience of the godly telleth them that it is another kind of light and love which they have after conversion than before. *Answ.* 1. It is not all converts that can judge by experience in this; because all have not had common grace in the highest, or any great observed measure before conversion. 2. It is hard for any to make that experiment, because we know not in our change just when common grace left, and special grace begun. 3. A physical, gradual difference may be as great as that which your experience tells you of. Have you experience of common light and love before conversion, and of another since which differeth from it more than the greatest flame from a spark, and more than the sunshine at noon from the twilight, when you cannot know a man; or more than the sight of the cured blind man, that saw clearly, from that by which he saw men like trees; or more than the pain of the strappado from the smallest prick of a pin?

Object. But it is not common gifts that are worked up to be spiritual grace. One species is not turned into another. *Answ.* True: imperfection is not turned materially into perfection. The dawning of the day is not materially turned into the greater light at noon; but a greater light superveneth, and is added to the less. The blind man's seeing men like trees, was not it that was the perfect, following sight, but an additional light was it.

Object. But special grace is the divine nature, the image of God, the new creature, &c. and therefore doth differ more from common.

Answ. I easily yield the antecedent, but deny the consequence. The difference is as admirably great as these terms express, though it be but a moral specific difference.

Reader, I will trouble thee no more but to entreat thee, if thou be of another mind, to differ from me without breach of charity, as I do from thee, and to remember that I obtrude not my explications on any. And if I have done thee wrong, it is but by telling thee my thoughts, which thou hast liberty to accept or reject as thou seest cause. But again I entreat thee, rather lay this by, or tear it out of the book, than it should be any stumblingblock in the way, or hinder thee from profiting by what thou readest. The Lord increase our light, and life, and love.

Jan. 15, 1657.

A

TREATISE OF SELF-DENIAL.

A PREMONITION CONCERNING THIS SECOND EDITION.

READER,

I TAKE the love of God and self-denial to be the sum of all saving grace and religion; the first of the positive part, and the second of the oppositive, or negative part; and I judge of the measure of my own, and all other men's true piety, by these two. And it is the rarity of these two, which assureth me of the rarity of sincere godliness. Oh how much selfishness, and how little love of God, are too often found among those contenders for supposed true doctrine, true worship, true discipline, and the true church! Who can say that their zeal for these things doth eat up themselves, their charity, their peaceableness, and their brethren? The same men that will not abate an opinion, a formality, a singularity, for the church's peace and concord, or for the interest of love, and the healing of our wounds, will as hardly abate a jot of their wealth, their worldly honour, their carnal interest, or selfish wills; which shows that their zeal and seeming orthodoxness and wisdom (as in them) is not from above, but from beneath, James iii. 15—17.

Oh that men knew what heart's-ease self-denial bringeth, by mortifying all that corrupteth and troubleth the souls of sinners! And if that part of religion which seemeth hardest and harshest, be so sweet, what is our love and delight in God, but the foretaste of heaven itself.

But the soul is seldom fit to relish this doctrine aright, till some special providence or conviction have made all the world notoriously insufficient for our relief. But he that in or after sharp affliction will still be selfish in a predominant degree, is next to hopeless. I remember, that one accounted of eminent wisdom,[a] a little before he forsook the land of his nativity, made this the first word that ever he spake to me, "I thank you especially for your book of Self-denial;" and when we are going out of the world, we shall all be much fitter to relish and understand the doctrine of self-denial, than now we are.

But though undeniable reason thus presented, by the grace of God, do much cure some particular souls, yet alas, the world, the most of the church visible, and the land, is so far uncured, as that selfishness still triumpheth over our innocency, piety, and peace, and seemeth to deride our hopes of remedy. Were profession as rare as true self-denial, I should be of their mind who reduce the church into a much narrower room than either the Roman, the national, the presbyterian, or independent. Alas, how few are those true believers, whose inordinate SELF-LOVE, SELF-CONCEITEDNESS, SELF-WILL, and SELF-SEEKING, are truly conquered by FAITH, and turned into the LOVE of GOD as GOD, and of the PUBLIC GOOD, and of their NEIGHBOUR as themselves; and into a HUMBLED UNDERSTANDING, conscious of its ignorance; and into a HUMBLED, SUBMISSIVE WILL, which is more disposed to follow than to lead, and to obey, than to be imperious and domineer; and into a life entirely devoted to God, and to the common good!

But this complaint was made before; but what we most feel, we are most inclined to utter; and to press that on others which we find most neeessary to ourselves. And I must say, that of all the books which I have written, I peruse none so often for the use of my own soul, in its daily work, as my "Life of Faith," and this "Of Self-denial," and the last part of the "Saints' Rest."

One little thing I will here tell the reader, that no book of mine (exeept the two first) had ever the word "dedicatory" joined to the epistle by my eonsent, but I have very oft prohibited it in vain; whether by the oblivion or self-conceit of the booksellers or printers, I cannot tell. Not that I condemn the word in others, but that my epistles were still of so different an importance, as did require a different title.

R. B.

TO THE HONOURABLE COLONEL JAMES BERRY, &c.

SIR,

PROVIDENCE having deprived me of the opportunity of nearer converse with you, whieh heretofore I have enjoyed, yet leaving me the same affeetions, they work towards you as they ean; and have chosen here to speak to you in the hearing of the world, that my words may remain to the ends intended, when a private letter may be burnt or east aside. Flattery, I am confident, you expect not from me, because you know me,

[a] The late Lord Chief Justice Oliver St. John.

and know me to be your friend. (And yet my late monitor hath made many smile, by accusing me of that fawning crime.) I am told what it is to bless my friend with a loud voice, Prov. xxvii. 14. I have learned myself, that "open rebuke is better than secret love;" and that "faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful," Prov. xxvii. 5, 6. And therefore I shall do as I would be done by. Faithfulness and usefulness shall be the measure of my message to you; and they have commanded me to set before you this lesson of self-denial, and earnestly entreat you, that you will faithfully read, and learn, and practise it. Though I judged you have learned it long ago, I think it not needless to mind you of it again; my soul being astonished to see the power of selfishness in the world, even in those that by confessions, and prayers, and high professions, have frequently condemned it. Yet this is the radical, mortal sin. Where this lives, all sins virtually live. Say that a man is selfish, and (in that measure) you say all that is naught of him, as to his inclination. That selfishness is the sum of vice, and the capital enemy of God, of commonwealths, of order and government, of all grace and virtue, of every holy ordinance and duty, especially of unity and brotherly love, and of the welfare of our neighbours, and of our own salvation, I have manifested to you in the following discourse. But alas, what need we words to manifest it, when, the flames of discord, and long-continued divisions among brethren, do manifest it! when hatred, strife, variance, emulation, backbiting, violence, rebellions, bloodshed, resisting and pulling down of governments, have so long lamentably declared it! when such havoc is made by it before our eyes, and the evil spirit goes on and prospereth, and desolation is zealously and studiously carried on, and the voice of peace-makers is despised, or drowned in the confused noise! "Presumptuous are they, self-willed, they have not been afraid to speak evil of dignities," 2 Pet. ii. 10. To speak evil? Was that the height of presumption and self-willedness then? Alas, how much farther hath it proceeded now! even under the cloak of liberty and religion! How many conquerors that have often triumphed over their enemies, are conquered by themselves, and live in continual captivity under this homebred, most imperious tyrant!

Whence is it but for want of self-denial, that there is such scrambling for rule and greatness, for riches and honours, among all, as if they thought it more desirable to fall from a high place than a low? and at death, to part with riches than with poverty? and at judgment, to have much to answer for, than little? and to go to heaven as a camel through a needle's eye, than by the more plain and easy way?

Whence is it but for want of self-denial, that men are so hardly convinced of their sins, be they never so open, and odious, and scandalous, if they be but such as will admit of an excuse before the world? Most sins that are confessed, are such as seem not to be disgraceful, or such whose justification would double the disgrace, or such as are confessed in pride, that the confessor may gain the reputation of humility.

Whence is it but for want of self-denial, that christian love is grown so cold, while all profess it to be the badge of Christ's disciples? and that so many professors have so little charity for any but those of their own opinions; unless it be a slandering charity, or a persecuting or murdering charity? that all is commendable, or excusable, that is done by men of their own conceits; and all comdemnable, or a diminutive good, that is found in those that differ from them; especially if they dispute or write against them?

Whence is it but for want of self-denial, that men who know that whoredom, and drunkenness, and theft, are sins, can yet be ignorant (in the midst of light) that discord and church divisions are sins? and that they hear him with heart-rising, enmity, or suspicion, that doth declaim against them? As if uniting were the work of Satan, and dividing were become the work of Christ. I mean not dividing from those without, but dividing in his church, and among his members; who are all baptized with one Spirit, into one body, (1 Cor. xii. 13,) even the body of Christ, (not of the pope,) of which even apostles are but members, (and therefore Peter was not the head,) 1 Cor. xii. 27, 28; which is so tempered together by God, that there should be no schism in it, but that the members should have the same care one of another, 1 Cor. xii. 24, 25; and that for all the plain and terrible passages against divisions, that are found in the word of God, it seems to some a venial sin, and to others a commendable virtue, if not a mark of christian piety. I may seem to speak incredible things of the delusions of selfish professors of religion, if they were not attested by the common and lamentable experience of the times.

And whence is it but for want of self-denial, that peace-makers succeed no better in their attempts? That while all men cry up peace and unity, most men are destroying them, and few are furthering them, and fewer do it with zeal and diligence; so few, that they are borne down in the crowd, and speed no better than Lot among the rabble of the Sodomites, that cried out against him, "This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge: now will we deal worse with thee than with them," Gen. xix. 9. How long have some been longing, and praying, and moving, and labouring for peace among the professed sons of piety and peace in England; and all (for aught I see) almost in vain; unless to the condemnation of a selfish, unpeaceable generation! (But yet let the sons of peace plead for it, as long as they have a tongue and breath to speak.)

Whence can it be but for want of self-denial, that magistrates professing a zeal for holiness, regard no more the interest of Christ; but that the name (and but the name) of liberty (a liberty that hath neither moral good or evil in it) is set in the balance against the things of everlasting consequence, and thought sufficient to overweigh them? and that the mere pretence of this indifferent carnal liberty, is thought an argument of sufficient weight, for the introduction of a wicked, damning liberty, even a liberty to deceive and destroy as many as they can, and to hinder those that endeavour men's salvation? And what is the argument pleaded for all this? It is partly a pretence of tenderness and mercy; and partly because men cannot be made religious by force. And must such ignorant and juggling confusions serve turn, to cheat a nation of their religion and liberties, and many thousands of their salvation? As if all the controversy were, whether we should force others to be our religion? When it is only or principally, whether we may hinder them from robbing us of our own; and from tempting unstable souls to sin and to damnation, and from hindering the means of men's salvation; and from the open practice of idolatry, or ungodliness. If we cannot force them to the christian faith, cannot we hinder them from drawing others from it? And are we unmerciful to them, if we give them leave to damn themselves, (for that is the mercy that is pleaded for) and only hinder them from damning others? Is it cruelty, or persecution, to hinder them from enticing souls to hell, as long as they may freely go thither themselves? I should rather think that if we did our best to save themselves, it were far from cruelty: for example; if infidel or papists' books be prohibited, what

cruelty or persecution is this? If quakers be hindered from railing at God's ordinances in the open streets and assemblies, what cruelty or persecution is this? But some think it enough for this toleration, that they think as confidently they are in the right, as we do that they err! And so do heathens, Mahometans, and infidels. And what! shall every man have leave to do evil, that can but be ignorant enough to think (or say he thinks) that he doth well? And must magistrates rule as men that are uncertain whether there be a Christ, or a church, or a heaven, or hell, because some are found in their dominions so foolish or impious as to be uncertain of it? In plain English, is it any hinderance to men's salvation, and furtherance of their damnation, to be made infidels, papists, and such as deny the essentials of christianity, or not? If not, then away with christianity and reformation; why do we pretend to it ourselves? But if it be, will merciful rulers set up a trade for butchering of souls; and allow men to set up a shop of poison, for all to buy and take that will? Yea, to proclaim this poison for souls, in streets and church-assemblies, as if men's souls were no more worth than rats, or mice, or hurtful vermin, or it were some noble achievement to send as many as may be to the devil? Judge impartially whether all this be not for want of self-denial. If selfish interest led them not to this, and if they were more tender of the interest of Christ than of their own, than of men's souls than of their flesh, it would not be thus. But the same argument that tempts the sensual to hell, doth tempt such magistrates to set up liberty for drawing men to hell. The wicked sell their souls to spare the flesh, and let go heaven to enjoy the liberty of sinning, and run into hell to escape the trouble of a holy life; and such magistrates sell the people's souls to spare the flesh of the deceivers; and in tenderness and mercy to their bodies, they dare not restrain men from seeking their damnation. Is faith and holiness propagated by persuasion, and not by force? Surely then infidelity, popery, and ungodliness, are propagated by persuasion too. Again I tell you, self-love doth make such rulers wiser than to grant commission or liberty to all that will, to entice their soldiers to mutiny or rebellion, their wives to adultery, their children to prodigality, and their servants to thievery: but the love of Christ and men's salvation is not so strong as to satisfy them whether men should be hindered from raising mutinies in his church, and from destroying souls! Forsooth they tell us that Christ is sufficient to look to his own cause. Very true (and they shall one day know it). But must he not therefore teach or rule by men? Is not adultery, murder, theft, rebellion, against the cause of Christ, and his laws, as well as popery and infidelity? And must they therefore be let alone by man? Christ is sufficient to teach the world as well as to govern. But doth it follow that men must be no teachers, under him? Nothing but selfishness could cause this blindness.

And because I know that this stream proceeds from the Roman spring, and it is their great design to persuade the world, that it belongs not to magistrates to meddle with religion, but only to cherish them that the pope approveth of, and to punish those whom the pope condemns; and that Christ must govern and judge of matters of religion himself, that is, by his pretended Roman vice-christ; I shall only now say this, that if Rome were acquainted with self-denial, and if the selfish, carnal interest of riches, and rule, and worldly greatness had not blinded them, they could never have believed themselves, that Christ did appoint the pope of Rome to be his universal vicar; and that princes and magistrates in their own dominions, have not more power to judge who is to be tolerated or punished by the sword, than the pope of Rome; when no priest or prelate upon earth (as such) hath any thing to do with such a judgment; no, not in the places where they live. All that they have to do herein, is to judge who is the heretic or offender, in order to his censure and excommunication; but it is magistrates only that must judge who is the heretic or offender, in order to corporal punishment or restraint. And this I undertake to make good against all the papists in the world: much more, that the Roman tyrant hath no such power at the antipodes, and in all the christian nations of the earth.

Remember in all this, that I speak not against a toleration of godly, tolerable men, episcopal, presbyterian, independent, anabaptist, &c. that will walk in charity, peace, and concord; we shall never be well till these are closed.

But do we not know that papists have Italy, and Spain, and Germany, and France at hand to help them? And that if we grant them such a liberty as shall strengthen them and make way for their power, we give away our own liberty, and are preparing faggots for our own martyrdom, and giving away the gospel, that by wonders of mercy hath been till now preserved (and I hope shall be preserved in despite of Rome and hell). Nor yet do I plead for any cruelty against a papist, but for a necessary defence of the interest of Christ, and the souls of men, and the hopes of our posterity. True humanity abhorreth cruelty.

Did magistrates well know their dependence upon God, and that they are his officers, and must make him their end, they would not take their flocks to be their masters, though they may take them for their charge; nor would they set up a carnal interest of the multitude against the pleasing of God, and men's salvation; nor would they think so highly of men's conceits and wills, as to judge it a matter of so much moment, to allow them in religion to say and do what they list. If allowing a man's self in the practice of known sin is inconsistent with a state of grace, and a sign of a miserable slave of Satan, I leave it to you to consider, what it will prove to allow others, even countries and nations, in known sin. And if rulers know not that setting up a universal vice-christ, and worshipping bread (though they think there is no bread) with divine worship, and serving God in an unknown tongue, with other points of popery, are sin; and that opposing and reproaching the holy Scriptures, ordinances, and ministry, are sin; woe to such rulers, and woe to the nations that are ruled by such! Oh what a blessing is a holy, self-denying magistracy to a nation! If one could have told you twenty years ago, that you, and such as you, should be rulers in this land, how confidently would you have promised a universal encouragement to godliness, and a vigorous promoting the cause of Christ, and a zealous suppressing of all that is against it! Little would you or I have thought, that after professors of godliness were in power, so many years should have been spent in destroying charity and unity, and cherishing almost all that will stand up for the devil, and plead his cause against the doctrine, and discipline, and worship, and churches, and officers of Jesus Christ; and that in their days it should have been put to the question, Whether the ministry itself should be taken down? and that men in power should write for liberty, for all that will call itself religion, even popery not excepted, (nor, I think, infidelity or Mahometanism itself,) and that those that write so should be men in power. My heart would have risen against him as an odious

calumniator, that should have presumed to tell me, that such men as have attempted this would ever have come to such a pass: and I should have encountered them with Hazael's question, "Are they dogs, that they should do so vile a thing?" and exercise such cruelty on souls, and seek to bring back the people of God to the Romish vomit, and set up the greatest tyranny on earth, and all under pretence of a religious liberty?

But alas, it is not magistrates only that are so wanting in self-denial. Ministers also are guilty of this crime, or else we should not have been so forward to divisions, and so backward to the cure; nor would men of this profession, for the interest of their opinions and parties, have cherished dissension, and fled from concord, and have had a hand in the resisting and pulling down authority, and embroiling the nations in wars and miseries. And whence is it but for want of self-denial, (for our own faults must be confessed,) that the ministers of Christ are so much silent in the midst of such heinous miscarriages as the times abound with? I know we receive not our commission as prophets did, by immediate, extraordinary inspiration: but what of that? The priests that were called by an ordinary way, were bound to be plain and faithful in their office, as well as the prophets; and so are we. How plainly spoke the prophets, even to the king! and how patiently did they bear indignities and persecutions! But now we are grown carnally wise and cautelous; (for holy wisdom and caution I allow;) and if duty be like to cost us dear, we can think that we are excused from it. If great men would set up popery in the land by a toleration, alas! how many ministers think they may be silent, for fear lest the contrivers should call them seditious, or turbulent, or disobedient, or should set men to rail at them and call them liars and calumniators; or for fear they should be persecuted, and ruined in their estates and names. If they do but foresee that men in power and honour in the world will charge them with lies or unchristian dealing for speaking the words of truth and soberness against the introduction of popery and impiety, and that they shall be made as the scorn and offscouring of all the world, and have all manner of evil sayings falsely spoken of them for the sake of Christ, his church and truth, they presently consult with flesh and blood, and think themselves discharged of their duty: when God saith, "If the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand," Ezek. xxxiii. 6. And were we no watchmen, yet we have this command, "Thou shall not hate thy brother in thy heart; thou shalt in anywise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him," Lev. xix. 17. Yet now many ministers will be cruelly silent, lest they should be charged with malice, and hating those they are commanded to rebuke. The sword of violence I persuade them not to meddle with; but were it not for want of self-denial, the sword of the Spirit would be more faithfully managed against the sins of the greatest enemies of Christ and of the gospel, than it is by most, though it should cost us more than scorns and slanders, and though we knew that bonds and afflictions did abide us.

And verily, I cannot yet understand, that the contempt and scorn of the ministry in England is fed by any thing so much as selfishness. Could we be for all men's opinions and carnal interests, (oh what experience have I had of this!) all men, for aught I see, would be for us. Is it a crime to be a minister? Doubtless it is then a crime to be a christian. And he that rails at us as ministers to-day, it is like will rail at us as christians to-morrow. But if such will vouchsafe to come to me, before they venture their souls, and soberly debate the case, I will undertake to prove the truth of christianity. The world may see in Clem. Writer's exceptions against my "Treatise against Infidelity," what thin, transparent sophisms, and silly cavils, they use against the christian cause.[b] When they have well answered, not only that treatise, but Du Plessis, Grotius, Vives, Ficinus, Micrelius, and the ancient apologies of the christian writers of the church, let them boast then that they have confuted christianity. The devil hath told me long ago in his secret temptations, as much against the christian faith, as ever I yet read in any of our apostates; but God hath told me of much more that is for it, and enabled me to see the folly of their reasonings, that think the mysteries of the gospel to be foolishness.

But if it be not as ministers and christians that we are hated, what is it then? If because we are ignorant, insufficient, negligent, or scandalous, why do they not by a legal trial cast us out, and put those in our places that are more able, diligent, and godly, when we have provoked them to it and begged it of them so often as we have done?[c] If it be because we are not papists, it is because we cannot renounce all our senses, our reason, the Scripture, the unity, judgment, and tradition of the far greatest part of the universal church. If I have not already proved that popery fighteth against all these, and am not able to make it good against any Jesuit on earth, let them go on to number me with heretics, and let them use me as they do such, when I am in their power. If we are hated because we are not of the opinions of those that hate us, it seems those opinions are enemies to charity; and then we have little reason to embrace them. And if this be it, we are under an unavoidable necessity of being hated: for, among such diversity of opinions, it is impossible for us to comply with all, if we durst be false to the known truth, and durst become the servants of men, and make every self-conceited brother the master of our faith. If we are so reviled, because we are against a universal liberty of speaking or writing against the truths and ways of Christ, and of labouring in Satan's harvest, to the dividing of the churches, and the damnation of souls, it is then, in the upshot, because we are of any religion, and are not despisers of the gospel, and of the church, and of men's salvation; and because we believe in Jesus Christ. I have lately found by their exclamations, and common defamations and threatenings, and by the volumes of reproaches that come forth against me, and by the swarms of lies that have been sent forth against me through the land, that even the present contrivers of England's misery, (liberty, I would say,) and of toleration for popery, and more, are themselves unable to bear contradiction from one such an inconsiderable person as myself; and they have got it into the mouths of soldiers, that my writings are the cause of wars, and that till I give over writing, they shall not give over fighting (though I do all that I am able for peace).[d] And if this be so, what a case would they bring the nation into, by giving far greater

[b] See my Reasons of the Christian Religion, since written.

[c] I may, with Tertullian, call all our enemies to search their court records, and see how many of us have been cast out or silenced for any immorality, but for obeying conscience against the interest, or wills, of some who think that conscience should give place to their commands. Read the two or three last chapters in Dr. Holden's Anal. fidei.

[d] Read Mr. Stubbs's and Mr. Rogers's books against me; and the soldiers openly thus calumniated me and threatened

liberty to all, than ever I made use of! Unless they still except a liberty of contradicting themselves, they must look for other kind of usage, when libertinism is set up. Yea, if they will seek the ruin of the church and cause of Christ, they must look that we should take liberty to contradict them, and to speak for Christ and the souls of men, till they have deprived us of tongues, or pens, or lives; and they must expect that we obey God rather than men, and that, as Paul did Peter, (Gal. ii. 11,) we withstand them to the face: and that Satan shall not be unresisted, because he is transformed into an angel of light; nor his ministers be unresisted, because they are transformed into the ministers of righteousness; nor the false apostles and deceitful workers, because they are transformed into the apostles of Christ, 2 Cor. xi. 13—15. Nor must they think to do so horrid a thing, as to weave their libertinism, and toleration of popery, into a new fundamental constitution of the commonwealth, which parliaments must have no power to alter; and that the ages to come shall curse us for our silence, and say that ministers and other christians were all so basely selfish, as for fear of reproaches or sufferings to say nothing, but cowardly to betray the gospel and their country.[e] If the rattling of the hail of persecution on the tiles, even on this flesh, which is but the tabernacle of our souls, be a terrible thing; how much more terrible is the indignation of the Lord, and the threats of him who is a consuming fire! If you can venture your life against an enemy in the field, we are bastards, and not christians, if we cannot venture ours, and give them up to persecuting rage, as long as we know that we have a Master that will save us harmless, and that the God whom we serve is able to deliver us, and that he hath charged us not to fear them that kill the body, and after that can do no more, &c.; and that he hath told us that we are blessed when men revile us and persecute us, and say all manner of evil against us falsely for his sake; bidding us "rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is our reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets that were before us," Matt. v. 10—12. And when we are told that "he that will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life, for the sake of Christ, shall find it," Matt. xvi. 25. And when we know that we own a cause that shall prevail at last, and resist them "whose end shall be according to their works," 2 Cor. xi. 15.

And what though this be unknown to the opposers? that will not warrant us to betray a cause that we know to be of God; nor will the ignorance of others excuse us for neglecting known truth and duty. If the souls of private persons be worth all the study and labour of our lives, and we must deal faithfully with them, whatever it shall cost us; surely the safety of a nation, and the hopes of our posterity, and the public interest of Christ, is worthy to be spoken for with much more zeal, and we may suffer more joyfully, for contradicting a public destroyer of the church, than for telling a poor drunkard or whoremonger of his sin and misery.

Hitherto I have permitted my pen to express my sense of the common want of self-denial in the land: now give me leave, as your most affectionate, faithful friend, to turn my style a little to yourself, and earnestly to entreat of you these following particulars.

I. In general, that as long as you live you will watch against this common deadly sin of selfishness, and study continually the duty of self-denial. We shall be empty of Christ, till we are nothing in ourselves. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Self is the strongest and most dangerous enemy that ever you fought against. It is a whole army united; and the more dangerous because so near. Many that have fought as valiantly and successfully against other enemies as you, have at last been conquered and undone by self. And conquer it you cannot without a conflict; and the conflict must endure as long as you live; and combating is not pleasing to the enemy; and therefore as long as self is the enemy, and self-pleasing so natural to corrupted man, (that should be wholly addicted to please the Lord,) self-denial will prove a difficult task: and if somewhat in the advice that would engage you deeper in the conflict, should seem bitter or ungrateful, I should not wonder. And let me freely tell you, that your prosperity and advancement will make the work more exceeding difficult; that since you have been a major-general, and a lord, and now a counsellor of state, you have stood in a more slippery, perilous place, and have need of much more grace and vigilancy, than when you were but Baxter's friend. Great places and employments have great temptations, and are great avocations of the mind from God. And no error scarcely can be small, that is committed in public, great affairs; which the honour of God, and the temporal and spiritual welfare of so many, do in some sort depend upon. These times have told us to our grief, what victory and prosperity can do, to strengthen the selfish principle in men: they have swallowed camels since they were lifted up, that would have strained at gnats in a lower state. The ministry, and ordinances, and holy communion that once were sweet to them, are grown into contempt. Centaury and wormwood are excellent helps to procure an appetite and strengthen the stomach; but marrow and sweetness breed a loathing. The vertiginous disease is not so strong with them that are on the ground, as with them that stand on the top of a steeple. I had rather twenty times look up at them that are so exalted, than stand with them, and have the terror of looking down. Had not professors been intoxicated by prosperity, they had not believed and lived so giddily. I have often seen men's reason marred with a cup or two too much, but seldom by too little. And too many I have known, that have wounded conscience and sold their souls for the love of prosperity and wealth; but none that ever did it for poverty. For a rich man to be saved is impossible to man, though all things are possible with God, Matt. xix. 26; Luke xviii. 27. For my own part, I bless God that hath kept me from greatness in the world, and I take it as the principal act of friendship that ever you did for me, that you provoked me to this sweet, though flesh-displeasing life of the ministry, in which I have chosen to abide. I had rather lie in health on the hardest bed, than be sick upon the softest: and I see that a feather-bed maketh not a sick man well. The sleep of the labouring man is sweet: the ploughman's brown bread and cheese is more savoury to him, and breedeth fewer sicknesses, than the fulness and variety of the rich. This country diet doth not cherish voluptuousness, arrogancy, vain-glory, earthly-mindedness, uncharitableness, and other selfish diseases, so much as worldly greatness doth.

Experience telleth us that most men are best in a low estate; insomuch that a bad man in sickness will

my death, as the said authors desired them to call me to a trial, even for speaking and writing against their casting down the government of the land, and setting up themselves, and attempting at once to vote out all the parish ministers.

[e] I know that it hardeneth thousands in impenitency, to say that others have done worse; and is the matter mended with you? And will it also ease men in hell to think that some others suffer more?

speak better, and seem more penitent and mortified, than many better men in health. It is a wonderful hard thing to live like a christian in full prosperity; and to be above this world, and have lively apprehensions of the invisible things, and live a heavenly conversation, in health and wealth, when our flesh hath so much provision at hand, to accommodate and please it. Prosperity doth powerfully corrupt the mind; it breedeth many dangerous errors and vices; and it maketh useless that knowledge which men have; so that though such men can speak the same words as another, about the matters of the life to come, it is but dreamingly, and without life. Their knowledge hath but little power on their hearts and lives. The world is so great with them, which is as nothing, that God and everlasting life are as nothing to them, which are all. They are so full of the creature, that they have no room for Christ; and so busy about earth that they have but little time for heaven; and taste so much sweetness in their present pomp, that they cannot relish the true and durable delights. They know their morals, as they know some astronomical or geometrical verities, by an opinion or uneffectual knowledge; so that indeed they know not what they know. Pausanias in his prosperity desiring to hear some secrets of philosophy, had no more from Simonides, but, Remember that thou art a man: he contemned this at the present, as a ridiculous memento of that which no man could forget; but when he was reduced to an extremity, he then remembered the philosopher's lesson, and perceived there was more in it than he understood when he contemned it.

How little is there in a prosperous state, that should seem desirable in a wise man's eyes! Why is it that great travellers and statesmen, and all that have most tried the world, desired to withdraw from it toward the evening of their age, and to retire themselves into a private life, that they may there look towards eternal things, and cry out of the vanity and vexation which they have here found? Must we not conceive them wiser after much experience than before; and therefore wiser in their recess, than in their aspirings; and therefore that it is folly to be ambitious, and wisdom to contemn the world? Why else do dying men most contemn it? Dear friend, you will think of these things more understandingly and more feelingly one of these days, when you come to die, than you can do now. I would not for all the world have been without the advantages of looking death so often in the face, as I have done since you first knew me. If I have been but awhile without this sight, and have but conceited that yet I have many years to live, alas, how it hath enervated my knowledge and my meditations! So that twenty times thinking the same holy thoughts, will not do so much as once will do, when I seem to be nearer my everlasting state.

And what doth worldly greatness add to your real worth in the eyes of God, or of wise men? Magistracy, as a thing divine, I honour: but James hath taught me, not to be partial to the rich as rich, and call up the man with the gold ring and gay attire, and say to the poor, Sit there at my footstool. As to be proud of fine clothes is a childish or womanish peace of folly, below a man; so to be proud of victories, and dignities, and wealth, and worldly honours, is the vanity of an infidel or atheist, and below a christian that hath the hopes of heaven. If a man be holy, he is above his worldly greatness, and beareth it as his burden, and feareth it as his snare. And if he be carnal, he is the faster in his misery; and golden fetters are stronger than any others. A pebble-stone on the top of Atlas is but a pebble; and a pearl is a pearl in the bottom of the sea. A nettle on the top of a mountain is but a nettle; and a cedar in the lowest valley is a cedar. If God dwell with the contrite, and have respect to him that is poor and humble, and trembleth at his word, it seems they are most to be respected, and are the most honourable, if God can put more honour upon us by his approbation than man. God will not ask us, where we have grown, (in order to our justification,) but what fruit we have borne: nor whether we were rich or poor, but whether we were holy or unholy: nor what was our station, but how we behaved ourselves in it.

Prosperity usually breedeth a tenderness, and sickly frame of soul, so that we can scarce look out of door, but our affections take cold; and can scarce feed on the most wholesome food, but we receive it with some loathing, or turn it to the matter of some disease. But to worldly vanities it breeds a canine appetite; so that ambitious wretches are like dogs, that greedily swallow the morsel that you cast them, and presently gape for more. But wholesome poverty hardeneth us against such tenderness and infirmities, and breedeth not such diseases in the soul.

> "A poor man's rod when thou dost ride,
> Is both a weapon and a guide;"

saith our serious poet. I sleep most sweetly when I have travelled in the cold; frost and snow are friends to the seed, though they are enemies to the flower. Adversity indeed is contrary to glory, but it befriendeth grace. Plutarch tells us, that when Cæsar passed by a smoky, nasty village, at the foot of the Alps, some of his commanders merrily asked him, whether there was such a stir for commands, and dignities, and honours among those cottages, as there was at Rome? The answer is easy. Do you think that an Antony, a Mark, a Jerome, or such other of the ancient retired christians, were not wiser and happier men than a Nero or a Caligula, yea, or a Julius or Augustus Cæsar? Is it a desirable thing to be a lord or ruler, before we turn to common earth; and as Marius, that was one day made emperor, and reigned the next, and was slain by a soldier the next; so to be worshipped to-day, and laid in the dust, if not in hell, to-morrow? It was the saying of the emperor Severus, *Omnia fui, sed nihil expedit;* and of king David, "I have seen an end of all perfection." O value these things but as they deserve! Speak impartially; are not those that are striving to get up the ladder, foolish and ridiculous, when those that are at the top, have attained but danger, trouble, and envy; and those that fall down are accounted miserable?

> "——Sed nulla aconita bibuntur
> Fictilibus——" Juvenal.

There are more draughts of poison given in golden than in earthen vessels, saith the poet. The Scythian, therefore, was no fool, who, when the emperor Mich. Paleologus sent him precious ornaments and jewels, asked what they were good for; whether they would preserve him from calamity, sickness, or death; and sent them home when he heard they were of no more use. You desire not the biggest shoes or clothes, but the meetest; so do by your dignity and estate. As you must ask your daily bread, so must you desire no more; neither poverty, nor riches, but convenient food; yet so as to learn to abound and to want, and in every state to be content: bearing riches and dignity, if cast upon you, without seeking; but not desiring or

gaping after them, nor glorying in them; undergoing them as a burden with patience and self-denial, and carefully using all for God; but neither desiring nor using them for carnal self. "They that will be rich (or great) fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition: for the love of money is the root of all evil, which while some covcted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows," 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10.

Remember where you begun, and where you must end. Naked you came into the world, and naked you must return to dust. You brought no riches hither, and none shall you take hence, unless you learn the blessed art of making friends of the unrighteous mammon, and laying up a good foundation against the time to come, and laying up a treasure in heaven, by the right improvement of your present mercies. Though our life be not circular, but progressive, the end, as to our naturals, is liker to the beginning than to the middle. If we die not children, yet liker to children than we live. It is sad that the height and perfection of our age should be the height of our folly; and that childhood and retired age should be least entangled with these vanities. And it is a lamentable stupidity that alloweth self so confidently to play its game so near eternity, where one would think the noise of damned souls, and the triumphant joys of blessed saints, that passed to rest by the way of self-denial, should mar the sport, and turn their pride into shame and trembling; and the great things of mortality that are even at hand, should drown the noise of pomp and pleasure, and make the greatness of this world appear an inconsiderable thing. The Lord grant that you be no less humble, and heavenly, and true to Christ, and above this world, than when you and I had our first familiar converse (and sure by this time you should be much better). It is said of Agathocles, king of Sicily, that having been a potter's son, he would always have together earthen and golden vessels at his table, to remember him of his original. You tread on earth, and bear about you such evidences of your frailty, as serve to tell you whence your flesh is, and whither it is going, and how it should be used now. Remember also your spiritual new birth, by what seed you were begotten, and by what milk you were nourished, and see that you degenerate not, and do nothing unworthy that noble birth, and the heavenly nature then received.

II. And remember that self-denial is never right, unless it be caused by the love of God; and as you deny yourself, so you entirely and unreservedly devote yourself to him. To this end I crave your observation of these few unquestionable precepts.

1. Take heed of unbelief, and dread all temptations tending to it, and live by that faith which maketh absent things to be to you as present, and things unseen, as if they were seen. When heaven once loseth its interest in the soul, the world may play *rex*, and delude and destroy us at its pleasure.

2. Take heed of all intrusions of selfishness: especially overvalue not your own understanding in the things of God. Draw not a great picture of a little man. Be not easily drawn to contemn the judgments of those that have searched the holy Scriptures, with equal diligence and humility, and with much more advantages of retiredness, and time, and helps, than you.

3. Take heed of engaging your hand, or tongue, or secret thoughts, against the faithful ministers of Christ; but further the work of Christ in their hands with all your power. I am no prophet, but yet presume to say, that if the reproaches of a faithful ministry in England be purged away without some dreadful judgment of God on the apostate reproachers, or else a desertion of the nation, by a removal of our glory, I shall wonder at the patience and forbearance of the Lord. It is a dreadful observation, to see so much of the spirit of malignity possessing those that once said they fought against malignants. And that the ministers and servants of the Lord are railed at by many of them, as formerly they were by the worst of those that their hands destroyed; and with this dreadful aggravation, that then it was but some that were reviled, and now with many it is all: then it was under the name of puritans and roundheads, and now it is openly as ministers, under the name of priests, and blackcoats, and presbyters, and pulpiteers. What have these souls done, that they are so far forsaken by the Lord? The Judge of the world is at the door, that will plead his servants' cause in righteousness. It is hard kicking against the pricks. He that despiseth, despiseth not men, but God. Persecution under pretence of liberty, is heightened with hypocrisy, and is one of the greatest sins in the world. But men are not catched in spiders' webs, though flies are: our Lord will make us a way to escape. Persecution never conquered Christ; and because he lives, we shall live also. Here is the faith and patience of the saints.

I know that malice wants not words to cloak their iniquity: he that hath will and power to do hurt, hath so much wit as to pretend some reason for it: though I think that malice did never walk more nakedly, since the primitive persecutions, than it doth in England at this day. Their principles and profound contrivances they can hide, but their malignity goes stark naked, and is almost grown past shame. They talk against mercenary ministers as if they had never read 1 Cor. ix.; Mal. iii. and such other Scriptures; or as if they envied food and raiment to them that watch and labour for their souls, to whom they are commanded to give double honour, (1 Tim. v. 17,) when they envy not provender to their horses, nor fodder to their labouring ox, nor the crumbs to their very dogs.[f] But the matter is, that their wit is too scant and narrow for their malice; and therefore the popish and malignant enemies have no fairer pretence to cast out the ministry, than by this engaging the covetousness of the ignorant and ungodly sort against them. They talk of our want of a just call; but what is it in point of calling that is wanting? Abilities, say some; succession, say others; miracles, say others; and indeed it is what the interest of selfish men doth dictate to the accusers. Oh that they would tell us what is the due call! and where is the ministry on earth that hath it, if we have it not? If they would have all laid by that work not miracles, we may see what they would have done to the church. If we are not what they would have us be, and do not what they would have us do, why do they not come in charity and meekness, and show us the course that we should take? If we are fools, or beside ourselves, it is for them. The God whom we serve, that will shortly judge us, is our witness, that we have chosen the calling that we are in, for their salvation and for his glory; and that we labour in it in season and out of season to please Christ, and to profit them, rather than to please or accommodate our flesh. You brought me into the ministry; I am confident you know to what ends and with what intentions I desired it: I was then very ignorant, young, and raw: though my

[f] The quakers and other self-esteemers are never the more reconciled to us, now we have been eleven years turned out of all.

weakness be yet such as I must lament, I must say, to the praise of the great Shepherd of the flock, that he hath since then afforded me precious opportunities, much assistance, and as much encouragement as to any man that I know alive. You know my education and initial weakness was such, as forbiddeth me to glory in the flesh; but I will not rob God of his glory, to avoid the appearance of ostentation, lest I be proud of seeming not to be proud. I doubt not but many thousand souls will thank you, when they have here read that you were the man that led me into the ministry. And shall I entertain a suspicion that you will ever hearken to those men that would rob you of the reward of many such works, and engage you against the King of saints? Is it gain, or ease, or worldly advantages that continueth me in this work? Let me speak as a fool, seeing it is for the Lord, in imitation of Paul, that was no fool. Was I not capable of secular and military advancement as well as others that are grown great? Did I ever solicit you so much as for my arrears (which is many hundred pounds)? You could scarce do the thing that would gratify my flesh more, than to silence and depose me from the ministry. Might I consult with the flesh, I should be more against my own employment than many of my enemies are. Did I but turn physician, I could get more worldly wealth, and my patients would not be so froward, and quarrelsome, and unthankful as most ministers find their carnal auditors to be. When men come to me for physic for their bodies, how submissive are they; and how do they entreat, and what thanks after will they return! But when we would help their souls, what cavils, and quarrels, and unthankful obstinacy do we meet with! We must be much beholden to them to accept our help, and all will not serve turn. My patients that have bodily diseases will pay me if I would take it; but if by giving them twice as much as I receive, I could satisfy and further the cure of diseased souls, how joyful should I be! And must we deny ourselves and all things in the world for our people's sake, and after all be reproached, as if we were a mercenary generation and sought ourselves? Oh how will God confound this ingratitude when he comes to judge!

Something they might say if the ministers of England had the provision of the French and other popish clergy. (I will not presume to compare now our calling, fidelity, and maintenance with magistrates, judges, and men of other professions.) Should I suppose the magistracy epitomized in you, and the ministry in me, I should give you an undue advantage; for I suppose there are far more ministers better than me than there are magistrates better than you; and yet I think you would not judge of me as the ministers are judged of. As there are no such commissioners for ejection of scandalous, insufficient, negligent magistrates as are for the ejection of such ministers, so if there were, I should not doubt but you would quickly see which part were liable to more exceptions. But when I look on the faithful ministers round about me, how many of them could I name, with whom my conscience tells me I am not worthy to be compared in holiness, I am then amazed at the ingratitude of the apostates of this age. How constantly and zealously do they preach in public, at home and abroad, some of them many times a week! how diligently do they instruct the ignorant in private, from house to house! how unblamably, and meekly, and self-denyingly do they behave themselves! And are men that once made profession of religion become the enemies of such a ministry? "O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united," Gen. xlix. 6. I had rather be in the case of Turks, yea, of cannibals, than of those men.

I know that many think our very ignorant dividers to have more illumination, and that the pastors of the flocks are carnal, ignorant men: (as the blind man that rushed against another, and asked him whether he were blind, that he could not go out of his way?) but I have long tried the spirits, and I have found that these camelcons have nothing within but lungs: and that straw and little sticks may make the quickest and the lightest blaze, but will not make a durable fire as the bigger fuel doth. A bittern hath a louder voice than a swan or eagle; and in some one thing a bungler may excel a better workman: and what if one minister excel in one gift and another in another, and few in all; is not this like the primitive administration? You be not angry with your apple-tree that it bears not plums, nor with your pear-tree that it bears not figs.

But I have been too tedious. I beseech you interpret not any of these words as intended for accusation or unjust suspicion of yourself: God forbid you should ever fall from that integrity that I am persuaded you once had. But my eye is on the times with grief, and on my ancient, dearest friend with love: and in an age of iniquity and temptation my conscience and the world shall never say that I was unfaithful to my friend, and forbore to tell him of the common dangers.

Dear friend, take heed of a glittering, flattering world. Remember that greatness makes few bad men good, and few good men better. As Seneca saith, The carcass is as truly dead that is embalmed, as that which is dragged to the grave with hooks.

And this I say, "The time is short: it remaineth that they that weep, be as if they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as they that use it not; for the fashion of this world passeth away," 1 Cor. vii. 29—31. And when the soul of the worldly fool is required of him, then whose shall all their dignities, and honours, and riches be? In the mean time, God judgeth not by outward appearance as man judgeth, nor honoureth any for being honoured of men.

Solus honor merito qui datur, ille datur.

These truths (well known to you) I thought meet here to set before your eyes, not knowing whether I shall any more converse with you in the flesh; and also to desire you seriously to read over these popular sermons (persuaded to the press by the importunity of some faithful brethren that love a mean discourse on so necessary a subject). "Watch and pray, that you enter not into temptation." I rest,

Your friend,

RICHARD BAXTER.

Sept. 12, 1659.

THE PREFACE.

Readers,

I here present to your serious consideration a subject of such necessity and consequence, that the peace and safety of churches, nations, families, and souls do lie upon it. The eternal God was the beginning and the end, the interest, the attractive, the confidence, the desire, the delight, the all of man in his upright, uncorrupted state. Though the Creator planted in man's nature the principle of natural self-love, as the spring of his endeavours for self-preservation, and a notable part of the engine by which he governeth the world, yet were the parts subservient to the whole, and the whole to God; and self-love did subserve the love of the universe and of God; and man desired his own preservation for these higher ends. When sin stepped in it broke this order; and taking advantage from the natural innocent principles of self-love, it turned man from the love of God, and much abated his love to his neighbour and the public good, and turned him to himself by an inordinate self-love which terminateth in himself, and principally in his carnal self, instead of God and the common good; so that self is become all to corrupted nature, as God was all to nature in its integrity. Selfishness is the soul's idolatry and adultery, the sum of its original and increased pravity, the beginning and end, the life and strength, of actual sin, even as the love of God is the rectitude and fidelity of the soul, and the sum of all our special grace, and the heart of the new creature, and the life and strength of actual holiness. Selfishness in one word expresseth all our aversion positively, as the want of the love of God expresseth it privatively; and all our sin is summarily in these two, even as all our holiness is summarily in the love of God and in self-denial. It is the work of the Holy Ghost by sanctifying grace to bring off the soul again from self to God. Self-denial therefore is half the essence of sanctification. No man hath any more holiness than he hath self-denial. And therefore the law (which the sanctifying Spirit writeth on the heart) doth set up God in the first table, and our neighbour in the second, against the usurpation and encroachment of this self. It saith nothing of our love and duty to ourselves, as such, expressly. In seeking the honour and pleasing of God, and the good of our neighbour, we shall most certainly find our own felicity, which nature teacheth us to desire. So that all the law is fulfilled in love, which includeth self-denial, as light includeth the expulsion of darkness, or rather as loyalty includeth a cessation of rebellion and a rejection of the leaders of it, and as conjugal fidelity includeth the rejection of harlots. The very meaning of the first commandment is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," &c. which is the sum of the first table, and the commandment that animateth all the rest. The very meaning of the last commandment is, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;" which is the summary of the second table, and in general forbiddeth all particular injuries to others, not enumerated in the foregoing precepts, and secondarily animateth the four antecedent precepts. The fifth commandment looking to both tables and conjoining them, commandeth us to honour our superiors in authority, both as they are the officers of God, and so participatively divine, and as they are the heads of human societies, and our subjection necessary to common good: so that self-denial is principally required in the first commandment, that is, the denying of self as opposite to God and his interest; and self-denial is required in the last commandment, that is, the denying of self, as it is an enemy to our neighbour's right and welfare, and would draw from him unto ourselves. Self-love and self-seeking as opposite to our neighbour's good, is the thing forbidden in that commandment; and charity, or loving our neighbour as ourselves and desiring his welfare as our own, is the thing commanded. Self-denial is required in the fifth commandment in a double respect, according to the double respect of the commandment: 1. In respect to God, whose governing authority is exercised by governors, their power being a beam of his majesty, the fifth commandment requireth us to deny ourselves by due subjection, and by honouring our superiors; that is, to deny our own aspiring desires, and our refractory minds and disobedient self-willedness, and to take heed that we suffer not within us any proud or rebellious dispositions or thoughts that would lift us up above our rulers, or exempt us from subjection to them. 2. In respect to human societies, for whose good authority and government is appointed, the fifth commandment obligeth us to deny our private interest, and in all competitions to prefer the public good, and maketh a promise of temporal peace and welfare in a special manner to those that in obedience to this law do prefer the honour of government and the public peace and welfare before their own. Thus charity as opposed to selfishness, and including self-denial, is the very sum and fulfilling of the law; and selfishness is the radical comprehensive sin (containing uncharitableness) which breaks it all.

And as the law, so also the Redeemer, in his example and his doctrine, doth teach us, and that more plainly and urgently, this lesson of self-denial. The life of Christ is the pattern which the church must labour to imitate; and love and self-denial were the summary of his life: though yet he had no sinful self to deny, but only natural self. He denied himself in avoiding sin; but we must deny ourselves in returning from it. He loved not his life in comparison of his love to his Father, and to his church. He appeared without desirable form or comeliness. "He was despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He bore our griefs, and carried our sorrows, and was esteemed stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was laid upon him. The Lord laid upon him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment. He was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgressions of his people was he stricken. It pleased the Lord to bruise him. He put him to grief," Isa. liii. What was his whole life but the exercise of love and self-denial? He denied himself in love to his Father, obeying him to the death, and pleasing him in all things. He denied himself in love to mankind, in bearing our transgressions, and redeeming us from the curse, by being made a curse for us, Gal. iii. 13. "He made himself of no reputation, and

took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," Phil. ii. 6—8. And this he did to teach us by his example, to deny ourselves, to "be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind, that nothing be done through strife or vain-glory, but in lowliness of mind, that each esteem others better than themselves: looking not every man after his own matters, but every man also after the things of others; and thus the same mind should be in us that was in Christ Jesus," Phil. ii. 3—5. He denied himself also in obedient submission to governors. He was subject to Joseph and Mary, Luke ii. 51. He paid tribute to Cæsar, and wrought a miracle for money rather than it should be unpaid, Matt. xvii. 24—26. He disowned a personal worldly kingdom, John xviii. 36; when the people would have him a king, he avoided it, (John vi. 15,) as being not a receiver but a giver of kingdoms. He would not so much as once play the part of a judge or a divider of inheritances, teaching men that they must be justly made such, before they do the work of magistrates, Luke xii. 14. And his Spirit in his apostles teacheth us the same doctrine, Rom. xiii.; 1 Pet. ii. 13—17; Ephes. vi. 1, 5. And they seconded his example by their own, that we might be followers of them, as they were of Christ. What else was the life of holy Paul and the rest of the apostles, but a constant exercise of love and self-denial? Labouring and travelling night and day, enduring the basest usage from the world, and undergoing indignities and manifold sufferings from unthankful men, that they might please the Lord, and edify and save the souls of men; and living in poverty, that they might help the world to the everlasting riches. In a word, as love is the fulfilling of the whole law as to the positive part, so is selfishness the evil that stands in contrariety thereto, even self-conceitedness, self-willedness, self-love, and self-seeking; and thus far self-denial is the sum of our obedience as to the *terminus a quo:* and Christ hath peremptorily determined in his gospel, that "if any man will come after him, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow him;" and that whosoever will put in a reserve, but for the saving of his life, shall lose it; "and whosoever will lose his life for his sake, shall find it," Matt. xvi. 24, 25; and that he that doth not follow him, bearing his cross, and that "forsaketh not all he hath for him, cannot be his disciple," Luke xiv. 27, 33.

According to the nature of these holy rules and examples, is the nature of the workings of the Spirit of Christ upon the soul. He usually beginneth in showing man his sin and misery, his utter insufficiency to help himself, his alienation from God and enmity to him, his blindness and deadness, his emptiness and nothingness, and then he brings him from himself to Christ, and showeth him his fulness and sufficiency, and by Christ he cometh to the Father, and God doth receive his own again. It is one half of the work of sanctification, to cast ourselves from our understandings, our wills, our affections, and our conversations; to subdue self-conceitedness, self-willedness, self-love, and self-seeking; to mortify our carnal wisdom, and our pride, and our concupiscence, and our earthly members. And the other (and chiefest part) consisteth in setting up God where self did rule; that his wisdom may be our guide, his will our law, his goodness the chiefest object of our love, and his service the work and business of our lives. The Spirit doth convince us that we are not our own, and have no power at all to dispose of ourselves or any thing we have, but under God as he commands us. It convinceth us that God is our Owner and absolute Lord, and that as we are wholly his, so we must wholly be devoted to him, and prefer his interest before our own, and have no interest of our own but what is his, as derived from him, and subservient to him. Fear doth begin this work of self-denial; but it is love that brings us up to sincerity.

The first state of corrupted man is a state of selfishness and servitude to his own concupiscence; where pride and sensuality bear rule, and have no more resistance than now and then some frightening, uneffectual check.

When God is calling men out of this corrupted, selfish state, he usually (or oft at least) doth cast them into a state of fear; awakening them to see their lost condition, and terrifying them by the belief of his threatenings, and the sense of his indignation; and making use of their self-love, to cause them to fly from the wrath to come, and to cry out to the messengers of Christ, "What shall we do to be saved?"

Some, by these fears, are but troubled and restrained a little while, and quickly overcoming them, settle again in their selfish, sensual, senseless state. Some have the beginnings of holy love conjunct with fear (of whom more anon). And some do, from this principle of self-love alone, betake themselves to a kind of religious course, and forsake the practice of those grosser sins that bred their fears, and fall upon the practice of religious duties, and also with some kind of faith do trust on the satisfaction and merits of Christ, that by this means they may get some hopes that they shall escape the everlasting misery which they fear. All this religion, that is animated by fear alone, without the love of God and holiness, is but preparatory to a state of grace; and if men rest here, it is but a state of hypocrisy or self-deceiving religiousness: for it is still the old principle of selfishness that reigns. Till love hath brought man up to God, he hath no higher end than himself.

The true mark by which these slavish professors and hypocrites may discern themselves, is this; they do the good which they would not do, and the evil which they do not, they would do. They had rather live a sinful life, if they durst; and they had rather be excused from religious duties (except that little outward part, which custom and their credit engage them to perform). They are but like the caged birds, that though they may sing in a sunshine day, had rather be at liberty in the woods. They love not a life of perfect holiness, though they are forced to submit to some kind of religiousness, for fear of being damned. If they had their freest choice, they had rather live in the love of the creature, than in the love of God; and in the pleasures of the flesh, than in the holy course that pleaseth God.

The third state is the state of love: and none but this is a state of true self-denial, and of justification and salvation. When we reach to this we are sincere; we have then the spirit of adoption, disposing us to go to God as to a Father.

But this love is not in the same degree in all the sanctified. Three degrees of it we may distinctly observe. 1. Ofttimes in the beginning of a true conversion, though the seed of love is cast into the soul, and the convert had rather enjoy God than the world, and had rather live in perfect holiness than in any sin, yet fear is so active, that he scarce observeth the workings of the love of God within him. He is so taken

up with the sense of sin and misery, that he hath little sense of love to God, and perhaps may doubt whether he hath any or none.

2. When these fears begin a little to abate, and the soul hath attained somewhat of the sense of God's love to itself, it loveth him more observably, and hath some leisure to think of the riches of his grace, and of his infinite excellences, and attractive goodness; and not only to love him because he loveth us, and hath been merciful to us, but also because he is goodness itself, and we were made to love him. But yet in this middle degree of love, the soul is much more frequently and sensibly exercised in minding itself than God, and in studying its own preservation than the honour and interest of the Lord. In this state it is, that christians are almost all upon the inquiry after marks of grace in themselves; and asking, How shall I know that I have this or that grace, and that I perform this or that duty in sincerity, and that I am reconciled to God, and shall be saved? Which are needful questions, but should not be more insisted on than questions about our duty and the interest of Christ. In this state, though a christian hath the love of God, yet having much of his ancient fears, and self-love, and the love of God being yet too weak, he is much more in studying his safety than his duty; and asketh oftener, How may I be sure that I am a true believer? than, What is the duty of a true believer? There is yet too much of self in this religion.

3. In the third degree of love to God, the soul is ordinarily and observably carried quite above itself to God; and mindeth more the will and interest of God, than its own consolation or salvation. Not that we must at any time lay by the care of our salvation, as if it were a thing that did not belong to us; or that we should separate the ordinate love of ourselves from the love of God, or set his glory and our salvation in an opposition; but the love of God, in this degree, is sensibly predominant, and we refer even our own salvation to his interest and will. In this degree, a christian is grown more deeply sensible he is not his own, but his that made him and redeemed him; and that his principal study must not be for himself, but for God; and that his own interest is in itself an inconsiderable thing, in comparison of the interest of the Lord; and that rewarding us with consolation is God's part, and loving and serving him is ours (assisted by his grace); and that the diligent study and practice of our duty, and the lively exercise of love to God, is the surest way to our consolation.

In our first corrupt estate we are careless of our souls, and are taken up with earthly cares. In our estate of preparation we are careful for our souls, but merely from the principle of self-love. In our first degree of the state of saving grace we have the love of God in us; but it is little observed, by reason of the passionate fears and cares of our own salvation, that most take us up. In our second degree of holy love, we look more sensibly after God for himself; but so that we are yet most sensibly minding the interest of our own souls, and inquiring after assurance of salvation. In our third degree of saving grace, we still continue the care of our salvation and an ordinate self-love; but we are sensible that the happiness of many, even of church and commonwealth, and the glory of God, and the accomplishment of his will, is incomparably more excellent and desirable than our own felicity; and therefore we set ourselves to please the Lord, and study what is acceptable to him, and how we may do him all the service that possibly we can; being confident that he will look to our felicity, while we look to our duty; and that we cannot be miserable while we are wholly his, and devoted to his service. We are now more in the exercise of grace, when before we were more in trying whether we have it: before we were wont to say, Oh that I were sure that I love God in sincerity! now we are more in these desires; Oh that I could know and love him more, and serve him better! that I knew more of his holy will, and could more fully accomplish it! And oh that I were more serviceable to him! And oh that I could see the full prosperity of his church, and the glory of his kingdom! This high degree of the love of God, doth cause us to take ourselves as nothing, and God as all; and as before conversion we were careless of our souls, through ignorance, presumption, or security, and after conversion were careful of our souls, through the power of convincing, awakening grace; so now we have somewhat above our souls (much more our bodies) to mind and care for: so that though still we must examine and observe ourselves, and that for ourselves, yet more for God than for ourselves: when we are mindful of God, he will not be unmindful of us: when it is our care to please him, the rest of our care we may cast on him, who hath promised to care for us. Even when we suffer "according to his will, we may commit the keeping of our souls to him in well doing, as to a faithful Creator," 1 Pet. iv. 19. And it is not possible in this more excellent way, (1 Cor. xii. 31,) to be guilty of a careless neglect of our salvation, or of the want of a necessary love to ourselves; for the higher containeth the lower, and perfection containeth those degrees that are found in the imperfect. This neglect of ourselves through the love of God, is consequentially the most provident securing of ourselves: this carelessness is the wisest care: this ignorance of good and evil for ourselves, while we know the Lord, and know our duty, is the wisest way to prevent the evil. To be something in ourselves, is to be nothing; but if we be nothing in ourselves, and God be all to us, in him we shall be something. Be not wanting to God, and I am sure you cannot be wanting to yourselves. He will reward if you will obey.

I have showed you hitherto the nature and necessity of self-denial. Oh that I could next show you the nations, the churches, that are such indeed as I have described! But when I look into the world, when I look into the churches of all sorts, and consider men of all degrees, my soul is even amazed and melted into grief, to think how far the forwardest professors are swerved from their holy rule and pattern! O grievous case! How rare are self-denying men! Nothing in the world doth more assure me that the number that shall be saved are very few, when nothing is more evident in Scripture, than that none but the self-denying shall be saved; and nothing more evident in the world, than that self-denying men are very few. Would God but excuse men in this one point, and take up with preaching and praying, and numbering ourselves with the strictest party, then I should hope that many comparatively would be saved. Would he give men leave to seek themselves in a religious way, and to be zealous only from a selfish principle, and would he but abate men this self-denial and the superlative love of God, I should hope true godliness were not rare. But if self-denial be the mark, the nature of a saint, and this as effected by the love of God, then, alas, how thin are they in the world! And how weak is grace even in those few! It is the daily grief of my soul to observe how the world is captivated to SELF; and what sway this odious sin doth bear among the forwardest professors of religion; and how blind men are that will not see it; and that it hath so far prevailed that few men lament it, or strive against it, or will bear the most suitable

remedy. Alas, when we have prevailed with careless souls, to mind their salvation, to read and pray, and hold communion with the godly, and seem well qualified christians, how few are brought to self-denial! And how strong is self still in those few! What a multitude that seem of the highest form in zeal, and opinions, and duties, delude themselves with a selfish kind of religiousness! And it grieveth my soul to think, how little the most excellent means prevail, even with professors themselves, against this sin! What abundance of labour seemeth to be lost, that we bestow against it! When I have preached over all these following sermons against it, (though grace hath made them effectual with some, yet,) selfishness still too much bears sway in many that heard them. Oh what a rooted sin is this! How powerful and obstinate! Men that seem diligently to hear, and like the sermon, and write it, and repeat it when they come home, and commend it, do yet continue selfish. And they that walk evenly and charitably among us in all appearance, as long as they are smoothly dealt with, when once they are but touched and crossed in their self-interest, do presently show that there is that within them which we or they before perceived not. It was, doubtless, from too much experience of the selfishness even of professors of religion, and of the successfulness of temptations in this kind, that Satan did tell God so boldly, that Job would sin if he were but touched in his self-interest: "Doth Job (saith he) fear God for nought? Hast not thou made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hand, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thy hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face," Job i. 9—11. As if he should have said, Glory not of Job or any of thy servants: it is not thee but themselves that they seek: they serve thee but for their own commodity: it is self and not God that ruleth them, and that they do all this for. Seem but to be their enemy, and touch their self-interest, and cross them in their commodity, that they may serve thee for nothing, and then see who will serve thee. This was the boast of Satan against the saints of the Most High, which hypocrites that encouraged him hereto would have fulfilled; and which God doth glory in confuting; and therefore he gives the devil leave to try Job in this point, and putteth all that he had into his power, ver. 12. And when Satan by this succeeded not, he yet boasteth that if he might but touch him more nearly in his self-interest, he doubted not to prevail. "Skin for skin, yea all that a man hath will he give for his life. Put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face," Job ii. 4, 5. This confidence had Satan, even against such a servant of the Lord, "that there was none like him in the earth, a perfect and upright man, that feared God and eschewed evil," Job i. 8. And though the power of grace in Job did shame the boasts of Satan, yet how frequently doth he prevail with men that seem religious! How truly may he say of many among us; Now they seem godly, but let the times turn, and godliness undo them in the world, and then see whether they will be godly. Now they seem faithful to their pastors and brethren; but give them a sufficient reward, and see whether they will not play the Judas. Now they seem peaceable, humble men; but touch them in their self-interest, cross them in their commodity or reputation by an injury, yea, or by justice, or necessary reproof, and then see what they will prove. Oh that the devil could not truly boast of thousands that by a few foul words, or by crossing their self-willedness, he can make them speak evil of their neighbours, and fill them with malice and bitterness against their truest friends! O where are the men that maintain their love, and meekness, and concord any longer than they are pleased, and their wills and interests are complied with, or not much contradicted?

Besides what I have more largely spoken of this common master, sin, in the following discourse, take notice here of a few of the discoveries of it.

1. Observe but the striving that there is for command, and dignity, and riches, and this even among professors of religion, and judge by this whether they are self-denying men. Who is it for but themselves that men make such a stir for offices and honours, and places of superiority? Surely if it were for the good of others, they would not be so eager and so forward. We cannot perceive that their charity is so hot, as to make them so ambitious to be serviceable to their brethren. If that be it, let them keep their service till it be desired or much needed, and not be so eager to do men good against their wills, and without necessity. As Greg. Mag. saith of the ministry, *Si non ad elationis culpam, sed ad utilitatem adipisci desiderat, prius vires suas cum eo quidem subiturus onere metiatur; ut et impar abstineat, et ad id cum metu cui se sufficere existimat accedat.* Men use not to be ambitious of duty or trouble. He that desireth government ultimately and principally for himself, desireth tyranny, and not a lawful government, whose ultimate end is the common good. And will not the wrath of the King of kings be kindled without so much ado, or hell be purchased at cheaper rates, than all the contrivance, cares, and hazards that ambitious men do draw upon themselves? *O ambitio, (inquit* Bernardus,) *ambientium crux, quomodo omnes torques? Omnibus places, nil acrius cruciat, nil molestius inquietat, nil tamen apud miseros mortales celebrius negotiis ejus.* Wonderful! that such abundant warning tameth not these proud, aspiring minds! They set up or admired them but yesterday, whom they see taken down or despised to-day, and see their honour turned to scorn, and yet they imitate their folly! They see the sordid relics of the most renowned conquerors and princes levelled with the dirt; and yet they have not the wit to take warning, and humble themselves that they may be exalted! They know how death will shortly use them, and read of the terrors that pride and ambition bring men to; but all this doth not bring them to their wits. When death itself comes, then they are as sneaking, shrinking worms as any; and the worm of ambition that fed upon their hearts in their prosperity, doth breed a gnawing worm in their consciences, which will torment them everlastingly. But, *(ut* Juvenal,)

——Mors sola fatetur,
Quantula sunt hominum corpuscula.——

This *Ærugo mentis*, as Ambrose calls it, and *regnandi dira cupido, (ut* Virgil,) doth keep men from knowing what they know, and denieth them the use of their understandings. All former professions are forgotten; repentings are repented of; the best parts are corrupted and sold to the devil, (as truly as witches sell themselves, though not so grossly,) and men are any thing that self would have them be, where the humour of ambition doth prevail, and this secret poison insinuateth itself into the mind: this *subtile malum (ut* Bernard) *secretum virus, pestis occulta, doli artifex, mater hypocrisis, livoris parens, vitiorum origo,*

tinea sanctitatis, excæcatrix cordium, ex remediis morbos creans, ex medicina languorem generans. The God of vengeance that abhorreth the proud, and beholdeth them afar off, and that did cast aspirers out of paradise, will shortly take these gallants down, and lay them low enough, and make them wish they had denied themselves.

2. Observe but men's desire of applause, and their great impatience of dispraise, and judge by this of their self-denial. Who is it that is angry with those that praise them, yea, though they exceed their bounds, and ascribe more to them than is due? Saith Seneca, *Si invenimus qui nos bonos viros dicat, qui prudentes, qui sanctos, non sumus modica laudatione contenti; quicquid in nos adulatio sine pudore congessit, tanquam debitum prehendimus; optimos nos esse, sapientissimosque affirmantibus assentimus, quum sciamus illos sæpe multa mentiri. Adeo quoque indulgemus nobis, ut laudari velimus in id, cui contraria maxime facimus.* Even proud men would be praised for humility, and covetous men for liberality, and fools for wisdom, and ignorant men for learning, and treacherous hypocrites for sincerity and plain honesty; and few of the best do heartily distaste their own commendations, or refuse any thing that is offered them, though beyond desert. But if they think they are lightly or hardly thought of, or hear of any that speak against them, or dishonour them in the eyes of men, you shall see how little they can deny themselves. Oh how the hearts of many that seemed godly men, will swell against them that speak to their disparagement! What uncharitable, unchristian deportment will a little injury produce! What bitter words! What estrangedness, and division, if not plain hatred, and reviling, and revenge! Yea, it were well (in comparison) if a due reproof, from neighbours or from ministers, (that are bound to do it by the Lord,) would not draw forth this secret venom, and show the world the scarcity of self-denial. Let others speak never so well of God, and of all good men, and be never so faithful or serviceable in the church, yet if they do but speak ill of them, (though it is like deservedly and justly,) these selfish men cannot abide them. By this you may perceive what interest is strongest with them: were they carried up from themselves by the love of God, they would delight to hear the praise of God, and of their brethren, and be afraid to hear their own; and say from their hearts, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name be the glory," Psal. cxv. 1. To praise another may be our gain (in the discharge of a duty, and exercise of love); but to be praised ourselves, is usually our danger. Pride needeth no such fuel or bellows. *Non laudato, sed laudantibus prodest*, saith Augustin. *Esse humilem est nolle laudari in se: qui in se laudari appetit, superbus esse convincitur.* Idem. It is the expectation of these proud and selfish men, that tempteth men to the odious art of flattery, when they find it is the way to please. And when one is flattering, and the other pleased with it, what a foolish and sordid employment have they! *Et vani sunt qui laudantur, et mendaces qui laudant*, saith Augustin. It is God to whom the praise is due, whom we know we cannot praise too much, whose praises we should love to speak and hear. *In laude Dei est securitas laudis; ut laudator non timet, ne de laudato erubescat*, saith Augustin. We may boldly praise him, of whom we are sure we never need to be ashamed. It is God in his servants that we must praise, and it is only his interest in our own praise that we must regard.

3. Observe but upon what account it is that most men's affections are carried to or against their neighbours, and then judge by this of their self-denial. Even men that would be accounted godly, do love or hate men according as their self-interest commandeth them, more than according to the interest of Christ. Let a man be never so eminent in holiness, and never so useful and serviceable in the church, and one that hath proved faithful in the greatest trials, if he do but oppose a selfish man, and be thought by him to be against him, he hateth him at the heart, or hath as base, contemptuous thoughts of him, as malice can suggest. He can as easily nullify all his graces, and magnify his smallest infirmities into a swarm of crimes, by a censorious mind and a slanderous tongue; as if virtue and vice received their form and denominations from the respect of men's minds and ways to him; and all men were so far good or evil, as they please him, or displease him; and he expects that others should esteem men such as he is pleased to describe or call them. Let all the country be the witnesses of a man's upright and holy life, yea, let the multitude of the ungodly themselves be convinced of it, so far as that their consciences are forced to bear witness of him, as Herod did of John, "That he was a just man and an holy," Mark vi. 20; yet can the selfish hypocrite that is against him, blot out his uprightness with a word, and make him to be proud, or false, or covetous, or what his malice pleases; yea, make him a hypocrite, as he is indeed himself. No man can be good in their eyes that is against them: or if he be acknowledged honest in the main, it is mixed with exceptions and charges enough to make him seem vile, while they confess him honest: and if they acknowledge him a man, they will withal describe him to be so plaguy or leprous, that he shall be thought not fit for human converse. Such a man is an honest man, say they; but he is a peevish, humorous, self-conceited fellow. And why so? Because he is against some opinion or interest of theirs. He is proud, because he presumeth to dissent from them, or reprehend them. He raileth, every time he openeth their errors, or telleth them of their misdoings. He is a liar, if he do but contradict them, and discover their sins, though it be with words of truth and soberness. In a word, no person, no speeches or writings, no actions can be just, that are against a selfish man. In differences at law, his cause is good, because it is his; and his adversary's is always bad, because it is against him. In public differences the side that he is on (that is for him) is always right, let it be never so wrong in the eyes of all impartial men: the cause is good that he is for, (which is always that which seems for him,) though it be undoubted treason and perfidious rebellion, accompanied with perjury, murder, and oppression; and the cause must be always bad that is against him; and they are the traitors, and rebels, and oppressors that resist him. His own murders are honourable victories, and other men's victories are cruel and barbarous murders. All is naught that is against themselves. They are affected to men according to their self-interest; they judge of them and their actions according as they do affect them; they speak of them, and deal by them, according to this corrupted judgment.

But as for any that they imagine do love and honour them, they can love them and speak tenderly of them, be they what they will. A little grace or virtue in them, seemeth much; and their parts seem excellent that indeed are mean. If they drop into perjury, fornication, treason, or such like scandalous sins, they have always a mantle of love to cover them. Or if they blame them a little, they are easily reconciled, and quickly receive them to their former honour. If they have any thing like grace, it is easily believed to be grace indeed, if they be but on their side: if they have nothing like grace, they can love them for their good natures, but indeed it is for themselves.

When this self-love describeth any person, when it writeth histories or controversies about any cause or person that they are concerned in, how little credit do they deserve! Whence is it else that we have such contrary descriptions of persons and actions in the writings of the several parties as we find? How holy, and temperate, and exceedingly industrious a man was Calvin, if the whole multitude of sober, godly men that knew him may be credited; or if we may believe his most constant, intimate acquaintance; or if we may judge by his judicious, pious, numerous writings: and yet if the papists may be believed, (contrary to the witness of a popish city where he was bred,) he was a stigmatized Sodomite; he was a glutton (that eat but once a day, and that sparingly); he was an idle, fleshly man (that preached usually every day, and wrote so many excellent volumes); and he died blaspheming and calling on the devil, (that is, in longing and praying for his remove to Christ, crying daily, How long, Lord! how long!) and how comes all this inhuman forgery about? Why, one lying Pelagian apostate, Bolsecк, wrote it, (whom Calvin had shamed for his errors,) and a peevish Lutheran, Schlasselburgius, hath related part of it from him; and this is sufficient warrant for the papists, ordinarily, to persuade their followers it is true, and with seared consciences to publish it in their writings, though Massonius and some other of the soberer sort, among themselves, do shame them for the forgery. So do they by Luther, Beza, and many more.

Among ourselves here, how certainly and commonly is it known to all impartial men acquainted with them, that the persons nicknamed puritans in England, have been (for the most part) a people fearing God and studying a holy life, and of an upright conversation; so that the impartial did bear them witness that in the scorner's mouth a puritan was one that was *Integer vitæ, scelerisque purus;* and this was the reason of their suffered scorn; and that the name was the devil's common engine in this land, to shame people from reading and hearing sermons, and praying, and avoiding the common sins, and seriously seeking their salvation. A puritan was one that "believeth (unfeignedly) that God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him," Heb. xi. 6; that strives to enter in at the strait gate, and lives as men that believe that heaven is worth their labour, and that God's kingdom and its righteousness should be first sought, Matt. vi. 33. And yet if Fitz-Simon and other Jesuits, and Bishop Bancroft, Dr. P. Heylin, Mr Thomas Pierce,[a] and other such among us are to be believed, what an abominable, odious sort of people are they, (and especially the presbyterians, who are the greatest part of them,) what intolerable, hypocritical, bloody men! And what is the reason of these accusations? Much is pretended; but the sum of all is, that they were in some things against the opinions or interests of the persons that abuse them. The Jesuits know that they were averse from their doctrines and practices. The rest were angry because some of them would be excused from two or three ceremonies, and from vowing obedience to the ceremony-makers. Yea, many of their accusers think themselves injured, if not oppressed and persecuted, as long as they are withheld from silencing, ejecting, or persecuting these, that would fain serve God according to his word, as the sufficient rule, and have nothing imposed on them in matter of worship, but necessary things, according to the apostle's decree, Acts xv. 28. By all this judge how rare self-denial is when the interest of men's own opinions, persons, or parties can cause such unchristrian dealing from self-esteeming professors and preachers of the gospel. Selfishness is the greatest liar, and slanderer, and the most malicious calumniator in the world.

4. Observe but how light most make of their own sins, and how easily they aggravate the sins of others; and how light they make of the good that is in others, in comparison of that which is in themselves, or those that are of their side; and judge by this of their self-denial! Judah would have judged Thamar hardly; but he was not so severe against himself! David pronounceth very peremptorily the sentence of death against the offender, till he heard from Nathan, "Thou art the man." How hard is it to convince a selfish hypocrite of any sin that will admit of an excuse or cloak! All the town can see the pride of some, the covetousness of others, the unpeaceable, unchristian behaviour of others, and yet themselves, that should most observe it and best discern it, perceive it not, nor will by any means be brought to see it. No minister can put them down when they are justifying themselves, nor make them humbly and heartily confess that they have sinned. (But God will ere long convince them irresistibly, and teach their tongues another kind of language.) Let the case of another come before them, and how readily will they adjudge him to penitent confession, reparation, restitution, and thorough reformation; but the case is altered when it becomes their own. Such incompetent judges are these selfish hypocrites.

5. Observe but how easily men fall out with one another, and how hardly they are reconciled, and how much ado any peace-maker shall have to end the difference; and observe also whether all the quarrel be not about some selfish interest; and judge by this of their self-denial. When do they so fall out with men for wronging God, or the gospel, or their own souls, as they do for wronging them?

And if a minister that can bear an injury against himself do faithfully rebuke them that deal injuriously against Christ, and against the church, and the souls of men, (especially if they be great men in the world that are reproved,) it is strange to see how self makes them storm, though they have read what a mark of rebellion and prognostic of misery it was, even in kings, to reject the reproofs of the messengers of the Lord, much more to hate or persecute the reprover.

6. Observe also how forward many are, unreasonably to exalt their own understandings above those that are far wiser than themselves; and judge by this of their self-denial. Though their brethren or teachers have studied, and prayed, and sought after knowledge, ten or twenty times more than they, and have as faithfully obeyed according to their knowledge, and indeed be incomparably beyond them in understanding, yet how commonly shall you meet with unstudied, unexperienced novices, (notably described, 1 Tim. iii. 6; vi. 4,) of undigested notions, and green and raw apprehensions, that are so puffed up with a little smattering, seeming knowledge, that they despise both ministers and people that be not of their mind, and vilify

[a] So common it is for selfish men to make their gainsayers as odious as they can devise, that I confess I wondered that I met with no more of this dealing myself from papists, anabaptists, or any that have turned their style against me; and at last Mr. Pierce hath answered my expectation, and from my own confession (not knowing me himself) hath drawn my picture, that I am proud, lazy, false, a hypocrite, unjust, a reader, &c. And from this Bolsecк's credit, I make no doubt but the papists will think they may warrantably describe me (if I be thought worthy their remembrance) in all following ages; though now I have nothing from them but good words. But it is a small thing to be judged by man, especially when our souls enjoy the Lord.

them as a sort of ignorant, deluded men. And do they indeed excel us in knowledge as much as they pretend? Oh that they did! that so we might see the church furnished with wiser, better teachers, and might ourselves have the privilege of being their hearers, and of being better instructed by them! But how evident is it to all that have eyes, that it is in pride and not in knowledge that they excel; and that all this comes from the dominion of self, and that they speak evil of the things they know not! Jude 10.

7. Observe also how far men are carried by the fond overvaluing of their own opinions against all reason and former promises, and against all bonds to God and man, and then judge of their self-denial. If once they feel a new apprehension, it tickleth them with delight, as being an elevation of their understandings above other men's; and as parents are fond of their children, because they are their own, so are the proud through the corruption of their minds as fond of an opinion which they call their own, if there be any thing of singularity in it to make them seem persons of more than ordinary understanding. And when they are once possessed of it how partially do they indulge it! How light do they make of the strongest arguments that are brought against it! How contemptuously do they think and speak of the persons, the judgments, the writings, the reasonings, of any that are against them! Nay, usually they will not be persuaded so much as once to read the writings that contradict them; or if they do, it is with so much prejudice and partiality, that they have in their minds confuted them, before they read or understand them: and instead of considering the weight of arguments, and comparing faithfully cause with cause, they only study what to say against their adversary (for so they account those that would cross or confute their opinions).

Nay, observe but what a change a new opinion makes upon them, in reference to their former friends. How strange do they look at them that cannot follow them in their fancies; though before they were their bosom friends, yet without any change in themselves, they have lost their interest in these changelings; and though before they honoured and praised them, yet all is changed when they themselves are changed; and their friends must seem to have lost their wits and honesty (or never to have had any) as soon as themselves have lost their humility and charity. How much am I able to say of this from sad experience of the change of many of my ancient friends! Some of them are changed to a reproaching of the Scripture, church, and ministry, and ordinances, and to a denying of the christian faith; and these I have lost (for they have lost themselves); and indeed these have constrained me to withdraw from them my ancient love of complacency, though I have a love of compassion to them still. Others are secretly insnared by the papists; and these I have lost (though they seem to bear me some respect). Others are changed to opinions which they think meet to hide; and these look strange at me, especially since I wrote against these hiders. Others are changed in the point of baptism; and these are greatly offended with me, for dissenting and giving the reasons of my dissent. And what uncharitable dealings some of them have been guilty of I shall not now express.[b] Some of them have turned to one opinion, and some to another, and almost all that make these turns have left their charity behind them. Some of them take up new causes in the commonwealth; and these are as angry with me as the rest, because I cannot follow them in their changes. How many ways hath a man to lose a selfish friend! I was once beloved by all these men; and now I am either hated, or looked at as a stranger (at least); when I am where I was when I had their love.

If I know my heart, I speak not this in any great sense of the loss of my own interest, but in the sense of the lamentable power and prevalency of self-love and self-conceitedness in the world. And while I am bitterly censured by almost every party, how easily could I recover my interest and reputation with any one of them, if I could but be of their mind and side! How wise and how honest a man could I be with the anabaptists, if I would but be re-baptized and turn to them! And how much should I be valued by the papists if I would turn to them! The like I may say of all the other forenamed parties; for every one of them have by word or writing signified so much to me. Even the Grotian prelatists would wipe their mouths and speak me fairer if I could turn to them. Mr. Pierce himself, that hath exceeded all men, (in his late book abounding with visible falsehoods and unchristian abuse of the servants of the Lord, whom he calleth puritans,) yet telleth me, p. 212, "We contend for your fellowship, and daily pray for your coming in: if you, by name, should have occasion to pass this way, and present yourself with other guests, at the holy supper of our Lord, no man on earth should be more welcome; but if you and your partners will continue your several separations, and shut yourselves out from our communion, as it were judging yourselves unworthy of the kingdom of God, and excommunicating yourselves," &c. See here the power of selfishness! A man that is painted out as lazy, a reader, a proud hypocrite, and much more, should be as welcome as any man on earth, if he will but have communion with them in their way! How much more if he were but of their party! This would cure hypocrisy, pride, and all these crimes. And till we can comply with them, we excommunicate ourselves, and judge ourselves unworthy of the kingdom of God! He that thinks bishops should not be, as now, diocesan, and undertake many hundred parishes, and then feed and govern them by others; and he that submits not to their mode in a surplice, or some form of prayer, doth therefore judge himself unworthy of the kingdom of God; as if God's kingdom were confined to them, and lay in meats and drinks, and not in righteousness and peace! And as if we continued in an excommunication of ourselves, because we are not of their party; when yet we deny no protestants to be our brethren, nor refuse local communion with them, so they will grant it us on Scripture terms; which if they will not, we will yet hold communion with them in several congregations. But thus it appeareth how strong self-interest is in the world; and how charitable men are to those of their own opinions or parties; and how easily many do take liberty to speak their pleasure against any that are not of their mind.

8. Observe also how forward men are to teach, and how backward to be learners, and then judge of their self-denial. Why are so many unwilling to enter by the way of ordination, but (too commonly) because they judge better of their own abilities than ordainers do, and therefore suspect that they may be rejected

[b] They waylaid the messengers that I sent letters by to friends, took them from them by force, and sent them to Sir H. Vane, to the council of state, to the trouble of those I wrote to, though nothing was found but innocency. And this was by my old professed friends of Bewdley, who differed from me in nothing but infant baptism, and their changes of our government; and yet thus studiously sought my utter ruin.

by the ordainers, or disgraced at the least, while they think highly of themselves. But if they were self-denying men, they would think the sober, faithful pastors much fitter judges of their abilities than themselves, and would not run before they are sent. Many that reproach the ministers as deceivers, will needs be themselves the teachers of the people; as if they should say, We (silly, ignorant souls) are wiser and fitter to be teachers than you; come down and let us take your places. In conference you may observe that most are forwarder to speak than to hear; which shows that they overvalue their own understandings. And so much are proud men delighted to be thought the oracles of the world, that if you will but seem to hearken to them, and learn of them, and yield to their opinions, you win their hearts, and shall be the men that have their commendations. Insomuch that some late ambitious persons that have thought to rise by the art of dissimulation, have found that there is no way for the deceiving of the people, and procuring the good-will of most, like this; even to seem to be of every man's opinion that they talk with, and to make every sect and party believe that they are their friends and of their mind: especially if you will seem to be changed by their arguments, and give them the glory of your convictions and illuminations, you will then be the dearly beloved of their hearts. In all this you may see the rarity of self-denial. Yea, in the very work of God, too many of the most zealous godly ministers that have been the instruments of converting many souls, are touched a little with the temptation to this selfishness, looking too much to their own part in the work.

9. Observe but how commonly with men called christians, the interest of Christ is trodden in the dirt, when it seemeth to cross any interest of their own. An argument drawn from the commands of God, or the necessity of the church or of the souls of men, seems nothing to them if their honour, or gain, or greatness, or safety, do stand up against it, and be inconsistent with its conclusion. Hence it is that the souls of hypocrites do cheat themselves by a carnal religiousness, serving God only in subservience to themselves. Hence it is that hypocrites do most show themselves in matters of self-interest; in the cheap part of religion they seem to be as good as any; as zealous for their party and opinions (which they call the truth); and as long and loud in prayer, and for as strict a way of discipline with others; but touch them in their estates or names, call them to costly works of charity, or to let go their right for peace, or public good, or to confess and lament any sin that they commit, and you shall then see that they are but common men, and self bears rule instead of Christ. Hence also it is that so many persons can bear with themselves in any calling or trade of life that is but gainful, be it never so unjust, and will not believe but it is lawful, because it is profitable; for they suppose that gain is godliness, 1 Tim. vi. 5. Hence it is that so many families will be so far religious as will stand with their commodity, but no further; yea, that so many ministers have the wit to prove that most duties are to them no duties, when they will cost them much labour or dishonour in the world, or bring them under sufferings from men. And hence it is that so many carnal politicians do in their laws and counsels always prefer the interest of their bodies before God's interest and men's souls; yea, some are so far forsaken by common reason, and void of the love of God and his church, as to maintain that magistrates in their laws and judgments must let matters of religion alone; as if that self, even carnal self, were all their interest, and all their god; and as if they were of the profane opinion, "Every man for himself and God for us all;" or as if they would look to their own cause, and bid God look to his.

From the power of this selfishness it is that so many princes and states turn persecutors, and stick not to silence, banish (and some of the bloodier sort, to kill) the ministers of Christ, when they do but think they stand cross to their carnal interests; and if you will plead the interest of Christ and souls against theirs, and tell them that the banishment, imprisonment, silencing, or death of such or such a servant of the Lord, will be injurious to many souls, and therefore if they were guilty of death in some eases, they should reprieve them, as they do women with child, till Christ be formed in the precious souls that they travail in birth with (so their lives be not more hurtful by any contrary mischief, which death only can restrain, which is not to be supposed of sober men); yet all this seems nothing to a selfish persecutor, that regards not Christ's interest in comparison of his own. Self is the great tyrant and persecutor of the church.

10. Observe also how few they be that satisfy their souls in God's approbation, though they are misjudged and vilified by the world; and how few that rejoice at the prosperity of the gospel, though themselves be in adversity: most men will needs have the hypocrite's reward, Matt. vi. 2, even some commendation from men; and too few are fully pleased with His eye that seeth in secret, and will reward them openly, Matt. vi. 4, 6. And hence it is that injurious censures and hard words do go so near them, and they make so great a matter of them. Those times do seem best to selfish men which are most for them: if they prosper and their party prosper, though most of the church should be a loser by it, they will think that it is a blessed time; but if the church prosper, and not they, but any suffering befall them, they take on as if the church did stand or fall with them. Self-interest is their measure, by which they judge of times and things.

11. Observe also how eagerly men are set to have their own wills take place in public businesses, and to have their own opinions to be the rule for church and commonwealth, and then judge by this of their self-denial. Were not self predominant there would not be such striving who should rule, and whose will should be the law; but men would think that others were as likely to rule with prudence and honesty as they. How eager is the papist to have his way by a universal monarch! How eager are others for one ecclesiastical national head! How eager are the popular party for their way! As if the welfare of all did lie in their several modes of government. And so confidently do the libertines speak for theirs, that they begin now to make motions that our parliament men shall be hanged or beheaded as traitors, if any should make a motion in (a free) parliament against the general liberty which they desire. Wonderful! that men should ever grow to such an overpowering of themselves and overvaluing their own understandings, as to obtrude so palpable and odious a wickedness upon parliaments so confidently, and to take them for traitors that will not be traitors or grossly disobedient against the Lord. Self-denial would cure these peremptory demands, and teach men to be more suspicious of their own understandings.

12. Lastly, Observe but how difficult a thing it is to keep peace (as in families and neighbourhoods, so) in churches and commonwealths, and judge by this of men's self-denial. Husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, masters and servants, live at variance, and all through the conflicts that arise between their contrary self-interest. If a beast do but trespass on a neighbour's grounds; if they be but assessed for the state or poor above their expectations; if in any way of trading their commodity be crossed; you shall quickly see

where self bears rule. This makes it so difficult a work to keep the churches from divisions. Few men are sensible of the universal interest, because they are captivated to their own; and therefore it is that men fear not to make parties and divisions in the church; and will tear it in pieces to satisfy their interests or selfish zeal. Hence it is that parties are so much multiplied, and keep up the buckler against others, because that selfishness makes all partial. Hence it is that people fall off from their pastors, or else fall out with them, when they are crossed in their opinions, reproved for their sins, or called to confess or make restitution, and perhaps that they may sacrilegiously defraud the church of tithes or other payments that are due. Hence it is also that members so oft fall out with one another for foul words, or differences of judgment, or some point or other of self-interest; nay, sometimes about their very seats in the place of worship: while every man is for himself, the ministers can hardly keep them in charity and peace.

And is any of this agreeable to our holy rule and pattern? No man can think so that hath read the gospel, but he that is so blinded by selfishness as not to understand what makes against it. And here, besides what is largelier spoken after, let me tell of a few of the evils of this sin, and the contrary benefits of self-denial.

1. The power of selfishness keeps men strangers to themselves; they know not their original nor actual sins with any kindly humbling knowledge. The very nature of original sin doth consist in these two things: Privatively, in the want of our original love or propensity to God as God; I mean the privation of the root, or habit, or inclination to love God for himself, as the beginning or end of us and all things, and the absolute Lord, and infinite, simple, inestimable good. And positively, in the inordinate propensity or inclination to ourselves, as for ourselves, and not as duly subordinate to God. The soul having unfaithfully and rebelliously withdrawn itself from God, in point of love and subjection, it becomes its own idol, and looks no higher than itself, and loveth God and all things but for itself (and principally for its carnal pleasure); and the propensity to this, with the privation of the soul's inclination to God, is original sin; the disposition suited to the actual sin that caused it, which was a retiring from God to self. He that feeleth not this evil in himself hath no true knowledge of original sin: and it is the want of the sense of this great evil (and so the want of being acquainted with their hearts) that causeth so many to turn Pelagians, and to deny the being of original sin.

2. Both selfishness and the want of a true discerning of it, doth breed and feed abundance of errors, and teach men to corrupt the whole body of practical divinity, and to subvert many articles of faith which stand in their way. How comes the world to be all in a flame about the universal reign of the pope of Rome, but from the dominion of selfishness? Whence is it that the nations of the earth have been so troubled for patriarchs, metropolitans, and diocesans, that must do their work by others, and for many things that (at best) can pretend to be but human, indifferent, changeable forms, but from the prevalency of self? Whence is it that men's consciences have been insnared, and the churches troubled by so many ceremonies of men's invention, and the church must rather lose her faithfullest pastors, than they be permitted to worship God as Peter and Paul did? Hath not selfishness and pride done this? It is self that hath taught some to plead too much for their own sufficiency, and to deny the need of special grace. And so far hath it prevailed with some of late, as to lead them doctrinally to deny that God is the ultimate end of man, and to be loved for himself, and above ourselves and all things; but only (they say) he is our *finis cujus vel rei*, to be loved *amore concupiscentiæ*. In a word, it is this woeful principle that hath corrupted doctrine, discipline, and worship in so many of the churches.

3. We shall never have peace in church or commonwealth while selfishness bears sway. Every man's interest will be preferred before the public interest, and rise against it as oft (which will be oft) as they seem inconsistent. This is the vice that informeth tyranny, whether it be monarchy, aristocracy, or democracy, when selfish interest is preferred before the common interest. This makes our people think themselves too wise or too good to learn or to be guided by their pastors, and every man (of this strain) seems wise enough to lead off a party of the church into a mutiny against the pastors and the rest. This makes the labours of reconcilers unsuccessful, while selfishness engageth so many wits, and tongues, and pens, and parties, against the most necessary equal terms and endeavours of such as would reconcile. Were it not for these selfish men, how soon would all our rents be healed! how soon would all our wars be ended; and all our heart-burnings and malicious oppositions be turned into charitable consultations for a holy peace! If once men were carried above themselves, they would meet in God the centre of unity.

4. It is for want of self-denial that we undergo so many disappointments, and suffer so much disquietment and vexation. Were our wills more entirely subjected to the will of God, so that his will were preferred before our own, we should rest in his will, and have no contradictory desires to be disappointed, and no matter left for self-vexation. Had we no disease we should feel no pain; and it is our self-will rebelling against the will of God that is our disease. Self-denial removeth all the venom from our hearts: persecution, and poverty, and sickness may touch our flesh, but the heart is fortified so far as we have this grace. Oh how happily doth it quiet and calm the mind, when things befall us that would even distract a selfish man! O happy man, where God is all and self is nothing! There duty, and love, and joy are all, and trouble and distress is nothing. These are not our matters now; partly because we are above them, and partly because they belong not to our care, but to his providence. Let us do our duty and adhere to him, and let him dispose of us as he sees meet. Who would much fear a tyrant or any other enemy, that saw God and glory, which faith can see? Did we see the glorious throne of Christ, we should be so far from trembling at the bar of persecutors, that we should scarce so much regard them as to answer them; the infinite glory would so potently divert our minds. As we scarce hearken to our children's impertinent babblings when we are taken up with great affairs, so if a tyrant talk to us of hanging or imprisonment, we should scarce hearken to such trivial impertinencies, were we so far above ourselves as faith and love should advance the soul.

I have further showed you in the following treatise, how self-denial disableth all temptations; how it conduceth to all eminent works of charity, but especially to the secret works of the sincere. It is of absolute necessity to salvation: it is the thing that hypocrites are condemned for want of: it is the wisdom of the soul, as being the only way to our own security: and it is the holiness and justice of the soul, (as it is conjunct with the love of God,) in that it restoreth to God his own. The excellency of grace is mani-

fested in self-denial. To do or suffer such little things as self is not much against, is nothing; but to be nothing in ourselves and God to be our all, and to close with our first and blessed end, this is the nature of sanctification.

Alas, poor England, (and more than England, even all the christian world,) into what confusion and misery hath selfishness plunged thee! Into how many pieces art thou broken, because that every hypocrite hath a self to be his principle and end, and forsakes the true universal end! How vain are our words to rulers, to soldiers, to rich and poor, while we call upon them to deny themselves! And must we lose our labour? and must the nation lose its peace and hopes? Is there no remedy, but selfishness must undo all? If so, be it known to you, the principal loss shall be your own: and in seeking your safety, liberty, wealth, and glory, you shall lose them all, and fall into misery, slavery, and disdain. Deny yourselves, or save yourselves, if you can. God is not engaged to take care of you, or preserve you, if you will be your own, and will be reserving or saving yourselves from him. And though you may seem to prosper in self-seeking ways, they will end, yea, shortly end in your confusion. You have seen of late years in this land, the glory of self-seekers turned to shame; but it is greater shame that is out of sight. The word and works of God have warned you. If yet the cause and church of God shall be neglected, and yourselves and your own affairs preferred, and men that shall not be tolerated to abuse you, shall be tolerated to abuse the souls of men, and the Lord that made them; and if God must be denied because you will not deny yourselves; you shall be denied by Christ in your great extremity, when the remembrance of these things shall be your torment. Hearken and amend, or prepare your answer; for behold the Judge is at the door.

LUKE IX. 23, 24.

AND HE SAID TO THEM ALL, IF ANY MAN WILL COME AFTER ME, LET HIM DENY HIMSELF, AND TAKE UP HIS CROSS DAILY, AND FOLLOW ME. FOR WHOSOEVER WILL SAVE HIS LIFE SHALL LOSE IT: BUT WHOSOEVER WILL LOSE HIS LIFE FOR MY SAKE, THE SAME SHALL SAVE IT.

CHAPTER I.

WHAT SELFISHNESS AND SELF-DENIAL ARE, AT THE ROOT.

I HAVE already spoken of conversion in the foregoing discourse, both opening to you the true nature of it, and the reasons of its necessity, and persuading men thereunto. But lest so great a work should miscarry with any for want of a more particular explication, I should next open the three great parts of the work distinctly and in order: that is, I. From what it is that we must turn. II. To whom we must turn. III. And by whom we must turn. For though I touched all these in the foregoing directions, and through the discourse, yet I am afraid lest so brief a touch should be uneffectual.

The first of these I shall handle at this time from this text, meddling with no more but what is necessary to our present business.

You may easily perceive that the doctrine which Christ here proclaimeth to all that have thoughts of being his followers, is this, that All that will be christians must deny themselves, and take up their cross and follow Christ, and not reserve so much as their very lives, but resolve to resign up all for him.

Self-denial is one part of true conversion; for the opening of this I must show you, I. What is meant by self. II. And what by denying this self. III. And the grounds and reasons of the point. And IV. I shall briefly apply it.

I. 1. Self is sometimes taken for the very person, consisting of soul and body simply considered; and this is called natural or personal self. 2. Self is taken for this person considered in its capacity of earthly comforts, and in relation to the present blessings of this world, that tend to the prosperity of man as in the flesh; and this may be called earthly self (yet in an innocent sense). 3. Self is taken for the person as corrupted by inordinate sinful sensuality; which may be called carnal self. 4. Self may be taken for the person in his sanctified estate; which is spiritual self. 5. And self may be taken for the person in his naturals and spirituals conjunct, as he is capable of a life of everlasting felicity; which is the immortal self.

II. By denying self, is meant disclaiming, renouncing, disowning, and forsaking it. Self is here looked on partly as a party disjunct from Christ, and withdrawn from its due subordination to God, and partly as his competitor and opposite; and accordingly it is to be denied, partly by a neglect, and partly by an opposition.

Before I come to tell you how far self must be denied, I must tell you wherein the disease of selfishness doth consist; and for brevity we shall despatch them both together.

And on the negative, 1. To be a natural individual person distinct from God our Creator, is none of our disease, but the state which we were created in; and therefore no man must under pretence of self-denial either destroy himself, or yet with some heretics aspire to be essentially and personally one with God, so that their individual personality should be drowned in him as a drop is in the ocean.

2. The disease of selfishness lieth not in having a body that is capable of tasting sweetness in the creature, or in having the objects of our sense in which we be delighted, nor yet in all actual sweetness and delight in them; nor in a simple love of life itself; for all these are the effects of the Creator's will. And therefore this self-denial doth not consist in a hatred or disregard of our own lives, or in a destruction of our appetites or senses, or an absolute refusal to please them in the use of the creatures which God hath given us.

3. Yea, though our natures are corrupted by sin,

self-denial requireth not that we should kill ourselves, and destroy our human natures that we may thereby destroy the sin. Self-murder is a most heinous sin, which God condemneth.

4. Our spiritual self, or self as sanctified, must not be so denied as to deny ourselves to be what we are, or have what we have, or do what we do. We may not deny God's graces, nor deny that they are in us as the subject; nor may we restrain the holy desires which God exciteth in us, or deny to fulfil them, or bring them towards fruition when opportunity is offered us.

5. We may not deny to accept of any mercy which God shall offer us, though but a common creature; nor to use any talent for his service if he choose us for his stewards; much lest may we refuse any spiritual mercy that may further our salvation. It is not the self-denial required by Christ, that we deny to be christians, or to be sanctified by the Spirit, or to be delivered from our sins and enemies; or that we deny to use the means and helps that are offered us, or to accept of the privileges purchased by Christ; much less to deny our salvation itself, and to undo our own souls. In a word, it is not any thing that is really and finally to our hurt or loss.

But (as to the affirmative) I shall show you what the disease of selfishness indeed is, and so what self-denial is.

1. When God had created man in his own image, he gave him a holy disposition of soul, which might incline him to his Maker as his only felicity and ultimate end. He made him to be blessed in the sight of his glory, and in the everlasting love of God, and delight in him, and praises of him. This excellent employment and glory did God both fit him for, and set before him.

But the first temptation did entice him to adhere to an inferior good, for the pleasing of his flesh and the advancement of himself to a carnal kind of felicity in himself, that he might be as God, in knowing good and evil. And thus man was suddenly taken with the creature as a means to the pleasing of his carnal self, and so did depart from God his true felicity; and retired into himself in his estimation, affection, and intention; and delivered up his reason in subjection to his sensuality, and made himself his ultimate end.

With this sinful inclination are we all born into the world, so that every man according to his corrupted nature doth terminate all his desires in himself; and whatever he may notionally be convinced of to the contrary, yet practically he makes his earthly life, and the advancement and pleasure which he expecteth therein, to be his felicity and end.

Self-denial now is the cure of this: it carrieth a man from himself again, and showeth him that he was never made to be his own felicity or end; and that the flesh was not made to be pleased before God; and that it is so poor, and low, and short a felicity, as indeed is but a name and shadow of felicity; and when it pretends to that, a mere deceit. It showeth him how unreasonable, how impious and unjust, it is, that a creature, and such a creature, should terminate his desires and intentions in himself: and this is the principal part of self-denial.

2. As God was man's ultimate end in his state of innocency, so accordingly man was appointed to use all creatures in order to God, for his pleasure and glory. So that it was the work of man to do his Maker's will, and he was to use nothing but with this intention.

But when man was fallen from God to himself, he afterwards used all things for himself, even his carnal self; and all that he possessed was become the provision and fuel of his lusts; and so the whole creation which he was capable of using, was abused by him to this low and selfish end, as if all things had been made but for his delight and will.

But when man is brought to deny himself, he is brought to restore the creatures to their former use, and not to sacrifice them to his fleshly mind; so that all that he hath and useth in the world, is used to another end (so far as he denieth himself) than formerly it was; even for God, and not himself.

3. In the state of innocency, though man had naturally an averseness from death and bodily pains, as being natural evils, and had a desire of the welfare even of the flesh itself; yet as his body was subject to his soul, and his senses to his reason, so his bodily ease and welfare was to be esteemed, and desired, and sought, but in a due subordination to his spiritual welfare, and especially to his Maker's will. So that though he was to value his life, yet he was much more to value his everlasting life, and the pleasure and glory of his Lord.

But now when man is fallen from God to himself, his life and earthly felicity is the sweetest and the dearest thing to him that is. So that he preferreth it before the pleasing of God, and everlasting life; and therefore he seeketh it more, and holdeth it faster, as long as he can, and parteth with it more unwillingly. As innocent nature had an appetite to the objects of sense, but corrupted nature hath an enraged, greedy, rebellious, and inordinate appetite to them; so innocent nature had a love to this natural, earthly life, and the comforts of it, but corrupted nature hath such an inordinate love to them, as that all things else are made but subordinate to them and swallowed up in this gulf; even God himself is so far loved as he befriendeth these our carnal ends, and furthereth our earthly prosperity and life.

But when men are brought to deny themselves, they are in their measures restored to their first esteem of life, and all the prosperity and earthly comforts of life. Now they have learned so to love them, as to love God better; and so to value them, as to prefer everlasting life before them; and so to hold them and seek their preservation, as to resign them to the will of God, and to lay them down when we cannot hold them with his love, and to choose death in order to life everlasting, before that life which would deprive us of it. And this is the principal instance of self-denial which Christ giveth us here in the text, as it is recited by all the three evangelists that recite these words, "He that saveth his life shall lose it," &c. and, "What shall it profit a man to win all the world, and lose his soul?" By these instances it appears, that by self-denial, Christ doth mean a setting so light by all the world and by our own lives, and consequently our carnal content in these, as to be willing and resolved to part with them all, rather than with him and everlasting life; even as Abraham was bound to love his son Isaac, but yet so to prefer the love and will of God, as to be able to sacrifice his son at God's command.

And the Lord Jesus himself was the liveliest pattern to us of this self-denial that ever the world saw; indeed his whole life was a continued practice of it. And it hath oft convinced me that it is a special part of our sanctification, when I have considered how abundantly the Lord hath exercised himself in it for our example. For as it is desperate to think with the Socinians that he did it only for our example, so it is also a desperate error of others, to think that it was only for satisfaction to God, and not at all for our example. Many do give up themselves to flesh-pleasing upon a miseonceit that Christ did therefore deny his flesh to purchase them a liberty to please theirs; as in his fasting and tempt-

ations, and his sufferings by the reproach and ingratitude of men, and the outward poverty and meanness of his condition, the Lord was pleased to deny himself, so especially in his last passion and death. As I have showed elsewhere, he loved his natural life and peace; and therefore in manifestation of that he prayeth, "Father, if it be thy will, let this cup pass from me:" but yet when it came to the comparative practical act, he proceeded to choose his Father's will with death, rather than life without it; and therefore saith, "Not my will (that is, my simple love of life) but thy will be done." In which very words he manifesteth another will of his own besides that which he consenteth shall not be done, and showeth that he preferred the pleasing of his Father in the redemption of the world before his own life. And thus in their measure he causeth all his members to do; so that life, and all the comforts of life, are not so dear to them as the love of God and everlasting life.

4. When God had created man he was presently the owner of him, and man understood this, that he was God's and not his own; and he was not to claim a propriety in himself, nor to be affected to himself as his own, nor to live as his own, but as his that made him.

But when he fell from God, he arrogated practically (though notionally he may deny it) a propriety in himself, and useth himself accordingly.

And when Christ bringeth men to deny themselves, they cease to be their own in their conceits any more: then they resign themselves wholly to God, as being wholly his. They know they are his both by the right of creation and of redemption; and therefore are to be disposed of by him, and to glorify him in body and spirit which are his, 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20; Rom. xiv. 9. To be thus heartily devoted to God as his own, is the form of sanctification; and to live as God's own, is the truly holy life.

5. As man in innocency did know that he was not his own, so he knew that nothing that he had was his own; but that he was the steward of his Creator, for whom he was to use them, and to whom he was accountable.

But when he was fallen from God to himself, though he had lost the right of a servant, yet he graspeth at the creature, as if he had the right of a lord: he now takes his goods, his lands, his money to be his own; and therefore he thinks he may use them for himself, and give God only some small contribution, lest he should disturb his possession: he saith as the impious ones, Psal. xii. 4, "Our lips are our own, who is Lord over us?" Though all of them know speculatively that all is God's, yet practically they take it and use it as their own.

But when grace teacheth them to deny themselves, it strippeth them naked of all that they seemed proprietors of, and maketh them confess that nothing is their own, but all is God's, and to God they do devote it, and use it for him, and give him his own; which the first christians signified by selling all and laying at the apostles' feet. And therefore he asketh God what he shall do with it, and how he shall use it; and if God take it from him, he can bless the name of the Lord with Job, (chap. i. 21,) as knowing he taketh but his own; and can say with Eli, "It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good," 1 Sam. iii. 18. He knows that God may do with his own as he list, (Matt. xx. 15,) and that he can have nothing but of his bounty: and therefore that it is his mercy that leaveth him any thing; but it were no wrong to him if he took away all. And thus he understandeth that he is but a steward, and therefore must use all that he hath for him that he received it from. If he have children, his desire is to know which way they may be most serviceable to God; and to that he will devote them. If he have wealth, or honour, and power among men, his care is to know which way he may employ them for his Master's use, and so he will employ them. If he have wit and learning, his care is to serve God by it. If he have strength and time, he is thinking which way to improve them for his Lord. And if vain companions, or the world, or fleshly delights, would draw him to lay them out for them, he remembers that this were to waste his Master's stock upon his enemies. So that though the sanctified man hath all things, yet he knows that he hath nothing. All things are his as God's steward, but nothing is properly and ultimately his own. All things are his for God; but nothing is his for his carnal self, nor ultimately for his personal or natural self. Upon this ground he gives the devil, the world, and the flesh a denial, when they would have his time, his tongue, his wit, his wealth, or any thing that he possesseth: he telleth them, They are none of mine, but God's; I received them, and I must be accountable for them. I had them not from you, and therefore I may not use them for you: I must give to God the things that are God's: that which is yours I will readily yield you. Justice requireth that every one have his own. And thus self-denial doth take off the sanctified from giving that which is God's unto themselves.

Object. But do we not lawfully use his mercies for ourselves? Are not our meat, and drink, and clothes, and houses, and goods our own, and may we not use them for ourselves?

Answ. Improperly they are our own; so far our own, as that our fellow-servants may not take them from us without our Lord's consent: as every servant may have a peculiar stock intrusted in his hands, or may have his tools to do his work with, which indeed are his master's, but are his to use. But as to a strict propriety they are none of ours, but God is the only Proprietary of the world.

And for the use of them, it may be for ourselves in subordination to God, but never ultimately for ourselves. We may not use one creature but ultimately and principally for God. When we eat or drink we must never make the pleasing of our appetite our end, but must do it to strengthen, and cheer, and fit ourselves for the service of God; and therefore we must first ask God, and not our appetite, what and how much we must eat and drink: and we must no further please our appetite, than the pleasing of it doth fit us for the service of God. It is the express command, 1 Cor. x. 31, "Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." You may not wear your clothes merely and ultimately for your bodies, but only to fit your bodies for God's service; and therefore you must advise with his word, and with your end, what you should put on. You may not provide a house to dwell in, nor friends, nor riches, nor any thing else for the pleasing of your flesh, as your ultimate end, but for the service of your Lord. For you must "put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof," Rom. xiii. 14.

6. As man had his being and well-being from God, so is it God only that can preserve and continue them. Innocent man understood this, and therefore lived in a dependence upon God; looking to his hand for the supply of his wants, and casting all his care upon him, and trusting him wholly with himself and all, and not distracting his own mind with cares and distrustful fears, but quieted and contented his

mind in the wisdom, goodness, and all-sufficiency of God.

But when man was fallen to himself from God, he desired presently to have his portion or stock in his own hands, and grew distrustful of God, and began to look upon himself as his own preserver, (in a great measure,) and therefore he fell to carking and caring for himself, and to studious contrivances for his own preservation and supplies. He searched every creature for himself, and laboured to find in it some good for himself, as if the care of himself had been wholly devolved on himself. I have been as much troubled to understand that text in Gen. iii. 22, as any one almost in the Bible, being somewhat unsatisfied with some ordinary expositions; and yet it is too hard for me. But this seems to me the most probable interpretation; that in his estate of innocency, Adam was as a child in his Father's house, that was only to study to please his Father, and to do the work that he commanded him, but not to take any thought or care for himself; for while he was obedient, it was his Father's part to preserve him and provide for him, to keep off death and danger, and supply all his wants. And therefore though man had the faculty or power of knowing more perfect than we have now, yet he did not need to trouble himself about these matters of self, because they belonged to God; and consequently had not the actual consideration or knowledge of them, for that would have been but a vain and troublesome knowledge and consideration to him: for though the knowledge of all things necessary to be known, was part of his perfection, yet the actual knowledge of many things unnecessary and vexatious or tempting, may be part of a man's infelicity and misery; and so "he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow," Eecl. i. 18. As man that foreknoweth his own death, is through the fear of it all his life-time subject to bondage, (Heb. ii. 15,) and the fear is more grievous than the death itself, when a beast that knoweth not his death is freed from those fears. Indeed in our fallen estate there is some use for more of this kind of knowledge than before: but in innoeency man needed only to know his Maker, and his will and works, and the ereature as his utensils, and the glass in which he was to be seen, and to fear with moderation the death which he had threatened, merely as threatened by him. But by the temptation of Satan man grew desirous to be past a child, at his Father's finding, and under his eare, and would take care and thought for himself, and know what was good or evil for himself as to the natural man; and so far turned his eye to the creature to study it for himself, when he should have studied God in it; and to search after good and evil to himself in it, while he should have searched after the attributes of God in it, and daily gazed with holy love and admiration upon his blessed face that shined in this glass: and so he would use the creature direetly for himself, which he should have used only for God's service. And thus I conceive man did indeed by his fall attain to much more actual knowledge as to the number of objects than he had before; which knowledge was indeed in itself considered physically good, but not good to him as any part of his felicity or his virtue, but rather by participation his sin and misery, as being unsuitable to his condition. It was better with him when he knew one God, and all things in God, as they eonduced to the love and service of God, and were suitable to his state, than when he turned his mind from God, and fell to study the creature in itself, and for himself, as good or evil to himself, and so lost himself and his understanding in a erowd of unneeessary and misused obieets: like a foolish patient, that having a most judicious and faithful physician that will take care of his health, and provide him the best and safest remedies, doth grow to an eager desire to be acquainted himself with the nature of each medicine, and to be skilful in the cure of his own disease, that he may trust his physician no longer, but may be his own physician; and therefore hearkeneth to a seducer that tells him, The physician doth but keep thee in ignorance, lest thou shouldst be as wise as he, and able to cure, or preserve thyself; hearken to me, and I will teach thee to know all these things thyself, and so thou mayst take care of thyself. So man was seduced by Satan to withdraw himself from the fatherly care of God, by a desire himself to be wise for himself in the knowledge of all that in the creature which might be directly good or evil to himself, so taking on himself the work of God, and casting off the work that God had set him, and withdrawing himself from his necessary dependence on his Maker. And accordingly much of this selfish knowledge of the creature he did attain; but with the woeful loss of the divine knowledge of the creature, and of the filial, soul-contenting knowledge of God; yea, and of himself, as in his due subordination to God, This seems the sense of this text, and this is the case of fallen mankind.

Naturally now every man would fain have his safety and comforts in his own hand. He thinks them not so sure and well in the hand of God. Oh what would a carnal man give that he had but his life and health in his own hand, and might keep them as long as he saw good! When he is poor, he had rather it were in his hand to supply his wants, than in God's; for he thinks it would go better with him. When he is sick, he had far rather it were in his own hand to cure him, than in God's; for then he should be sure of it. If he be in any strait, he cannot be content with a bare promise for his deliverance; but unless he see some probability in the means and work, and unless he be acquainted with the particular way by which he must be delivered, he is not satisfied; for he cannot trust God so well as himself. Is not this the case of all you that are carnal? would you not think your case much safer and better if it were in your own hands, than you do now it is in God's? what would you not give, that you were but as able to give ease, and health, and wealth, and honour, and life to yourselves, as God is! Hence it is that you so anxiously contrive for yourselves, and trouble yourselves with needless cares; because you dare not trust God, but think you are fallen to your own care and finding. You think yourselves quite undone when you have nothing left you but God and his promise to trust upon, and when you see nothing in yourselves and the creature to support you. And thus are all men fallen from God to themselves.

But sanctification teacheth men that self-denial which, according to its measure, doth heal them of this disease. Though some actual knowledge of good and evil, and some care of our natural selves, be now become a necessary duty, as suited to our lapsed state, which yet had never been but through sin; yet that which is sinful self-denial doth destroy. It showeth man that he is every way insufficient for himself, and that he is not the fountain of his own felicity; nor doth it belong to him, but to God, to preserve him and secure his welfare. He seeth what a folly it is to depart from the tuition of his heavenly Father, and as the prodigal son to desire to have his portion in his own hands. Experience tells him with smart and sorrow, that he hath not been so good a preserver of himself, nor used himself so well

as to desire to be in the same hands any longer that have so abused him. Yea, he knoweth that it was God that indeed preserved him, while he was over-solicitous about it himself, and would needs have the managing of his own affairs. He now believes that he can be no where safe but in the hands of God, and no way sufficiently provided for, but by his wisdom, love, and power: nor dare he trust himself hereafter with himself or any creature. He finds that he hath but turmoiled and distracted his mind by undertaking the management of his own preservation; and that he hath brought himself into a wilderness, and lost himself and ravelled his own affairs: when if he had committed himself to God, and been satisfied in his wisdom, love, and power, all had been kept safe and sound, and man had not been lost, nor his estate thus shattered and overthrown. And therefore the returning, self-denying convert is brought to an utter distrust of himself, and resolved hereafter to trust himself upon nothing below All-sufficiency and Infinite love. He is so offended with himself for his former self-destruction, and for undoing himself so foolishly, that he calls himself to account and into judgment for it, and condemneth himself as a traitor to God, and a murderer of himself, and will no more be in the hands of so treacherous a delinquent; but as the eyes of a servant are on the hand of his master, so are his eyes on God for all supplies. And this is the part of the work of the Spirit of adoption, who teacheth us to cry Abba, Father: and as children, not to be very careful for ourselves, but to run to our Father in all our wants, and tell him what we stand in need of, and beg relief: and "to be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer with supplication and thanksgiving to make known our requests to God," Phil. iv. 6. And this acquiescence of the soul in the love of God, is it that "keepeth our hearts and minds in that peace of God which passeth understanding," ver. 7: so that the more self-denial, the less is a man dependent on himself, or troubled with the cares of his own preservation; and the more doth he cast himself on God, and is careful to please him that is his true preserver, and then quieteth and resteth his mind in his all-suffieiency and infinite wisdom and love; and so is a mere dependant upon God.

7. Moreover, it is the prerogative of God, as absolute owner of us, to be the sole disposer of man, and of all the other creatures; and to choose them their condition, and give them their several talents, and determine of the events of all their affairs, as pleaseth himself. And innocent man was contented with this order, and well pleased that God should be the absolute disposer of him and all.

But when man turned from God to self, he presently desired to be the disposer of himself; and not of himself only, but of all the creatures within his reach. How fain would selfish, corrupted man be the chooser of his own condition! His will is against the will of God, and he usually disliketh God's disposal. If he had the matter in his own hands, almost nothing should be as it is; but so cross would they be to God, that all things would be turned upside down. If it were their will, there is scarce a poor man but would be rich; and scarce a rich man but would be richer. The servant would be master; the tenant would be a landlord; the husbandman and tradesman would be a gentleman: the labourer would live an easier life; his house should be better; his clothing should be better; his fare should be better; his provision should be greater; his credit or honour with men should be more: the gentleman would be a knight, and the knight a lord, and the lord would be a king, and the king would be more absolute, and have a larger dominion. Nay, every man would be a king, and learn the doctrine of the Jews, and many of this age among us, to expect that the world should be ruled by them; and they should reign as lords and princes in the earth. If it were with selfish men as they would have it, there is scarce a man that would be what he is, nor dwell where he doth, nor live at the rates that now he liveth at. The weak would be always strong; and the sick would be well, and always well; and the old would be young again, and never taste the infirmities of age; and if they might live as long as they would, I think there are few of the unsanctified that would ever die, or look after heaven as long as they could live on earth. Oh what a brave life should I have, thinks the selfish, unsanctificd wretch, if I were but wholly at my own disposal, and might be what I would be, and have what I would have! What would men give for such a life as this! Had they but their own wills, they would think themselves the happiest men on earth; that is, if they could be delivered from the will of God, and be from under his disposal, and get the reins into their own hands!

Nay, this is not all, but the selfish person would be the disposer of all the world within his reach, as well as of himself. He would have kingdoms at his disposal, and all things carried according to his will. He would have all his neighbours have a dependence upon him: very bountiful he would be, if he were the lord of all; for he would be the great benefactor of the world, and have all men beholden to him, and depend upon him. If he see things that little concern him, he hath a will of his own that would fain have the disposal of them. If he hear of the affairs of other nations, some will he hath of his own, which he would have fulfilled in them, at least so far as any of his own interest may be involved in the business.

But when sanctification hath brought men to self-denial, then they discern and lament this folly. They see what silly, giddy worms they are, to be disposers of themselves, or of the world. They see that they have neither wisdom, nor goodness, nor power sufficient for so great a work. They then perceive that it were better make an idiot the pilot of a ship, or an infant to be their physician when they are sick, or the disposer of their estates, than to commit themselves and the world to their disposal. They see how foolishly they have endeavoured or desired to rob God of his prerogative: and therefore they return from themselves to him, and give up all by free consent to his sole disposal, that so he may do with his own as he list. He finds that he hath work enough to do of his own, and is become too unfit for that; and therefore he dare no more undertake the work of God, for which he is infinitely unfit. He finds that the more he hath his own will, the worse it goes with him; and therefore he will give up himself to God and stand to his will. If he feels that Providence doth cross his flesh, and that he hath poverty, when the flesh would have riches; and shame, when that carnal self would have honour; and labour, when the flesh would have ease; and sickness, when the flesh would have health; he would not for all that have the work taken out of the hand of God, but truly saith, "Not my will, but thine be done;" and believeth that God's disposal is the best; and that his Father knows well enough what he doth; and if it were put to his choice, whether God or he should be the disposer of his estate, and honour, and life, he had rather it were in God's hands than his own; and would not undertake the charge if it were offered him. Alas, thinks he,

I am almost below a man, and am I fit to make a god of? I come off so lamely in the duty of a creature as deserves damnation; and am I fit to arrogate the work of the Creator?

8. Moreover, it is the high prerogative of God to be the Sovereign Ruler of the world; to make laws for them, which must be obeyed; and to reward the obedient, and punish the disobedient. God is King of all the earth; even King of kings, and Lord of lords; and all shall obey him, or be judged by him for their disobedience.

But sin turned man into a rebel against heaven, and a traitor to his Maker; so that now the selfish, unsanctified man disliketh God's government, at least in the particulars, and would govern himself. The law of God contained in his word and works he murmurs at as too obscure, or too precise and strict for him. He finds that it crosseth his carnal interest, and speaks not good of him but evil; and therefore he is against it as supposing it to be against him, and his pleasure, profit, and honour in the world. If men had but the government of themselves, what a difference would there be between their way and God's! If corrupt, unsanctified, selfish man might make a law for himself instead of the word of God, what a law would it be! and how much of the law of God should be repealed! If sinners might make a Scripture, you should find in it no such passages as these, "Except a man be converted, or born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven: without holiness none shall see God." If self might make laws, you should not read in them, "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if by the Spirit ye mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." Nor should you there find, that "the gate is strait, and the way is narrow, that leads to life, and few there be that find it;" or that "the righteous are scarcely saved." As all the Scripture is now for holiness, and against profaneness, ungodliness, and sensuality; if self had the framing of it, it should all be changed, and it should at least speak peace to fleshly-minded men. All those true and dreadful passages that speak fire and brimstone against the unsanctified, and threaten everlasting torments, should be razed out; and you should find no talk of damnation in the Scripture for such as they; no talk of "the worm that never dieth, or the fire that is never quenched;" or of "Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity; I know you not;" or that "the way of the ungodly shall perish;" or that "God doth laugh at them, because he seeth that their day is coming." Abundance of the Bible would be wiped out, if carnal self had but the altering of it. Nay, it would be quite made new, and made a contrary thing. The articles of our creed would be changed: the petitions of our rule for prayer would be most altered: every one of the ten commandments would be altered, as I shall after show. Idolatry should be no sin, but the principal law; for self would be set up as the idol of the world. Will-worship would be no sin; men would be held guiltless that take the name of God in vain; the Lord's day should be a day of mirth and carnal pleasure; every subject would be the sovereign, and every inferior the superior; revenge would be made lawful for themselves, though not for others; fornication and adultery would be no mortal sin; stealing would be made tolerable to themselves; it should be lawful to them to do any wrong to the name and reputation of another. In a word, every man would do what he list, and his will should be his law, and himself should be his own judge; a gentle, tender judge, no doubt. Thus would self rule.

But sanctification brings men to deny this self; and to lay down the arms of rebellion against God; and to see how unfit we are to rule ourselves; that we are too foolish, and simple, and partial to make laws, and too partial also and tender to execute them; and that as we were made to obey, so obey we must, and come again into our ranks, and willingly subject ourselves to the Sovereign of the world. Self-denial teacheth a man to hate his own carnal wisdom and reasonings that rise up against the laws of God; and to love them the worse because they are thus his own; and to love the laws of God the better, because they are God's, and because they are against his carnal self. The stamp of God on them doth make them current with him, when if they had but the private stamp of self, he would disown them as counterfeit or treasonable. He hath indeed a flesh that is restrained by God's laws, and striveth against them; but he thinks never the worse of the law for that, but approveth and liketh it in the inner man: and if he might have his choice, he would not blot out one commandment, nor one direction, nor one article of faith, nor a tittle of the law, because that self is not the chooser in him; but he hath learned to submit to the will and wisdom of the Lord.

And though he love himself, and have a nature that is unwilling of suffering, and feareth the displeasure of God, and the threatenings of his holy law; yet doth he unfeignedly justify the law, and acknowledge it to be holy, and just, and good; and would not have the very threatenings of it to be repealed and blotted out, if he had his choice; for he knows that the determinations of God are the best, and that none but he is fit to govern, and therefore he desires that he himself may be taught better to obey, and not that he may rule; and wisheth that he were more conformed to the law, and not that the law were conformed to him; and fain he would have his own will brought up to God's, but wisheth not God's will to be crookened and brought down to his. As far as men have self-denial, this is so.

9. Moreover, as it is God's prerogative to be the sovereign Ruler of ourselves, so also of all others as well as us. But when sin had set up self, man would not only rule himself, but would rule all others. An eager desire there is in the unsanctified, selfish heart, that he might be ruler of town and country, and all might be brought to do his will. And hence it is that there is such resisting and grudging at good governors, and that men are so ambitious, and fain would be highest, because they would have their own wills fulfilled by all, and therefore would have power to force men to it. Hence it is that there is such a stir in the world for crowns and kingdoms; and few men have ever been heard of, that have refused a sceptre when it was offered them, yea, or that would not step out of their way for it, and wound their consciences, and hazard all their hopes of heaven for it, if they found themselves in a likelihood of obtaining it; because where self doth reign at home, it would reign also over all others. Nothing more pleaseth the carnal mind, than to have his will, and to have all men do what he would have them, and to see all at his beck, and each man seeking to know his pleasure, ready to receive his word for law. This is the reign of self.

But sanctification teacheth men self-denial, doth make them look first at the doing of God's will; and would have all the world obedient to that; and for their own wills, they resign them absolutely to God's, and would not have men obey them but in a due subordination to the Lord. As they affect no dominion or government but for God, so they desire not men to obey their wills any further, than it is necessary to the obedience of God's will, to which

they are serviceable and conform. The self-denying, sanctified man hath as careful an eye up and down the world for God's interest, as the self-seeker hath for his own; and as eagerly doth he long to hear of the setting up of the name, and kingdom, and will or laws of God in the world, as the ambitious man longs for the setting up of his own. And it as much rejoiceth the holy, self-denying man to hear that God's laws are set up and obeyed, and that the world doth stoop to Jesus Christ, as it would rejoice the carnal, selfish wretch to be the lord and master of all himself, and his will become the law of the world. A holy, self-denying man would be far gladder to hear that Africa, America, and the rest of the unbelieving part of the world were converted to Christ by the power of the gospel, and that the heathens were his inheritance, and the kingdoms of the world become the kingdoms of Christ, than if he had conquered all these himself, and were become the king or emperor of the world. For as self is the chief interest of an unsanctified man; so Christ and the will of God is the chief interest of the sanctified: for he hath destroyed the contradictory interest of self, and renounced it, and hath taken God for his end, and Christ for the way, and consequently for his highest interest; so that he hath now no business in the world but God's business; he hath no honour to regard but God's honour; he hath none to exalt but the King of kings; he knows no gain but the pleasing of God; he knows no content or pleasure but God's pleasure: for the life that he now lives in the flesh, he lives by faith of the Son of God, that hath loved him and given himself for him; and thereby hath drawn him out of himself to the fountain and end of love: and so it is not he that lives, but Christ liveth in him, Gal. ii. 20.

10. Lastly, it is the high prerogative of God, to have the honour, and power, and glory ascribed to him, and be praised as the author of all good to the world; and his glory he will not give to another. Man and all things are created, and preserved, and ordered for his glory; nor shall man have any glory but in the glorifying of his Lord: when we fell short of glorifying the Lord, we also fell short of the glory which we expected by him.

But when sin turned man from God to himself, he became regardless of the honour of God, and his mind was bent on his own honour, so that he would have every knee bow to himself, and every eye observe him, and every mind think highly of him, and every tongue to praise and magnify him. It doth him good at the heart, to have virtue, and wisdom, and greatness ascribed to him, and an excellency in all; and to have all the good that is done ascribed to him, and to be taken to be as the sun in the firmament that all must eye, and none can live without, and to be esteemed the benefactor of all. When he hears that men extol him and speak nothing of him but well, and great things; and when he sees them all observe and reverence him, and take him as an oracle for wisdom, or as an angel of God, oh how this pleaseth his unsanctified, selfish mind! Now he hath his end, even that which he would have; and "verily," saith Christ, "they have their reward."

But when sanctification hath taught men to deny themselves, they see then that they are vile and miserable sinners, and loathe themselves for all their abominations; and are base in their own eyes, and humble themselves before the Lord, and abhor themselves in dust and ashes, and say, "To us belongeth shame and confusion of face. Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name give the glory," Dan. ix. 7, 8; Psal. cxv. 1. The holy, self-denying soul desireth no glory and honour, but what may conduce to the glory and honour of his Lord: his heart riseth against base, flattering worldlings, that would rob God and give the honour to him; nor can they do him a greater displeasure than to ascribe that to him which belongeth only to God, or to bring to him or any creature, his Maker's due. If God be honoured, he takes himself as honoured, if he be never so low; if God be dishonoured, he is troubled, and his own honour will not make him reparation. As he liveth himself to the glory of God, and doth all that he doth in the world to that end; so would he have others do so too. And if God be most honoured by his disgrace and shame, he can submit.

And thus I have showed you the true nature both of selfishness and of self-denial. But observe that I describe it as it is in itself; but yet there is too much selfishness in the best, which may hinder the fulness of these effects. But self-denial is predominant in all the sanctified, though it be not perfect.

CHAPTER II.

REASONS OF THE NECESSITY OF SELF-DENIAL TO SALVATION.

III. And now you have seen the description of self-denial, and I hope, if you have studied it, you know what it is that is required; I shall next show you some of the reasons of its necessity, and prove it to you beyond dispute, that it is no indifferent thing, nor the high attainment of some few of the saints, but a thing that all must have that will be saved, being of the very essence of holiness itself; so that it is as possible to live without life, as to be holy without self-denial; and as possible to be saved whether God will or no, as to be saved without self-denial in a predominant degree. And if any of you think it strange that salvation should be laid on so high a duty, and that no man can be a true disciple that denieth not himself, even to the forsaking of his life, and all, when God requireth it, I shall show you that reason that should easily satisfy you.

Reason 1. Till a man deny himself, he denieth God, and doth not indeed believe in him, and love him, and take him to be his God. And I hope you will grant that no man can be saved that believes not in God, nor loveth him, nor takes him for his God. He that will deny God and yet think to be saved, must think to be saved in despite of God. The first article of our faith, and of our baptismal christian covenant, is, to believe in God the Father, and take him for our God, and give up ourselves to be his people. But this no man can do without self-denial. For by all that I have said in the description of it, you may see that selfishness is most contrary to God, and would rob him of all his high prerogatives, and God should be no God, if the selfish sinner had his will; and he doth not heartily consent that he shall be God to him. I have formerly told you, that self is the god of wicked men, or the world's great idol; and that the inordinate love of pleasure, profits, and honour, in trinity, is all but this self-love in unity; and that in the malignant trinity of God's enemies, the flesh is the first and foundation, the world the second, and the devil the third. Every man is an idolater, so far as he is selfish. God is not a bare name: he that takes away his essence, or attributes and prerogatives, and yet thinks he believeth in him, because he leaveth him his name and titles, doth as bad as they that set up an image, and wor-

ship that instead of God, or that worship the sun or moon as gods, because they somewhat represent his glory; for sure a bare name hath as little substance as an image; much less can you say it hath more than the sun. Now selfish, ungodly men do all of them rob God, and give his honour and prerogatives to themselves, and put him off with empty titles; they call him their God, but will not have him for their end, their portion, and felicity, nor give him the strongest love of their hearts: they will not take him as their absolute Owner; and devote themselves and all they have to him, and stand with a willing mind to his disposal. They will not take him for their Sovereign, and be ruled by him, nor deny themselves for him, nor seek his honour and interest above their own. They call him their Father, but deny him his honour; and their Master, but give him not his fear, Mal. i. 6. They depend not on his hand, and live not by his law, and to his glory; and therefore they do not take him for their God. And can you expect that God should save those that deny him, and would dethrone him, that is, his very enemies?

Reason 2. Yea, more than so; God will not save those that make themselves their own gods, when they have rejected him. But all these unsanctified, selfish men do make themselves their own gods; for in all the ten particulars before mentioned, they take to themselves the prerogatives of God. 1. They would be their own end, and look no further. 2. They use all creatures but as means to this end; yea, God himself is esteemed but for themselves. 3. They love their present life and prosperity better than God. 4. They would be their own, and live as their own, and not as those that are none of their own. 5. They would have the creatures to be their own, and use them as their own, and not as God's. 6. They must care for themselves, and shift for themselves, and dare not trust themselves wholly upon God. 7. They would dispose of themselves and their own conditions, and of all things else. 8. They would rule themselves, and be from under the laws and government of God. 9. They would be the rulers of all others, and have all men do their wills. 10. And they would be honoured and admired by all, and have the praise ascribed to them. And if all this be not to set up themselves as gods or idols in the world, I know not what is. Certainly God is so far from having a thought of saving such vile idolaters, (in this condition,) that they are the principal objects of his high displeasure, and the fairest marks for his justice to shoot at: and he is engaged to pull them down, and tread them into hell. Should God stand by and see a company of rebellious sinners sit down in his throne, or usurp his sovereignty and divine prerogatives, and let them alone, yea, and advance them to his glory? No, he hath resolved that "he that humbleth himself shall be exalted, and he that exalteth himself shall be brought low." And what higher self-exaltation can there be, than to make ourselves as gods to ourselves? And therefore who should be brought lower than such?

Reason 3. No man can be a christian that takes not Christ for his Lord and Saviour; but no man without this self-denial can take Christ for his Lord and Saviour, and therefore no man without self-denial can be a christian and so be saved. He that makes himself his end, cannot make Christ, as Christ, his way; for Christ is the way to the Father, and not to carnal self. Nay, the business that Christ came upon into the world, was to pull down and subdue this self. Moreover, whoever taketh Christ for his Saviour, must know from what it is that he must save him; and that is principally from self: and no man can take Christ for his Saviour that renounceth not self-confidence, and is not willing to be saved from the idolatry of self-exaltation. No man can take Christ for his Master or Teacher, that comes not into his school as a little child, renouncing the guidance of carnal self, and sensible of his need of a heavenly teacher. No man can take Christ for his King and Lord, and give up himself to him as his own, and as his subject, that hath not learned to deny that self that claims propriety and sovereignty in his stead. There is no antichrist, nor false Christ, that ever was in the world, that doth more truly oppose Christ, and resist him in all the parts of his office, than carnal self. It is this that will not stoop to his righteousness, or to his guidance, and to his teaching and holy government. Self is the false Christ or Saviour of the world, as well as the false god. And therefore there can be no salvation where self is not denied and taken down.

Reason 4. He that believeth not in the Holy Ghost, and taketh him not for his Sanctifier, cannot be a true christian, or be saved. But no man without this self-denial believeth in the Holy Ghost, and taketh him for his Sanctifier. And therefore without this self-denial no man can be a true christian, or be saved. The very nature of sanctification consisteth in the turning a man from himself to God; in destroying selfishness, and devoting the soul to God by Christ. And therefore it is past dispute, that none but the self-denying are sanctified; and therefore none but they do truly take the Holy Ghost for their Sanctifier, and truly believe in him. So far as men are in love with the disease it is certain they will not use the physician.

Reason 5. No man is a true christian, and in a state of salvation, that denieth, renounceth, or rejecteth the word of God. But all men that have not self-denial (that hear the word of God) do renounce, deny it, or reject it; and therefore no man without self-denial is a true christian, or can be saved. In the Scriptures it is that we have eternal life; it is they that must make us wise to salvation; the man that will be blessed, must meditate in them day and night, Psal. i. 2; and it is not the hearers but the doers of them that are blessed. But nothing is more clear, than that the voice of Scripture calleth aloud on all men to deny themselves; and that the scope of it is to cry down self, and set up God in Jesus Christ. It is the very drift and meaning of it from end to end to take down self, and abase men in their own eyes, and bring them home to God from whom they are revolted.

Reason 6. No man can be a christian or be saved without saving grace. But no man without self-denial hath saving grace. For it is the nature of every grace to carry man from himself to God by Christ. It is the work of godly sorrow to humble proud man, and break the heart of carnal self. It is the work of faith, for a self-denying soul to pass out for hope and life to Christ. It is the work of love, to carry us quite above ourselves to that infinite goodness which we love. It is the nature of holy fear, to confess our guilt and insufficiency, and to suspect ourselves, and dread the fruit of our own ways. Confidence doth bottom us upon God, and hope itself doth imply a despairing in ourselves. Thankfulness doth pay the homage to him that hath saved us from ourselves. And every grace hath self-denial as half its very life or soul. And therefore it is certain that no man hath any more grace than he hath self-denial.

Reason 7. They that reject the ministry and the fruit of all the ordinances of God, are not true christians, and cannot be saved. But so do all among us

that have not self-denial. For the use of the ministry is to call home sinners from themselves to God. The use of every ordinance of God, is to get or keep down carnal self, and exalt the Lord. Confession is nothing but self-abasing: and he must confess, that will have the faithful and just God to forgive him; for "he that covereth his sin shall not prosper," 1 John i. 9; Prov. xxviii. 13. Prayer is a confession of our own emptiness, insufficiency, and unworthiness, and a flying from ourselves for help unto another. In baptism we come as condemned prisoners for a pardon, as it were with ropes about our necks, and strip ourselves of the rags of our filthiness, that by the blood of the Lamb we may be washed from our blood, and our sins may be buried as in the depth of the sea. In the Lord's supper we renew the same covenant, and receive the same renewed pardon; and still fly from ourselves to Christ for life; and renounce our carnal selves by solemn covenant, as a people coming home to God. So that never was any ordinance of God effectual and saving on the soul of any, further than it brought them to self-denial, or preserved, exercised, or manifested it.

Reason 8. He that can do no work sincerely, nor go one step in the way of life, is no true christian, nor in a state of life. But this is the case of all that have not self-denial. For self is their principle, rule, and end: and he that hath either a false principle, rule, or end, cannot be sincere in any of the means; much less when he is out in all of these. A selfish man is seeking himself in his very religion; and is serving himself when he seemeth to be serving God. And indeed he doth not any service sincerely unto God, because he makes not God his end; and therefore cannot be accepted.

Reason 9. No man is a true christian, or can be saved, that sticks in the depth of his natural misery, in his lapsed state. But so do all men that have not self-denial; for it is self that they are fallen to, and must be saved from.

Reason 10. No man can be a true christian and be saved, that is not a member of the holy catholic church, and the communion of saints. But so are none but the self-denying; for every true member of the church hath a public spirit, preferring the church's interest to his own, and suffering with fellow-members in their suffering, and having a care of one another, 1 Cor. xii. 25, 26. But the self-seeking, unsanctified person is a stranger to this disposition.

Reason 11. He that is led by the greatest enemy of God and his own soul, is not a true christian, nor in a state of life. But so is every man that hath not learned to deny himself. For self is the greatest enemy of God and us. Escape but your own hands and you are out of danger. All the devils in hell cannot destroy you, if you would not be your own destroyers.

Reason 12. Lastly, It is a plain contradiction to be saved without self-denial. For as it is self that we must be saved from both as our end and means and greatest enemy, so to stick in self is still to be lost and miserable, and therefore not to be saved. So that the case is as plain as a case can be, that no man can be a true christian or disciple of Christ without self-denial; and consequently none without it can be saved. I have been the briefer upon the arguments, because the matter of some of them may come to be fullier opened anon in the application.

CHAPTER III.

THE FIRST USE. A GENERAL COMPLAINT OF THE PREVALENCY OF SELFISHNESS.

IV. AND now we have seen from the words of Christ the absolute necessity of self-denial, and that there is no true christianity nor salvation without it, let us next take a view of ourselves and of the world, and judge of our condition by this certain rule.

Look well into yourselves, and into the world, and tell me whether you find not cause to lament, 1. That true christianity is so rare a thing, even among the professors of christianity, seeing self-denial is so rare. 2. That grace is so weak and small in the most of the regenerate, seeing self-denial is so little and imperfect.

Oh! if the name of christians would prove us christians, and the magnificent titles we give to Christ would prove that we are his true disciples; if reading, and hearing, and outward duties, and a cheap religiousness would serve turn, we have then great store of christians among us! If Christ would have left out but this one point of self-denial from his laws and conditions of salvation, what abundance of disciples would he have had in the world! and how many millions might have come to heaven, that now must be shut out! It is this point that hindereth all sorts of heathens and infidels from being christians. The Jews will believe in no Christ but one that will restore their temple and outward glory, and make them great, and rulers of the world; and therefore they will not be the servants of that Christ that calleth them to the contempt of all these things, and of life itself, for the hopes of an invisible kingdom. The Mahometans had rather believe in Mahomet that giveth them leave to please their lust, than in Christ that calleth them to mortification and self-denial, and tells them of nothing but suffering and patience, duty and diligence, till they come into another world: the idolatrous heathens abhor christianity, when they hear how much they must do and suffer, and all for a reward in the life to come. It is an informing instance that Pet. Maffæus gives us in his Indian History of the first king of Congo that was baptized: he quickly received the articles of faith, and the form of worship, and the outside and cheaper part of religion; and so did many of his nobles and followers; but when he was called to confession, and understood that he must leave his gluttony, and drunkenness, and whoredom, and oppression, and inordinate pleasures, he would be a christian no more; his nobles persuading him that the forsaking of all his mirth, and pleasure, and delights of the flesh, and taking up so strict a life, was too dear a price to pay for the hopes of a life to come; and it was better keep the pleasure they had, and put another life to the venture: and thus christianity had been quickly banished that kingdom again, if it had not taken deeper rooting in his son and heir Alphonsus, and made him venture his crown and life for the sake of Christ. And thus is it at the heart with the most, even of baptized persons, and those that take themselves to be christians; because it is the religion of the country, and they are taught that there is no salvation without it, they will be baptized and be called christians, and say their prayers, and come to church, and say they believe in God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and they will go as far with you in religion as they can without denying themselves; but for the rest, which is the life and truth of christianity, they will not

understand it, or believe that it is of such necessity: God forbid, say they, that none should be christians and be saved, but those that thus deny themselves, and take up their cross and forsake all they have, and accept not life itself from Christ. They say they believe in Christ, and yet they say, God forbid his word should be true; or, God forbid we should believe Christ that hath spoken this in the gospel! See what kind of christians multitudes are! Every man and woman on earth that take themselves for true christians, and yet do not deny themselves, even life and all, for the sake of Christ and the hope of everlasting glory, are mere self-deceivers, and no true christians at all. "He that will save his life," saith Christ, "shall lose it;" that is, he that in his coming to Christ, and covenanting with him, will put in an exception for the saving of his life, and will forsake all for Christ if he be put to it, except life itself, this man is no true disciple of Christ, and shall be so far from saving his life, that he shall lose both heaven, and life, and all; and the justice of God shall take from him that life which he durst not resign to the will of mercy; and he shall lose that for nothing, which he would not lose for Christ and heaven. It is impossible for that man to be Christ's disciple, that loveth his life better than Christ and the hopes of life everlasting, Matt. x. 37, 38; Luke xiv. 26, 27, 33. Some self-denial there may be in the unsanctified: many of them would leave a little pleasure or profit rather than be damned; and many had rather suffer a little, than venture upon eternal sufferings. But I beseech you, remember that this is the lowest degree of self-denial that is saving, to set more by Christ and the hopes of glory, than by all this world and life itself; and to be habitually resolved to forsake life and all, rather than to forsake him. No less than this is proper self-denial, or will prove you christians and in a state of life. This was the trial that Christ put one to, that had thought to have been his disciple: "Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me," Luke xviii. 22. Not that every man must actually sell all, but every man must set more by heaven than all, and therefore part with all when Christ would have him: and he that is not thus resolved, let him go never so far in all other things, doth yet lack "one thing," and such a "one thing" as he shall never be saved without. For the meaning of the text is, that Christ would try by this command, whether he set more by any thing than him, and whether he set more by heaven or earth; and so would have us all to judge of ourselves by the same evidence within, though he put not all on the same way of discovering it. Many a man can deny self the superfluities of pleasure, and as this rich man did, can avoid enormous crimes, and say of whoredom, and theft, and drunkenness, and oppression, and gross deceit, "All these have I avoided from my youth." Education may moderate some selfish desires, and natural temper may further that moderation; and custom, and good company, and holy precepts, may yet do more; and wit may teach men to do or suffer somewhat rather than to run on the wrath of God; and therefore many thousands may deny self the pleasure of some inordinate lust, or of some recreation, or excess in meat or drink, and yet be far from denying life and all, and so from the true self-denial of a christian: nay, a man may deny self for self in many particulars, and so may please self more than he denieth it. Many a civil, ingenuous gentleman, and other persons, will forbear the disgraceful sins of drunkenness, filthy speaking, whoredom, incivility, notorious profaneness, even because they are disgraceful, and therefore are against the interest of self; so much as self can possibly spare, a carnal heart may be brought to part with. But still self is alive and predominant with them, still it is the ruling end and principle. But to go out of self to God, and resign up ourselves to him, and possess no interest but him and in him, and to have nothing that we esteem, or love, or care for in comparison of him, knowing that for him we were made, redeemed, preserved, and sanctified, and therefore desiring to be wholly and only his, and to have no credit, no goods, no life, no self, but what is his, for his service, at his will, and at his disposal, and government, and provision; this is the true self-denial, which the Spirit of God worketh in a prevailing, though not a perfect measure, in every gracious, believing soul.

But alas, sirs, how strange is this in the world, and how weak and low in the souls where it is found! and what matter of lamentation would a survey of the world or of ourselves present us with! Is not SELF the great idol which the whole world of unsanctified men doth worship? Who is it that ruleth the children of disobedience, but carnal self? For what is all the stir and strivings, the tumults and contentions of the world, but for self? This ruleth kingdoms, and this is it that raiseth wars; and what is it, except the works of holiness, but self is the author of? Look unto the thrones and kingdoms of the earth, and conjecture how many self hath advanced and placed there, and how few have staid till God enthroned them and gave them the crown and sceptre with his approbation. Among all the nobles and great ones of the earth, that abound in riches, how few are there that were not set a-work by self and ruled by it, in the getting, or keeping, or using their riches, dignities, and honours! Look on the great revenues of the nation, and of the world, and consider whether God or self have the more of it. One man hath many thousands a year, and another hath many hundreds, and how much of this is devoted to God, and how much to carnal self? And the poor that have but little, would think us injurious to them if we should call to them for any thing for God, who have not enough for themselves; when indeed God must have all, and self must have nothing, but what it hath by way of return from God again, and that for God, and not for self, but as subservient unto him. Alas, of many hundred thousand pounds a year, which the inhabitants of a country possess among them, how little hath God that should have all, and how much hath self that should have nothing! O dreadful reckoning, when these accounts must be all cast up! Judge by the use of all, whether self have not the dominion of all. If men throw out to God his tenth, which is none of their own; or if they cast him now and then some inconsiderable alms, when in his members he is fain to beg for it first, they think they have done fair, though self devour all the rest. Is it more, think you, for God or self that our courts of law are filled with so many suits, and lawyers have so much employment? Is it more, think you, for God or self that merchants compass sea and land for commodity? Who is it that the soldier fights for? is it for God or self? Who is it that the tradesman deals for, that the ploughman labours for, that the traveller goes for? is it more for God or self? Who is it that the most of men's thoughts are spent for, and the most of their words are spoken for, and the most of their rents and wealth laid out for, and the most of their precious time employed for? is it for God or self? Consider of it, whether it be not self that finally and morally rules the world. What else do most live for or look after?

And is not the common piety, religion, and charity of the world, a mere sending God some scraps of the leavings of carnal self? If the flesh be full, or have enough, then God shall have the crumbs that fall from its table, or at most so much as it can spare: but till the flesh have done and be satisfied, God must stay even for these scraps and crumbs; and if they can but say, I want it myself, or have use for it myself, they think it a sufficient answer to all demands. One may see by the irregularity of the motions of the world, the confusions, and crossings, and mutabilities, and contradictions, the doing and undoing again, the differences and fierce contendings, that it is not God, but self, that is the end and principle of the motions. Nay, most men are so dead to God, and alive only to themselves, that they know not what we mean when we tell them, and plainly tell them, what it is to live to God, and what it is to serve him in all their affairs, and to eat, and drink, and do all things for his glory; but they ask in their hearts as Pharaoh, "Who is the Lord, that I should serve him?" And when they read these passages about self-denial, and about referring all to God, they will not understand them; for they are unacquainted with God, and know no other god in deed but self, though in name they do.

Nay, it were well if self were kept out of the church, and out of the ministers of the gospel, that must teach the world to deny themselves; that it did not with too many choose their habitations, and give them their call, and limit them in their labours, and direct them in the manner and measure: it were well if some ministers did not study for self, and preach and dispute for self, and live for self, when they materially preach against self, and teach men self-denial. And then for our people, alas, it rules their families, it manageth their business, it drives on their trades; it comes to church with them, and fights within them against the word, and perverteth their judgment, and will let them relish nothing, and receive nothing but what is consistent with selfish interest. In a word, it makes men ungodly, it keeps them ungodly, and it is their very ungodliness itself! Oh! were it not for carnal self, how easily might we deal with all sorts of sinners! But this is it that overcometh us.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PREVALENCY OF SELFISHNESS IN ALL RELATIONS.

BESIDES all the generals already mentioned, it will not be amiss to give you some particular instances of the power of selfishness, and the rareness of self-denial in the world, that you may see what cause of lamentation is before us.

1. How ready and speedy, how effectual and diligent, how constant and unwearied, are they in the service of self! And how slow and backward, how remiss and negligent, how unconstant and tired, are they in the works that are merely for God and their salvation! Do I need to prove it to you? You may as well call for proof whether there are men in the world. I were best for instance begin next home. Many ministers think it a drudgery and a toil that God requireth at their hands to confer with every family in their parishes, and instruct them privately in the matters of salvation. But see what self can do: if the same men have but their tithe to gather, they will not think it a needless thing, to go or send to every family, and speak with them all about their own business. At least if it were any considerable sum, they would not lose it for want of speaking for.

Our neighbours do many of them think it much that we should call them to be personally instructed or catechised, and they will not come at us; but say, What needs all this ado? have we not teaching enough at church. It is children that must be catechised, and we are past children. You see how little interest God and their ministers and their own salvation have in them; but will you see what carnal self can do more? Had I but money enough, I would undertake to make them come to me, and follow me as a horse will follow his provender! Had I but ten pounds a piece to give them, yea, or but ten shillings, I do not think I should have any refuse to come and fetch it, unless it were those that now are the forwardest in seeking relief for the wants of their souls. Had I but the estates or lives of all these men in my power, how easily would they be ruled, and how diligently and submissively would they attend, that now for God and their everlasting life disdain to come and seek instructions! And yet these men would scarce believe you, if you should tell them that self and the world is made their god, and that God himself is denied and rejected by them.

Moreover, a long time I have been persuading all the families in the town and parish to read the Scripture, and daily call upon God together. I have proved it their duty from Scripture, and this doth not prevail. But see what flesh and self can do! If these men were but sure of ten or twenty shillings a time, for every morning and evening that they pray together, I warrant you, whatever the heart did, the lips should be taught to do their part. Oh how busy would all the town and parish be to learn to pray, that now look not after it! I do not believe that there is ever a house among them all that would not shortly set up prayer, if they were but paid for it after these rates. Judge now whether God or self bear sway among these men, and whether soul or body be more regarded.

Moreover, we have too many drunkards in the town, that no means that we can use will restrain and keep sober. They love the drink, and they cannot forbear; and tell them of God's word, that doth threaten them with damnation, and they will for all that be drunk the next day. But if one of these wretches might have but ten pounds a week on condition he would forbear, I do not think for all this, but he could forbear. Or if he were sure that for every cup of drink, he should drink after it a cup of urine, or gall, I warrant you he would soon begin to abate.

We have abundance of ignorant, sensual men that for love of sin refuse church government, and will not come under it. But if the magistrate would but make a law, that all men shall be members of a particular church, and submit to discipline, or forfeit but twenty shillings a month, how few refusers should we have in all the town or country!

We have many that seldom come to hear in the public assemblies; but let the parliament make a law that they shall pay for their refusal, and how readily will it bring the most of them! (unless they have hopes that the law will not be executed.) And judge now whether self or God have greater interests in these men's hearts.

I see but one piece of self-denial among this sort of people in this town, and that is this: though the officers are to give the money to the poor which they have from swearers, drunkards, unlicensed and abusive ale-sellers, profaners of the Lord's day, &c. yet that sort of the poor themselves do hate those officers that are zealous in their duties. This is

strange, that the love of money doth not change them. But whether it be that they can deny their flesh for the devil, though not for God; and in enmity to godliness, though not to further it; or whether it be that the officers do use to give their money to an honester sort of poor, and these have none of it, I cannot well tell.

And having given so many sad instances of the power of self, and scarcity of self-denial in others, I hope the magistrates will not take it ill if we help them to discern this enemy in themselves, nor be offended that they come last, unless it were in a more honourable cause. I hear the best and wisest men that I can meet with, complain that in most places, ale-houses flourish under the magistrates' noses; and that whoredom, swearing, profaning the Lord's day shall seldom be punished, but when they are very much urged to it, nor then neither if it will but displease a neighbour, or a friend, especially if it be a worshipful swearer or drunkard that is to be punished. We see in most places, that it is more than the justice can do to put down one ale-house of many that they confess should be suppressed; and I doubt but few can keep them from increasing. Men say that there is so much ado before they can have justice from many of them, and those that seek it are counted but for busy, troublesome fellows, that men are ready to let all alone. And whence is all this, that men in power can do so little against those that have no power to resist them? Why, alas, the cause is plain; self is against it. They have none but God, and ministers, and a few precise fellows, to persuade them to it: and they have no greater motives than what are fetched from heaven and hell to move them to it; and these are but small matters with them (I speak of the unsanctified). It must be one that hath greater interest in them than God, that must persuade them to it. It must be more powerful matters than the promises of heaven and the threatenings of damnation, that must prevail with such moderate gentlemen as these. And who is it that can do this, that God and their salvation may not do? Why even self, carnal self. If you know but how to engage their own self-interest in the business, I warrant you it will go better on. Let but every informer be paid well for his pains, and every justice have a hundred pounds from the exchequer for every due execution of such laws, and how roundly would the work go on! Then they would not say, We cannot do it, or, We are not bound to look after them. Do you think I wrong them or speak without proof? I will leave it to your judgment when I have given you but these few instances. Let but the plague break out in the town, and infect but a quarter as many houses as here are infectious ale-houses that harbour tipplers and drunkards, and see whether the magistrates of this or any town will not a little better bestir themselves, and send to search after infected places, and nail up their doors, and write on them, Lord, have mercy on us, that all may take warning and keep away. They will not here be offended with informers, nor say, Am I bound to look after them? And why are they not as zealous against sin as against the plague? Great reason; self is for sin, and God only is against it; but self is against the plague, because it is concerned in it. Sin doth but hurt the soul, and bring them to hell-fire; but the plague destroys their body: and this is the greater matter with them, because they have flesh and sense to judge of it; but they have not faith to believe the other.

Again, let but one house in the town be on fire, and all are up to quench it, and the bell is rung, and the magistrate doth not think that he wants a call himself to look after it. And when the fire of hell is kindling in an ale-house, that is nothing, but must be let alone; there is no such zeal nor any such haste. And why so? Why, one they see in good sadness, and perceive that it is fire indeed; but the other they believe in jest, as if it would prove but a painted fire.

Again, let but an ungodly fellow slander the magistrate, or call him all to naught, especially if he give him but two or three boxes on the ear, and see whether he will let that man alone. But let the same man abuse the name of God, and break his laws, and with too many he may be let alone, unless they be urged to do justice. And how comes this difference? Why self is touched in one, and it is but God (but God! O atheists!) that is touched in the other. Self can do more with them than God can do. (Remember still when I say that self can do more with them than God, that I speak not of what God could do by his omnipotency if he would; but of the final causality, or the small interest that God hath in their hearts by holy faith and love.)

Again, let but a servant rob the magistrate, and carry his money and goods to an ale-seller to receive; and try whether he will look after him and the ale-seller. And why not as soon and as zealously, when ale-sellers receive men's sons and servants, and drown men's understandings, and turn them into beasts? Why? because in one it is but God and men's souls that are concerned (a matter of nothing); but in the other it is self (a great matter with them).

Shall I give you but one instance more, that the ale-sellers themselves will take my part in, so far as to bear me witness that it is true? Here are farmers of the excise that have power to know what ale-houses are in the town, and their gain lieth on it; and there shall scarce a man in town or country sell ale so secretly but they will know it; nor sell a barrel but what they are acquainted with. They do not say, I am not bound to go search after them; nor that they be not able to discover them, and to bring them to pay excise. But the justices (too commonly) can overlook abundance that the excise-men can find; and they cannot make one of twenty pay, when the other can: and what is the matter? Why one works for self and money, and the other works but for God, and his own and other men's salvation (a small matter)! See then beyond denial what self and money can do with such men, when God and men's salvation can do next to nothing.

But I must desire you not to mistake me, and think I speak this of any honest, godly magistrate, and abuse the good by joining them with the bad. No, far be it from me to be so injurious. For it is evident that they can be no good men, nor have any true love of God in their souls, that are such in a predominant sense as I have here described. It is not in my thoughts to lay this blame on any honest, godly magistrate; for none but the ungodly would do as I have mentioned, and prefer themselves before the Lord, and the bodies of men before the souls.

And, alas! if the sovereign powers of the nations of the world were not too sick of the same disease, gain would not be accounted godliness, but godliness the greatest gain; and carnal policy would not go for piety, but true piety would go for the surest policy. It would not be so common in most nations to have the truth and cause of Christ disowned, and his servants persecuted, and their lives and blood to be made a sacrifice to carnal self and worldly interests. Nor would the breaches of the churches be so long unhealed, and grow wider and wider, and few much regard them; but all have their own work

to do, which must be looked after. Yea, and the cause of Christ and the gospel must be trod down if it stand in the way of their own. And the churches must be set on fire by their wars and contentions for their selfish interests. And if self were not too strong among us, we should not have had such connivance, at doctrinal and practical abominations, nor so much delay or neglect of healing the discomposed churches, and uniting the divided christians, or attempting it more effectually than we have done. But because I desire to speak to none but those that are within my hearing, I will return home to ourselves.

The holy ordering and instructing of families, and suppressing sin in children and servants, is one of the most effectual works for the building up of the church, and the glory and stability of the commonwealth. Oh if parents and masters would but sanctify their houses to the Lord, and teach their families the will and fear of God, and do their best (by punishment, when instruction will not serve) to hinder sin, how fast would reformation then go on! And what hindereth? why carnal self. If it were but for worldly commodities they would do more. Would you have me prove it? Let experience speak. Let a servant or child go prayerless to their work, and few regard it; but they will not go without meat, or drink, or clothes. The master will suffer them to neglect God's service; but if they neglect his own, and should do him no more or better service than they do to God, they should soon hear of it, and be turned out of door; and they were no servants for him. They will teach their children to do their own work, or set them apprentices to learn it; but the work of God and their salvation, they shall for them have little teaching in, how plainly soever God hath commanded it them, Deut. xi. 18, 19; vi. 6—8; Ephes. vi. 4.

Let a servant or child reproach his master or parent, or call them all to naught, and they think not fit to put up that (nor indeed is it); but let them swear by the name of God, or break his laws, and they can patiently bear with it, and a cold rebuke, like Eli's, will serve turn. They can get them into field or shop to work together, but they cannot get them before and after to prayer together. And why is all this? Why one is for self, and the other is for God: one is for the body, and the other is for the soul. So that you see what self can do, and how commonly it is the master of families, towns, and countries, because it is the master in men's souls.

God must be loved above all, and our neighbour as ourselves; but if God were allowed but so much love as a very neighbour should have, it would not be all so ill with the selfish world as now it is. But because I have been so long on this first discovery of the power of self, and the scarcity of self-denial, I will be shorter in the rest that follow.

CHAPTER V.

THE POWER OF SELFISHNESS UPON MEN'S OPINIONS IN RELIGION.

2. Another instance discovering the reign of selfishness in the world, is, The great power that it hath to form men's opinions and conceptions in religion. Though the understanding naturally be inclined to truth, yet a selfish bias upon the soul, especially on the will, doth commonly delude it, and make the vilest error seem to be truth to it, and the most useful truth to seem an error. The will hath much command over the understanding; and when selfishness is become the very habit, the bias, the nature of the will, you may easily conjecture how it will pervert the understanding. But what need we more than experience to satisfy us? Do you not see that where self is but deeply engaged, the judgment is bribed or overmastered, and carried from the truth? So that as the eye that looks through a coloured glass, doth see all things as if they were of the same colour as the glass; so the understanding that is mastered by a selfish inclination, thinks every thing is truth that savoureth his self-interest. And here I shall offer you some more particular instances.

1. We all see that almost all the world is of that religion or opinion which hath the countenance of the government that they live under, and the persons that have greatest power on their reputation; or at least which is consistent with their safety, if not rising and prosperity in the world. The Turks are commonly Mahometans; the subjects of Rome, and Spain, and Austria, &c. are generally papists; those in Denmark, Sweden, Saxony, &c. are generally Lutherans; those of Scotland, England, Helvetia, &c. are commonly Calvinists (as they are called). I know the power of education is great, and hearing evidence only on one side, may bias a well-meaning man; but papists and protestants (as to the learned part) have the books of the contrary-minded at hand; and therefore that opinions should run in a stream, and whole countries almost be of a party, must needs be much from the power of selfishness, because they are swayed by them that have the power of their reputation, and estates, and liberties in the world.

2. Moreover, when a man is by custom grown self-conceited, or by the power of pride is wise in his own eyes, how hard a matter do we find it to convince such men by the clearest evidence! They will not see, when they can hardly wink so close as to keep out the light. It is their opinion, and therefore shall be so; and they will hold it because it is their own.

3. Especially if it be an opinion of a man's own invention, which is doubly his own, both as he is the contriver and possessor, how close will he stick to it, too commonly beyond the evidence of truth, because that self hath so great an interest in it.

4. Yea, if a man be but deeply engaged for it, either by laborious disputes, or confident owning it, or any way, so as that his credit lieth on it, how tenacious will he be of it, because of the powerful interest of self!

5. And if it be but an opinion that seems to befriend any former opinion that we have much engaged for, how much doth selfishness usually appear in our inordinate propensity to it!

6. Also if we live in days of persecution, how easily do we receive those opinions that would keep us from prison and fire! Or if any suffering lie upon it, we commonly take that side to be the right that is safest to the flesh (except when self would be advanced by the occasion of sufferings). And in prosperity, if there be any controversy arise, which our gain is concerned in, how easily believe we the thriving opinion! If any oath, engagement, or duty be imposed on us by those who have power to do us harm, the generality are for it be it what it will. In all these cases it is commonly carnal self that is the judge.

And how far self commands in such cases, you may see by these discoveries following.

1. In studying the case, men's thoughts run almost all one way. They study what to say for their own

opinions, and how to answer all that is against them; but they study but very little what may be said on the other side. They sit at their studies with a biassed will, inclining or commanding their understanding what to do: even to prove that to be true, which they would have to be true, whether it be so or not.

2. And hence it is that the weakest arguments on their own side do seem sufficient, if not invincible: and they stand wondering at the blindness of all those men that cannot see the force of them; but no arguments seem to have any weight, that are brought against them. And all this is from the power of self.

3. Yea, sometimes when they are silenced, and know not what to say for their opinions, nor how to answer the arguments for the contrary, yet they can say, We are of this mind, and we will be of this mind. And why, but because it is espoused to them and their own?

4. And hence it is, that if a man be but an admirer of us, or of our own opinion in other things, we are readier to receive an opinion from him than from another.

5. And hence it is that disputations do so seldom change men's minds, because they take it to be a dishonour to be changed by another (unless it be a person of great renown); we envy to an opposite the glory of altering our understandings; but if we may have the doing of it ourselves by the power of our own understandings and studies, we will sometimes yield to change our minds. He is a stranger to the ungodly world that seeth not how much self-interest doth, to master their understandings, and turn their hearts from the holy doctrine of Christ, and how much it doth to make them like or dislike their teachers, or any point or practice in religion. And he is a stranger even among divines themselves, that seeth not the sway that self doth bear in their judgments, and disputes, and course of life, and the choice of their party or society to which they join themselves.

CHAPTER VI.

MEN'S GREAT AVERSENESS TO COSTLY OR TROUBLESOME DUTIES.

3. Another discovering instance of the rarity of self-denial is this, The great averseness of men to any costly, or troublesome, or self-denying duty, how necessary soever, how plainly soever revealed in the Scripture, and how generally soever acknowledged by the church: as if self had a negative voice in the making of laws for the government of the world, and none must be binding without its consent. I shall come down to some more particular instances.

1. The great duty of charitable relieving our brethren in necessity to the utmost of our power, is commonly made almost nothing of in the world. And men cheat their souls by thinking they are passed from death to life, because they love the brethren with such a cold and barren love as will neither lay down estate for them, nor venture life for them, but think they are real christians, because they can say as the believers that James mentioneth, "Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; but give them not that which is necessary thereto," James ii. 16. Though it be told them plainly by Christ himself, that it is not a fruitless, uneffectual love, but that which causeth them to feed, and clothe, and visit the saints, that must stand them in stead at judgment, Matt. xxv.; and the apostle asketh them, "How the love of God can dwell in that man, that sees his brother have need, and shutteth up the bowels of his compassion from him," 1 John iii. 17; yet do men think by dropping now and then a penny, they have discharged all this great duty. And when they see many ways by which they might promote the gospel, and help the church, and serve God with their estates, yet self will not let them see the meaning of the plainest scriptures that do require it.

2. When men should practise the great duty of forgiving injuries, trespasses, and debts, and of loving our enemies, and blessing them that curse us, and praying for them that hate and persecute us, how stubbornly doth selfishness resist these duties! What abundance of words may you use in vain, with most men, to persuade them to any of this work! No, they must have their right, and that which is their own, though it be to the undoing of their brother. Passion and revenge even boil within them, and the thoughts of an injury stick in their minds; and if they do take on them dissemblingly to forgive it, yet they cannot forget it, nor heartily love a brother that displeaseth them, much less an enemy: and all this is from the dominion of self, and shows that it prevaileth above God in the soul, and therefore shows a graceless heart.

3. When the ministers of the gospel themselves should be painful in their great and necessary work, and should watch over all the flock, Acts xx. 28; "warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that they may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus," Col. i. 28; condescending to men of the lowest sort, and teaching them in season and out of season; what reasonings and shifts will self bring to resist so great and excellent a duty, and prove it no duty; and that God will give them leave to spare their pains; and all because of the powerful interest of self!

4. And let the same ministers have a disordered flock, that hath scandalous members, especially if they be great ones, or many, and how rarely will they do their duty to them, in plain reproof, and in case of impenitency and continuance in sin, by public admonition and rejection! What shiftings and cavillings will they find against this displeasing work of discipline! Even when they will reproach a man themselves whose opinion is against discipline, and when they have preached, and written, and disputed so much for it, and almost all parties are agreed of the necessity of it in the substance; yet when it comes to practice, it cannot be done without procuring men's hatred and opposition, and laying us open to much disadvantage, and therefore self doth persuade us to forbear; and whether God or self have the more servants, even yet, in a reformed ministry, I leave you to judge, as your observation of the congregations through the land shall direct you. But were it not for self, I should undertake to do more for discipline and personal instruction with most ministers by one argument, than I have done by a volume, and you might see a unanimous concurrence in the work, and consequently a great alteration in the churches.

5. And whence is it but from selfishness, that plain and close application in our sermons is taken to be an injury to those that think themselves concerned in it? If a minister will speak alike to all, and take heed of meddling with their sores, they will patiently hear him; but if he make them know that he meaneth them in particular, and deal closely

with them about their miserable state, or against any special, disgraceful sin, they fall a railing at him, and reproaching him behind his back; and perhaps they will say, they will hear him no more. O, saith the selfish, ungodly wretch, I know he meant me to-day: had he nobody but me to speak against? As if a sick man should be angry with the physician, for giving directions and medicines to him in particular, and say, Had he nobody to give physic to but me? were there not sick men enough in the town besides me? When Christ told the despisers of the gospel of the certain and dreadful destruction that was near them, it is said that "when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them, (a heinous business!) and therefore they sought to lay hands on him, but that they durst not do it for fear of the multitude," Matt. xxi. 41, 44, 45.

6. Nay, let a minister preach but any such doctrine as seems consequentially to be against self, and to conclude hardly of them, and they are ready to say, as Ahab of Micaiah, "I hate him; for he prophesieth not good of me, but evil," 1 Kings xxii. 8. Let us but tell them how few will be saved; what holiness, and striving, and diligence is necessary, though we have the express word of God for it, Heb. xii. 14; Matt. vii. 13, 14; Luke xiii. 24; 2 Pet. i. 10; yet because they think that it makes against their carnal peace, they cannot abide it. Plain truth is unwelcome to them because it is rough, and grates upon the quick, and tells them of that which is troublesome to know: though they must know their sin, and danger, and misery, or else they can never escape it; yet they had rather venture on hell, than hear the danger. And as a sottish patient, they love that physician better that will tell them there is no danger, and let them die, than he that will tell them, Your disease is dangerous; you must bleed, or vomit, or purge, or you will die. Oh what a wrong they take it to be told thus! If a minister tell one of them that hath the death-marks of ungodliness in the face of his conversation, Neighbour, I must deal plainly with you; your state is sad; you are unsanctified, and unjustified, and in the slavery of the devil, and will be lost for ever, if you die before you are converted and made a new creature; and therefore turn presently as you love your soul; it is ten to one but he should have a reproachful answer instead of thanks and obedience. And all this shows that self bears the rule. I will give one instance from the gospel, that will tell you plainly the power of self. In Luke iv. 20, &c. you read of an excellent sermon preached by Jesus Christ himself, so that all did wonder at his gracious words; yet few were converted by it, but they fell on cavilling against him, because of his supposed parentage and breeding. Whereupon Christ telleth them that Elias and Elisha, though most excellent prophets, were sent but for the sake of a few, and therefore it was no wonder if of all that multitude it was but a few that should be converted and saved by him. This very doctrine so nettled these wretches, that the text saith, that "all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up and thrust him out of the city, and led him to the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong," ver. 28, 29. See what entertainment such doctrine had even from Christ himself! As if they should have said, What! are we all unconverted and ungodly? Shall none be saved but a few such as you? Self was not able to bear this doctrine, they would have had his life for it.

7. Again, let but a minister or private christian deal closely with ungodly men or hypocrites about their particular sins, by private reproof, and see whether self be not lord and king in them. Oh how scurvily they will look at you! and their hearts do presently rise against you with displeasure, and they meet you with distaste and passion, and plead for their sins, or at least excuse or extenuate them; or bethink themselves what they may hit you in the teeth with of your own. Or if malice itself can fasten nothing on you, they let fly at professors, or those that they think are of your mind and way. In a word, they show you that they take it not well that you meddle with them, and let not their sin alone, and look to yourselves, for all that God hath expressly commanded us, "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him," Lev. xix. 17. And, "Exhort one another daily, while it is called to-day, lest any be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin," Heb. iii. 13. So Matt. xviii. 15, 16. Try but plain dealing with your neighbours one twelvemonth, with as much prudence, and love, and lenity as will stand with faithfulness: and when you have done, I dare leave it to yourselves to judge, whether God or self have the more servants in the world, and whether self-denial and sanctification be not very rare.

8. Yet further, you see it is the duty of christians to admonish and faithfully reprove one another; but because most men take it ill, and plain dealing will displease and lose a friend, how few even of professors will be brought to perform it! yea, of those that expect a minister should reject the offender, when it cannot be done till after admonition, and impenitency thereupon. No, this is a troublesome duty, and self will not give them leave to do it.

9. Moreover, you know that church government and discipline is an undoubted ordinance of Christ, which the church hath owned in every age; (though in the execution some have been negligent, and some injurious;) and that open, scandalous sins must have open confession and repentance, that the ill effects may be hindered or healed, and the church see that the person is capable of their communion, and that the absolution may be open and well grounded. And yet let any man (except the truly penitent and godly) be called, after a scandal, to such a necessary confession, and how hardly are they brought to it! What cavilling shall you have against the duty! They will not believe that it is their duty; not they! And why so? is it because it is not plainly required by God? No, but because it tends (they think) to their disgrace; and self is against it: and when you have showed them such reasons for it that they cannot answer; yet, the sum is, they will not believe it; or if they believe it, they will not do it. What! will they make themselves the laughing-stock and talk of the country? No, they will never do it; and it is an injury, they think, for God or man to put them upon it. God commands, and self forbids; God bids them yield, lest they perish in impenitency; self bids them not to yield, lest they shame themselves before men: God persuadeth, and self dissuadeth, and which is it that most commonly prevails? (Though to avoid the shame of excommunication, self also will sometimes make them yield.) Did but the magistrate by a penalty of ten or twenty pounds upon refusers, persuade them to this, not one of a hundred would then refuse; but when God urgeth them with the threatening of hell, the wages of impenitency, they make little or nothing of it: as if they could escape it by not believing it, or some way or other could deal well enough with him. Judge

by the performance of this one duty, whether God or self have more disciples.

10. Lastly, Let me instance in one duty more. Suppose a deceitful tradesman, or oppressing landlord, or any one that gets unlawfully from another, is told from the word of God that it is his duty to make restitution, either to the person, or to his posterity (or to God by the poor, if neither can be done); and do give back all that ever he thus unjustly came by, though he have been possessed of it (without disgrace) never so long; see what entertainment this doctrine will have with the most. Self will not lose the prey that it hath got hold of, till death shall wring it out of its jaws, and hell make them wish they had never meddled with it, or else had penitently and voluntarily restored it. Oh what abundance of objections hath self against it! and no answer will satisfy from God or man. Of a thousand unjust getters, how many do restore, and say as Zaccheus, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold?" Luke xix. 8.

Nay, let us instance in a duty of lesser self-denial, than this of restitution. If two do but fall out, and one give railing words to the other; or if one slander his neighbour and do him wrong; though it be undoubtedly the will of Christ that he penitently ask him forgiveness that he hath wronged, (Luke xvii. 3, 4,) yet proud-hearted, selfish men will refuse it. What! will they stoop to such a fellow, and ask him forgiveness (especially if it be their inferior)? No, they scorn it; never talk to them of it more; they will never do it. And why so? would not God have them do it? Hath not he said, "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted?" Yea, but what tell you them what God saith, and what Scripture saith, as long as self, and flesh, and pride are against it. Judge now by these ten duties that I have named, whether God or self be king with most.

CHAPTER VII.

MEN'S EXCEEDING TENDERNESS OF SELF IN CASE OF ANY SUFFERING.

4. ANOTHER discovering instance of the dominion of self, and the scarcity of self-denial, is, The exceeding tenderness of ourselves in any case of suffering, and the great matter that we make of it, and our displeasure against all that are the causes of it, be it never so just. I shall here also give you some more particular instances.

1. When did you ever see an offender (at least very few) that justified the judge, and heartily confesseth that his punishment is due (unless some few at the gallows, when the sight of death takes down their pride)? But at most, every one that suffereth for his fault doth repine at it, and at them that caused it, and think they have wrong, or are hardly dealt with. If all the swearers, cursers, profaners of the Lord's day, drunkards, or ale-sellers that harbour them, or are otherwise guilty, were accused by their neighbours, and punished by the magistrate but according to the law, how many of all these are there that would not be displeased with the accusers and with the magistrate, and think himself wronged, and bear them a grudge in his mind that did it? And why so? Is it not just and according to the laws of God and man? Must we make a stir in choosing parliament-men? and must they sit there month after month, and use their utmost skill and diligence to make such laws as are necessary for the common good, and when all is done, must not these laws be executed? Why then it were better spare the parliament-men the labour of sitting about them, and ourselves the trouble of choosing us parliament-men, than do all this for nothing. What! is every ale-seller, or drunkard, or swearer, or profane person, wiser than all the parliament and the prince, or are they all better, and juster, and honester than they? No; but it is self that stands up against all. It is in vain to tell them of kings, or parliaments, or laws, or common good, as long as you go about to cross the flesh, and trouble them in their private interest; set but self against all, and all goes down before it as nothing. There is scarce a thief or a murderer that is hanged, but thinks he hath hard measure, because it is against himself.

2. Nay, it is not only penalties, but words, that men are very sensible of, if they be but against themselves. An angry or disgraceful speech, or any contempt or disrespect, doth seem a great matter against them; and they have aggravations enough to lay upon it. So tender are they of themselves, that you may see how little they deny themselves.

3. Yea, God's own corrections do seem so heavy to them, that they murmur and are impatient under them. A little loss or cross to self doth lie as a mountain on them. Poverty, or sickness, or disgrace, or troubles, do make them complain as if they were almost quite undone: and all this shows how little they have learned to deny themselves.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PARTIALITY OF MEN'S PRACTICAL JUDGMENT IN THEIR OWN CASE.

5. ANOTHER discovering instance of the dominion of self, is, The strange partiality of men's practical judgments when the cause is their own, and the equity of their judgments when the case is another man's.

For particular instances of this, you may take up those that were mentioned before. I will give you but a few.

1. Take but a dull and backward minister, (for I know you will expect I begin next home,) and he that is most averse to particular instruction, and discipline, and self-denying duties, will be content that another man should perform them, and will commend and extol him for a worthy man; except he perceive that another's diligence disgraceth his selfishness and negligence, and then indeed he may possibly repine at it.

2. A man that will not come near us to be instructed or catechised, will yet let his children or servants come. Why, what is the matter? Doth he more regard their salvation than his own? or hath he not a soul to save or lose as well as they? and hath he not need of teaching? Yes; but they are not himself: if they learn a catechism, it is no trouble to him: if their ignorance be opened, he takes it to be less dishonour to him than if he show his own. He can yield to their submission without self-denial, but not to his own.

3. Take a common glutton or drunkard that cannot forbear, but must needs have that which the flesh desires, and they can be content that another

man be temperate and sober; and if a neighbour should have the cup before him as they have, or a provocation to their appetite, they could be content that they let it alone; yea, they can tell them that it is the best way, and give them good counsel; and yet when the case is their own, it is otherwise. I have known drunkards that would persuade their children to take heed of it, and swearers that would whip their children for swearing, and persons that would not read or pray, that would be content to have their children do it. And why is all this? Why that which goes by their own throats, must cost them self-denial in the displeasing of their greedy appetites; but that which goes by the throat of another doth cost them nothing: self is not so much against their children's abstinence and reformation as their own.

4. The same magistrate that will not trouble himself and displease his neighbours, by suppressing ale-houses and punishing vice, will perhaps be content if it were done by another; so that self might have none of the trouble and ill-will.

5. Some men that will not instruct their families, nor pray with them morning and night, will confess it is well done of others that do it. Yea, some that will not be persuaded to a holy, heavenly life, will confess it is the best and wisest course, and approve of it in others, and wish they might but die in such men's case; and yet they will not themselves be brought to practise it. They will commend Peter, and Paul, and the fathers, and the martyrs for a holy life, and as I said, keep holy days for them, and yet they will not be persuaded to imitate them. And why so? Why it costs them nothing to commend holiness in others; but to practise it themselves, must cost them self-denial.

6. If another man be so ingenuous as to forsake an old self-espoused opinion, which their reputation seems to lie upon, and this upon their arguing, or in conformity to their minds, they will commend his great self-denial and sincerity; but yet they will not do so themselves, where the case is perhaps more clear and necessary.

7. Take a man that is never so worldly and unmerciful, that gives not to the poor any considerable part of his estate, nor doth any thing worth the mentioning for the church, and yet this man will consent that another shall be as bountiful and charitable as he will: when you can hardly screw a groat out of his purse, he will be content if another will give a hundred; and he will commend the liberal, and speak well of them, when he will not imitate them. And why is this? Why, it costeth him nothing for another to be liberal, and therefore he can advise it, or consent to it, without self-denial; but self is against it when he should do it himself.

8. Take the most selfish, unsanctified man, that cannot love an enemy, nor forgive a debt or a wrong, and he will yet commend it in another, and advise them to it, and speak well of those that will do so by him. And why is this? Why, it costeth him nothing to have another man love an enemy, or forgive a debt or wrong; but he cannot himself do it without self-denial.

9. Those men that love not to be touched themselves by the minister's application, can yet endure well enough that others be dealt as sharply with as may be; and they are glad to hear any sharply reproved whose sins they do dislike. The covetous man loves to hear us reprove the drunkard, and the drunkard is content to have the covetous reprehended: erroneous professors, dividers, and hypocrites do hate the minister that reprehendeth their own sin, and can scarce endure to hear him, but say he is bitter, or a persecutor, or raileth at the godly; (alas, that wickedness should have so impudent a plea!) but they can freely give us leave to deal as plainly as we will with the openly profane: scarce any sect can endure you to speak against their own mistakes; but you may speak as freely against the contrary-minded as you please. How easily can papists endure one to speak against protestants; or anabaptists endure one to speak against infant baptism! and the openly profane can well enough endure to have sects, and schismatics, and heretics reproved: and why is all this, but from the dominion of self, and the scarcity of self-denial in the world? To have another rebuked, toucheth not self, and therefore may be borne.

The poor man loves to hear us preach against the vices of the rich, and to reprehend the luxury of gentlemen, and the cruelty of oppressors: the subject too often loves to hear the ruler's faults laid open: the countryman loves to hear the courtiers', the ministers', but especially the lawyers' faults laid open: here you may speak freely; but self must be let alone, upon pain of their displeasure, and many a reproach.

10. So also in case of personal close reproof; those that cannot endure it themselves, do think it the duty of others to endure it, and expect that others should submit to them: and if any will say, Neighbour, I thank you for your plain and friendly dealing, and having so much compassion on my soul, as to help to save me from my sins. I confess I am a vile, unworthy sinner; but by the grace of God I will do so no more; or if I be any more overtaken, I pray you tell me of it, and let me not alone in it. I say, if another should answer them thus, and thank them for their reproof, they would think the better of him, and take it well. But yet they will not do so themselves; for it costeth self nothing to have another submit and humble himself.

11. So those that are most backward to the admonishing of others, lest they lose their love, can like to have a minister or another do it; for that doth not put them to deny themselves.

12. Nay, take a scandalous professor that is drawn to public confession as a bear to the stake, and if it were another man's case, he would think it but reasonable and meet, and would persuade him to it. If another had committed the same sin against God as he hath done, or had slandered or wronged him, and would freely, without urging, confess in the congregation, with tears in his eyes, that he hath sinfully provoked God, and offended the church and wronged his brother, and laid a stumblingblock in the way of the ungodly and the weak, and dishonoured his holy profession, and is never able to make satisfaction for such heinous sins, and is unworthy any more to be a member of the church, and to have any communion with Christ or them; and should earnestly entreat them to pardon him, and pray for him, and retain him in their communion, and entreat God to pardon him; would not the stander-by think this were well done, and a better way to his recovery than to refuse it? And all is, because that self is not touched in another man's case; unless he apprehend it like to become his own; and then he may be against it, and scoff at this as too precise a course.

13. Take also the extortioner, or any man that hath defrauded or injured another, and that will not be persuaded to make restitution of all that he hath got amiss; and let this man hear of the case of Zaccheus, and he will say it was well done: or let another's case be propounded to him, and he can tell them, that Restitution is the safest way; whatever

it cost you, it is fit that every man should have his own. Self will give him free leave to consent to another man's restitution; but not to his own.

14. Moreover, suppose that persecution were afoot, and a man must either knowingly sin against God, or lose his estate, and part with all that he hath in the world, and burn at a stake for the cause of Christ: the selfish, unsanctified person will not be persuaded that this is his duty, or at least, he will not be persuaded to submit to it; he cannot suffer, nor burn; he will trust God with his soul, rather than men with his body (as such speak that despise God, and reject him, and prefer the world before him, and call this trusting him). But if this were another man's case, they could tell him that it is better displease men than God, and that it is better venture a short life than an endless life; and that it is little profit to win all the world, and lose his own soul; and that it is the wisest way to make sure work for eternity, and not to venture on endless misery; and they could consent that another should rather suffer than sin: why else do they commend the martyrs for it? and what is the reason of this strange partiality? Why, self is the great ruler, and God hath but the name. Self is partial in their own cause, but not in another man's; and therefore they can consent to his suffering without self-denial; and hence comes the difference.

15. Moreover, when offenders murmur at their punishment, ask but the standers-by, and they are of another mind. When the ale-seller thinks he is wronged if he be put down, ask but the poor women whose husbands used to be drunk there, and whose children lack meat, and drink, and clothes, because the ale-house devours that which should buy them, and they will be quite of another judgment, and think you love not God nor the country, if you will not suppress them.

16. Also when you hear men extenuating their sin, and excusing it, put but the case as another man's, and let them not understand that it is their own, and you shall hear another judgment. So Nathan came about David, and put but a far lower case as another's about the robbing a poor man of his only sheep, and he could presently say and swear, "As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die, because he had no pity;" and his anger was greatly kindled against the man, 2 Sam. xii. 5, 6. But why was he not as angry with himself for a greater sin? Oh! self had got the better in that grievous fall, till grace broke his heart by true repentance. So when Judah heard of Tamar's fornication, he commandeth, "Bring her out that she may be burnt," Gen. xxxviii. 24. But when he understood that it was by himself, the case was altered.

17. Let a man that has been provoked by injuries and ill words, have done or spoken as bad himself against another, and he can make but a small matter of them, or think they should be easily put up or pardoned, when yet the same words spoken against him, do seem intolerable.

18. Let a man speak with others in poverty, sickness, or any affliction, and what good counsel can he give him to submit to God, and take all patiently! But let the suffering be his own, and he cannot take the counsel that he gives.

19. Nay more, men are not only partial for themselves, but for any that are near themselves, or that self is related to. Let another man's son or servant do evil, and you can be content that he be rebuked or corrected; but if it be a son, or kinsman, or servant of your own, the case is altered; it is then a wrong to punish him, because of his relation to you. Let a stranger do amiss, and you can give way to justice; but if the drunkard, or ale-seller, or swearer be your friend, then he must be borne with and forgiven, and the justice must be entreated for him.

Let a scandalous or insufficient minister or schoolmaster be offered to any place, if he be a stranger you can be content that he be rejected; but if he be a kinsman, or child, or friend of yours, what an alteration doth this make in the case! Then he must be borne with and tried, and you hope he will mend, and his faults are made the least of, and his virtues more than indeed they are.

Nay, any man that doth but love yourselves, and honour you, and think highly of you, shall have a favourabler construction for all his words, and actions, and intentions, than one that you imagine is against you, or hath low thoughts of you, or is against your interest or your opinion.

Sirs, I have run into abundance of instances, but not a quarter so many as might be given; and all is to meet with the turnings and windings of this serpent, self; and to let you see (if light itself can make you see, against the blinding power of self) how rare self-denial is in the world, and what a large dominion self obtaineth.

I would here have added some more discoveries, as, 6. From the excessive care, and cost, and labour that almost all the world is at for self; and the little they are at for God, or the good of others. 7. The large proportion that is expended on self, in comparison of God and others. 8. The zeal of men to vindicate self, but the little zeal for God or others. 9. The rigorous laws that are made in the cause of self, (thieves and traitors must die,) and the remissness of lawgivers in the cause of God; blasphemy, malignity, and impiety are not so roughly handled. 10. The firmness of men to carnal self, and their great mutability and unfaithfulness to God. But I had rather omit somewhat than to be too tedious, and therefore I go no further in these discoveries, save only to add a few of those aggravations that show you the extent of self's dominion, as you have seen the sad discoveries of the reality of it.

CHAPTER IX.

THE GREAT POWER AND PREVALENCY OF SELFISHNESS DISCOVERED.

And that you may see what cause we have for our lamentations, consider the greatness of selfish tyranny in these particulars.

1. Consider what a power it is that self beareth down in the world. The commands of the God of heaven are overcome by it. The promises of eternal life are trod under foot by it. The threatenings of endless torments are nothing to it. It casts by heaven; it ventures upon hell; it tramples upon the precious blood of Christ; it will not hear the voice of wisdom itself; nor the voice of goodness and mercy itself; it refuseth him that speaks from heaven; love itself is not lovely where self is judge; it quencheth all the motions of the Spirit; it despiseth ministers; it turneth mercies into wantonness and sin. Like Samson, it breaks all bonds that are laid on it; and till it be weakened itself, there is no holding, no ruling, no saving the soul that is ruled by it.

2. Consider also the exceeding number of its subjects. Truly if there were no other proof that the sanctified and the saved are very few, this one is so full and sad a proof, that it tempteth me sometimes

to think them much fewer than willingly I would do. Alas, how few self-denying persons do you meet with in the world! yea, in the church! yea, among the stricter professors! Look over all the world, and see how few you can find at work for any one but for carnal self! If you observe the courts, and see whose work is done most there; and look into the armies of the world, and see who it is that ruleth there; if you look upon the affairs of nations, and the wars of princes, and their confederacies, and see who it is that rules in all, how little will you see (save here and there) but carnal self! It is self that makes the cause and manageth it; it is self that maketh wars and peace. Come down into our courts of justice, and whose voice is loudest at the bar but self's? and who is it commonly else that brings in the verdict? at least, who is it else that made and followeth on the quarrel? How many causes hath self at an assize, for one that God hath! Come lower into the country, and who is it that ploughs and sows, who is it that keeps house or shop, but self? I mean, what else but carnal self is the principle? what else but carnal self is the end? what else but the will of self is the rule? and what else but selfish commodity, or pleasure, or honour are the matter, or some provision that is made for these? and consequently what else but self-respect is the form? For the end informeth the means as means, and therefore all that is done for self, is self-service and self-seeking. In a word, as God is all in all to the sanctified, so self is as all in all to the ungodly. And alas! how great a number are all these?

3. Consider that it is a sin that is nearer us objectively than any other sin; and the nearer the more dangerous. Alas! that a man should turn his own substance into poison, and feed upon it to his own destruction! If you have drunk poison, you may cast it up again, or nature may do much to work it out; but if your own blood, and humours, and spirits be turned into venom, that should nourish and preserve your life, what then shall expel this venom, and deliver you?

4. Moreover, it is the most obstinate disease in the world. No duty harder (except the love of God) than self-denial. Oh! how many wounds will self carry away and yet keep life, and heal them all! How commonly do we convince some carnal gentlemen that "one thing is needful;" and that it is a better part than earth, and honour, and sensuality that must be chosen, or else they are undone; and the more they have, the more they must forsake, and the more self-denial is required to their salvation; and that all their lands, and wealth, and honours, and all their wit, and parts, and interest must be at the service of their Maker and Redeemer; and that when they have all in the world that they can get, that all must become nothing, and God must become all; their treasure must become the dross and dung, and Christ must become their treasure, or they are lost: I say, how oft do we convince men of all estates of these important, evident truths! And yet this self is still alive, and keeps the garrison of the heart; and all that we can have from most of them, is, as the rich man, Luke xviii. 23, 24, to be very sorrowful that they cannot have heaven at easier rates, and that Christ will not be a servant unto self, or they cannot have two masters! They go away sorrowful (but away they go) because they are rich; which makes Christ say upon this observation, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!" But when the disciples were troubled at his observation, he lets them know that it is self and not riches that is indeed the deadly enemy. It is the selfish that trust in riches, and love and use them for themselves, and deny not themselves, and devote not all to God, that will be kept out of heaven by them; or in Christ's own words, it is "he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God," Luke xii. 21. Conquer self, and conquer all.

5. Moreover, self is the most constant malady, the sin that doth most constantly attend us. Many actual sins may be laid by, and we may for the time be free from them. But selfishness is at the heart, and lives with us continually; it parteth not from us sleeping or waking; it goes to the worship of God with us; it will not stay behind in the holiest ordinance; it will not forbear intermixing itself in the purest duties, but will defile them all. So that above all sins in the world, it is this that must have the strictest, constantest watch, or else we shall never have any peace for it.

6. Yea, this self doth lamentably survive even in the sanctified soul, among the special graces of the Spirit, and lamentably distempereth the hearts and lives of too many of the godly themselves. Not that any godly man is selfish in a predominant sense; or that self is higher or more powerful in his heart than God, for that is a contradiction; such a man cannot be a godly man (without conversion). But yet the very remnants of conquered self, what a smoke do they make in our assemblies, and what noisome scent in the lives of many godly men! What a stir have we sometimes with those that we hope are godly, before we can get them to an impartial judgment; to lament their own foul words, or other miscarriages, and to humble themselves, or freely to forgive another that hath wronged them! especially to confess disgraceful sins in any self-denying manner! How close stick they to their own conceits! how lamentably do they improve them, to the contempt of ministers, and trouble and division of the church! How wise are they in their own eyes, and how hardly yield they to any advice that crosseth self! How hardly are they brought to any dear and costly duty! How much do they indulge their appetites and passions! and how cheap a religion do many think to come to heaven with! We can scarce please some of them, they are so selfish; either because we cross them in their opinions, or in their ways; or because we allow them not so much special countenance and respect as self would have, or deny them somewhat which self desires. If they have any use for us, if we leave not more public or greater work which God hath set us on, and allow them not that part in our time, or labours, or other helps, which God and conscience will not allow them, they are offended and take it ill, that self is not preferred before God and the public service. Their selves are so dear to themselves, that they think we should neglect all to serve them.

Let the most useful minister live in a place that hath the plague, or other contagious mortal sickness; and most that are visited will take it ill if the minister come not to them, though they know that his life is hazarded by it, and that his loss to the whole church is more to be regarded than the content or benefit of particular persons; and it is not the pleasing of them, nor their benefit by him then, that will countervail the church's loss of him. What is this but too much preferring self (I hope not habitually, but) in that act, before the church and honour of God?

Let a minister or any other man resolve to bestow all that God hath given him for his service, on the poor, or pious uses; perhaps he shall displease as many as he pleaseth, because he hath not enough for all; and if he give to nineteen, the twentieth

will say, He passed by me; and I am never the better. And thus this insatiable, unreasonable self will hardly be pleased; and among the godly how much doth it prevail! Oh how many ministers in England can tell by sad experience, how much of self surviveth in professors! so much that we can hardly rule them, or keep them from breaking all to pieces, and every man running a way of his own. The ruin of England's expected reformation; the fall of our hopes in too great a measure; the multiplying of sects; the swarms of errors; the rage against the faithfulest ministers; the neglect of discipline, and obstinate refusal of penitent confessions, and humbling, self-denying duties; the backwardness to learn; the forwardness to be teachers; the high esteem of weak parts, and weaker grace; the commonness of backbiting, censuring, and slandering, especially those that are not of their fond opinions; the rising designs of many; the tenderness of their reputations; the contending for pre-eminence; all these, with many others, do too loudly tell the world how much of self and how little self-denial is in many that seem godly.

7. But yet this is not the highest discovery of the power of carnal self. Though it is sad to think that it should be so potent in any that have grace; yet it is sadder to think that it hath too much power in the wisest and most learned magistrates and ministers, that should be the greatest enemies of it in the rest. A magistrate, as a magistrate, is for the common good. Political societies consisting of sovereign and subject, are therefore called commonwealths, from the final cause, which is the common good or weal of all; so that it is essential to a magistrate to be for the common good. And yet self creeps in, and makes such work with many of them, that it is hard to judge whether it have left them the essence of the magistracy, and whether they should be called magistrates or no.

But yet it is sadder, that the learned, godly preachers of self-denial should have so little of it, as too many have. Alas, that ministers do not remember how ill Christ took the first contendings among his disciples, who should be the greatest; that they do not imprint upon their minds the image of Christ's setting a child before them, and after girding himself, and washing their feet. I think those men that make a sacrament of this, do err much less than those that forget it. And I suspect that our contrariety to this example, will tempt some ere long into this contrary extreme, and it may be set up as a sacrament indeed. O woeful case! to be daily lamented by all the compassionate members of the church; that the learned, zealous pastors of it are the leaders, fomenters, and continuers of her divisions: and when they have opportunity to seek for healing, they want a will; and so much of self surviveth in them, that though God call to them for peace and unity, and the bleeding church is begging it of them on her knees; yet self hath such power over them, that God is not heard, and the church cannot be regarded; but peace, and piety, and all must be sacrificed to the will and interest of self; as if they were the priests of self, and the honour of God and peace of the church were the daily sacrifice which they have to offer! Not a motion can be made for reformation or unity, but some selfish ministers rise up to strangle it, under pretence of mending the terms. Not a consultation can be held, but self creeps in, yea, openly appears, and ravels the work, and will needs be the doer of all that is done, or nothing must go on that is done against it.

O blessed nation, if self-denial were more eminent and predominant therein! O precious ministry, and great and honourable, if we truly sought our honour in the habit of children, and by being the servants of all! O happy churches, abounding in holiness and peace, if once the pastors and people were better skilled in the practice of self-denial! I must confess, to the praise of God's grace, many such ministers and people I have had the happiness to converse with; and how sweet the fruit hath been both to them and me, both they and I are ready to confess. But one self-seeking, unmortified minister, is enough to disturb a whole society, and break the good endeavours of many. And, alas! how many such are abroad, that talk of almost nothing but their opinions, or parties, or carnal interests, and are not in the harvest as reapers to gather, but as wild beasts that are broken in to make spoil, or Samson's foxes to set all on fire; running up and down from country to country with firebrands at their tails, and stings in their mouths, which they call by the reverend name of zeal.

But you may think I have been long in discoveries, aggravations, and complaints; and therefore I will go no further in that sort of work, but only to adjoin these three or four practical consectaries following.

CHAPTER X.

SOME WEIGHTY CONSECTARIES.

Consect. 1. So common and potent is selfishness in the world, that it is enough to convince a rational, considerate man of the truth of the doctrine of the fall of man, and of original corruption, against all the objections that all the Socinians or Pelagians in the world do make against it. He that thinks that God made man in this distempered, distracted state, that selfishness doth hold the world in, hath unreasonable thoughts of the workmanship of God. He that seeth even children, before they can speak or go, so selfish as they are, and all mankind, without exception, to be naturally as so many idol gods in the world, and can believe that this is the image of God, in which they were created, doth make the image of Satan to be the image of God. No wiser, no better is the doctrine that denieth original sin, where self hath such a tyrannical, universal reign in all the world.

Consect. 2. So deep-rooted, and powerful, and universal is this abominable vice, that it must teach us what to expect in all places we live in, and may help us to make the truest prognostics, or probablest conjectures, of any mutations where the will of man is like to be the determiner. Know once but where self-interest lies, and you may know what almost all men will endeavour, and might write a probable prognostication of the changes that are like to be in states, and kingdoms, and any where in the world, were it not for the interposition of two greater powers that have got the victory of self; and that is grace, and divine, overruling Providence. I say were it not that these step in, and cross self, and hinder its designs, you might foresee in self-interest the changes that are made in human affairs.

Consect. 3. And so potent and common is the dominion of self, that it may warrant an honest, moderate incredulity and jealousy of almost all men, in cases where the interest of self is much concerned. Let him be never so ingenuous, let his parts and profession be never so promising, let his former engage-

ments to you be never so great, let him be your own brother; yet be not too confident of him, if his carnal self be concerned or engaged against you. For you shall see by experience, as long as you live, that self will still bear dominion in the most.

Consect. 4. Above all, every wise and godly man should hercin maintain the greatest jealousy of his own heart. Keep the heart above all keepings; and keep out self above all sins whatever. Take heed of selfishness, as ever you would be christians, and live as christians, and have the peace of christians. And to that end be always suspicious of every cause, opinion, controversy, or practice, where self is much concerned. The very names of self and own, should sound in a watchful christian's ears as very terrible, wakening words, that are next to the names of sin and Satan; and at least carry in them much cause of suspicion.

And this hath led me up to the next use of the point.

CHAPTER XI.

THE SECOND USE. TO TRY OUR SELF-DENIAL: THE SINCERITY OF THE LEAST DEGREE.

Of Exhortation.

BELOVED hearers, I have now before me as great a sin and danger to deter you from, (even selfishness and its effects,) and as great a duty to offer to your entertainment, (even self-denial,) as any (save one) that I am acquainted with in the world. The raising up the soul to God is indeed the greatest work; but the mortifying of the flesh, and the denying of self, is surely the next to it, being a real part of the change. You hear ministers tell you of the odiousness, and danger, and sad effects of sin; but of all the sins that ever you heard of, there is scarce any more odious and dangerous than this, and yet I doubt there are many that never were much troubled at it, nor sensible of its malignity. My principal request therefore to you is, that as ever you would prove christians indeed, and be saved from sin, and damnation that follows it, take heed of this deadly sin of selfishness, and be sure you be possessed with true self-denial; and if you have it, see that you use and live upon it.

And for your help herein, I shall, 1. Tell you how your self-denial must be tried; and, 2. How it must be exercised; and, 3. I shall give you some further reasons to persuade you to it; and, 4. Some directions for the procuring and strengthening it.

I. The trial of your self-denial may be performed by the help of the signs that have been given you before. In the ten particulars mentioned in the beginning, you may see what is selfishness, and what is self-denial. But for your further satisfaction, I shall only tell you in a few words, how the least measure of true self-denial may be known. And, in one word, that is thus: Wherever the interest of carnal self is stronger and more predominant habitually than the interest of God, of Christ, of everlasting life, there is no true self-denial or saving grace; but where God's interest is the strongest, there self-denial is sincere. If you further ask me how this may be known, briefly thus:

1. What is it that you live for? what is that good which your mind is principally set to obtain? and what is that end which you principally design and endeavour to obtain, and which you set your heart on, and lay out your hopes upon? Is it the pleasing and glorifying of God, and the everlasting fruition of him? or is it the pleasing of your fleshly mind in the fruition of any inferior thing? Know this, and you may know whether self or God have the greatest interest in you. For that is your God which you love most, and please best, and would do most for.

2. Which do you set most by, the means of your salvation and of the glory of God, or the means of providing for self and flesh? Do you set more by Christ and holiness, which are the way to God; or by riches, honour, and pleasures, which gratify the flesh? Know this, and you may know whether you have true self-denial.

3. If you are truly self-denying, you are ordinarily ruled by God, and his word and Spirit, and not by carnal self. Which is the rule and master of your lives? Whose word and will is it ordinarily that prevails? When God draws, and self draws, which do you follow in the tenor of your life? Know this, and you may know whether you have true self-denial.

4. If you have true self-denial, the drift of your lives is carried on in a successful opposition to carnal self, so that you not only refuse to be ruled by it, and love it as your god, but you fight against it, and tread it down as your enemy. So that you go armed against self in the course of your lives, and are striving against self in every duty; and as others think, it then goes best with them, when self is highest and pleased best; so you will know that it then goeth best with you, when self is lowest, and most effectually subdued.

5. If you have true self-denial, there is nothing in this world so dear to you, but on deliberation you would leave it for God. He that hath any thing which he loveth so well that he cannot spare it for God, is a selfish and unsanctified wretch. And therefore God hath still put men to it, in the trial of their sincerity, to part with that which was dearest to the flesh. Abraham must be tried by parting with his only son. And Christ makes it his standing rule, "He that forsaketh not all that he hath, cannot be my disciple," Luke xiv. 33. Yet it is true that flesh and blood may make much resistance in a gracious heart; and many a striving thought there may be, before with Abraham we can part with a son, or before we can part with wealth or life; but yet on deliberation, self-denial will prevail, and there is nothing so dear to a gracious soul, which he cannot spare at the will of God, and the hope of everlasting life. If with Peter we should flinch in a temptation, we should return with Peter in weeping bitterly, and give Christ those lives that in a temptation we denied him. For, habitually, God is dearest to the soul.

6. In a word, true self-denial is procured by the knowledge and love of God, advancing him in the soul to the debasing of self. The illuminated soul is so much taken with the glory and goodness of the Lord, that it carrieth him out of himself to God, and as it were estrangeth him from himself, that he may have communion with God; and this makes him vile in his own eyes, and abhor himself in dust and ashes; he is lost in himself, and seeking God, he finds himself again in God. It is not a stoical resolution, but the love of God and the hopes of glory, that make him throw away the world, and look contemptuously on all below, so far as they are mere provision for the flesh.

Search now, and try your hearts by these evidences, whether you are possessed of this necessary grace of self-denial. O make not light of the matter, sirs, and presume not of it, till you find good

grounds! For I must tell you that self is the most treacherous enemy, and the most insinuating deceiver, in the world. It will be within you when you are not aware of it, and will conquer you when you perceive not yourselves much troubled with it; and of all other vices is both the hardest to find out, and the hardest to cast out; the hardest to discover, and the hardest to cure. Be sure therefore in the first place that you have self-denial; and then be sure that you use it and live in the practice of it. And for this I must give you more particular advice.

CHAPTER XII.

IN WHAT RESPECT SELF MUST BE DENIED.

II. And here I beseech you take heed of self in all these following respects. 1. You must deny self as it is opposite to God, and a competitor with him, and the idol of the soul and of the world; and this in all the ten respects which I mentioned in the beginning, and therefore shall not now rehearse. And this is the principal part of self-denial.

2. Self must be denied as it is but conceived as separated from God; and would be an end in a divided sense from God. For ourselves and all things else are created contingent, dependent beings, and must not be once thought of as if we were either our own beginning, or end, or in any capacity, but subservient unto God. Self becomes a Satan, when it would cast off its due subordination to God, and would be any other than the workmanship of God, depending on him, and ruled by him, and living to him, loving him, desiring him, and seeking after him, and either mourning when we miss him, or rejoicing when we find communion with him.

3. Self must be denied as it stands up against the truth of the gospel, and blindly and proudly quarrelleth with that word which faith relieth upon for justification and salvation. Carnal self is both the most incompetent judge of the word of God, and of spiritual affairs, and also the most forward, and arrogant, and audacious, for all it is so incompetent. And this is the damnable fountain of unbelief. That self is an incompetent judge of the word and ways of God, is evident: for, (1.) It is a natural enemy to them, and an enemy is no competent judge, "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be," Rom. viii. 7. Deny therefore this enemy the power of judging the word of God. Ill-will never saith well. Enmity is credulous of all evil, and overlooks the good, and is accompanied with false surmises, and wresteth every word, and suspecteth or maketh an evil sense where there was none: there is not a worse expositor in the world. And therefore no wonder if such a nature of enmity can find matter of quarrel with the very Scripture itself, and with a holy life, yea, with God himself; for it is him especially that the enmity is against.

(2.) Moreover self is a party, and therefore an incompetent judge. It is self that the Scripture principally speaks against. All over the gospel there are the words of disgrace, and the arrows of death, directed against the very heart of carnal self. God there proclaimeth and manageth an open war against it. And shall a party be the judge? Shall the traitorous delinquent be the judge? A child will hardly speak well of the rod, whatever he do by the corrector; but it is not to be expected that a thief should love the halter, or the gallows. God's word is the weapon that self must be slain by; and therefore self is an incompetent judge of it.

(3.) Moreover self is quite blind in the matters of God. "The natural man discerneth them not, nor can do, because they are spiritually discerned," 1 Cor. ii. 14. And the ignorant and blind are incompetent judges.

(4.) And the selfish man is no good student in the laws of God; even when he readeth the letter, he doth not mind or savour the spirit of them; "For they that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit," Rom. viii. 5. A fair world it would be, if every collier should judge the privy council, and the judges of the land, or if every thief should sit upon his accuser and his judge, and every traitor should judge the prince. And a thousandfold more insufficient is self to judge the word of God. And yet as insufficient as it is, it is exceeding arrogant, and steps up into the judgment-seat, at every chapter that is read or heard: and if this blind and malicious judge be unsatisfied, forsooth the Scripture must be dark or contradictory, or what he pleases. This horrible, presumptuous arrogancy of self is it that hath opened so many mouths against the blessed doctrine of salvation, and made so many wretched apostates in the world, and cast so many others into doubtings of that word by which at last they must be judged, and which should have been the ground of their faith and hope.

4. Moreover, self must be denied as it stands up against the Lord Jesus Christ. When Christ is presented in his wonderful condescension, in his incarnation, and mean, despised life, and in his ignominious death, proud self is offended at so low a Saviour, and disdaineth that humiliation which his own necessities did require, and despiseth Christ because he became despised, and a man of sorrows, in our stead. When he is propounded as the remedy of a miserable soul, and as our only life, and righteousness, and hope, self doth seduce the soul to undervalue him: it will not easily be convinced of so much misery as to need such a remedy; it is too well to value such a physician; it is too righteous to value the righteousness of a Mediator. It hath too much life and hope at home, in its own supposed innocency or sufficiency, to set much by the hopes that Christ hath purchased, and to live in him.

O, down with self, that Christ may be Christ to you! How shall he come in, while self is the porter that keeps the door? How shall he pardon you, when self will not suffer you to feel the want and worth of pardon? How shall he bind up your hearts, when self will not suffer them to be broken? How shall he clothe you with his righteousness, while self keeps on your own defiled, rotten rags? Down therefore with self, that Christ may be exalted. Away with your own conceited righteousness, that he may be your righteousness; down with your selfish, foolish wisdom, that the supposed foolishness of God may be your wisdom. Level this mountain, which Satan hath built up in enmity against the holy mountain of the Lord.

5. Moreover, self must be denied as it is the great resister of the Holy Ghost. The sanctifying Spirit hath no greater enemy, at least, except the devil himself. One half of the work of sanctification, is to destroy this carnal self; and therefore no wonder if hence it find the chief resistance. Not a holy motion can be made to the soul, but self is against it. No work hath the Spirit to do upon us, but self is ready to gainsay it, and contradict it, and work against it. Whenever therefore this mortal principle

is contending against the Spirit of God, dishonouring holiness, dissuading you from duty, persuading you to sin, down with it and deny it, as you would be true to the Spirit and yourselves.

6. Moreover, self must be denied as it traitorously complieth with the enemies of Christ and your own salvation, when it takes part with Satan, and pleads for sin, and saith as wicked men say, and entereth a conspiracy with all that would undo you, and all this under pretence of your own good. Whenever it speaks for sin, you may be sure it speaks against God and you, and therefore it is reason you should deny it. Self also must be denied when it riseth up against the supposed tediousness or difficulty of duty; when it grudgeth at a holy life, and saith, What a stir is here! what a weary life is this! what do I get by serving God? Now self is playing the traitor against God and you; and therefore deny it.

7. Moreover, when self doth rise up against sufferings, and make you believe that they are intolerable, and that it is unreasonable for a man to forsake all that he hath for fear of a sinful word or deed, when we sin every day when we have done our best; it is time now to stop the mouth of self, for it plays the devil's game against God and you, and would persuade you to prefer a short, uncertain, miserable life, before eternal life, and to give up yourself to wilful sin, because God beareth with the sins of men's infirmity. It is reason that you should deny so unreasonable an enemy to God and you.

8. Moreover, self must be denied when it stands up against the ordinances of God. When it pleadeth against the arguments of the word, and findeth fault with the law that it should obey, and quarrelleth with prayer and all holy duties, and would make all instituted means uneffectual for your saving good, it is time now that you deny it.

9. When self doth rise up against the officers of Christ, and would make you believe your teachers fools, and you are wise; that they are beside the truth, and you are in the right; or that they speak against you out of malice or singularity, or some such distemper, and so would deprive you of the saving benefit of their doctrine and office; it is time now to deny self, if you know but what belongeth to your peace. And though I grant that you must not follow a teacher into a certain sin and error, yet when it is not God, but self, that riseth up against your teachers, and possesseth you with a spirit of bitterness, disobedience, contradiction, and malignity, this self must be denied.

10. Lastly, As self is against the good of our neighbour or human societies, it must be denied; for we must love our neighbour as ourselves; that is, both self and neighbour must be loved in a due subordination to God, as means to his glory; and in this notion of a means, the love should be equal: though there is also a natural love in order to self-preservation put into us by the Creator, which our love to every neighbour is not to equal in degree, yet our love to societies should exceed it; and our love to a neighbour should come so near it, that we should *deligere proximum proxima dilectione*, love him as a second self, and so study his welfare, as to promote it to our power, and not to covet or draw from him ourselves, nor do him any wrong. This is the sense of the tenth commandment, and sum of the second table.

CHAPTER XIII.

I. SELFISH DISPOSITIONS MUST BE DENIED: AND, 1. SELF-LOVE.

Having seen in what respects and upon what accounts it is that self must be denied, I am next to tell you the particulars of that selfish interest that must be denied, and the parts that are contained in this needful work.

And here you must remember what saving faith is, that seeing how self opposeth it, you may know wherein it must be denied.

Saving faith is such a belief in Christ for reconciliation with God, and the everlasting fruition of him in glory, as makes us forsake all the things of this world, and give up ourselves to the conduct of the word and Spirit, for the obtaining of it.

When a man can strip himself of all the pleasures, and profits, and honours of this world, first in his estimation, and love, and resolution, and then in the actual forsaking of them at the call of God, because of the firm belief and hope that he hath of the fruition of God in glory, as purchased and promised by Jesus Christ; this is a christian, a disciple of Christ, a true believer; and none but this. And (as I have told you) as God in unity, and Father, Son, and Holy Ghost in Trinity, is the object of our saving faith; so carnal self in unity, and pleasure, profits, and honours in trinity, must be renounced and denied by all true christians; as being that which we turn from, when we turn to God. So that, in brief, to deny yourselves doth generally consist in denying all your own dispositions and interests whatsoever, as they are against God the Father, Son, and Spirit, or stand not in a due subserviency to him. And this interest which you must deny, consisteth in your pleasures, profits, and honour; of these therefore I shall speak distinctly, though but briefly.

1. You must begin at the denial and mortification of your corrupt and selfish disposition, or else you can never well deny your selfish interest. It is not enough to keep under this selfishness by denying it somewhat that it would have, but the selfish inclination or nature itself must be so far mortified and destroyed, that it shall not reign as formerly it did. For this which we call selfishness is not your very persons, nor any spiritual or right natural desire of your own good; but it is the inordinate adhering of the soul to yourselves, by departing from God, to whom you should adhere, and so a carrying over God's interest and honour to yourselves. Holiness is an inclination and dedication to God, by which two we are said to be separated to him; and wickedness is an inclination and addictedness or devotedness to ourselves above God, or as separated from God: and this inclination, disposition, or separation of man to himself instead of God, is it that I call self or selfishness; and this self must itself be destroyed as to the predominant degree.

And therefore let us first observe wherein this selfish disposition doth consist, which must be destroyed; and then, secondly, wherein the selfish interest doth consist that must be denied.

And first, the selfish disposition consisteth in these several parts that follow.

1. The principal part of it consisteth in an inordinate self-love. This is a corruption so deep in the heart of man, that it may be called his very natural inclination, which therefore lieth at the bottom, below all his actual sins whatsoever; and must be changed into a new nature, which principally con-

sists in the love of God. This is original sin itself, even in the heart of it. This speaks what man by nature is; even an inordinate self-lover; and as he is, so he will act. In this, all other vice in the world is virtually contained; even as all grace is in the love of God: which made the schoolmen say, that love is the form of all grace; not as they are this or that grace in particular; not of faith as faith, nor of hope as hope; but of faith, hope, &c. as vital or gracious acts. Because the respect to the end is essential to the means as a means; and therefore the respect to God as the end, is essential to faith, hope, &c. as a means to him: and therefore that grace (of love) which is terminated on the end, must have an essential participation, concurrence, or influence on those that are directly terminated on the way or means, and must convey somewhat of its very essence to them; and so far as they partake of that essence of love, so far are they indeed those special graces which carry the soul to God its end. And in this sense we may allow the distinction between *fides, spes*, &c. *formata charitate*, (which is true christian faith and hope,) and *fides, spes*, &c. *informis* (which is but an opinion and a dream). And so it is in the body of sin; when self-love doth reign, it is the heart of wickedness: and though every sin hath its own specific nature, yet all are virtually in self-love, and are so far mortal, or prove men graceless, as they are informed by the essential communication of self-love; for self being the end, informeth all the means as they respect it. I say the more to you of this, because indeed it is a weighty truth, for the right understanding of the true nature of grace and sin; and I doubt many are in the dark for want of understanding and considering it. A man that feareth and loveth God, and an unsanctified man, may be both overtaken with the same sin; perhaps a gross one, as Noah's, and David's, and Peter's was; and this may be a mortal sin in the ungodly, I mean, such as proves him in a state of death, and yet not so in the gracious person. The wicked will deride this in their ignorance, as if we made God partial; but it is no such matter. The papists cannot endure it, but suppose Peter, David, and Noah, were quite without the love of God, and so were again unsanctified men; but this is their error. It was not from the power of reigning self-love, and the habitual absence of the love of God, that these men (or any saints) did sin; but from a particular act of mortified self-love, by a surprise upon the neglect of the actual exercise of the love of God. But all the sins of unsanctified men, or at least their common sins, are from the habitual reign of self-love, and the habitual absence of the love of God; and therefore the sins of the saints are, as the schoolmen speak of the graces of the ungodly, unformed: they be not mortal sins in the sense aforesaid, because they be not naturalized, informed, animated by the malignity and venom of the mortal end and principle, which is habitual, reigning self-love: but those of the wicked are sins informed by this inordinate self-love as an habitual, reigning sin; and therefore being animated by its malignity are mortal: yet say not that this makes God partial, and not to hate the same sin in one as he doth in another. For two things must be taken in: 1. Where the heart is sanctified, such sins are strangers: perhaps one godly man of ten or twenty may be guilty of one of them, as Noah was of drunkenness, once in all his life (since his conversion); for it will not stand with grace to live in them; for such as a man's love, and inclination, and nature is, such will be the drift of his life. And would not you have God make a difference between those that sin once, and those that live in it? 2. Besides, will not any honest man make a great difference of the same acts according as they come from different hearts? You will not take a passionate word from a father, husband, or wife, so ill as the same word from a malicious enemy. If an unthrifty son should spend you twenty shillings wastefully, you will not prosecute him as you would do a thief or an enemy that takes it from you violently. Wilful murder and casual manslaughter have not the same punishment by the law of the land. If you will make such a difference yourselves of the same words or deeds as they come from different meanings and affections, quarrel not with God for doing that which you confess is just and necessary to be done.

1. The faculty where this disposition is principally seated, is the will; which in man is the heart of morality, whether good or evil. And the principal act is an inordinate adhesion of man to himself, and complacency in himself: and this is the inordinate self-love that must be first mortified.

2. The next faculty that self hath corrupted, is the understanding; and here we first meet with the sin of self-esteem, which is the second part of selfishness to be mortified. It is not more natural for man to be sinful, vile, and miserable, than to think himself virtuous, worthy, and honourable. All men naturally overvalue themselves, and would have all others also overvalue them. This is the sin of pride. But of this I must speak by itself.

CHAPTER XIV.

SELF-CONCEITEDNESS MUST BE DENIED.

3. The next part of selfishness to be mortified, is in the same faculty, and it is called self-conceitedness. And it consisteth of two parts: the first is a disposition to selfish opinions or conceits that are properly our own. And the second is to think better of those conceits than they do deserve.

1. Naturally men are prone to spin themselves a web of opinions out of their own brain, and to have a religion that may be called their own: and it is their own in two respects: 1. Because it is of their own devising, and not of God's revealing or appointing. 2. Because it suiteth with their own carnal ends and interests. Men are far readier to make themselves a faith, than to receive that which God hath formed to their hands. And they are far readier to receive a doctrine that tends to their carnal commodity, or honour, or delights, than one that tends to self-denial, and to abase themselves, and exalt the Lord.

2. And when they have hatched or received such opinions which are peculiarly their own, they are apt to like them the better, because they are their own, and to value them because of the interest of self. O sirs, that you did but know the commonness and danger of self-conceitedness in the world! Even with many that seem humble, and verily think that it is the Spirit of God that beareth the greatest sway in their understandings, yet self doth there erect its throne! O how secretly and subtlely will self insinuate, and make you believe that it is a pure self-denying light which guideth you; and that what you hold, is merely by the cogent evidence of truth, or the illumination of the Spirit, when it is but a viper that self hath hatched and doteth on, because it is her own. Because the papists have gone too far in teaching men to depend on the church and on their

teachers, therefore self-conceitedness takes advantage of their error, to draw men into the contrary extreme, and make every infant christian to think himself wiser than his most experienced brethren and teachers; and every raw, unstudied christian to think himself wiser than those that have been searching into the word of truth by study and prayer almost all their days; and therefore to cry down that learning, wisdom, and study, which they are unacquainted with; that seeing they have it not themselves, they may at least be thought as wise men without it, as those that have it, and so may provide for the reputation and interest of self. Oh what sad work hath this great sin of self-conceitedness made in the world! In too many places men make it their religion to strive who shall be greatest for wisdom and abilities in the eyes of men: and it is the very work of their prayers, and conference, and teaching to exercise self-conceitedness, and to make it appear that they are somebody in knowledge; hence is it that they are so apt to fall upon novelties which either few receive, or none before themselves devised, that being singular, self may be the more observed, and they may have something which may be called their own. Hence also it is that they are so little suspicious of their own opinions, never bending their studies impartially to try whether they are of God or not, but rather to maintain them, and to find out all that can be said for them, and against the contrary-minded. Hence is it that men have such light and contemptuous thoughts of the judgment of those that excel them in knowledge, and that the voice of Korah, and those other conspirators, (Numb. xvi. 3,) is grown so common in the mouths of ignorant, proud professors. "Ye take too much upon you, (say they to their guides and teachers,) seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?" It is the holiness of the congregation, and all its members, and the presence of God himself among them, that is pleaded against the superiority of Moses and Aaron, as if with so holy a people, that had God himself to be their Teacher and Guide, there were no need of men to be lift up above the congregation of the Lord; but it was self that was intended, whatever was pretended. From this self-conceitedness also it is, that the weightiest common truths that self hath no special interest in, are so little valued, and relished, and insisted on; and that a less and more uncertain point which self hath espoused, shall be more relished, insisted on, and contended for: hence also is most of the common confidence of men in their own opinions; that when the point is doubtful, if not certainly false, in the eyes of wiser men than themselves, yet "the fool rageth and is confident," Prov. xiv. 16. He can carry on a conceit of his own with as brazen a face, and proud contempt of other men's arguments, as if he were maintaining that the sun is light, and other men pleaded to prove it dark, when, alas, it is self-interest that is the life, the strength, the goodness of the cause. Hence also it is that men are so quarrelsome with the words and ways of others, that they can scarce hear or read a word, but these pugnacious animals are ready to draw upon it, as if they had catched an advantage for the honouring of their valour, and were loth to lose such a prize and opportunity for a victory and triumph: hence it is that hissing at the sayings and doings of others, is the first, and most common, and most sensible part of their commentaries; and that they can make heresies and monsters not only of tolerable errors, but of truths themselves, if they have but the inexpiable guilt of crossing the wisdom of these self-conceited men. Hence it is that opinions of their own are more industriously cultivated and studiously cherished, by a double if not a tenfold proportion of zeal and diligence, than common truths that all the godly in the world have as much interest in as they, though the common truths be incomparably the greater. And hence it is that men are so tenacious of that which is their own, when they easilier let go that which is God's; and must have all come to them, and every man deny his own judgment, except themselves; and that it must be the glory of others to yield to them, and their glory to yield to none, but to have all men come over and submit to them. All these are the fruits and discoveries of self as it reigns in men's understandings, who possibly may think that it is Christ and the Spirit that is there exalted.

Yet mistake me not; I do not say or think that a man should forsake a certain truth for fear of being accounted self-conceited, nor that he must presently captivate his own understanding to a learneder man, or the stronger or more numerous side, for fear of being self-conceited. Much less must I deny that grace of God that hath made me savingly wise by his illumination, that was formerly foolish, disobedient, and deceived in the days of my ignorance. The world must give us leave to triumph over our own former folly with Paul, Tit. iii. 3—7; and say with the same Paul, that we were no better than mad when we were enemies to the gospel, (Acts xxvi. 11,) and with the man in John ix. 25, "One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see." It is no self-conceitedness for a man that is brought from the blind, distracted state of sin, into the light of the sanctified, to know that he is wiser than he was before; and that he was formerly beside himself, but now is come to his understanding again. Nor is it any self-conceitedness for the meanest christian to know that a wicked man is more foolish than he; or for a minister or any man that God hath caused to excel in knowledge, to hold fast the truth he knows, and to see and modestly oppose the errors of another, and to know that in that he is wiser than they. God doth not require that we shall turn to every man's opinion, and reel up and down from sect to sect, and be of the opinion of every party that we come among, and all for fear of thinking ourselves wiser than they. David knew he had more understanding than his teachers, Psal. cxix. 98, 99; and true believers fear not to say, "We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness," 1 John v. 19; iii. 19; ii. 3. And Paul would not forbear the reproving of Peter, for fear of being thought to be self-conceited, Gal. ii. Some men are so desperately self-conceited that they take every man to be self-conceited that is not of their conceits.

But when self is men's instructor, and chooseth their text, and furnisheth them with matter, and nothing is savoury but what is either suited to the common interest of self, or which it hath not a special interest in; when men are absolutely wise in their own eyes, and comparatively wiser than those that know much more than they; when self-interest serves instead of evidence to the receiving, retaining, or contending for a point; when men think they know that which indeed they do not know, and observe the little which they do know, more than a hundredfold more that they are ignorant of; doubtless here is self-conceitedness with a witness; and they that will not see it in a lower degree, methinks should see it in such a case as this. He that will not believe that a man is drunk when he reels and stammereth, may know it when he lieth spewing in the streets.

Well, sirs, I beseeeh you see that self in the understanding be mortified and pulled down. It is the throne of God, the lantern of holy truth, the temple of the Spirit; and shall self rule there? The understanding is it that guideth the soul and all the actions of your lives; and if self rule there, what a ruler will you have, and what a case will heart and life be in! If your eye be dark, your light be dark, how great will be your darkness! and if it be selfish, it is certainly so far dark. O believe the Holy Ghost; "Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him," Prov. xxvi. 12. For a mere fool that is ignorant only for want of teaching, hath no such prejudice against the truth, as the self-conceited have; nor is it so hard to make him know that he is ignorant, nor yet to make him willing to learn. He that knoweth himself to be blind, is willing to be led. Morcover the self-conceited have much to unlearn, before they can be fit to receive the truth in a saving manner. Oh how many thousands arc undone by self-conceitedness! It is this that keeps out knowledge, and every grace, and consequently all true peace and comfort; and this it is that defendeth and cherisheth all sin. Let us show men the plainest word of God for duty and against sin, and show them the clearest reasons, and yet self-conceitedness bolts the door against all. Yea, so wonderfully doth this sin prevail, that the ignorant, silly people, that know almost nothing, are as proudly self-conceited as if they were the wisest men. They that will not learn, and cannot give an account of their knowledge, in the very catechism or principles of christian religion, nor can pray, nor scarce speak a word of sense about the matters of salvation, but excuse themselves that they arc no scholars; yet these very people will proudly resist their teachers, though they were the wisest and learnedest men in the land. Let us but cross their conceits of doctrine or practice in religion, about their own title to church privileges, or fitness for them, and they are confident and furious against their ministers, as if we were as ignorant as they, and they were the wisest men in the world. So that pride and self-conceitedness makes people mad, or deal like mad-men. We cannot humble men for sin, nor reclaim them from it, till they know the sin, and the danger of it. And self-conceitedness will not let them know it, no, nor let them come to us to be taught; but they are wise enough already; and if we tell them of the sin and danger, they are wiser than to believe the word of God or us! They will tell us to our faces, they will never believe such and such things, which we show them in the Scripture. Oh the precious light that shineth round about you all, and would make you wise, if self-conceitedness did not keep it out by making you seem wise already! These men that thus deceive themselves, by seeming wise to themselves, must become fools in their own eyes, if ever they will be truly wise, 1 Cor. iii. 18; and confess themselves, as Paul himself did, that they were foolish and deceived, when they served their lusts and pleasures, Tit. iii. 3. This pride and self-conceitedness is like the barm in the drink, that seems to fill up the vessel, but indeed works it all over: this is the knowledge that puffeth up, 1 Cor. xiii. 4; like the pot that by boiling seemeth to be filled, that was half empty before, but it is empty in the bottom, and presently boils over, and is emptier than before. So is it with the self-conceited, that have a superficial knowledge, while they are empty at the bottom, and by the heat of pride that little they have boileth over to their loss. It is the humble that God reveals his secrets to, and the hungry that he filleth with good things, and the full that he sendeth empty away. He will have no disciples that come not to his school as little children, teachable and tractable, not thinking themselves too old, or too wise, or too good to be taught. If you would see the mysteries of the gospel savingly, you must even creep to Christ on your knees, and cry, "Lord, be merciful to me a sinner!" He will not lift up your minds and hearts to heaven, till you think yourselves unworthy to lift up your very eyes to heaven, because you have sinned against heaven. And if you were even lifted to heaven, should you there but be lifted up with pride or self-conceitedness, you should soon have a prick in the flesh, to let out that dangerous, venomous wind that puffs you up.

And if you should have any knowledge of the most precious truths, as long as you are thus proud and self-conceited, it will not be savoury and effectual on your hearts. Humility feedeth, and pride starveth, every grace. The Spirit of God will not dwell with the proud: he will beat you out of yourselves, unless you drive him away from you. Some seeming raptures and comforts the self-conceited have, which are but the deluding flatteries of self, and the encouragements that Satan giveth to his servants. (For Satan will needs be a comforter for a while, as the Holy Ghost is to the saints; and his followers also have their joys.) But it is the humble soul that hath the solid comforts; from the dust of humiliation, we have the clearest sight of glory, and consequently, the sweet tastes of it. As high as the rain comes from, it is the lowest valleys that receive it most, and retain it. Faith itself will not prosper in the proud and self-conceited; to such the gospel will be foolishness or an offence. It is only the humble that savingly close with its mysteries. Humility cherisheth the fear of God, and makes us say, How shall we do this evil? or neglect this duty? But self-conceitedness and pride is blind and bold, and destroyeth in men's apprehensions the difference between things sacred and common, the holy and the unclean; it disposeth them to such an unreverent boldness with holy things, as usually ends in a profane contempt: so that such can at last despise holy ordinances which they should live upon. Repentance and this pride are deadly foes. To be penitent and proud, is to be hot and cold, alive and dead. Though Christ love not to find you in the dust of earthly-mindedness, yet he loves to find you in the dust of humility. The publican that hanged down the head, did hit the way better to the sight of God, than the self-conceited Pharisee. The most self-denying humiliation is the nearest way to heaven, and the most self-exalting pride is the surest and nearest way to hell. I had rather sit with Mary washing and wiping the feet of Christ, than ask, as the mother of James and John, to sit at Christ's right hand and left hand in his kingdom. Mary was in a manner thanked for the love of her humility; and they were in a manner denied the request that so little savoured of self-denial. Our Lord does not use to thank people for their service, and yet he did that which was next to it, to this humble, self-denying, penitent woman. He doth not use to deny his own disciples a heavenly request; and yet he did that which was next to a denial, when self brought him the petition. He that hath taught us not to press to the highest room, lest with shame we hear, Sit lower, doth hereby tell us what we must expect from himself. And he that hath bid us sit down at the lower end, that we may hear, "Friend, sit up higher," doth express his purpose for humble, self-denying souls. I had rather from the dust hear his Come up higher, than from self-exaltation to hear

Come down lower. Oh! you that are proud, self-conceited wretches, did you but know what good it doth a humble soul, to feel Christ take him up from the dust, you would soon fall down that you might taste their comforts in his lifting up. Oh what a blessed feeling it is, to feel one's self in the arms of Christ! Our compassion that makes us run to take up one that falls before us, is a spark of that compassion in Christ. Who meddles with him that walks before us? but a man that falls down in a swoon, we are all ready to lay hands on! O happy fall, that makes us feel the arms of Christ! Though the fall into sin be never the better, that occasioneth it, yet the fall into humiliation is better, that prepareth for it. He that in his agony had an angel to minister to him, will not leave the self-denying, humble soul without his angel, or some way of relief that is suitable to the necessity. Christ himself will not communicate himself to the proud and self-conceited. He is wisdom, but not to them that are wise in their own eyes already. He is righteousness, but not to them that justify themselves. He is sanctification, but not to those that never found their own uncleanness. He is redemption, but to none but those that feel themselves condemned. He hath the white raiment, and the treasures of grace and glory; but it is only for those that penitently feel that they are poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked. Truly, sirs, though I have no mind to trouble the well-grounded peace or comfort of any of your souls, yet I would advise you, if you have never so good thoughts of yourselves, suspect lest it should be the fruit of self-conceitedness; and if you should have never so much peace and joy, look well whether it come from God or self-conceit. And if it come not in against self, it is ten to one but it comes from self. If your peace and comfort be not won from Christ, in a way of self-denial, and as the spoils of the flesh, you have it not in the ordinary way of God. Did you come to your joy and peace by humility, and self-denial, and patience, and mortification, and by becoming little children, and the servants of all, and by learning of Christ to be meek and lowly? If not, take heed lest you nourish a changeling, an imp of hell, and a selfish brat, instead of the fruit of the Spirit, the peace and joy of the Holy Ghost. If you feel no great matter at home to trouble you, you are too righteous to be justified by Christ. If you groan not under your ignorance and unbelief, you are too wise to be Christ's disciples. If you mourn not under the load and pain of sin, you are too well to be Christ's patients. If you are readier to justify and excuse yourselves than to condemn yourselves, and had rather hear yourselves praised than reproved, admonished, or instructed, and like Diotrephes, love to have the pre-eminence, you are too high for Christ to take any acquaintance with you; and too full of self to have any room for his love, and Spirit, and heavenly consolations. He that gave us the parable of the importunate widow, (Luke xviii. 2—5,) would have us understand that bare necessity is not enough to fit us for relief, (for then the worst of men should be the fittest,) but it must be necessity so felt, as to humble us, and drive us to importunity with God. The prodigal was miserable when he was denied the husks; but he never felt his father's embracements till he came to himself by denying himself, and returning to his father. And this the self-conceited will not be persuaded to. The first that must touch Christ after his resurrection, is not a king, nor a lord, no, nor a man, but a woman that had been a sinner. When she held him by the feet, love did begin low in humility, but it tended higher, and ended higher. Christ hath told us that where much is forgiven, there will be much love. For there is most of the fruits of God's love, and least of self, and most to abase self. It is not possible that love to Christ should dwell or work in any but the humble, that feel at the heart that they are unworthy of love, and worthy of everlasting wrath. The proud and self-conceited cannot love him; for they cannot be much taken with Christ's love to them, except as the Pharisee, in a way of self-flattery. But the poor soul that was lost, will heartily love him that sought and found him; and he that was dead, will love when he finds himself alive; and he that was condemned both by God and conscience, will surely love the Lord that ransomed him! And it is the apprehensions that men have of themselves that much causeth all this difference. The self-abhorring, self-judging, self-denying sinner is melted with the love of God in Christ, because it is to such a worthless, sinful wretch. What, Lord, saith he, is the blood of Christ, the pardon of sin, the Spirit of grace, the privileges of a child, and everlasting glory, for such an unworthy wretch as I, that have so long offended thee, and so much neglected thee, and lived such a life as I have done, and am such an empty, unprofitable worm? Oh what a wonder of mercy is this! But the full soul loathes the honeycomb. The self-conceited, unhumbled sinner looks as mindlessly at Christ, as a healthful man at the physician, or an innocent man at a pardon.

And that good that is in the proud and self-conceited doth seldom do much good to others (much less to themselves). As such do but serve themselves, so ordinarily God doth not bless their endeavours; but as they are perverted, they are the likest to pervert others, and propagate their self-conceitedness: two words from a humble, self-denying man, doth oftentimes more good than a sermon from the self-conceited.

I admonish you therefore in the name of God, that you take heed of this part of selfishness and mortify it. It will else keep out God, and almost all that is good. If you are proud and self-conceited, you will hear a minister rather to cavil with him, than to be edified; and when any thing from God doth cross your foolish wisdom, you will but slight it, or make a jest at it; and if any truth of God do strike at the heart of your selfish interest, you will but fret at it, and secretly hate it, and perhaps, as the devil's open soldiers, publicly reproach it; and as the Jews did against Stephen, (Acts vii. 54,) even gnash the teeth at the preacher; or as they did by Paul, "They gave him audience to that word, (even that word that made against themselves,) and then lifted up their voices, and said, Away with such a fellow from the earth; for it is not fit that he should live," Acts xxii. 22. This entertainment we still meet with from our hearers, when self hath brought them the next step to hell.

O sirs, suspect your own understandings; think not of them beyond the proportion of your attainments, nor beyond your experience, and the helps, and time, and opportunities which you have had for knowledge, nor beyond the measure of your diligence for the improving of these; for these are God's ordinary way of giving in a ripeness in knowledge. Read and study Heb. v. 12, 14; 1 Tim. iii. 6. Set not up your own conceits too boldly against those of longer standing and diligence in holy studies, much less against your teachers, and much less against a multitude of ministers; and much less against all the church of God; and least of all, against God himself, as speaking to you by the Holy Scriptures. O take warning by the swarms of here-

sies and scandals that have been caused by self-conceitedness and pride.

Object. If you may think yourself wiser than me and others without self-conceitedness, why may not I think myself wiser than you and such others without self-conceitedness?

Answ. I may not do it in the cases before mentioned. I may not think myself to be what I am not, nor exalt myself above them that are wiser than I, nor against my guides, or the church of God.

Object. But it is but your conceit that you are wise enough to be a teacher, or wiser than others, and why may not I as well conceit it?

Answ. No man in his own conceits must become a teacher; but the judicious of that calling must call them, and judge of their abilities. And conceits are as the ground of them is. The true understanding of the grace that we have received is a duty, and fitteth us for thankfulness; but the false conceit that we have what we have not, is a dangerous delusion; "For he that thinketh he is something when he is nothing, deceiveth himself," Gal. vi. 3. What if a blind man should argue as you do with one that sees, and say, You say that you see so far off, and why may not I say so too? Would you not answer him, I know that which I say to be true, and so do not you? And what if he still go on and say, You think that I am blind, and I think that you are blind; and why may not I be believed as well as you? Would this kind of talk prove the man to have his eyesight, or should it make me question whether I have mine? He that seeth knoweth that he seeth, whoever question it; and if another make doubt of it, let men that have eyes in their head be judges, but not the blind. But I confess, spiritual blindness hath this disadvantage, that whereas I can easily make any other blind man know that he is blind, and therefore be willing to be led or helped, here the more blind men are, most commonly they are the more confident that they see, and scornfully say, as the Pharisees to Christ, "Are we blind also?" John ix. 40. For pride will not let them know their ignorance. The same light that cureth ignorance must reveal it. Especially when men are born blind, and never knew the saving illumination of the saints, they will not believe that there is any other light than they have seen. But I have been somewhat long on this part; I pass now to the next.

CHAPTER XV.

SELF-WILL TO BE DENIED.

4. The fourth part of selfishness to be mortified, is self-will. And this is the fruit of self-conceit, and also a natural corruption of the soul; and a most deep-rooted, obstinate vice it is. Every wicked man is a self-willed man, against God, and all that speak for God. And till self be mortified in the will, there is no saving grace in that will.

Quest. But what will is it that is to be called a self-will?

Answ. Not that which is from God and for God; but all the rest. 1. That will that is not fetched from God, and moved by his will, as the lesser wheels in a clock are moved by the first wheel and by the poise, is no better than self-will. A will that is not dependent on God's will, is an idol, usurping the prerogative of God; for it is proper to him to be dependent upon none, and to have a will that is not ruled by a superior will. Little do the most know how great a sin this is, to be self-willed. You have a will to something or other continually; and it is your will that ruleth the rest of your faculties and actions; but what is it that ruleth your will? whence do you fetch the rise and reason of your desires? Is it from God's will, or is it not? You pray to God, "Thy will be done;" and do your own wills answer these prayers? or are they hypocritical, dissembling words? If indeed it be God's will that you would have fulfilled, then will the knowledge of that will of God determine your own wills. As a servant dependeth on his master's will, for all the work that he is to do, and doth not what he will himself, but what his master will have him do; and as a scholar dependeth on his master's will, and learneth only such books and lessons as he sets him; so must we depend on the will of God, and know what is his will, before we give way to any will of our own. The reason why you choose any trade, or calling, or course of life, should be the will of God. If you are in poverty, and desire to be richer, and that to please your own will, and not that you think that it would be any more pleasing to God, this is self-willedness. If you desire any change in your condition, if you undertake any thing in the world, know why you do this; whether it be principally because you think it is the will of God, or because it is your own will. I tell you again, you should not have one wish or desire in your souls, till you can prove or find that God would have it so; and if your own wills be made the absolute rulers of your ways, you make gods of yourselves, and God will deal with you accordingly.

2. Yea, if you do think the will of God is according to your will, and you are moved the more to it on that account, yet if your own wills do lead and make the first choice, and God's will be brought in but to follow and encourage yours, this is still self-willedness and self-idolizing. This is the common trick of the ungodly. They first give way to their own self-will, and then they will go to Scripture for somewhat to bear them out; and will needs believe that God's is agreeable to theirs, that so they may go on with peace of conscience. They go for counsel to God as Balaam did, not sincerely to know the will of God, with a resolution to obey it, but with a desire that God would conform his will to theirs. I tell you, if the matter be never so much commanded in the Scriptures, and never so agreeable to the will of God, yet if you desire and do it from yourselves, and not for this reason, because it is the will of God, and do not let God's will lead your own, but let your own will lead, and God's will follow, this is no better than self-willedness, were the matter never so good in itself.

3. If the end that moveth your will be not the service and glory of God, but only your own interest, this is but self-will. God giveth you leave to look to yourselves as his servants, in a due subserviency to him. But if you will principally look at your own interest, and make light of God's, and fetch the reason of your will and desires from your own ends and commodity, rather than his glory, this is an ungodly, selfish will. And yet, alas, how many are there that know not any better frame of will than this! If they were truly to give an account of the principal reason and motive of every desire of their hearts, why they would have this, or why they would do that, must they not confess it is for themselves, because it serveth their own ends or interests, and because it pleaseth their own wills, and not because it furnished them better to serve and please the will of God? If you ask men in their buying, and selling,

and marrying, and trading, and dealing with men, why it is that they do this or that, can they truly say, I do it because I think in this way I can do God the best service, and the church or commonwealth most good, and this is my chief reason? Alas, I fear they are too few that have any higher principal end and motive than self. Self-will is the spring of their whole conversations, that sets them upon all they do. Nay, doubtless, in the very duties of religion, in praying, hearing, reading, and the like, they are but serving self, while they take on them to serve God; and their holiest devotions are but such a serving of God, as flatterers will serve their prince or landlord with, merely that he may do them a good turn, and may serve their ends, and be serviceable to them; or else as some Indians serve the devil, for fear of him, lest he should do them a mischief. The will that is moved chiefly by self-interest, is a self-will.

4. And much more is it self-willedness, when men contradict the will of God: when Scripture saith one thing and they another; when they disrelish God's laws, and dislike the work that he sets them on; when they have a will to that which God forbids, and would fain be doing with unlawful things; yea, and it doth not satisfy their corrupt desires to see that the express will of God is against them; this is self-will in a high degree.

5. So also when men's wills are to that which is against the honour and interest of God; which would hinder his gospel, and the saving men's souls, and is displeasing to him, this is self-willedness in a high degree.

And thus you see what it is to be self-willed. And now do but consider whether this part of self be commonly denied in the world. Among the millions of desires that are in men's hearts, how few of them are kindled by the commands of God, or moved by his interest and glory! How commonly are the word and ways of God distasteful to the world! How ill do men like the disposals of his providence! and what a striving is there in their wills against him! And were it not that God is above them and unconquerable, and they know that striving will not help them, you should have most of the world in open war against the God of heaven; I speak no more than I am able to prove. The dominion of self is so great in the wills of all that are unsanctified, that their wills are utterly against the will of God; and it is merely because there is no remedy that they submit to him so far as they do. Those very persons that think they love and serve him as well as the precisest, would be in arms against him before to-morrow, and pull God out of heaven, if it were in their power: or if they had but as much hope to prevail against God, as they have against his servants, what work would be in the world! I know these men will not believe this by themselves: no, self is too strong in them to let them so far know themselves; but the case is plain. For as God himself tells us, that ever since the fall an enmity is put between Christ and this serpentine seed; so we see it manifested by daily sad experience. How generally is the will of God disliked by the world! What hath God spoke against in his word but sin? and what else hath he commanded his messengers to cry out against? And yet what is there that more pleaseth the minds of the most? And how stubbornly do they resist not only God, but magistrates and ministers that would draw them from it! What is it that God commendeth to the world so much as a holy and heavenly life? and what is the heart of most men more against? and how much do they strive against all our persuasions that would bring them to it! and how obstinately do they resist us, if not deride and scorn that holiness which the will of God hath so abundantly commended to them! His whole word speaks for it; his prophets, apostles, and all his servants are examples of it; his Son Jesus Christ, in his sacred person, and office, and holy life, hath yet more notably commended it to the world; and it was a principal part of his business in the flesh, to set men a pattern of holiness and self-denial: and yet many scorn it, and hate it, and most dislike it, and even fight against this holy will of God, that is, against God himself, if they had but any hope to get the better. There is no doubt of it, though they will not know so much by themselves. Do you think it is for nothing that God calleth them his enemies, and resolveth them the reward of enemies, even because they would not have Christ to rule over them? Luke xix. 27. Doubtless God sentenceth no man unjustly: if he say they are such, and condemn them as such, it is certain that they are such. O but the infinite dreadful God is out of their reach; but they be not out of his reach. Their malice cannot hurt him any more than it can stop the course of the sun; but his displeasure will quickly bring them down. In the mean time, these wretches should consider what a God they have had to do with, that beareth with their malignity. The sun or moon forbear not to shine even on the dogs that bark at them. Thy rebellious self hath hitherto been maintained by the mercy of that will of God which thou hast resisted; but this patience will not always last: take therefore this necessary advice in time. Down with thine own idolatrous self-will; know not a will or desire in thyself, that is not moved by the will of God, even by his word as thy ground, and his pleasure and honour as thy chiefest end. Destroy that will that springs but from self, and is moved but by the interest of self. Slay it before the Lord as his enemy, as Samuel did Agag. Though a hypocritical Saul will spare this king of rebellion, designed to destruction, yet so will not an obedient servant of God. I will not bid thee offer it in sacrifice to God's will, for it is too vile to be an acceptable sacrifice; but utterly destroy it as the accursed thing. Know not hereafter such a thing within thee as a will that is originally or finally thine own. If the word and the glory of God be the movers of it, thou mayst call that God's will as well as thine own; it is thine subjectively, but it is God's as the principal efficient and end. Oh that you did but know what your own wills are, and what they have done against you, and what they may yet do, if they be not mortified! You would not then be so indulgent to them, and pamper and please them, and be so desirous to have your own wills as you have been. To this end I pray you consider but of these particulars following.

1. The will of man is the terrestrial throne of God. It is there that he must reign. The will is to rule all the inferior faculties; and God is to rule the will. And shall self presume to dethrone the Lord, and sit down in his place? He that rules the will rules the man. And shall self be thy ruler? And will God put up all this?

2. It is God only that hath the sovereign authority, and self hath none but under him. We are not our own; and therefore have nothing to do with ourselves but at the will of God that is our owner. Take heed therefore of this usurpation.

3. Thy own will is a corrupt and sinful will, and therefore unfit to be thy governor: what! wilt thou choose an unjust, a wicked, and unmerciful governor, that is inclined to do evil? Why such is thine own will; but the will of God is perfectly good, that hath not the least inclination to evil, nor possibility

of such a thing. Be ruled by it, and you are most certain to have the most just, and holy, and faithful, and merciful ruler in the world. To prefer self-will before the will of God, is as the Jews, to prefer a murderer, Barabbas, before the Lord of life.

4. Moreover, our own wills are guided by a dark understanding; and therefore ready on every occasion to turn aside. Though the will commandeth, yet the understanding guideth it: and therefore as the dark understanding is commonly at a loss, or quite mistaken, judging evil to be good, and good to be evil; so the will must be an unhappy governor, that followeth the direction of so ignorant a counsellor. But if you will deny your own wills, and be ruled by the will of God, you need not fear misleading, seeing his wisdom is infallible and infinite. Choose not a blind guide, then, when you may have the conduct of wisdom itself; when God is content to be your governor, prefer not such foolish sinners as yourselves before him.

5. Moreover, your self-will hath almost undone you already; it hath been the cause of all your sin and misery: never any hurt befell you, or any man on earth, but from self-will. And yet will you follow it still, and take no warning, as if it had not done enough against you? But on the contrary, you were never hurt in all your lives by following the will of God; unless it be such a hurt as the searching or cleansing of a sore, without which it cannot be healed; or such a hurt as the taking of physic, without which you can have no cure. Tell me if you can, whenever the will of God did wrong you? when did you speed the worse for the following of his counsel? Look back upon your lives, and tell me whether all your smart and loss have come from your following God's will or your own; and which you think you have more cause to repent of.

6. There is none followeth self-will to the end, but is everlastingly undone by it; it leadeth directly to the displeasing of God's will, and so to hell: but on the contrary, there is none that sincerely and finally follow the will of God, that ever do miscarry; he is the safest conductor; he never led a soul to hell. All that follow him, live with him; for whither should he lead them but to himself? And where God is, there is life and glory. To obey his will, is to please his will; and to please him, is our very end. It cannot go ill with them that please the Lord and Judge of all the world, the dispenser of all rewards and punishments.

7. Your own wills are so mutable, as well as misguided, that they will bewilder you, and toss you up and down in perpetual disquietness; though I know you think that is the only way to your content, and nothing will content you unless you have your will. But you are lamentably deluded; your wills are like the will of a man in fever, that would fain have cold water, which pleaseth him in the drinking, but afterwards may be his death. You love that which hurteth you; yea, that which is no better than poison to your souls. You would soon undo yourselves, if you had your own wills. It is none of the least of God's mercies to you to cross your wills, and to deny you that which you have a mind to. You will not let your children eat or drink what they will, but what you will, that know better what is good for them. A patient can deny his own will for his health, and submit himself to the will of his physician; and should not you much more submit to God? Yea, you should desire him to deny your own wills, whenever he seeth them contrary to his will, and to your own good: had you but the skill of judging aright of God's dealings, I am persuaded that upon the review of your lives, you would find, that God hath showed you more mercy in the crossing of your wills, than in accomplishing them. Be not therefore too eager for the time to come, to have what you love, till you are surer that you love nothing but that which is good for you, and which you should love. The present contenting of diseased self-will, is but the breeding after disquietness. But in the will of God you may have full and durable content. For his will is always for good, and therefore hath nothing that should cause your discontent. His will is still the same and unchangeable; and therefore will not disquiet you by mutations. He knows the end at the beginning, and sets you upon nothing but what he is sure will comfort you at the last. It belongeth to his will, and not to yours, to dispose of you and all your affairs. And therefore there is all the reason in the world, that God's will should be set up, and in it you should rest yourselves content, and that self-will should be denied as the disturber of your quietness.

8. Moreover, self-will is Satan's will, and stirred up by him against the Lord. How else do you think the devil rules the children of disobedience, but by self-conceit and self-will? If therefore you would deny the devil, deny self-will; for in being ruled by it you are ruled by him; and in pleasing it, you please him. God himself tells you this in plain expressions, Eph. ii. 1—3. They that walk in trespasses and sins, and so are dead in them, according to the course of this world, and in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, these the Holy Ghost there tells you, do walk according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.

9. It is the very perfection and felicity of man, to be conformed to the will of God, and to rest with full content therein; and it is the corruption and misery of man, to have a selfish, misguided will of his own, and strive against his Maker's will. And so far as you stick in your own wills, and are set upon them, and must have them fulfilled, and cannot rest in the will of God, so far are you still unsanctified and unsaved, and in the power of your great disease. And so far as you are dead to self-will, and look up to the will of God both for direction and content, and will that which he willeth, even because he willeth it, and would have you will it, and can rest your souls in this as full satisfaction, It is my Father's will, and therefore best; so far are you sanctified and restored to God.

10. Lastly, let me tell you, that it is best for you to deny self-will in time, and give your wills to the will of God; for when you have done all that you can, God will have his will, and you shall not have your own will long. You may strive against the will of God, but you shall not frustrate it. You may break his laws, but shall not escape his judgments. You may rebel against his commanding will, but you cannot resist his punishing will. When you have done your worst, it is God's will that must stand; and such a will as is little to the pleasure of your wills. But self-will is never of long continuance; its content is short. Now you will have your will, let God say what he will to you; you love to please your appetite in meats and drinks; you love to be carnally merry, and spend your time in vain sports and pleasure; you love to be respected and humoured by all, and to be honoured and counted somebody in the world; you love to be provided for for the time to come, and to be wealthy that you may take out of a full heap, or at least not want for the contentment of your flesh; and therefore you must have your wills, and have that you love, if you can tell how to

get it: but how long will you have your wills? How long will you have that you love, though God forbid it? When death comes, will you have it then? When you lie in pain, expecting every hour to appear in another world, will you then have your wills? When you are in hell, will you then have your wills, or that you love? O sirs, self-will is short-lived, as to its delights and pleasure; but the will of God is everlasting. And, therefore, if you take up with your own wills, how short will be your content! But if you look for content in the will of God, you will have everlasting content. Your own wills may be crossed by every trifle; any man that is greater than you can cross them; yea, those that are under you can cross them. The poorest beggar can rob you, or scorn you, or raise a slander of you, or twenty ways can cross your self-wills; a hundred accidents may cross them. Your very beast can cross you; and almost any thing in the world can cross you; much more can God at any time cross you; and cross you certainly he will: so that in your own wills there is no rest nor happiness. But if you could bring your wills to God's, and take up your full content in this, It is the will of God, then what a constant, invincible content might you have! Then all the world could not disturb you and rob you of your content, because they cannot conquer the will of God: his will shall be done; and so you should always have content.

CHAPTER XVI.

SELFISH PASSIONS TO BE DENIED.

5. ANOTHER part of selfishness to be mortified and denied, is selfish passions. The soul is furnished with passions by God, partly for the exciting of the will and other faculties, that they do not sluggishly neglect their duties; and partly to help them in the execution when they are at work: so that they are but the wheels or the sails of the reasonable soul, to speed our motion for God and our salvation, and not to be employed for carnal self. When passions and affections are sanctified and used for God, they are called such and such particular graces, and the fervour of them is a holy zeal; but when they are used for carnal self they are our vices; and the heat of them is but fury, or carnal zeal, and the height of vice. But how rare is it to meet with men that are meek and patient in their own cause, and passionate in a holy zeal for God! I know many are passionate in disputes and other exercises about religion, and think that it is purely zeal for God, when self is at the bottom of the business, and ruleth as well as kindleth the fire, when they scarce discern it, and little know what spirit they are off; but pure zeal for God, conjoined with self-denial, is exceeding rare. How few can say, that their love to God is greater and hotter than their love to themselves! The desires of men are strong after those things that supply their own necessities, and please their own corrupted wills; but how cold are they after the honour of God! How averse are men from that which hurteth the flesh; as to go into a pesthouse, or to take deadly poison, or to suffer any pain; but few are so averse to the breaking of the law of God. A hard word, or a little injury done to themselves, will put them into a passion, so that their anger is working out in reproach, if not in more revenge: but God may be abused from day to day, and how patiently can they bear it! There are few carnal minds but can more patiently hear a man swear, or curse, or scorn at Scripture and a holy life, than hear him call them rogue, or thief, or liar, or any such disgraceful name. It seems an intolerable dishonour with selfish persons that are advanced by pride to be great in their own eyes, for a man to give them the lie, or to reproach their parentage, or make them seem base; but they can hear twenty oaths and reproaches of the truths or ways of God, as quietly and patiently as if there were no harm in them. Their own enemies, whom God commandeth them to love, they hate at the heart; but the enemies of God and holiness, whom David hated with a perfect hatred, (Psal. cxxxix. 21, 22,) do little or nothing at all offend them. It is not thus with self-denying, gracious souls. When David heard Shimei curse him, he commanded his soldiers to let him alone, for God had bidden him; that is, by that afflicting providence on David he had occasioned it, and by the withdrawing of his restraint, he had let out his malice, for a trial to David. Thus David could endure a man to go along by him cursing him, and reviling him as a traitor, and a man of blood, and throwing stones at him; and he rebuked Abishai that would have taken off his head, 2 Sam. xvi. 7—10. But when the same David speaks of the wicked, the froward, the slanderer, the proud, the liar, and the deceitful, he resolveth that he will not know them, they shall not dwell in his house, nor tarry in his sight; he hateth them; they shall depart from him; he will cut them off, and early destroy them from the land, and from the city of the Lord, Psal. ci. So was it with Moses: when God was offended by the idolatry of the Israelites, he was so zealous that he threw down the tables of stone, in which God had written the law, and broke them; but when Miriam and Aaron spake against himself, he let God alone with the cause, and only prayed for them; for saith the text, "He was very meek above all the men that were on the face of the earth," Numb. xii. 3. Phineas's zeal for God did stay the plague, and was imputed to him for righteousness; when the selfish zeal of Simeon and Levi was called but a cursed anger, and brought a curse on them instead of a blessing from their dying father, that they should be divided in Jacob, and scattered in Israel; and left them the name of instruments of cruelty, Gen. xlix. 5—7.

Take warning then from the word of God; and use your passions for God that gave them you; but when it is merely the cause of self, be dead to passion, as if there were no such thing within you. If the wrong be done to you, think then with yourselves, Alas, I am such a silly, wretched worm, that a wrong done to me is a small matter in comparison of the least that is done to God; it is not great enough for indignation or passion. Remember, that it is God's work to right your wrongs, and your work to lament and hinder the abuse of God. And therefore if men curse you, or revile you, or slander you, if God's interest in your reputation command you to seek the clearing of it, then do it, but not for yourself, but for God: but otherwise, be as a dead man that hath no eyes to see an injury, nor ears to hear it, nor heart to feel it, nor understanding to perceive it, no, nor hands to be revenged for it: this is to be mortified and dead to self. When passion begins to stir within you, ask, What is the matter? who is it for? and who is it that is wronged? If it be God, ask counsel of God, what he would have you to do, and let your passion be well guided and bounded, and then it will be acceptable, holy zeal: but if it be but self that is wronged, remember that you are not your own; and

therefore take no thought of the business, but leave God to look to his own, and do with it as he please: if you are his, your cause is his, and therefore let him look to it that is concerned in it more than you, and that hath said, "Vengeance is mine, and I will repay."

CHAPTER XVII.

SELF-IMAGINATION TO BE DENIED.

6. Another part of self to be mortified and denied, is self-imagination. It is the selfishness of men's thoughts, that is the vanity of their thoughts; and these are the imaginations that are only evil continually. The thoughts should be let out on God and his service; so that our meditation of him should be sweet, and we should delight in the Lord, Psal. civ. 34; and in the multitude of our thoughts within us, his comforts should delight our souls, Psal. xciv. 19. His word should be our meditation all the day, Psal. cxix. 97, 99; and in his law we should meditate day and night, Psal. i. 2. God should be the spring, the end, the sum of all our thoughts; if we find a thought in our minds that savoureth not of God, yea, that is not sent by him, and doing his work, we must disown it, apprehend it, and cast it out. But alas, how contrary is the case with the most! As self is advanced highest in their imagination, so doth it there attract and dispose of the thoughts. What are all the thoughts of unsanctified men employed for, but for themselves and theirs? Their fantasies hunt about the world; but it is their own game and pleasure that they range about. The thoughts of one man run upon his covetousness, and another man's upon his filthy lusts, and another man's on his sports and pleasures, and another man's upon his honour and reputation with men! They feed the imaginations of their mind upon almost nothing but selfish things; sometimes delighting themselves with the very thoughts of men's esteem of them, or of their worldly plenty, or of their sinful lusts and pleasures; and sometimes troubling themselves with the thoughts of their wants, or low condition, or crosses, or injuries from men; sometimes contriving how they may attain their desires, and carking and caring for accomplishing their selfish ends: morning and evening, at home or abroad, as the thoughts of the sanctified are on God, and heaven, and the way thereto, so the thoughts of the unsanctified are all upon self, and the interest of self, and the means thereto. O cleanse your minds, sirs, of this great self-pollution; keep them more clean and chaste to God. Deny self this room in your imaginations, and waste not thoughts and precious time, on such unjust and unprofitable employment. It is an impertinency, to be so much solicitous about the charge of God, and to care so much when he hath bid us "be careful for nothing." It is a debasing of our minds to feed them so long on so low an object, when they might be taken up with God. Care not therefore what you shall eat or drink, or wherewith you shall be clothed; for after all these things do the selfish, unsanctified gentiles seek; and our Father knoweth that we have need of all these things: but seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you, Matt. vi. 31—33. Self doth but rob you of the fruit of your thoughts which you might reap by feeding them on God.

CHAPTER XVIII.

INORDINATE APPETITE TO BE DENIED.

7. The last part of self to be denied, is your inordinate appetites, excited by the senses, commonly called the sensitive appetite. These are not to be themselves destroyed; for the appetite is natural and necessary to our welfare; but the inordinate desire is to be denied, and the appetite restrained, and no further satisfied than is allowed by the word of God; and by this means the inordinacy of it may come to be mortified. Though selfishness hath defiled the whole man, yet sensual pleasure is the chief part of its interest, and therefore by the senses it commonly works, and these are the doors and windows by which iniquity entereth into the soul. And therefore a principal part of self-denial consisteth in denying the sensitive appetite.

Quest. But how far is this appetite to be denied?

Answ. 1. Whenever it craveth any thing that is forbidden: this is past doubt. It must not be pleased to the disobeying of God. 2. When it enticeth us towards that which is forbidden, and would be feeding on the baits and occasions of sin; unless the thing desired be necessary, it is here to be denied. For sin and hell are dangers that no wise man will draw too near to. 3. Whenever the pleasing of the sense conduceth not to God's service, and doth not fit or furnish us for our duty, it is unlawful.

Quest. But may not the creatures be received for delight as well as for necessity?

Answ. It is an ill-expressed question; as if delight itself were never necessary. Necessity is either absolute, as of those things without which we cannot be saved; or it is only to our bettering and the greater securing of our salvation; and so it is taken for that which is any way useful and profitable to it; directly and indirectly. We may and must make use of the creatures, 1. Not only for our own necessity, but principally for the service and glory of God, 1 Cor. x. 31. And, 2. Not only for our absolute necessity, but also when they in any measure further us in or to the service of God; so be it they be not on any other account unlawful. 3. We may use the creatures for delight, when that delight itself is a means to fit us for the work of God, and is sincerely sought for that intent. But we may not use them for any other delight, but that which itself is necessary or useful to God's service. Reasons are evident. (1.) Because we should else make that delight our ultimate end, which is as bad as brutish; for either it must be an end, or means. If it be not used as a means to God as our ultimate end, it must be our ultimate end in itself, which is no better than to take his place. (2.) That action is idle, and consequently a sinful misemploying of our faculties, which doth not conduce to the end that we were made for, and live for. (3.) It is a misemploying of God's creatures, and a sinful casting them away for any end which is not itself a means to the great end of our lives. All is lost that is no ways useful to God and our salvation. It is contrary to the end of their creation and of ours. (4.) It is a sinful robbing God of the use of his talents, if we use them for any end that is not subservient to himself as the chief end. For certainly he made all things for himself, and that which is not employed for him is taken from him injuriously. All men must answer for the mercies which they have received; whether they have so used them for God, as that they can give him his own with the improvement.

(5.) The sensitive appetite, by reason of its inordinacy, is grown a rebel against God and reason; and an enemy to him and to ourselves. And no man should unnecessarily please or feed so dangerous an enemy. Sin doth most make its entrance this way; and most men lie in sin before our eyes, by pleasing their senses: and shall we run ourselves on such a great and visible danger, against the warning of so many experiences? Yea, we know that we have been often this way overtaken ourselves, and that abundance of sin hath crept in at these passages; and yet shall we plead for liberty to undo ourselves? The godly are so conscious of their weakness or proneness to sin, that they are jealous of themselves; and therefore it beseemeth not such to do any thing needlessly that may tempt them to it, and is so likely to prove a snare. If Paul must beat and tame his body to bring it into subjection, lest when he had preached to others, he should be cast away himself, (1 Cor. ix. 27,) much more have we need to be watchful that are more weak. We are commanded expressly to make no provision for the flesh, to satisfy the lusts (or desires) thereof, Rom. xiii. 14; and therefore they that eat, or drink, or do any thing else for the mere satisfaction of the desires of the flesh, and for its delight, do break this express command of God. And how is it said, that they that are Christ's have crueified the flesh, with the affections and lusts, or desires thereof, if they may use creatures merely to delight and please the flesh? this is not crucifying its affections and desires, Gal. v. 24.

Job's covenant with the eyes that they gaze not on alluring objects, (Job xxxi. 1,) was an act of self-denial that others need as well as Job. Such a covenant with our taste, and with our ears, and with every sense, that they move not but by the consent of God and reason, and let not in any sin into the soul, is a most eminent part of this necessary duty. David's adultery and murder did first make its entrance at the eye. Had Noah more jealously watched his appetite, he had not by drunkenness been a warning to posterity. It was Achan's eyes that betrayed his heart to the gold, and silver, and rich attire, though an accursed thing, Josh. vii. 20, 21. What sin almost doth not enter at some of these ports?

Be sure therefore that no sense be without its guard: accustom yourselves to deny them, and the conquest will be easy. It is not to deny them any thing that is useful to you for God's service, and a true means to your holy ends, that I advise you to; but only that which would betray you by delighting in them. It is not to destroy the body, but to tame it, keep it under, and bring it into subjection: and this must be done. To move to this, consider yet further these three or four things more distinctly.

1. It is for want of this part of self-denial that the world is so full of scandals, and the consciences of men so full of wounds, and professors walk so unevenly with God, and seem to be but as other men. Here one drops into tippling, if not stark drunkenness; and there another into wantonness, if not fornication; and many live in gluttony, and never see it nor repent of it; and many are drowned in covetous desires and practices; and some give up themselves to sensual pastimes; and all because they do not make this covenant with their senses, nor have ever yet learned to deny themselves: but because it pleaseth them, they think it is not displeasing to God; and that it is no sin, but a part of their christian liberty: yea, many of them think that by this doctrine of self-denial, we would deny them the use of the mercies of God, and consequently hinder them from thankfulness for them: and thus they make a religion of pleasing the flesh, which is the deadly enemy to God and religion. They imagine a liberty purchased them to please it, and fulfil its desires; and they measure out mercies as they please it, and they would return God a fleshly thanks for these mercies, and offer him a sacrifice as the heathens did to Ceres and Bacchus; whenas the gospel knoweth no mercy, but either eternal mercy or that which is a means to it; nor will it call that a mercy which hath not a tendency to God; nor did Christ purchase us any liberty, but what is from sin or punishment, and is for his service: he did not suffer in the flesh to procure us liberty unprofitably to indulge and please the flesh, and to strengthen our enemy, and by use to give it the mastery, when this mastery is the damnation of most of the world. If christians had learned more to deny their senses, they would walk more blamelessly and inoffensively in the world: if they would keep at a distance from the bait, and when they cannot do so, yet shut up these doors, that it may be at a distance from their minds, how safely would they walk that now are stumbling at every creature that is given for their relief! The objects of sense are these lower things, so contrary to the objects of faith, that the more we love the one of them, the less we shall regard the other; and therefore these are always working against each other. And as the objects of faith are then most sweet and powerful with us, when faith is set most fully upon them; so the objects of sense are then most powerful to draw us from God, when the doors of sense are set wide open, and the appetite let loose upon them.

2. And you may further observe, that almost all the grossest sins in the world do begin with some little liberty of the senses, which at first we take for a lawful or indifferent thing. The filthiest whoredoms do usually begin in lustful looks, and thoughts, and speeches, and so proceed to lascivious behaviour, and so to filthiness itself. And the glutton and the drunkard are first insnared by the eye, and then by tasting, and so proceed by little and little to excess. See therefore that you keep as far from the baits of sensuality as you can: and lay a command upon your senses to forbear: if you look upon it, you are next to touching it, and if you touch it, you are next to tasting it, and if you taste it, you are like to let it down, you are like to venture again, and let down more; and all must up again, or you are lost. And therefore keep out the first beginnings, and think with yourselves, If sin be the poison of my soul, the digesting of it will be my ruin: and if I cannot digest it, why should I let it down? and if I may not let it down, what reason have I to be tasting it? and if I should not taste it, why should I touch it or be meddling with it? and if I may not meddle with it, why should I look upon it or hearken to them that would entice me to it? So that the denying of your senses and your appetite is the sure and easy way to prevent those dreadful gripes that else may follow.

3. Moreover, if you deny not your sensitive appetites, you will never be acquainted with heavenly delights. The soul cannot move two contrary ways at once, towards earth and towards heaven. When you gaze upon this world and feed your appetites with fleshly delights, you have no heart nor mind to the delights above. It is the soul that retires from creatures and sensual objects, that is free for God, and ready to entertain the motions of grace. Not that I would have you turn hermits and monks, and forsake the company of men and all worldly business; no, it is a higher and nobler course that I propound to you; even in the midst of the world to

live as without the world, and as if there were nothing before you for sensuality to feed upon: to live so fully to God in the world, that you may see God in all the creatures, and converse with him in those same objects by which the sensual are turned from him; and to live in the greatest fulness of all things, as if there were nothing but penury to your flesh, and seeing God in all, and using all for God, and denying self, where you have opportunity to please it; this is the most noble life on earth. But if you find that you cannot attain to this, and that you cannot deny yourselves the delights of earth, unless you withdraw from the sight of the objects; do so and spare not, so far as may consist with your serviceableness to God and human society: but still you shall find that whether earthly delights are present or absent, your minds must retire from that which doth allure and gratify the flesh, if ever you would enjoy communion with God, and taste of the delights of a heavenly conversation.

4. And by pleasing your senses, you will increase their vicious, inordinate desires. The more you gratify them, the more they will crave; you feed your disease by yielding to such desires; but never think to quiet it by contenting it. The more the flesh hath, the more it would have. The only way to abate the rage of sensual desires, is to deny them, and use them constantly to that denial. The safest food and raiment is that which best strengtheneth and furnisheth us for God's service, with the least content and pleasure to our sensual appetites and desires. And the same I must say of house, and lands, and labours, and friends, and all the creatures; that is the best state of life in which God is served and pleased best, with the least content and pleasure to the flesh. Carnal delights and spiritual are so contrary, the one so drossy and sordid, and the other so sublime and pure, that they will not well consist together; but the delights of the flesh do corrupt or weaken the spiritual delights.

5. Lastly consider, what a base, unmanly thing it is for man to be a slave to his sensitive appetite. As truly as the horse was made to be ruled by the rider, and all the brutes to be under man, so was the appetite and all the senses made to be ruled by reason; and no sense should be pleased till reason do consent: a beast has no rule for his eating and drinking but his appetite; and therefore man's reason is to moderate him: but a man hath a better guide than appetite or sense to follow: you should not eat a bit or drink a drop merely because the appetite would have it, but reason must be advised with, and God must give advice to reason. A swine that will drink whey till he burst his belly, is blameless, because he knew not the danger, and had not reason to restrain him: but a man that hath reason, and yet will eat, and drink, and sleep, and use the creatures merely to please the appetite of his flesh, is utterly unexcusable! What must the light of reason be put out, or put under the cover of sensual concupiscence? Must a nature that is kin to angels, be enslaved to that which is kin to beasts? Unworthy is he of the honour or glory of a saint, that casteth away the honour of his manhood, and makes himself a very beast. What else doth that wretch, that when he seeth a dish before him that he loves, doth never ask whether it be wholesome or unwholesome, but eats it as a horse doth his provender, merely because his appetite would have it; yea, perhaps though he know, or be told, that it is unwholesome, yet as long as it pleases his taste, he cares not? And what else doth that wretch, that when he sees the cup, must needs be tasting? he loves it, and that is reason enough with him. What a base, unmanly thing is it (much more unchristian) to be a slave to a fleshly appetite! Would one of these gentlemen-gluttons, drunkards, or whoremongers, or any of our voluptuous epicures, that must needs have that they love, be contented to become a servant to a beast? Would you take a dog or a swine for your master, and serve them, and obey them, and do what your brutish master would have you? Why, what is the matter that many of our worshipful and honourable beasts do not see that they do as bad? What is your own fleshly sensual appetite any better than that of a beast? A dog hath as good a scent as you; and a swine hath as good a taste or sight as you, also as strong a lust as you. What great difference is there betwixt the serving your own flesh and another's, your own brutish part, or any other brute that lives about you? Wonderful! if the favour of God be nothing with you, and if damnation be nothing with you, that yet you are insensible of your honour in the world; and that you, that cannot put up a disgraceful word or blow, can yet put up at your own hands such a bestial indignity, as the subjecting of a rational, immortal soul, to that brutish flesh, which was made to be its servant!

CHAPTER XIX.

II. SELF-INTEREST. AND, 1. PLEASURE. AND, 1. OF THE TASTE TO BE DENIED.

I HAVE told you what the selfish disposition is that must be mortified and denied; and now I must tell you what is the selfish interest that must be denied: having described self-denial from the faculties, I must now describe it by its objects.

The selfish interest consisteth in this trinity of objects, pleasure, profit, and honour; not spiritual, but carnal; not heavenly, but worldly pleasure, profit, and honour. Sometimes all these are comprehended in the word pleasure alone; and then it is taken more comprehensively, and not only for sensual pleasure, called voluptuousness, as it is here in this distribution; and sometimes all is comprehended in the term world, and selfishness in the word flesh; the world being that harlot with which the flesh commits adultery. So 1 John ii. 15, 16, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world: and the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God, abideth for ever." To these three heads therefore we shall reduce all that we have to say of this matter.

1. The selfish, fleshly pleasure that must be denied, consisteth in these particulars following, which I shall but briefly touch, because they are so many. 1. One principal part of sensuality or self-interest, consisteth in meats and drinks to please the appetite. So far as these are taken to fit us for God's service, and used to his glory, so far they are sanctified, as before was said; but when they are merely to please the appetite, they are offered to an enemy, and are the fuel of lust. Do you see any thing that your appetite desireth, whether meats or drinks, whether for quality or quantity? Take it not, touch it not, merely upon that account; but inquire whether it tend to the strengthening and fitting your bodies or minds

for the service of God; and if so, take it; if not, let it alone. If your appetite had rather have wine than beer, or strong beer than small, take it not merely on that account: if your appetite would fain have one cup more, when nature hath as much as is profitable, deny that appetite. If your appetite would fain be tasting of any thing that is not for your health, deny that appetite. If it would fain have one bit more, when you have as much before as is wholesome or useful to you, deny that appetite: or else you are guilty of flesh-pleasing, and plain gluttony.

Quest. But is it not lawful at a feast to taste of another dish, or eat another bit, when I think that nature needs no more? What perplexities then will you cast men into, to know how many morsels they may eat!

Answ. It is gluttony, and no better, to take the creatures of God in vain, and sacrifice them to a devouring throat, which should be used only for his service. That which is a man's ultimate end, is his god. What would you have plainer than express words of Scripture, that tell you, that whether you eat or drink, it must be all to the glory of God, 1 Cor. x. 31; and that the fleshly do make their bellies their gods, Phil. iii. 19; and therefore when you have taken as much as suiteth with your end, the service and glory of God, you must not take more for another end, the pleasing of your fleshly desires. But for the scruples that you mention, about the just proportion, we need not be disquieted with them; for God hath given us sufficient means to direct us, to know what is for our good, and what is superfluous; and it is our duty in an even and constant way to use our reason, and keep as near the due proportion as we can; and when we know that this is our desire and endeavour, it were a sin against God to trouble ourselves with continual or causeless scruples or fears, lest we do exceed or miss the rule. For what can we do more, than go according to the best skill we have; and if for want of skill we should a little mistake, it is pardoned with the rest of our daily infirmities; and to trouble and distract ourselves with causeless fears, would more unfit us for God's service, than some degree of mistake in the proportion would do, and so would be as great a sin as that which we feared. And therefore our way is quietly and comfortably, without distracting fears or scruples, to do our best, and use our prudence with self-denial, and remember that we have to do with a Father that knows the flesh is weak when the spirit is willing. But yet wilfully to cast away one cup or one morsel, on the pleasing of our appetite, when it no way fits us for the service of God, and will do us no other good, this is not self-denial but sensuality.

Quest. But nature knows best what is good for itself, and therefore that which it desireth is to be judged best: a beast liveth as healthfully as a man, that obeyeth his appetite only. Is it not lawful to take either meat or drink on this account, that the appetite is pleased with it?

Answ. 1. Some beasts would presently kill themselves in pleasing their appetites, if man that is rational did not rule, restrain, and moderate them. A swine will burst himself with whey in half an hour. A beast in new after-grass will surfeit, if he be suffered. No beast knows poison from food, but would soon perish by it, in obeying his appetite. 2. And yet as a beast has no reason, so he is better provided to live without reason, than man is. His appetite is not so corrupted by sin as ours is. Original sin hath depraved and enraged our appetites. And if man had not more use for his reason than a beast, even in ordering his natural actions, God would not have given him reason to rule his appetite, and commanded him to use it herein. And who knows not that if a man did follow his appetite alone as beasts do, he were like to murder himself the next day or week, or at least in a very little space? The appetite would presently carry us to that for quality, or quantity, or both, that would cast us into mortal diseases, and soon make an end of us; and in those diseases, the pleasing it usually would be certain death. And indeed this is a beastly doctrine, that man that hath reason to rule his sensual inclinations, should lay it by, and please his appetite without it like a brute! What more do all gluttons, drunkards, and whoremongers, but follow their fleshly desires? And if the desires of the flesh might be followed, who would not be such as they, in some measure? That which is no sin in a beast, is a heinous sin in a man, because man hath reason to rule his appetite, and a beast hath none, and therefore is not capable of sin. And for the body, it is certain that most of the diseases in the world are bred and fed by the pleasing of the appetite; and I think that there are few that are laid in their graves, but this was the cause of it, though the ignorant know it not, and the sensual are loth to believe it.

And for the question, Whether we may not take any meat or drink purposely to please the appetite? I answer, yes, as a means to fit us for duty; but not as your chief end. 1. Sometimes, especially in weak bodies, the very pleasing of the appetite doth recreate nature, and further strength. 2. And sometimes the appetite shows what sort of food nature will best close with and concoct, so that as to the quality, if reason have nothing against it, it hath something for it; because it is a sign that it is like to be best digested, which is most desired. And so if you thus far follow the appetite, as a sign directing your reason what is best, and take nothing ultimately to please it, but by pleasing it to preserve the health or vigour of your bodies for God's service; thus you may do, and yet be self-denying: for this is not a sensual serving of our flesh. But if you will, 1. Take that which reason tells you is unhealthful in quality. 2. Or that which reason tells you is either hurtful, but needless and unprofitable in the quantity. 3. Or have mastered your reason so far by your appetite, that you will not believe that is hurtful or needless which you love, but judge what is good for you, merely by your appetite, as a beast. 4. Or if you make the pleasing of your appetite your chief end, in any meat or drink that you take: all this is bestiality, sensuality, carnality, gulosity, and contrary to true moderation and self-denial.

Live therefore like men, and not like beasts; like christians, and not like atheists and epicures: he hath as base a god as most of the vilest heathen idolaters, that makes his belly his god. He that cannot deny himself a delicious cup or morsel, would ill deny himself a kingdom if it were made the bait of sin. He that will not displease his appetite in so small a matter, would hardly leave his estate, or liberty, or life, if he were put to it, either to sin, or leave them. As he is a faithful servant to God indeed, that will not displease him in the smallest matter, so he is most fully obedient to the flesh, that cannot deny it the least thing that it desireth. Though I know that the smallness of the matter doth often so relax the cautelousness even of the godly, that they venture on a small thing who would not on a greater; yet even with them it is some aggravation of the sin, that they cannot bear so small a matter as the displeasing of their appetites in such a trifle; and that they cannot deny themselves, where they may do it at so

cheap a rate; and that they have the hearts to displease God, and wrong their souls, for a cup or a morsel which their appetite hath a mind to. He sets little by heaven or the favour of God, that will venture it for so small a thing. It hath ofttimes abated my compassion to dying men, when I have known that their death was caused by a wilful obeying their appetite against the persuasion of their physician; and be the person never so dear to me, I feel that there is a somewhat in nature that inclineth us to consent to the sufferings of the wilful, or abateth our pity of them in their misery. It was an aggravation of Adam's sin, that a forbidden morsel could entice him to venture on the wrath of God, and the ruin of himself and his posterity. And it will be a double aggravation of your sin, if you will take the same course, and take no warning by him, or by the sinning world that hath followed him to this day. "When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat," Gen. iii. 6. Thus entered sin, and death by sin.

2. Another part of self-interest to be denied, is the pleasing of lustful, venereous inclinations. Not only in avoiding the gross act of adultery and fornication itself, but also in avoiding the pleasing of any of the senses by lascivious actions that lead to this: especially some men that are naturally prone to lust, have need to set a-work both faith and reason, and sometimes call for help from others to quench the dangerous hellish flames; for it is a sin that God hath spoken terribly against, and that so often that intimateth man's proneness to it, and expresseth God's detestation of it. And seldom doth Paul rebuke it, but he reckoneth up the several kinds, that he may make it odious, and none may escape. "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, &c. of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God," Gal. v. 19. The sins which he would not have the Ephesians name, are, "Fornication and all uncleanness, neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: because no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God," Eph. v. 3—5. So, "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness which is idolatry; for which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience," Col. iii. 5, 6. "Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, &c. shall inherit the kingdom of God," 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. "The law is made for whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind," &c. 1 Tim. i. 10. "Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge," Heb. xiii. 4. Read also 1 Cor. v. 11; Matt. xv. 19; Heb. xii. 16; 1 Thess. iv. 3; Rom. i. 28, 29, &c.; 1 Cor. vi. 13, 18, and x. 8. "These filthy dreamers defile the flesh," &c. Jude 7, 8. "But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness—Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin," 2 Pet. ii. 10, 14. Abhor therefore this filthy, damnable sin, which God abhorreth. And to that end please not the flesh by any beginnings of it, or any thing that savoureth of it, or makes way to it. Chambering and wantonness are mentioned by the apostle among the fulfilling of the fleshly lusts, Rom. xiii. 13, 14. The allurements of the lusts of the flesh and wantonness was the course of the wretched apostates, 2 Pet. ii. 18; 1 Pet. iv. 3; Eph. iv. 19; 2 Cor. xii. 21; Mark vii. 22. And Christ himself hath told you, that "he that looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery already in his heart," Matt. v. 28. Suffer not therefore your eye to entice your hearts, by gazing on beauty or any alluring objects; touch them not, come not near them without necessity. The fire of lust doth need no blowing up; but in some it needeth all that ever they can do to quench it. Fly therefore from the temptations and occasions, if you would escape; cast not yourselves upon opportunities of sinning; let temptations have as little advantage as you can. A weak christian may walk more evenly that flieth from temptations and keeps at a distance from that which would insnare him, than a strong christian that suffers the bait to be near him. David's woeful experience could tell you what it is to give way to a wandering, lustful eye, when Joseph's resolution may tell you what an advantage it is to fly away and not to stand a parley with temptations. As ever you would escape this sin, this horrible soul-destroying sin, keep off from all opportunities of committing it, and live not with temptations near you: especially take heed that you suffer not an unclean spirit to possess your minds; but cast out the first impure thoughts with abhorrency. Oh the daily filthiness that lodgeth in the thoughts and imaginations of some men! They can scarce look on a woman of any comeliness, but they have presently some filthy thought. If they attempted actual uncleanness, a chaste person may easily reject them with detestation; but in this secret way of heart-filthiness, they will commit fornication with whom they please, and as many as they please, and as often as they please; but the ruin and sin are only their own. As you love the favour of God, the credit of the gospel, and the peace and salvation of your own souls, deny yourselves not only the lust of uncleanness, but of unchaste behaviour, and wanton dalliance, and the filthiness of your thoughts. For how unfit is that mind to converse with God, and to be employed in holy ordinances, that cometh but newly from thinking of filthiness, and feeding on lust.

CHAPTER XX.

WANTON DISCOURSE, SONGS, &C. TO BE DENIED.

3. Another part of self-interest or sensuality to be denied, is, the use of wanton, filthy discourse, and of wanton books, and songs, and ballads, commonly called love songs. As these are the fruits of vain minds that do invent them, so do they breed and feed the like vanity in others. Indeed they are the devil's psalms and liturgy, in which he is served with mirth and jollity, by persons of corrupt and sensual minds. They that will not be at the pains to learn a catechism, will learn a wanton song or ballad, which one would think should be as hardly learned. When we desire them to learn any thing that is necessary to their salvation, they tell us that they are no scholars, and they have weak memories, and they cannot learn. But they can learn an idle tale, or a filthy song, though they are no scholars, and though their memories be weak. Their weak memories are strong enough to keep any thing that is naught; like a riddle that will not hold the corn, but it will hold the straws and rubbish; or like a sieve that will not hold the milk, but it will hold the hairs and filth. And so much greater is this sin than

many others, because it is studied for, and laboured for, and therefore is committed purposely, resolvedly, and with delight, and not as some other sins which men are tempted to by sudden passions or surprisal. What abundance of children are sent to school to the devil, and must bestow many days and hours in learning their lessons; and when they have learned them, he must hear them say them over, usually more than once a day! As they are at work in their shops or fields, they are at it, either by wanton songs, or ribald, filthy talk; yea, they be not ashamed to sing them as they go about the streets. Mark this, you that are the servants of Christ! Will you ever more be ashamed of your Master, or of his holy service? will you be ashamed to confess him in the open streets, or to be heard at prayer, or reading, or singing the praise of God in your houses; when the devil's servants are trained up in their very childhood to sing his psalms in the open streets, and publicly to serve him without fear or shame? May not a man conjecture by their education, what trade they are intended for? They that serve an apprenticeship to a trade, are sure intended to live upon it. One would think by the talk and the songs of many of our children in the streets, that the parents had bound them apprentices to a brothel-house, and intended that their trade should be fornication, whoredom, and all uncleanness! why else do they learn the art of talking of it, but in order to the art of practising it? Sure I am, they are the apprentices of Satan: and a doleful case it is to think on; that as the Turks do take the children of christians, and breed them up to be their army of janizaries, to fight against christians as their stoutest soldiers, when they come to age; so the devil and their own parents do take the children that in baptism were dedicated once to Christ, and listed under his command, and they teach men to fight against Christ, by cursing, and railing, and swearing, and mocking at godliness, and by bawdy songs and ribaldry. Christ telleth us that "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh;" and therefore they cannot in reason blame us, if we judge of their hearts by their tongues; for though the tongue be too often better than the heart, it is seldom worse. And surely if many of our wretched neighbours may be judged of by this rule of Christ, we must needs conclude that they have lustful, filthy, adulterous hearts; what else can we think of them when their discourse and songs are filthy, but that their hearts are filthy? Christ hath warranted us to conclude, that rotten speeches come from the abundance of a rotten heart. Young people, I beseech you regard your credit, if you regard not your salvation. Will you openly proclaim in the ears of the world that you are trained soldiers of the devil, learning to be whores and whoremongers, or that you have lust and whoredom in your hearts? Is it your meaning to tell this to all the town? what doth it in your mouths, if it be not in your hearts? Will you not judge by a man's language what countryman he is? If he speak Welch, you will think he is a Welchman: if Irish, you will think he is an Irishman; if English, you will conjecture he is an Englishman; and if you speak the language of harlots and brothel-houses, what can we think but that you are such yourselves, or at least are learning to be such? For shame do not so disgrace your parents that breed you up, and the houses that you live in! What may folk think and say, when they hear you talk filthily, and singing filthy songs? will they not think that you have adulterers or filthy persons to your parents, that teach or suffer you to learn such things? and that they are bringing you up for their own profession? Will they not think that you live in whorehouses, and not in christian families? Do not for shame proclaim this suspicion of your parents, or the families you dwell in, in the hearing of the world, unless you think it an honour to be harlots. It would make the ears of a modest person to glow on his head, to hear the ribaldry that is ordinary in some profane families; especially in many inns and alehouses, where the quality of the company and the nature of the employment is such from whence no better can be expected.

Let all that would be accounted christians, deny and abhor this part of sensuality in themselves and theirs. Again consider the command of God; "But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not once be named amongst you, as becometh saints: neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient; but rather giving of thanks," Eph. v. 3, 4. "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers: and grieve not the holy Spirit of God," Eph. iv. 29, 30. Mark here, how such filthy speech is called corrupt communication, or rotten like carrion in a ditch, which should cause all that pass by to stop their noses. And yet this is our people's sport: what say these wretches, May we not jest and be merry, when we mean no harm, without all this ado? Have you no honester mirth than this? nor more cleanly jests than these? will you feed upon that which is carrion, or corrupt, and make it your junkets to delight your palate? will you make merry with that which God condemneth, and threateneth to shut you out of his kingdom for, and makes the mark of the unsanctified, and chargeth you not once to name it, that is, not without distaste and rebuke? Have you nothing but filthiness, and the service of the devil, and the wrath of God, to play with, and to make merry with? "It is a sport to a fool to do mischief," Prov. x. 23. I may well say of this, as Solomon of another sin, "As a mad-man that easteth firebrands, arrows, and death, so is the man that deceiveth his neighbour, and saith, Am not I in sport?" Prov. xxvi. 18, 19. It is mad sporting with sin, especially to choose it purposely for a recreation; and especially such an odious sin as this, that infecteth others, and banisheth all gracious edifying conference, and increaseth the corruption of the mind, and prepareth people to actual whoredom, self-pollution, and abominable uncleanness: for thoughts and words are but preparative to deeds.

CHAPTER XXI.

IDLE AND WORLDLY TALK TO BE DENIED.

4. Another part of sensuality to be denied, is idle and worldly talk, which most men make their daily recreation. It is not to be made light of that Christ himself hath told you, that for every idle word men shall give account in the day of judgment, (Matt. xii. 36, 37,) such an account as that they shall be charged on you as sins; and if they be not repented of, and pardoned through the blood of Christ, they will be your condemnation, as well as greater sins. By idle words is meant, not only all wicked and all lying words, which are vain in a high degree and worse; but also useless, unprofitable speeches, that tend not to any good, and which you have no call to speak, Tit. iii. 9; and that which the apostle calls

foolish talking, Eph. v. 4. When that christian wisdom is left out that should guide and season our speech, and direct it to some good end; especially when by vain jesting men will make fools of themselves to please others; or when they lay by christian gravity, and by jesting affect to become ridiculous, Eph. v. 4; much more when men jest with holy things, and speak unreverently, contemptuously, or scornfully of the matters of God, which is impiety in a high degree: the same may be said of proud, boasting words, and of multitude of words, even when the matter is good, but the multitude of words unseasonable and unprofitable; as also of rash, unconsidered words, that tend to stir up strife and passion; as also censuring, backbiting, reproach, flattery, dissembling, and many the like: but the thing that I principally speak of now, is the pleasing of a man's self by a course of idle, unprofitable talk. And alas, how common is this sin! Not only the foolish multitude are guilty of it, but persons of judgment, and gravity, and reputation. How many may you come in company with, before you shall have any edifying communication, that tends to minister grace to the hearers! Vanity is become the common breath of the greatest part. What the better can any man be for their discourse, unless by taking warning by them, to avoid the vanity which we hear them guilty of? Even ancient persons, with whom the words of wisdom should be found, (Job xii. 12,) and who should be examples unto youth, are yet given up to idle talk; and an old story is more savoury with them than heavenly discourse: even parents and masters, that should be examples to their families, will in their hearing multiply idle words, as if they would teach them to be vain as they are; when, alas, the souls of those about them have need of other manner of discourse; and it is another task that God hath set them, Deut. vi. 6—8; xi. 18, 19. Whence is it that children learn a course of idle, foolish talking, more than of their own parents? For one word of God, and the doctrine of the gospel, and the matters of salvation, that their families hear from most of them, they hear a hundred, yea, a thousand of the world, and of unprofitable things. Had God but the tithe of their words, we should account them very pious. And they that cannot spare him the tithe of their words, I doubt do not allow him the tithe of their affections, and would not allow him the tithe of their increase, if they could tell how to keep it. Not but that with some persons, that are called to much worldly business, more than ten parts of their daily speeches may lawfully be about the creatures: but then even those with godly men are ultimately for God, and so are sanctified, and not unprofitable: and also they are glad to redeem what time they can for speeches of a higher and more excellent subject.

And the commonness of this sin of idle talk, yea, with many that we hope are godly, doth make me think that it is thought to be a smaller matter than it is; and I doubt this conceit is it that makes it to be so common. And therefore I shall here give you some of the aggravations of this sin, that you may hereafter judge of it as it is, and not be encouraged in it by false apprehensions.

1. A custom of vain words, is a sign of a vain and empty mind: were the heart but full of better things, the tongue would be employed in better speeches. Either the head or heart, or both, is empty and vain, in that measure as the tongue is vain. "A dream cometh through the multitude of business, and a fool's voice is known by multitude of words," Eccles. v. 3. "The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious; but the lips of a fool will swallow up himself," chap. x. 12. "A fool is full of words," chap. x. 14. And therefore Solomon opposeth the tongue of the just, and the heart of the wicked: "The tongue of the just is as choice silver: the heart of the wicked is little worth," Prov. x. 20. See Prov. xvii. 27, 28. "The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment:" and whence is this? "The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide," Psal. xxxvii. 30, 31. It is a sign that a man hath little feeling of the greatness of his own sin, of the greatness of God's love in Christ, of the greatness of the joy that is set before him, of the greatness of duty that lieth on him, when he can spend so much of his time in talking of mere vanity. You cannot get a dying man, or a man that is taken up with any great, important business, to jest and prate with you of idle matters. It is only alienated, idle minds that can give way to a course of idle words: nay, it is a sign that conscience is not so tender as it ought to be, when men can knowingly go on in a course of sin: doth not conscience ask you what you are doing, and whether this discourse do tend to edification, and the cherishing of grace? What consciences have you that look no better after your tongues, but will let them wander so long after vanity, before they call them to account? Do you remember God's presence, and withal his holiness and jealousy? Can you talk so idly and God stand by, and hear every word, and put down all? How can you be so contemptuously fearless of his presence?

2. The tongue of man is a noble member, called our "glory," Psal. xxx. 12; lvii. 8; given us for the praise of our great Creator, and for other high and noble ends. And should it be abased and abused to idleness and vanity? You will not take the clothes that adorn your bodies to clothe a mawkin, or sweep the oven, or wipe your dishes with; and why should you use your tongues to filth, or base, unprofitable things, that are given you for the noblest uses in the world, even the honour of God, the edifying of your brethren, the reproof of sin, and your own salvation?

3. Consider, what abundance of great and needful employment you have for your tongues, and then tell me, whether you should spare them to idleness and vanity? Oh what work hath that little member to perform! what matters have you to mind and talk of! what transcendent subjects! what matter of highest excellency, and greatest necessity! You have a life of sin to look back upon and lament: you have many a sin to confess to others: you need much help against temptations, and for the strengthening and exercise of your graces: what need to make sure of your title to salvation! and to prepare for death, and to get ready the graces that you must use in your last necessities! and yet have you words to spare for vanity? What abundance of poor souls about you are ignorant, hard-hearted, sensual, covetous, empty of grace, in a state of death, and need all that ever you can do for their recovery, and all too little; and yet can you find in your heart to talk with them of vain, unprofitable things? Alas, sirs, most of the persons about you are within a step of death, and going to the bar of God, and want nothing but one stroke of death to make them past help, and send them to damnation: and can you find in your hearts to talk idly with such men? O cruel, unmerciful people, that regard no more your neighbours' miseries! If you came to them at the point of death, or if their houses were on fire, would you sit down and tell them an old tale, or talk of the weather, or this trifle, or that? what an absurdity would this be, and insensibility of your brethren's case! And will you do so in a case ten thousandfold greater? Can you find in your heart to stand jesting and prating with a

poor unregenerate man that is within a step of hell? Have you not more need to call to him to look about him in time, and to remember eternity, and to turn and live? If you see but the nakedness of the poor, or the sores of a cripple, it should move you to compassion: and will not men's ignorance and ungodliness move you? Their miseries cry aloud to you for pity, though themselves are silent, O help to save us from sin and hell, as you have the hearts of men; and yet will you stop your ears, and fall a prating and jesting with them? You rob them of the means that God hath commanded you to use for their recovery. God hath commanded, that "the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another," Col. iii. 16; yea, that you "daily exhort one another while it is called today, lest any be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin," Heb. iii. 13.

Nay, you have the great mysteries of the gospel to discourse of with the godly; the glorious things of everlasting life to make mention of to one another; yea, you have the high praises of God to advance in the world, and all his blessed attributes to magnify, and all his glorious works to praise, and all the experiences of your own souls to lay open, and his many and great mercies towards you to admire and thankfully confess. And yet have you leisure for idle talk? For number of objects, you have God and all his works in heaven and earth (that are revealed) to talk of; you have all his providences, all his judgments, all his mercies, and all his word: and is not this field large enough for your tongue to walk in, but you must seek out more work in vanity itself? For greatness, you have the greatest things in all the world to mind and talk of: for necessity, you have the matters of your own and other men's salvation to discourse of: for excellency, you have God, and his image, and works, and ways, and heaven itself to talk of: for delightfulness, you have the sweetest objects in the world, even goodness itself, salvation, and the way to it, to be the matter of your discourse. And lest one thing should weary you, you have a world of variety to employ your speeches on; even God, and all his works, and word, and ways before mentioned. And is it not a shame to talk of vanity, yea, to go seek for recreation in vanity, while all these stand by, and offer themselves to be the subjects of your wise, and fruitful, and delightfullest discourse. Consider whether this be wise or equal dealing.

4. Moreover, a course of idle talk is a thief that robs us of our precious time. And he that knows what God is, or what duty is, or what his soul is, or what everlasting joy or torment is, will know that time is a commodity of greater worth than so contemptuously to be cast away for nothing. O remember when thou art next in idle talk, did God make thee for this? doth he continue thee among the living, and keep thee out of hell, and yet prolongeth thy days, that thou shouldst waste thy time in idleness and vanity? Hast thou so many sins to mortify, and so many other works to do, which heaven or hell lieth on, and so short and uncertain a time to do them in, and yet hast thou leisure for idle talk?

5. Moreover, this sin is so much the greater, because it is not a rare or seldom sin, but frequently committed and continued in. It is not like the sin of David or Noah, that though greater, yet was but once committed; but this is made great by the number and continuance. How many thousand idle words have you been guilty of in your time!

6. And it is a sin that tendeth to greater sins. For idle words are the ordinary passage to backbiting, railing, lying, and contentious words: "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin, but he that refraineth his lips is wise," Prov. x. 19. Thus "a fool's lips enter into contention; his mouth is his destruction, and his lips are the snare of his soul," Prov. xviii. 6, 7. "In the multitude of dreams, and many words, are divers vanities: but fear thou God," Eccl. v. 7. "The lips of a fool will swallow up himself; the beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishness, and the end of his talk is madness," Eccl. x. 12, 13. Idleness is the beginning, but worse than idleness is the end.

7. It is a sin that habituateth the speakers and hearers both to vanity: use makes us disposed to that which we use. It will grow strange to you to speak of better things when you are used to vanity. And the use of hearing you, is an exceeding wrong to the souls of the hearers. And a small matter confirmeth such bad hearts as the most have, in the vanity that they are in. You cast water on their graces and your own, if there were any. If any of them had better thoughts, your idle talk doth drown and divert them.

8. And it is a sin that hindereth abundance of edification that holy confidence might bring. It is a precious thriving course for christians to be communicating experiences, and declaring the excellences and loving-kindness of God, and exciting one another: and this you lay by, and turn to vanity. Nay, perhaps some other that is in the company may be purposed to set upon such profitable discourse, and your idle talk doth hinder them, and suppress the exercise of God's graces for your good. At least there may be much precious matter in them, that wants but vent, and if you would but begin, it may be poured forth as precious ointment. Many wise and able men are too backward in beginning edifying discourse, that yet are exceeding fruitful, when you have once set them a-work. And idle talk is the hinderer of this.

9. And it is a very fruitless sin. You offend God for nothing. What get you by an hour's idle talk? or what have you to tempt you to it?

10. And it is a wilful sin, and usually accompanied with much impenitency, which makes it much the greater. Men use not to lament it, and call themselves to account for it, and say, What have I done? but go on in it as if it were no sin.

And now you see the greatness of the sin, I beseech you make more conscience of it than you have done. And that you may avoid it, observe these brief directions.

Direct. 1. Labour for understanding in the matters of God: for that is it that must furnish the tongue, and prevent vanity, Prov. xi. 12; x. 19. A foolish head will have a foolish tongue.

Direct. 2. Get a deep impression and lively sense of the matters of God upon the heart. For a man never talks heartily, that talks not from the heart. He that is full of the love of God, possessed of the Spirit of Christ, taken up with the riches of grace and of glory, will scarce want matter to talk of, nor a holy disposition to set him a-work: for the word of God will be as a fire in his heart; he will be weary with forbearing, till the flames burst out, Psal. cxix. 11; xl. 8; lvii. 7; cxix. 111; xxxix. 3; Jer. xx. 9. The hearty experienced christian is usually the fruitful christian in word and deed.

Direct. 3. Preserve a tender conscience, that may check you when you begin to turn to vanity. The fear of God is the soul's preserver, Psal. xix. 9; Prov. xvi. 6; xxiii. 17.

Direct. 4. Walk as before the Lord: live, and think, and speak as in his presence. If the presence

of an angel would call you off from idle words, what then should the presence of God himself do! Dare you run on in idle, foolish prating, when you remember that he heareth you?

Direct. 5. Keep out of the company of idle talkers, lest they entangle you in the sin: unless when you have a call to be among them, Prov. xiii. 20. We are apt to let our discourse run with the stream.

Direct. 6. When you are with the ungodly, maintain in you a believing compassion to their souls; and then the sense of their condition will heal your discourse.

Direct. 7. Provide matter of holy discourse of purpose beforehand. As you will not travel without money in your purses to defray your charges; so you should not go into company without a provision of such matter as may be profitable for the company that you may be cast upon. Study and contrive how to suit your speeches to the edification of others, or else to draw good from others, even as ministers study for their sermons.

Direct. 8. Speak not until you have considered what is like to be the effect of it, and weighed the quality of the person, and other circumstances to that end. Do not speak first, and consider after, but first think, and then speak.

Direct. 9. Be still sensible of the worth of time and opportunity, and then you will be as loth to cast it away on idle talk, as a good husband will be to cast away his money for nothing.

Direct. 10. Keep up a sense of your own necessity, which may provoke you to be better husbands of your tongues and time: and engage those you converse with, to mind you of your idle talk, and take you off it as soon as you begin.

Direct. 11. See that your heart, and tongue, and all be absolutely devoted to God; and then you will question any by-expense of words: and "whatsoever you do in word or deed, you will do all in the name of Christ, and to the glory and praise of God," Col. iii. 17; 1 Cor. x. 31.

Direct. 12. Be resolute for God, and be not ashamed to own him and his cause. A sinful bashfulness hinders much good. Observe these directions for this part of self-denial.

CHAPTER XXII.

FALSE STORIES, ROMANCES, AND OTHER TEMPTING BOOKS.

5. Another point of sensuality to be denied, is, the reading or hearing of false and tempting books, and those that only tend to please an idle fancy, and not to edify. Such as are romances, and other feigned histories of that nature, with books of tales, and jests, and foolish compliments, with which the world so much aboundeth, that there are few but may have admittance to this library of the devil. Abundance of old feigned stories, and new romances, are in the hands, especially of children, and idle gentlemen, and filthy, lustful gallants, or empty persons that savour not greater matters, but have spirits suitable to such gauds as these. But if they were only toys, I should say the less; but having seen by long observation the mischief of them, I desire you to note it in these few particulars.

1. They insnare us in a world of guilt, by drawing us to the neglect of those many, those great and necessary things that all of us have to mind and study. Oh! for a man or woman, that is under a load of sin, unassured of pardon and salvation, that is near to death, and unready to die, to be seen with a story or romance in their hand; what a gross incongruity is this! It is fitter the book of God should be in your hand. It is that which you must live by and be judged by. There is much that you are yet ignorant of, which you have more need to be acquainted with than fables. Are you not ignorant of a hundred truths that you should know, that God hath revealed to further your salvation; and can you lay them all by to read romances? Are you travelling towards another world with a play-book in your hand? Oh that you did but know what greater matters you have to mind and to do! Do all that you have to do first, that is of a thousand times more worth, and weight, and need; and then come to me, and I will answer your objections, What harm is it to read a play-book? First, quench the fire of sin and wrath that is kindled in your souls; and see that you understand the laws of God, and read over those profitable treatises of divines, that the world aboundeth with, and your souls more need, and then tell me, what mind or time you have for fables.

2. Moreover, it dangerously bewitcheth and corrupteth the minds of young and empty people, to read these books. Nature doth so close with them, and delight in them, that they presently breed an inordinacy of affection, and steal away the heart from God, and his holy word and ways. It cannot be that the love and delights of the heart can be let out on such trash as these, and not be taken off from God and the most needful things. That is the most dangerous thing to the soul, that works itself deepest into the affections, and is most delighted in, instead of God. And therefore I may well conclude that play-books, and history-fables, and romances, and such like, are the very poison of youth, the prevention of grace, the fuel of wantonness and lust, and the food and work of empty, vicious, graceless persons; and it is great pity that they be not banished out of the commonwealth.

3. Moreover, they rob men of much precious time, in which much better work might be done: much precious knowledge might be got while they are exercised in these fables. Those hours must be answered for: and there is not the worst of you but then had rather be able to say, I spent those days and hours in prayer, and meditating on the life to come, and reading the law and gospel of Christ, and the books which his servants wrote for my instruction, than to say, I spent it in reading love-books, and tale-books, and play-books. All these considered, I beseech you throw away these pestilent vanities, and take them not in your hands, nor suffer them in the hands of your children, or in your houses, but burn them as you would do a conjuring-book, and as they did, Acts xix. 19, that so they may do no mischief to any others.

CHAPTER XXIII.

VAIN SPORTS AND PASTIMES TO BE DENIED.

6. Another part of fleshly interest to be denied, is, vain sports and pastimes, and all unnecessary recreations. For this also is one of the harlots that the flesh is defiled with.

Recreations are lawful and useful if thus qualified.
1. If the matter of them be not forbidden: for there

is no sporting with sin. 2. If we have a holy, christian end in them, that is, to fit our bodies and minds for the service of God; and do not do it principally to please the flesh. If, without dissembling, our hearts can say, I would not meddle with this recreation, if I thought I could have my body and mind as well strengthened and fitted for God's service without it. 3. If we use not recreations without need, as to the said end; nor continue them longer than they are useful to that end; and so do not cast away any of our precious time on them in vain. 4. If they be not uncivil, excessively costly, cruel, or accompanied with the like unlawful accidents. 5. If they contain not more probable incentives to vice than to virtue; as to covetousness, lust, passion, profaneness, &c. 6. If they are not like to be more hurtful to the souls of others that join with us, than profitable to us. 7. If they be not like to do more hurt by offending any that are weak, or dislike them, than good to us that use them. 8. If they be used seasonably, in a time that they hinder not greater duties. 9. If we do it not in company unfit for us to join with. 10. Especially if we make a right choice of recreations, and when divers are before us, we take the best; that which is least offensive, least expensive of time and cost, and which best furthereth the health of our bodies, with the smallest inconvenience.

These rules being observed, recreations are as lawful as sleep, or food, or physic.

But, alas, they are made another thing by the sensual, ungodly world. Sometimes they must sport themselves with sin itself, in the abuse of God's name, and servants, and creatures: tippling, and profane courses, are some men's chiefest recreations: and though the law of the land forbid most of their sports, and the law of God commandeth them to obey all the laws of men that are not against the law of God, yet this is a matter of nothing to their consciences. And let the matter be never so lawful, they make all impious by a carnal end. It is none of their intention to strengthen and fit themselves for the service of God, and a holy, righteous life, by their recreations; but it is merely because their fancy and flesh is pleased in them: even as the drunkard, glutton, or whoremonger, that have no higher end than pleasure, and can give you no better account why they feed their lust, but because they love it, and it is their delight; just so is it with sportful youths and gallants. How few of many thousands can you come to that are at cards, dice, or dancing, that can truly say, they would not do any of this but for God, and to fit themselves for his service! Did you ever know such a one? I believe in some better kind of recreations you may know some such; but scarce in these. Alas, this sin is not of so small a stature as too many impenitent souls imagine. It is one of the crying sins of the land, and I believe one that brought down the vengeance of the late war upon us; and yet it is not half cured after all. The gentry of England, that should have been educated in learning and the fear of God, and been the examples of the people in temperance and holiness, have been lamentably brutified and drowned in this (with other parts of gross) sensuality. Instead of serious prayer, and holy conference, and instructing of their families, cards and dice took up the time, and cursing and swearing were the common attendants of them; and their children and servants learned of them, and took the same course. They bestowed more time in these, and in hunting, hawking, bowling, cocking, stage-plays, and such like, than they did in the serious worshipping of God; yea, than they did in the works of any lawful calling: for indeed they lived as without a calling, doing very little else but rise, and dress them, and compliment those about them, and drink, and eat, and so to their sports at home or abroad, and then to eating and drinking again, and so to their vain discourses, and so to their beds again: and this was the ordinary course of their lives: "they sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play," Exod. xxxii. 6; 1 Cor. x. 7. In the sins of Sodom did they live, "pride, fulness of bread, and idleness," Ezek. xvi. 49. They trod the steps of him that Christ had told them, did cry in vain for a drop of water to cool his tongue, (Luke xvi. 19,) gallantly clothed, and fared deliciously every day (or sumptuously). Their whole life almost was a sacrifice to their flesh, to their belly, their fancies, and their lusts; till God broke in upon them in his wrath, and found them another employment, and shortened their store, and diminished their full estates, and brought them into contempt and trouble: and yet how common is the sin to this day! "Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning that they may follow strong drink, that continue till night, till wine inflame them; and the harp and the viol, the tabret and pipe, and wine are in their feasts; but they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands: therefore my people are gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge, and their honourable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst: therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure, and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth shall descend into it," Isa. v. 11—14. "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion,—that stretch themselves on their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the stall, that chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of music—that drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments: but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph," Amos vi. 1, 4—6.

The precious time that this sort of men lay out in their needless sports and recreations, is more worth than all their estates; and if their sin had no other aggravation but this, I confess I should take it for a far greater sin than any that thieves are usually hanged for at the gallows! What! for men that have received more from God than others, and are obliged more to him, and are capable of doing him more eminent service, for such as these to live like epicures! and when they are hastening to an endless life, to waste the most, yea, almost all this precious time in flesh-pleasing sensuality! I think it is one of the greatest sins in the world! And no wonder that Christ made such a choice of such a one as these, to acquaint them who they are that shall be damned, Luke xvi. And if conversion make not a wonderful change on them, they must look undoubtedly to speed as he; and to have the same account of the cause of their misery, "Son, remember that thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented," Luke xvi. 25.

Abundance of them bestowed more upon hawks and dogs, than would have maintained many poor families: and play for large sums at cards, and dice, and cockings, and horse-races. Covetousness, and luxury, and passion, and swearing, and cursing, were the virtues that their sports did exercise: and others must be their companions in the same impieties, that they perish not alone. Unmerciful and oppressing they are in their very sports, treading down the hedges and corn of poor men in following their game, and never making them reparation for

their loss, but raging at them if they do but complain. No fitter company for them, than the most impious swearers, and ribald, filthy speakers, and the like: who was offended at it, they cared not; but made it an additional part of their sport, to cast a scorn at those that durst not and would not be as bad as they. And all this is, when they have variety of civil, cheap, inoffensive recreations at hand, which might better have fitted a christian's end.

And the youthful part of the vulgar are, in their degree, of the same spirit with those epicures, and of the like practice, as far as their estates and leisure will allow them. Witness the eagerness of the rabble in following after wakes, and may-games, cock-fightings, dancing, dice, and cards, and such like exercises. And more pleasure they have in these than in prayer, or God's praises, or holy instructions, or conferences. As much as the most sordid whoremonger or drunkard is enslaved in his proper flesh-pleasing sin, so much are our voluptuous youths and others addicted to gaming, sports, and pastimes, and enslaved to this flesh-pleasing sin of theirs. Ah poor people! doth time run on so fast, and are you hastening to the dreadful bar of God; and do you want pastime? Is your work so great, and your time so short, and utterly uncertain; and yet must you hunt about for pastime? Must it go with you in heaven or hell for ever, as you spend this hasty inch of time, and yet have you days or hours to spare for needless recreation? Oh what a cursed thing is sin, that can so bereave men of the use of reason, in that one thing for which their reason was given them! Yea, we can scarce convince these poor deluded souls that they do amiss; but they say, What harm is there in cards, or dice, or hunting, or bowling, or such like recreations? How shall we live without recreation? *Answ.* But is there no harm in needless flesh-pleasing, and in the loss of precious time, to men that are ready to step into eternity? Oh that ever men should make such a question! Suppose your recreations were the lawfullest in the world in their own nature? Can there be a greater villany, than to set your hearts on them, and make a god of them, and cast away precious hours on them, in using them needlessly? Recreations are your physic, or your sauce; and therefore must not become your food, nor be made a meal of. They are only as whetting to the mower, which must never be used but when there is need; to spend half the day in needless whetting deserves no wages. O did you know but what is your work, and time, and what is before you, you would be better husbands; and then you might so contrive your business, as to lose no time in recreations. For either your calling puts you on the labour of the mind, as students, or of the body, as labouring men. If study be your calling, you need no exercise of recreation but for your bodies, for variety of studies is the best or sufficient for the mind: and two hours' walking is bodily recreation enough in a day, for almost any student that is in a capacity to labour: and if you be labouring men, or your calling lie in bodily motion, then you need no recreation for your bodies besides your callings, but only for your mind: and if you love God and his word, what better recreation for your minds can you devise, than thinking of the love of God in Christ, and meditating on the law of God, (Psal. i. 2,) and calling upon him, and rejoicing in his praises, and the communion of his saints? Is not a day in his courts better than a thousand any where else? The Spirit of God by David said so, Psal. lxxxiv. 10. But alas, it is this unmortified flesh, and tyrannizing sensuality, that blindeth you, that you cannot see the truth: or else all this would be as plain to you as the high way.

CHAPTER XXIV.

VAIN COMPANY TO BE DENIED.

7. Another sensual vice to be denied, is, a love to vain, ungodly company. This is a sin that I think none but utterly graceless men are much carried away with. For the godly are all taught of God to love one another, (1 Thess. iv. 9,) and to delight in the saints as the most excellent on earth, (Psal. xvi. 2, 3,) and to take pleasure in their communion; and to look on the ungodly with a differencing belief, as foreseeing their everlasting misery, if they return not: so that it is the ungodly that I have now to speak to. Some fall in love with the company of good fellows, as they call them; and some love the company of harlots, and some of gamesters; and most of merry, pleasant companions, and men that are of their own disposition: and the love of such company enticeth them to the frequent committing of the sin. They would not go to gaming but for company; they would not go to the ale-house but for company; and when they are there, perhaps they will swear, and drink, and mock at godliness for company. But are you willing also to go to hell for company? Is the company of those sinners better than the company of God, and his favour? Were it not better to be that while with him in prayer, or about his work? If you love a tippling fellow better than God, speak out, and say so plainly, and never dissemble any more, nor say that you love God above all, or that you are christians. Have you more delight in the company of them that would entice to sin, than in the company of the godly that would draw you from it? This is a most certain mark, that yet you are the children of the devil, and in a state of damnation. It is not possible for a sanctified child of God to do so. See the description of the man that shall be saved, in Psal. xv. 4; "In his eyes a vile person is contemned, but he honoureth them that fear the Lord." Birds of a feather will flock together. The company which you love, shows what courses you love, and what you are. You delight in the company of those that Christ will judge as his enemies; and how then will he judge of you? You delight most in the company of those notorious fools, that know not the plainest and needfullest things in all the world; that know not that God is better than the world, and holiness than sin; and know not the way of their own salvation. If you are content to have the company of the ungodly for ever, you may take it here. But if you would not dwell in hell with them, do not go on in sin with them. O when you shall see those very men arrested by death, and haled at the bar of God, and cast into damnation, then you will have no mind of their company! Then, oh that you could but say, that you were none of them! Like a man that is enticed by thieves to join with them; but when the hue-and-cry overtakes them, and they are apprehended, how glad would he be then to be from among them! I tell you, sinners, if grace recover you, you shall wish in the sorrow of your hearts that you had never seen the faces of those men that enticed you to evil; but if grace do not recover you, you shall wish ten thousand times in hell that you had never seen their faces: but then your

wishes will be in vain. In the name of God bethink yourselves, whether your companions can bear you out at last, and save you from the wrath of God, and warrant your salvation? Nay, whether they can save themselves; alas, you know they cannot: God saith, "If you live after the flesh, ye shall die," Rom. viii. 13; and if these men say, (as the devil to Eve,) "You shall not die," are they able, think you, to make it good? What! can they overcome the God of heaven? O sirs, away, as you love your souls, from such mad and miserable company as this.

CHAPTER XXV.

PLEASING ACCOMMODATIONS, BUILDINGS, GARDENS, HORSES, &c.

8. ANOTHER sensual delight to be denied, is pleasing accommodations, in buildings, rooms, walks, gardens, grounds, cattle, and such like. It is lawful to be thus accommodated, and lawful to desire and use such accommodations, with such cautions as I gave before about recreations: 1. If you do not with Ahab desire to be accommodated by that which is another man's, coveting your neighbour's possession, or unlawfully procuring it. 2. If you be not at too much cost upon such things, expending that upon them that should be laid out on greater and better things. 3. But especially, if you desire such accommodations for right ends, sincerely referring all to God's honour, and desiring them, not principally to please your own fancy, and carnal mind, but for the enabling you the better and more cheerfully to serve God. Nothing but God may be loved for itself. When the pleasing of the flesh and fancy is the utmost thing we look at in any of our desires, they are wicked and idolatrous. Our houses therefore must be fitted to necessary uses, and not to inordinate delights. Our gardens, orchards, walks, and such like, must be first suited to necessity, and then to so much delight as is useful to us for the promoting of our holiness; but not to any useless, tempting delight.

But worldlings and sensual persons will not be tied to these christian rules. Alas, it is the furthest matter from their minds, to make heaven the end of all their earthly possessions and accommodations. They may hypocritically talk of God, and of serving him by their estates; but really it is the pleasing of a fleshly mind that is the thing which they intend. They have more delight in their houses, and gardens, and lands, and cattle, than in God and the hopes of life everlasting. They desire fair houses that they may be thought to be no mean persons in the world, and that they may please their humours that run after creatures for felicity and content. I would desire such men to consider these things.

1. All these are but the baits of Satan to delight you and entangle your desires, and find you work in seeking after them, while you neglect far greater matters. Can you have while to look so much after superfluities and delights in the world, when you have necessaries yet to look after for your souls? Have you not greater things to mind than these, which these occasion you to neglect?

2. Do you really find that they conduce to your main end, even to make you more holy, or more serviceable to God? Nay, do not your own consciences tell you, that they hinder you, and cross those ends? And yet will you go against your experience?

3. If you are humble, conscionable christians, you feel cause enough already to lament, that your love to God and delight in him is no more; and yet are you preparing snares for your souls, to steal away that little remnant of your affections, which you seemed to reserve for God?

4. If you have any spark of grace in you, you know that the flesh and the world are your dangerous enemies; and you know that the way that the world doth undo men, is by enticing them to over-value it and over-love it; and that those that love it most, are deepest in a state of condemnation; and the less men love it, the less they are hurt or endangered by it. And do you not know that you are liker to overlove a sumptuous house, with gardens, orchards, and such accommodations, than a mean habitation? Why should you be such enemies to your own salvation, as to make temptations for yourselves? Have you not temptations enough already? Do you deal with those you have so well, and overcome them so easily and so constantly, as that you have reason to desire more? If Christ your General send you upon a hotter service, you may go on with courage, and expect his help; but if you will so glory in your own strength, as to run into the hotter battle, and call for more and stronger enemies, it is easy to conjecture how you will come off. If you are christians, know yourselves; you know that in the meanest state, you are too prone to overlove the world, and that, under all God's medicinal afflictions, you cannot be so weaned from it as you ought! Are you not daily constrained to groan and complain to God under the burden of too much love of the world, and too much delight in worldly things? If this be not your case, I see not how you can have any sincerity of saving grace. And if it be your case, will you be so sottish, and hypocritical, as to complain daily to God of your sin, and in the mean time to love and cherish it? to groan under your disease, and wilfully eat and drink that which you know doth increase it? What will you think of a man that will pray to God to save him from uncleanness, and yet will dwell no where but in a brothel-house? What do you better, that must needs have the world in the loveliest garb, and must needs have house, and grounds, and all things in that plight, as are fittest to entice the heart; and then will complain to God, that you overlove the world, and love him too little? To your shame you may speak it, when you do it so wilfully, and cherish the sin which you thus complain of. If God call you into a state of fulness and temptations, watch the more narrowly over your affections and your practices; and use no more of the creatures for yourself, if you have ten thousand pounds a year, than if you had but a hundred; but do not seek and long for temptations: wish not for danger, unless you were better able to pass through it.

5. Remember when your fancies desire such things, not only that it is an enemy that desireth them, and to please your enemy is not safe for you; but also that it is the way that most have perished by, to have the world before them in too pleasing and lovely a condition. Remember Nebuchadnezzar's case, (Dan. iv. 30,) that for glorying in his pompous buildings, was turned as a mad-man among the beasts. Remember the rich man's sad example, Luke xii. 20, and xvi. and think whether it be safe to imitate them. If men must perish for loving the creature more than God, methinks you should long most for that condition, in which the creature appeareth least lovely, or is least likely to steal your love from God, and in which you may love him and enjoy him most.

6. And bethink you how unsuitable it is to your

condition, to desire sumptuous buildings, and enticing accommodations to your flesh. Have you not taken God for your portion, and heaven for your home? And are you not strangers and pilgrims here? And is not God and everlasting glory sufficient for you? You profess all this, if you profess to be christians; and if you be not, you should not profess that you are. And what! do you begin to repent of your choice? Must you yet turn to the pomp and vanity of the world again? And will you quit your hopes of God and glory? Ah, poor souls! what little need have you of such great matters on earth! You have but a little to do with them! and but a little while to stay with them! And will not a mean habitation, and shorter accommodations, serve you for so short a time? Stay but a while, and your souls shall have house-room enough in heaven or hell, and a narrow grave of seven feet long will serve your bodies till the resurrection. And cannot you make shift with an ordinary habitation, and with small and common things, till then? Naked you came into the world, and naked you must go out: make not then so great a stir in dressing, and undressing, and feathering a nest, that will be so soon pulled down.

7. And it is a dangerous sign that your time on earth is short, when you have most content in outward things. I have told you once in another discourse (which I have since seen more of) that people that much set their hearts upon any earthly thing, do use to be snatched away by death just when they have attained it, before they can have the comfort of possessing it. Just when their houses are built; just when their debts are paid, and their estates cleared and settled; just when they have such or such a thing which they earnestly desired, then they are gone; as the fool in Luke xii. 20, "This night shall thy soul be required of thee; then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?"

8. And you do but prepare for a double sorrow, when you must leave all these. Do you think that the more you love or delight in any thing below, you will not be the lother to leave it? Do not think only of the present content, but ask your hearts, Shall I be willinger to part with a sumptuous house, and commodious gardens, walks, and fields, than with a mean habitation, and less pleasing things? Oh, how it tears the very heart of the worldling, when he sees that he must for ever leave all that which he set so much by, and which hath cost him so dear! If he set his heart but on a horse, or any creature, the loss of it is a double suffering. Much more will he be wounded with the loss of all, that his mind was so much set upon.

Remember, therefore, christians, that as these accommodations are mercies which you must faithfully use, when they are cast upon you; so they are snares not to be sought after; and matter for your self-denial to neglect. As they are provision for the flesh to fulfil its desires, you must not know them. You have a building of God to mind and look after; a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens; and it better beseemeth you, earnestly to groan to be so clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up of life, 2 Cor. v. 1, 2, 4. Possess present things as not possessing them; and use them as not abusing them; for the form of them passeth away.

CHAPTER XXVI.

APPAREL AS USED FOR THIS CARNAL END, &c.

9. Another object of sensuality to be denied, is apparel, as desired for this carnal end. Though clothing be a consequent of sin, yet now to man in this necessity it is a mercy and a duty, so be it we use it with such cautions as in the foresaid cases is expressed. 1. That our end be the furnishing our frail bodies for the work of God, and the preserving them from that shame, and cold, and hurt which would unfit us for his service. 2. And that our apparel be fitted as near as we can to these ends; that is, to healthful warmth, and comeliness; and that under the name of comeliness we do not fit them to carnal ends, to set us out to the eyes of men, and to raise their esteem of our worth or comeliness of person: but be satisfied if we avoid the shame of nakedness and contemptible unhandsomeness. 3. To which end we should see that we affect not to rise above those of our own rank, nor equal ourselves in apparel with our superiors; but go with the lower sort of our condition. 4. And that we imitate not the fashions of light and vain persons; but keep company in our attire with the most wise, and sober, and grave persons about us. 5. And that we bestow no needless cost upon our attire, because we must be accountable for all that God intrusteth us with. 6. And that we change not causelessly. Thus must apparel be used: the cheapest that is warm and comely, according to the fashion of the gravest persons of our rank, and the lowest of them.

But alas, this childish trifle the devil hath made a bait of sensuality. The care that people have about it, the cost they bestow on superfluities, their desire to go with the highest of their rank, to say nothing of mutable and immodest fashions, do show to what end it is that they use it. I desire these kind of people to think of these few things that I shall say to them.

1. This vanity of apparel is the certain effect of the vanity of your mind; you openly proclaim yourselves to be persons of a foolish, childish temper, and poor understanding: among the most ungodly people, they that have but common wisdom, do look upon this vanity of inordinate apparel as quite below them. And therefore it is commonly taken to be the special sin of women, and children, and light-headed, silly, empty men. Those that have no inward worth to commend them to the world, are silly souls indeed, if they think any wise folks will take a silken coat instead of it! It is wisdom, and holiness, and righteousness, that are the ornaments of man; and that is his beauty which beautifieth his soul. And do you think that among wise men fine clothes will go instead of wisdom, or virtue, or holiness? You may put as fine clothes upon a fool as upon a wise man; and will that think you make him pass for wise? When a gallant came into the shop of Apelles, that famous painter, to have his picture drawn, as long as he stood silent, the apprentices carried themselves reverently to him, because he shone in gold and silver lace; but when he began to talk, they perceived that he was a fool, and they left their reverence, and all fell a laughing at him. When people see you in an extraordinary garb, you draw their observation towards you, and one asketh, who is yonder that is so fine? And another asks, who is yonder? And when they perceive that you are more witless and worthless than other folks, they will but laugh at you and despise you. Excess in

apparel is the very sign of folly, that is hanged out to tell the world what you are, as a sign at an inn-door acquaints the passenger that there he may have entertainment. You draw folks to suspect that all is not well with you, where there needs all this ado. It is sure a sorry house that needeth many props; and a diseased body that needeth so much medicining; and a deformed face that needeth painting: and what is gaudy attire to the body, but such as painting is to the face? If I see artificial teeth in your heads, I must think that you want natural ones that were better. If I perceive your breath to be still sweetened by art, I shall suspect that it would stink without it. And if I see people inordinately careful of their apparel, I must needs suspect that there is some special cause for it: all is not well where all this care and curiosity is necessary. And what is the deformity that you would hide by this? Is it that of your mind? Why you bewray it more? You tell all that see you, that you are empty, silly souls, as plainly as a morrice-dancer, or a stage-player, doth tell folks what he is by his attire. Is it the deformities of your bodies that you would hide this way? I confess, that is the best excuse that can be made for this excess; for apparel will do more to hide the deformities of the body than of the mind. But the shape of your clothes is fittest for this (so far it is fit to be attempted); for the bravery of them will do little, but draw men's observation the more upon your infirmity. If you say that you have no such extraordinary necessity, then I must say that you do yourselves wrong to entice people to suspect it.

2. And also you make an open ostentation of pride, or lust, or both, to all that look upon you. In other cases you are careful to hide your sin, and take it for a heinous injury if you be but openly told of it and reproved: how comes it then to pass that you are here so forward yourselves to make it known, that you must carry the signs of it open in the world! Is it not a dishonour to rogues and thieves, that have been burnt in the hand or forehead, or must ride about with a paper pinned on their backs, declaring their crimes to all that see them; so that every one may say, yonder is a thief, and yonder is a perjured man? and is it not much like it for you to carry the badge of pride or lust abroad with you in the open streets and meetings? Why do you desire to be so fine, or neat, or excessively comely? Is it not to draw the eyes and observations of men upon you? And to what end? Is it not to be thought either rich or beautiful, or of a handsome person? And to what end desire you these thoughts of men? Do you not know that this desire is pride itself? You must needs be somebody, and fain you would be observed and valued; and fain you would be noted to be of the best or highest rank that you can expect to be reckoned of: and what is this but pride? And I hope you know that pride is the devil's sin, the first-born of all iniquity; and that which the God of heaven abhors! so that it were more credit for you in the eyes of men of wisdom to proclaim yourselves beggars, sots, or idiots, than to proclaim your pride. And too oft it shows a pang of lust as well as pride; especially in young persons; and few are so forward to this sin as they. This bravery and fineness is but the fruit of a procacious mind; it is plainly a wooing, alluring act. It is not for nothing that they would fain be eyed, and be thought comely or fair in others' eyes! Somewhat they want; you may conjecture what! And even married people, if they love their credit, should take heed by such means of drawing suspicion upon themselves. Sirs, if you are guilty of folly, pride, and lust, your best way is to seek of God an effectual cure, and to use such means as tend to cure it; and not such as tend to cherish it, and increase it; as certainly fineness in clothing doth. But if you will not cure it, for shame conceal it, and do not tell every one that sees you what is in your heart. What would you think of one that should go up and down the street, telling all that meet him, I am a thief, or I am a fornicator? would you not think that he were a compound of foolery and knavery? And how little do you come short of this that write upon your own backs, Folly, pride, and lust; or tell them by your apparel, Take notice of me; I am foolish, proud, and lustful?

3. And if you be so silly as to think that bravery is a means of honour, you should withal consider that it is but a shameful begging of honour from those that look upon you, when you show them not any thing to purchase or deserve it. Honour must be forced by desert and worth, and not come by begging; for that is no honour that is given to the undeserving. It is but the shadow of desert, and will constantly follow it among the wise and good, but never go without it. Your bravery doth so openly show your desire of esteem and honour, that it plainly tells all wise men that you are the less worthy of it. For the more a man desireth esteem, the less he deserves it. And you tell the world by your attire that you desire it; even as plainly and foolishly as if you should say to the folks in the streets, I pray think well of me, and take me for a handsome, comely person, and for one that is above the common sort. Would you not laugh at one that should make such a request to you? Why, what do you less, when by your attire you beg estimation from them? And for what, I pray you, should we esteem you? Is it for your clothes? Why I can put a silver lace upon a mawkin, or a silken coat on a post, or an ass. Is it for your comely bodies? Why a wicked Absalom was beautiful, and the basest harlots have had as much of this as you: a comely body, or beautiful face, doth oft betray the soul, but never saveth it from hell. And your bodies are never the comelier for your dress, whatever they may seem. Is it for your virtues that you would be esteemed? Why pride is the greatest enemy to virtue, and as great a deformity to the soul as the pox is to the body; and he that will think you ever the honester for a new suit, or a silver lace, doth as little know what honesty is as yourselves. For shame, therefore, give over begging for esteem, at least by such a means as inviteth all wise men to deny your suit; but either let honour come without begging for, or be without it.

4. Consider also that excess of apparel doth quite contradict the end that proud persons do intend it for. I confess it doth sometimes insnare a fool, and so accomplish the desires of the lustful; but it seldom attaineth the ends of the proud: for their desire is to be highlier esteemed, and almost all men do think the meanlier of them. Wise men have more wit, than to think the tailor can make a wise man or woman, or an honest man or woman, or a handsome man or woman: good men pity them, and lament their folly and vice, and wish them wisdom and humility. In the eyes of a wise and gracious man, a poor self-denying, humble, patient, heavenly christian is worth a thousand of these painted posts and peacocks. And it so falls out that the ungodly themselves do frustrate the proud person's expectations. For as covetous men do not like covetousness in another, because they would get most themselves; so proud persons like not pride in others, because they would not have any to vie with them, or overtop them, and be looked upon and preferred before them.

None look with such scorn and envy at your bravery, as those that are as silly and sinful as yourselves, who cannot endure that you should excel them in vanity; so that good and bad do ordinarily despise or pity you for that which you think should procure your esteem.

5. Consider, also, that apparel is the fruit or consequent of sin, that laid man naked and open unto shame; and is it fit you should be proud of that which is ordained to hide your shame; and which should humble you, by minding you of the sin that caused the necessity of it?

6. And you should bethink you better than most gallants do, what account you mean to make to God for the money that you lay out in excess of bravery. Will it, think you, be a good and comfortable account, to say, Lord, I laid out so much to feed and manifest my pride and lust, when such abundance of pious and charitable uses did call for all that you could spare? Many a lord, and knight, and gallant bestoweth more in one suit of clothes, or in one set of hangings, or in the superfluous dress of a daughter, than would keep a family of poor people for a twelvemonth, or than would maintain a poor scholar for higher service than ever they themselves will do; and many a poor boy or girl goeth without a Bible, or any good books, that they may lay out all they have on their backs.

7. Lastly, I beseech you do not forget what it is that you are so carefully doing; and what those bodies are that you so adorn, and are so proud of, and set out to the sight of the world in such bravery. Do you not know yourselves? Is it not a lump of warm and thick clay, that you would have men observe and honour? When the soul that you neglect is once gone from them, they will be set out then in another garb. That little space of earth that must receive them, must be defiled with their filthiness and corruption; and the dearest of your friends will have no more of your company, nor one smell or sight of you more, if they can choose. There is not a carrion in the ditch that is loathsomer than that gallant painted corpse will be a little after death. And what are you in the mean time? Even bags of filth, and living graves, in which the carcasses of your fellow-creatures are daily buried and corrupt. There is scarce a day with most of you, but some part of a dead carcass is buried in your bodies, in which, as in a filthy grave, they lie and corrupt, and part of them turneth into your substance, and the rest is cast out into filthy excrements. And thus you walk like painted sepulchres; your fine clothes are the adorned covers of filth, and phlegm, and dung. If you did but see what is within the proudest gallant, you would say the inside did much differ from the outside. It may be a hundred worms are crawling in the bowels of that beautiful damsel, or adorned fool, that set out themselves to be admired for their bravery. If a little of the filth within do but turn to the scab or the small-pox, you shall see what a piece it was that was wont to have all that curious trimming.

Away then with these vanities, and be not children all your days; nay, be not proud of that which your children themselves can spare! Be ashamed that ever you have been guilty of so much dotage, as to think that people should honour you for a borrowed bravery, which you put off at night, and on in the morning! O poor deluded dust and worms'-meat! lay by your dotage, and know yourselves: look after that which may procure you deserved and perpetual esteem, and see that you make sure of the honour that is of God. Away with deceitful ornaments and gauds, and look after the inward real worth. Grace is not set out and honoured by fine clothes, but clouded, wronged, and dishonoured by excess. It is the inward glory that is the real glory. The image of God must needs be the chiefest beauty of man: let that shine forth in the holiness of your lives, and you will be honourable indeed. Peter telleth you of such a conversation of women as may win their unbelieving husbands without the word. And what is it? "While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear; whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning, of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in old time, the holy women that trusted in God adorned themselves, being in subjection to their husbands," 1 Pet. iii. 1—5.

CHAPTER XXVII.

EASE, QUIETNESS, AND WORLDLY PEACE TO BE DENIED.

10. ANOTHER part of carnal self-interest to be denied, is, ease, quietness, and worldly peace, which the slothful and self-seekers prefer before the pleasing of God. Both the ease of the mind and of the body are here comprehended; and slothfulness in God's nearest service, and also in the works of our callings, to be reprehended.

The same fleshly power that draweth one man to whoredom, and drunkenness, and covetousness, doth draw another to sloth, and idleness. It is but several ways of pleasing the same flesh, and obeying the same sensuality. And because that idleness and sloth is so great and common a sin, and yet made so light of by the most, I shall briefly tell you the mischiefs of it, and the reasons that should make you hate it.

1. Slothfulness doth contradict the very end of our creation and preservation, and the frame of our nature; and so provoketh God to cut us off, and cast us as useless into the fire. Who dare so wrong the wisdom of God, as to say or think that he made us to do nothing? If a man make a house, it is to dwell in; if he make a watch, it is to tell him the hour of the day; and every thing is for its proper use. And is man made to be idle? What man, that is the noblest inferior creature, and an active creature, fitted for work, and the highest work! shall he be idle? Justly may God then hew him down as a dead and withered tree, and suffer him no more to cumber his ground.

2. Slothfulness is a sin that loseth the precious gifts of God. Our faculties and our members are his gifts and talents, which he hath committed to us to use for his service; so are our goods and all that we have; and shall we hide them in a napkin, or idly neglect to use them? Oh, what abundance of excellent mercies lie useless and idle, because you are idle that should use them! Every hour that you lose in idleness, what noble faculties, and large provisions are all laid by! As much as in you lieth, you make the whole creation to be and work in vain. Why should the sun shine an hour or minute for you in vain? Why should the earth bear you an hour in vain? Why should the springs and rivers run for you an hour in vain? Why should the air refresh you an hour in vain? Why should your pulse beat one stroke in vain; or your lungs

once breathe a breath in vain? Shall all be at work for you to further your work, and will you think that idleness is no sin?

3. Moreover, laziness and sloth is a sin that loseth you much precious time. All the time is lost that you are idle in. Yea, when you are at work, if you do it slothfully, you are losing much of your time. A diligent person will go further and do more in an hour, than the lazy flesh-pleaser will do in two. When the slothful is praying, or reading, and working in his calling, he is but losing half his time, which diligence would redeem. And is our time so short and precious, and yet is idleness an excusable sin? what! loiter so near night, so near eternity, when we have but a little time to work? Oh, work while it is day, for the night is coming when none can work. Were it but for this, that sloth doth steal so much of our time, I must think it no better than a heinous thievery.

4. And by this means we rob ourselves. We might be getting some good all the time that we are idle; or doubly advantage ourselves, if sloth did not keep us company in our work. "The slothful is brother to him that is a great waster," Prov. xviii. 9. Slothfulness is self-murdering; men die while they lie still and wish. It is a sin that famisheth soul and body; "The desire of the slothful killeth him, because his hands refuse to labour," Prov. xxi. 25. It is the common cause of beggary and want; and what comfort can you have under such afflictions which you bring upon yourselves? If you want food or raiment, if your wives and children are in want, how can you think that God should take eare of you and afford you relief, when you bring this on yourselves by pleasing your flesh which is his enemy? If a soldier get hurt by trucking with the enemy, he may rather look that his general should hang him than relieve him. And how should good men be moved to compassionate you? If God doth impoverish you, and you come to want by innocency or a righteous cause, they must needs be ready to relieve you: but if sloth, or pride, or gluttony, or drunkenness bring you to it, till you repent, I see not how they should relieve you, at least any further than to keep you alive. For if you are set to please your flesh by idleness, must I join with you to please it by such supplies as shall cherish you in your sin? No, one flesh-pleaser is enough for one man! If you will please it either by idleness, or by luxury, yourselves, expect not that others should please it by your relief, and make provision for your sin. If I may not make provision for my own flesh to satisfy its lusts, neither must I do it for another.

But that is not the worst; slothfulness is the common cause of men's damnation: when they see a temptation and danger before them, slothfulness hindereth them from resisting it: when heaven is offered them, slothfulness makes them sit still and lose it. They must run, and strive, and fight, and conquer, and these are not works for a slothful person; especially when they must be continued to the death. So that it is manifest, that most men in the world are undone, soul and body, by the sin of sloth.

5. And by this you rob others as well as yourselves; you owe the world the fruit of your labours: you rob the souls of men, to whom you should do good. You rob the church that should be bettered by you. You rob the commonwealth, of which you are a member, and should have benefit by you. You owe your labours to church and commonwealth, and the souls of men, and will you not pay so great a debt? You deserve no room in the church or commonwealth, but to be cut off as an unprofitable member, if you bring no advantage to them. They say the bees will not suffer a drone in the hive. Nay, if you be hired servants, you plainly rob your masters if you are slothful, as much as if you stole their money or goods. If you buy a hundred sheep of a man, and he let you have but fourscore, doth he not rob or cheat you? And if a man buy a year's or a day's labour of you, and you let him have but half a year's labour, or half a day's labour, because of your sloth, do you not defraud or rob him of the other half? So that the idle are thieves to themselves, to the church, and the souls of men, to the commonwealth, and those that they are related to; even to their wives and children, for whom they should provide due maintenance by their labour.

6. And you are injurious to the honest poor, in that you disable yourselves from relieving them; when God commandeth you to work with your hands not only for yourselves, but that you may have to give to them that need, Eph. iv. 28. What if all men should do as you do, how would the poor be maintained, and the church and commonwealth served?

7. Yea, worst of all, you are guilty of robbing God himself. It is him that you owe your labours to, and the improvement of all the talents that he lendeth to you; and idleness is unfaithfulness to the God of heaven that setteth you on work: even in working for men, you must do it ultimately for God. "Not with eye-service as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing God: and whatsoever ye do, do it heartily as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord you shall receive the reward of the inheritance, for ye serve the Lord: but he that doth wrong, shall receive for the wrong which he hath done," Col. iii. 22, 23. If it be an offence to wrong man, what is it to wrong God! And if you may not be slothful in the work of a man, what a crime is it to be slothful in the work of the God of heaven! The greater your master is, the more heinous it is to be lazy in his service. Remember the curse on them that do the work of the Lord deceitfully, Jer. xlviii. 10. All work that you have to do is the work of the Lord.

8. And consider, that the idle forfeit the protection and provision of God; even their daily bread. For must he support and feed you to do nothing? His own rule is, "that if any man will not work, neither should he eat," 2 Thess. iii. 10. And if he may not eat, we may not relieve him.

9. And if idleness had not been a heinous sin, the apostle would never have commanded us to avoid the company of such, as if they were unfit to converse with christians, 2 Thess. iii.

10. Consider what abundance of work we have to do, and of how great importance! Oh, what a deal have we to do for our poor souls, and for many about us, besides all our bodily employment in the world! Methinks, every man that knows why he is a man, and what it is in an inch of time to work for everlasting, should never find an hour for idleness in his life, but still cry out, How short and swift is time, and how great and long is the work! A man that had all the town on fire about his ears, or a man that were fighting for his life, or a man that were in a leaking vessel ready to sink under him, might better be lazy, than a man that is at work for an endless life.

11. Moreover, idleness is a base kind of vice: it is the imitation of a block or a stone that lieth still, when that which hath life will be in action.

12. And it is usually a continual sin, or at least makes up a great part of the lives of many that are addicted to it: a drunkard will not always be drunk; and a liar will not always be lying; but a slothful person will be most commonly slothful.

And, to conclude, lay all this together, and think what a reckoning a slothful person is like to have, that by his sin is always running behindhand, and will have the neglected time, and means, and mercies of almost all his life to answer for.

And now you see the greatness of this sin, abhor it, and awake from it. You have much to do, and souls to save; and the ease of your flesh and fleshly minds is one thing that must be denied, before it can be accomplished. The slothful is still craving, yet a little slumber, yet a little ease; and he is still upon delays, even when he is convinced of his danger and his duty: when he knows that he must turn or die, yet he is delaying and putting off till another time. And so the vineyard and garden of the sluggard are grown over with nettles and weeds; and he hath scarce a duty to do, but there is a thorny hedge, or a lion in the way. Deny this ease, and be up and doing.

And there are three sorts of persons that have especial need of this advice. The first is those that by the phlegmatic distemper of their bodies, are more prone to heaviness and slothfulness than others. The more such are disposed to it, the more should they watch against it, and resist it.

The second sort are beggars, and other idle, wandering persons, that make a trade of idleness, and worse; such also as ballad-singers, stage-players, jugglers, cheaters, and most ale-sellers that spend their time in tippling and talking with their guests; and other idle persons, that will spend whole hours together in twattling and talking idly, and of other men's matters. All these live in a course of flesh-pleasing, and of heinous sin; and must better learn to deny the flesh before they can be the true disciples of Christ. This is not the life that God called you into his vineyard for; no, nor that he sent you into the world for, to waste your short and precious days in potting, and piping, and prating, and other ways of idleness: nor should such be suffered in a commonwealth.

The third sort are, too many lords, knights, and gentlemen, that think because they have enough to maintain them, that it is lawful to live an idle life; or if they do any thing that is profitable to the commonwealth, it is rather as a recreation than as a calling: now and then an hour, in the midst of their pleasures and idleness, is the most. It is a miserable life that this sort of persons live; even in the sins of Sodom, (which cry for the vengeance of Sodom,) pride, fulness of bread, and idleness. As if these persons that have most wages should do God the least work; and they that have most of his stock in their hands, should make the least use of it; or those that are obliged to God by the greatest mercies, should do least in manifesting their thankfulness or fidelity! What incongruities are these! Who should be so busy and laborious as those that have the greatest account to make, and those that are to be exemplary to the rest? Truly, gentlemen, I must deal plainly with you, that idleness, and the expression of it among the most of you, in hunting, and hawking, and bowling, and complimenting, and visitations, and vain discoursings, and excess of drinking, and tedious meals, is become the common shame of your order, and must be corrected before your honour or consciences can be recovered; and I am so far from any partiality in this censure of you, that I must tell you, if I knew one of my own profession that was guilty but of the tenth part of some of your idleness, I would do my best to rid the church of him, and have him cast out among the sensual. And you may do well sometimes to ask yourselves, whence it comes to pass that negligent, idle ministers must be sequestered and turned out of all, and idle magistrates let alone? One reason is, because gentlemen can better cheap compel a minister to painfulness than themselves, and punish ministers for negligence than themselves. And another reason is, because all faithful ministers themselves, in love to the church, are the seekers of this severity; but magistrates are few of them so self-denying, and forward to seek for such severity against the idle and negligent of their own order. But doth not your calling require diligence, as well as ours? It is a brutish, ungrateful conceit, of any man, to think that he may live idly, because he is rich. The richest men in the world are bound to as diligent labour as the poorest, though not in the same kind. And yet I can perceive that most of the poor are even of the same mind; and when they labour hardest, they are idle in God's account, because they would live idly if they could. It is no thanks to them that they labour, for it is necessity that doth constrain them. I can hear them say, that they would not work, at least but little, if they had but money enough. God will judge these as idle persons, because he takes the will for the deed. You must labour in obedience to God, and work as his servants, and that with cheerfulness and delight, and deny that self and flesh that would have ease, if ever you would have the heavenly reward.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE DELIGHT OF THRIVING AND PROSPERITY, &c.

11. Another selfish interest to be denied, is, a delight in prosperity, and seeing ourselves thrive, and our designs succeed for worldly things. The possession of these things doth not so much delight, as the hopes and successes of our endeavours to attain them. The very thoughts of prospering in our undertakings, and of being in a thriving course, and likely to reach some higher things which are in our eye and hope, is the greatest part of the content of worldlings. Men think that the world can do more for them than it can, and is sweeter than it is, and therefore they are very eager in seeking it, and please themselves much with the thoughts of their supposed felicity; but when they have reached the matter of their desires, they find it is not the thing they took it for. But in the mean time they feed themselves with fancies and expectations, and think that though this doth not content them, which they have attained, yet such or such a thing more would do it; and when they have that, yet somewhat more would do; and still, though they come short of the felicity they expect, yet it pleaseth them that they think they are in the way to it, and see their endeavours seem to prosper. The poor man that hath a desire but to reach to a competency, doth please himself much when he perceiveth that he is fair for it. Much more do the rich in the prospering of their designs, for the increase of their riches; and thus the "turning away of the simple doth slay them, and the prosperity of fools doth destroy them," Prov. i. 32. If their prosperity be such an eyesore even to the godly in temptation, when they judge according to the flesh, no wonder if it be a great matter in their own eyes; Psal. lxxiii. 3. If the best are in danger of puffing up with carnal delight and confidence in their attainments, and saying in their prosperity, "we shall never be moved," (Psal. xxx. 6,) no wonder if it be much more so with others. Prosperity

is as strong a trial to many as suffering for Christ; Oh how eager is the flesh upon this bait, and how close doth it cleave to what it doth attain!

See then that in this you deny yourselves; not in refusing prosperity when God bestows it on you, but in refusing the sensual delights which it affordeth the flesh to satisfy its lust. Not in pulling down your houses, or casting away your estates, or hindering your increase; but, 1. See that you do not promise yourselves too much in the creature; feed not your carnal fancies with vain hopes. Think not too highly of a prosperous state. Judge not of it as it accommodateth the flesh, but as it either helps or hinders you for God and heaven; and then you will perceive that it is a heavy charge and burden to the best, if not a dangerous temptation. O, if you knew but how dear the most do pay for their prosperity, you would pity them, and have lower thoughts of prosperity.

2. Seek not after prosperity too eagerly. Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and then if other things be cast in, or added to you, take them thankfully, but with self-suspicion and holy fear; but run not after them. "Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that which endureth to everlasting life," John vi. 27; and then take your daily bread as from your Father's provision. Labour about the world, in obedience to God; but not for the world as your ultimate end.

3. When prosperity is given you by God, then, above all, take heed how you use it. Let carnal self and corrupt desires fare never the better for it, if you had all the country, or were princes in the earth; but as you have it from God, remember you have it for God, and use it for him. When the flesh would be pleased and lifted up, whether with delicious meats and drinks, or carnal pomp, applause, or ostentation, or by sports, or idleness, or any other sensual delight, deny it these desires, as much as if you had no riches, and use nothing but for health and the service of God; and tell the flesh, It was not for thee, to the pleasing of thy desires, that God hath prospered me, but it was for his own more blessed ends; and therefore I will not serve or please thee by my prosperity, but him that gave it me. Do not think you have ever the more liberty to gratify your appetites in eating or drinking, because you are rich, or to gratify your flesh in inordinate sleep, or ease, or sports, or idleness; but let the flesh have as little as if you had the meanest estate, in which necessity did not deny you that which might fit you for the work of God.

Quest. But may not a gentleman fare better than a poor man? And may he not spend more time in ease or recreations? Or may he not wear more sumptuous apparel?

Answ. 1. A rich man that hath a greater family, must have a greater quantity of provision than a poor man that hath but few; and so must the poorest too that hath the like number. And for the quality: many poor are deprived of that which is most healthful through their necessity; and therefore here it is lawful for the rich to go beyond them, and to use so much of the creature as is most healthful and useful to their duties. But for all this, the richest man in England hath no more allowance to eat or drink one bit or cup for the mere pleasing of his carnal appetite, without any higher end, than the poorest man that is: it is a sin to both. It was a rich man that was tormented in hell for taking up his good things in this life, in being clothed in purple and fine linen, and faring deliciously or sumptuously every day, Luke xvi. 23. And the same answer I must give to the rest of the question; if a poor man want that ease, or sleep, or recreation, that would fit him for God's service, a rich man may take it, but not a jot more. He may not lie one hour in bed, nor spend one hour in talk, or sports, or long dinners, beyond what is useful to his christian ends, let him be never so rich. Rich men have as much work to do as the poor, and as much need to watch, pray, and fast, and study to prepare for death and judgment, which will not spare them because they are rich. If it be far hardest for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God, by Christ's own testimony, then it is clear that rich men have far greatest need to be painful to overcome their dangers, and make sure work for their immortal state. 3. And as for apparel, I grant, that rich men that are magistrates, or in any office or calling that requires it, may lawfully go in richer apparel than the poor; but this should not be one jot to please their carnal, proud fancies, or gratify inordinate, fleshly desires, but merely for health, and for such ornament as tendeth to the honour of their office: so that God, and not self, must be the end of all. Take warning therefore by the ruins of so many thousands as prosperity hath undone, and by so many dreadful passages of Scripture which show the danger of it; and see that if you prosper in any worldly thing, you offer it all to God, and deny yourselves, and prosper not to the flesh.

CHAPTER XXIX.

CHILDREN AND RELATIONS HOW TO BE DENIED.

12. Another selfish interest is in friends and children, and other near and dear relations, and this is also to be denied.

Not that you should imitate those unnatural heretics that tell us that fathers, and mothers, and brethren, and sisters, and husbands, and princes, and wives, and subjects, are all carnal relations that must be disowned, any further than justice binds us to a retribution to parents, or others that have been at pains or cost upon us. No, this is worse than heathenish impiety, and not only against the fifth commandment, but abundance of the plainest passages through the Scripture. To be without natural affection, and disobedient to parents, is part of the character of those impious professors of whom Paul prophesied, 2 Tim. iii. 2, 3; "If christian servants have heathens to their masters, they must not therefore cast off the yoke, but count them worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed: and if they have believing masters, they must not despise them because they are brethren, but the rather do them service because they are faithful." This is the doctrine of the gospel, which establisheth, and not dissolveth, our relations: and "if any teach otherwise, he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words," 1 Tim. vi. 1—4. Believing wives must stay even with unbelieving husbands, and win them to Christ by an eminent subjection, chastity, modesty, and piety, 1 Pet. iii. 1—6; 1 Cor. vii. 13, 14. And the like may be said of other relations. God calls us not, as popish votaries conceive, to renounce and separate from our natural or other near relations, on pretence of being devoted to him. The words of Paul, 2 Cor. v. 16, are abused by them. It is true, we must know no man after the flesh, no not Christ himself; that is, as esteeming them principally for

carnal excellences, as personage, greatness, birth, &c. or to carnal advantages and ends, or preferring the body and common relations before the inward spiritual worth and spiritual relations; and thus we must not know either parents, or children, or husbands, or wives, after the flesh; nor should a christian know or do any thing after the flesh as a carnal man: but yet, as we still continue our relation to Christ as his disciples, and servants, and members, and redeemed ones, for all that we know him not after the flesh, so must we continue our relations to others, and be faithful in the duties of those relations, and this after the Spirit, and for God.

So that by this you may see, that it is our relations, carnally considered, that are the fleshly interest which we must not know; that is, as they are looked upon as any part of that self, or of the interest of that self which would be its own end and god, and which is opposite to God, or not subordinate to him. To look upon your children more as yours than as God's is a carnal, selfish thought: to love them inordinately, and more because they are your own than because they are God's, and to love your own interest in your children more than God's interest in them, is a selfish regarding them after the flesh. Grace doth not destroy nature, nor natural relations or affections; but it sanctifieth them all to God, and carrieth us above it and destroyeth it, as glorious intuition destroyeth gracious knowing in part, that is, by perfecting it. Before sanctification, we know, esteem, regard, and love our parents, children, husbands, wives, merely as thus related to us, and in these carnal respects, and rise no higher; and if we had conversed with Christ himself, and ate and drank in his presence, and loved him accordingly, it would have been but a selfish, carnal knowledge, esteem, and love. But now we are sanctified, as God is exalted, and self denied and annihilated, as opposed or separated from God; so are all things that belong to self; and therefore, if we had loved parents, or Christ himself, with such a carnal, selfish love before, yet now we love them with higher love, that carrieth self and all to God. And thus even self is so destroyed, (as opposite to God, and separate from him,) as thereby to be exalted as united and subservient to him. And so is the love of friends, relations, or Christ himself (if we had loved him as a natural kinsman or brother, as some did that yet believed not in him); it is destroyed, but by an exalting, perfecting destruction. Just so far as self is dead, so far carnal knowledge and self-interest in friends is dead, and their dearness to us for that interest, and self and they are all advanced and dedicated unto God. And thus it is that the apostle would be understood, and thus it is that self must be denied in your relations; but because much duty consisteth herein, I shall moreover tell you the several parts of it in a few directions, which shall mostly extend to other relations, but principally to parents, because they are aptest to exceed.

1. See that it be God more than yourselves that you love in your children and other relations; and to that end, see what of God is in them, as they are his creatures, as devoted to him, as any way gifted by him for his service, as sanctified if they are such. He that loveth any creature for itself, and doth not principally love God in them, loveth them but carnally.

2. See therefore that you value and love those most, that have most of God in them, and the best of his endowments. Love a crooked, deformed child, that is godly, better than the most comely, or beautiful, or witty, that is ungodly. When parents have a humorous, unreasonable love to one child above the rest, without desert, or to a worse before a better, this is but a carnal, selfish love.

3. Love none excessively, but with a moderate love, such as shall allow God and holiness the pre-eminence: so that when you have the most love for your relations, you may have more for God, at least in the estimation, resolution, adhesion of your souls to him, if not in the passionate part of love.

4. See that you subject them to the government of Christ; labour to win all other relations to him, and devote your children to him betimes, that they may be his as soon as yours. While they have no wills of their own to use, they are to choose with your wills; that is, you are to make choice for them: and therefore if you unfeignedly dedicate them to God, you have small reason to doubt of his acceptance. This all parents do virtually that are godly; for he that is himself devoted to God by sanctification, doth with himself devote all that he hath, and virtually all that ever he shall have: and if he understand himself, he will do it actually. And hence it is that the seed of believers (yea, of one believer) are said to be holy; not only or chiefly because they are yours, born of your bodies; nor merely from a promise of God, that hath no pre supposed reason from the subject; but because they are the children of one that hath devoted himself, and all that he hath, to God: and if he understand himself, doth actually offer, devote, and dedicate his child to God in the solemn baptism, ordinance, and covenant. And God will sure accept all, that upon his own invitation are consecrated and offered to him.

5. See that you submit them heartily to the dispose of God; so that whatever he doth with them, for sickness or health, for poverty or riches, for honour or dishonour, for life or death, you can patiently bear it, and say as Eli, "It is the Lord, let him do as seemeth him good," 1 Sam. iii. 18. Murmur not if God afflict and take them away, even at once, as he did the sons of Job; or if he should afflict you in them, as he did David in Amnon and Absalom. Remember that as the resignation of life itself is the point by which Christ, under the gospel, doth try men's faith; so it was the resignation of an only son, which was next to life, by which he would try Abraham, the father of the faithful, before the incarnation of Christ. If therefore you will be the children of Abraham, you must walk in the steps of faithful Abraham, and remember that your children are not your own; and be content that God do with his own as he pleases.

6. Make God their portion as much as in you lieth, and seek more for a spiritual than a temporal felicity for them, and acquaint them with their Creator in the days of their youth: as believing, that those of them that are the holiest are the happiest.

7. Devote your children to such callings and employments in which they are likeliest to be most serviceable to God. Consider their dispositions and parts, and then never ask what kind of life is the most honourable or gainful for them, but in what way and course of life they may most serve God, and be most useful to his church; and to that let them be devoted.

8. Favour them not in sin; and suffer them not to dishonour God that they are devoted to: remember Eli's example. Gentle reproofs, instead of necessary severe correction, is called by God, "a despising him, and preferring his sons before him," 1 Sam. ii. 29, 30; even because his "sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not," 1 Sam. iii. 13. Take heed, as you love yourselves or them, of taking their parts against God, or against correction, and excusing the sins by which they do dishonour him.

9. Give them not, for their carnal advancement in the world, that part of your estate which is due to God. You owe it all to him; and in the disposing of it, he hath limited you to begin at home, and provide so for your children that they may have their daily bread, and so much more as they are in likelihood the fittest stewards to improve for God. But if you see the public state of the church or commonweal to stand in need of your assistance, and you shall then give almost all to your children, to make them rich and great in the world, and put off the works of greater moment with some poor, inconsiderable alms or legacy, this is to prefer self before the Lord; even as it is imagined to survive in your progeny, even when natural self can no longer enjoy it. It is a wonder, how so many men, seeming holy and devoted to God, can quiet their consciences in such a palpable sin as this. If one of them have two hundred or three hundred pounds a year, it is a wonder if he leave a hundred a year of it to any pious or charitable use; but if he leave forty or fifty pounds to the poor, or build some small almshouse, he thinks he hath done well: all the rest must go to leave his son in equal dignity and riches in the world as himself. But of this I spoke before.

10. Lastly, be sure that you be very suspicious of self, when the case of your children or any dear relation is before you: for self is near you, and will stick close, and will not easily be thrust out of your counsels, nor shaken off. And therefore in your own case, and your children's case, or the case of your near friends, you will have much ado to overcome the cunning and strong temptations to partiality, if you were the holiest saint on earth (though overcome them you will in the main, if you have true grace): but if you are dead professors, it is twenty to one but they will overcome you, and you will show the world that you are selfish hypocrites, and more for your children and friends than God.

Let me here give a few instances in this warning.

1. How oft have we seen it here and elsewhere, that people that make some show of religion, and are forward to have vice punished, and discipline exercised, yet when it falls on any children or near relations of their own, they are as much against it as they are for it on others; yea, rise up with passion and bitter reproaches of officers, ministers, or others that are the causes of it. As one hypocrite is tried when he denieth to suffer for Christ himself, so others show themselves hypocrites sooner by preferring their children; yea, their sinful children; yea, the present ease, or profit, or credit of their children; before their duty and the honour of God. And they will rather have God provoked, sin unpunished, and their children's own salvation hazarded, than they will have them justly and regularly chastised; yea, some of them rise up as malignant enemies against them that do it.

2. Again, when God hath convinced you of duty, if a carnal friend, a husband, or a parent, do but contradict it, and persuade you from a known duty or a holy life, how commonly do men obey, because forsooth they are their friends that do persuade them?

3. Moreover, when the case falls out that a man cannot follow God and his duty, and be true to his soul, but he is like to lose his friends; how commonly is God denied, that friends may not be denied, and conscience wounded, and duty balked, that the favour of friends may not be lost. O, saith one, they are the friends that I live by, my livelihood is in their hands, I am undone if they cast me off! Well, take them, and make thy best of them, and keep them as long as thou canst; if thou canst live better without God than them, or canst spare God's favour better than theirs, and they are better friends to thee than Christ is, and would be, take thy course, and judge at last whether the friend that thou didst choose, or that thou didst neglect and abuse, was the better, and would have stood thee in more stead in thy deepest extremities. Christ hath resolved you once for all, that he that loveth father or mother more than him, is not worthy of him, and cannot be his disciple: nay, if he hate not father, mother, and all; that is, if he will not cast them all away, and forsake them as men do hated things, rather than forsake Christ and the glory which he hath promised, Luke xiv. 26, 33. And therefore, seeing Christ hath thought meet to instance, in the forsaking of carnal friends for his sake, as a duty of all that will be his disciples, you may see that this is a very considerable part of your self-denial; and, doubtless, it is a point that christians are usually put to the trial in, or else Christ would not have instanced in it. Few turn to Christ, but their carnal friends will turn from them. No greater enemies to a man in the matters of his salvation, (except carnal self,) than carnal friends; and therefore either God or they must be denied. For when God is for holiness, and they against it; when they are for sinful pleasures and gain, and God against it; both cannot be pleased; and therefore one of them must be denied, God or they.

CHAPTER XXX.

REVENGEFUL PASSIONS TO BE DENIED.

13. Another part of self-denial consisteth in the denying of revengeful passions, that provoke us against those that have done us wrong, or that we judge to be our enemies. It is the common saying of such persons as are disposed to this sin, that revenge is sweet: it easeth the minds of malicious persons to have their will upon their adversaries, and to see them at their feet. Nothing of all his honours and prosperity could satisfy Haman till he was revenged of Mordecai. As a burning, festering boil, or imposthume, is eased by opening and vent, so is a boiling, passionate mind, when by railing speeches, or revengeful actions, it venteth itself against them that they hate. But in this also self must be denied by all that will be Christ's disciples, for he forgiveth none but those that can heartily forgive another: and that we may know that this is a part of self-denial of great necessity, he hath put it into our prayers, and will not have us so much as ask for forgiveness ourselves, if we cannot forgive; that we may know, that seeing it is not to be asked for on lower terms, it is not to be hoped for. The forgiving grace of God in Christ, doth so melt and overcome the hearts of all true christians, that it disposeth them in their measure to imitate him in forgiving: and they cannot find in their heart to take another by the throat for a hundred pence, when their Lord hath forgiven them ten thousand talents, Matt. xviii. 24, 28. The grace that is most gloriously manifested in the gospel, must needs make the deepest impression on the soul, and consequently conform the soul into its image: and doubtless this is love, and compassion, and forgiving mercy; and therefore he that cannot love his enemy, bless them that curse him, and pray for them that hate and persecute him, and return good for evil, can be no child

of God, Matt. v. 44—46. It is an inhuman oblivion of our own condition, for a man to seek revenge of another for a trifle, (for it can be no greater, as it is against such simple worms as we,) when so many and heinous sins have been forgiven us. Doth God remit to us the everlasting torments, and shall we inflict on another the venom of our private spleen? I know the furious Bedlams, and malicious wretches, do take all this but for unsatisfactory talk, and it is not words that will serve their turns to repair their honour, and ease their devilish, rancorous minds. Flesh and blood, say they, cannot endure it. *Answ.* And therefore, "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor corruption inherit incorruption," 1 Cor. xv. 50. Grace can do more than flesh and blood; and if you cannot forgive, you cannot be forgiven. If it be so hard for you to forbear, yea, to love an enemy, it shall be as hard to you to be saved, and escape the portion of the enemies of God; and if the word of God's command be but wind with you, the word of his promise shall be as uneffectual to your salvation, as the word of his precept and persuasion was uneffectual to your conversion and obedience. As "God is love," so his sanctified ones are turned into love: love is their new nature, and love is not of a revengeful disposition. Love is the divine nature in us, and malice provoking to revenge is the devilish nature; and a believer is more afraid of the anger of God, than to take his sword of revenge out of his hand. He hath learned, "Avenge not yourselves, but give place to wrath. Vengeance is mine, and I will repay, saith the Lord. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good," 1 Pet. ii. 21, 23; 1 Thess. iv. 6; Rom. xii. 19.

CHAPTER XXXI.

NEW, VAIN HISTORIES, AND OTHER MEN'S MATTERS, &c.

14. Another piece of carnal pleasure to be denied, is the delight men have in reading unprofitable histories, and hearing news that do not concern us, and meddling with other men's matters where we have no call.

With some fancies this is a notable part of carnal delight: many school-boys, and young effeminate wits, are as much poisoned and carried away with reading romances, feigned histories, and tale-books, and play-books, as by almost any piece of sensuality. Oh the precious hours that have been lost upon this trash and trumpery! but of this I spoke before: that which now I speak is, even true history and reports, as matter of mere news, to please a busy, ranging mind. History is a very profitable study, if it be used for right ends, and be rightly chosen. It is a very great help to understand the Scriptures, and to know the former and present state of the church; and see the wonderful works of Providence, that otherwise would be as lost to us. It is not fit that the wondrous works of God should die with those that have seen them, and not be transmitted to posterity. God should have the honour of his glorious works from generation to generation, and how shall that be if all be forgotten? He that knoweth nothing of any age but that which he lives in, is as foolish as he that knows nothing of any country or town but that which he lives in. Some history is essential to our faith, and much more is integral to it; and yet much more is very serviceable to it. He that hath not some competent acquaintance with church history, will be at great disadvantages in the holding and defending his faith itself against an infidel, or the purity of religion against a papist. And he that knoweth not the present state of the world, and of the church through the world, doth scarce know how to order his affections, or compose his prayers even in those greatest petitions, about the honour, and kingdom, and will of God. They cannot grieve with the church in grief, nor mourn with it when it mourns. So that it is a great duty of a christian to labour to understand by history the former and present state of the church: and it is a great mark of a gracious soul that longs to hear of the prosperity of the saints and free progress of the gospel; and a mark of a graceless person that careth not for these things.

But when history is not used to acquaint us with the matters of God, or to furnish us with useful knowledge, but to please a ranging, carnal mind, then it is but sinful sensuality or vanity. Many persons have no such delight to read the useful history of church affairs, as they have to read the curiously penned, though less useful history of other matters. Though I know that the history of the whole world is very serviceable to the knowledge of divine things, yet they that use it to holy ends will make choice accordingly, and be no more in it than may suit with those ends. It is the most human, with the most light, ridiculous passages, that are most pleasing to vain, unsanctified wits; but the godly delight in it so far as it shows them something of God, and leadeth them to him. In the very reading of Scripture, a carnal reader may be much pleased with the history, that hath no savour in the doctrine, but is weary to read it: and yet I must add this caution by the way; if we find a carnal kind of delight in Scripture history, or any other that is profitable, we must not therefore cast off the history, but seek after the cure of our disease, that we may spiritually take pleasure in all for God, and he may be the beginning, and end, and the life, and the all of our studies and delights; and though our carnal delight in news and history be a sin in us, yet God doth sometimes make it an occasion of good by leading us to that holy truth, which after may be the means of our sanctification, though at first we received it but as a novelty.

And so the carnal pleasure that many have in hearing news, and sitting with folks that will talk of other men's matters, or things that concern them not, is nothing but a sinful pleasing of the fancy, and loss of time, and neglect of greater matters which call for all our time and care. It was the vice of the Athenians, "for all the Athenians and strangers that were there, spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing," Acts xvii. 21: yea, novelty of doctrine and religion, and teachers, is a snare and bait to carnal fancies, which many are taken by that are forsaken of God, having first forsaken him, and proved false to the truth received.

CHAPTER XXXII.

UNNECESSARY KNOWLEDGE, AND DELIGHT THEREIN.

15. Another part of carnal pleasure which self must be denied in, is, a desire after unnecessary knowledge, and delight therein. This is the common sin of man, but not of all alike. Even they that can

live without the knowledge of the saving prineiples of religion, do yet itch to know unprofitable things; and many a foolish question they will be asking about matters unrevealed, or that concern them not, when they overlook that which their salvation lieth on: but the learneder sort, and especially more prying wits, and those that are bred up among disputes, are the pronest to this sin: and though it be an odious vice, yet it so befooleth many, that they reckon it confidently among their virtues.

God cannot be known too much, nor can any man be too much in love with the true knowledge of God in Jesus Christ. Without this knowledge the mind is not good, nor can the heart be sanctified, or the man be saved; nor can any man know too much of the will and word of God; nor yet of his works in which he revealeth himself to the world. But the carnal knowledge which is to be denied, is of another nature than the sanctified knowledge of believers. I shall show you the difference in certain particular respects.

1. This desire to know, which is in the unsanctified, is partly from mere nature, and partly from a distempered fantasy, which is like a corrupt, enraged appetite, that chooseth that which is unwholesome, and yet is over-greedy after it. But the desire after knowledge in the sanctified, is kindled by the love of God, and the love of those holy and heavenly things which they are inquiring after. It is not the love of God that sets ungodly men upon their studies, but a common and carnal desire to know: and this appears in the end, which is next.

2. This carnal knowledge is but to feed, and furnish, and please a carnal fancy; because it is some adding to our understandings, and because it is naturally pleasant to know, and because it brings in some novelty and variety, and because it makes us seem wiser than other men, and furnisheth us with matter of discourse and ostentation, and rids the mind of some troublesome doubts; therefore, even the worst have a mind to know. But this is the knowledge that must be denied: that which must be valued and sought after, is, to know God, that we may love, and reverence, and trust, and admire, and honour him, and enjoy him: to know Christ, that we may have more communion with him: to know the word and works of God, that in them we may know his nature and his will, and knowing his will, may serve him and please him: these must be the ends of christian knowledge. There is nothing in the world that God hath revealed, but in its place we may be willing to know, so that we stick not in the creature, or sense of the words, or common verities, but use every thing as a book or looking-glass: we love not a book so much for the letters, as for the matter which they contain; and we love not a glass for itself, so much as for its use to show us the face which we would see in it: so if we go to the creatures but as a book, in which we may read the mind of God, and see his nature, and as a glass in which his glory doth shine forth, our study and knowledge will be sanctified and divine. And thus, as Paul would know nothing but Christ crucified, so every christian should be able to say that he would know nothing but God in Christ: for though we know a thousand matters, and that of the lowest nature in themselves, yet as long as we study them not for themselves, but for God, it is not them that we know so much as God in them; and so all is but the knowing of God: even as in our duty, though the works may be many and mean that we are employed in, yet all is but the serving of God, as long as we do them all for him. This is the main difference between an unsanctified scholar and a servant of God in all their studies: one of them is but recreating his curious fancy or inquisitive mind, and seeking matter of honour and applause, or some way or other studying for himself; but the other is searching after the nature and will of his Creator, and learning how to do his work in that manner as may please and honour him most. So that when they are reading the same books, and studying the same subjects, they are upon quite different works, as having contrary ends in all their studies: the one is content with bare speculation and airy knowledge, which puffeth up; and the other studieth and knoweth practically to feed the holy fire of love in his heart, and to guide, and quicken, and strengthen him for obedience.

3. Moreover, there is a difference commonly in the subject which they most desire to know: for though there is no truth but a wicked man may know, which a true christian knoweth, and also but few truths but what he may for selfish ends be desirous to know; yet ordinarily a carnal heart is much more forward to study common sciences than divinity, and in divinity to study least the practical part, and to be most in points that exercise the brain, and lie further from the heart; but the sanctified man delighteth most in knowing the mystery of redemption, the riches of grace, the glory which he hopeth for, the nature and will of God, the way of duty, the temptations that are before him, and his danger by them, and the way to escape, with such other useful truths which he must live upon. One feeds upon the air and chaff of words and notions, or common truths; and the other is taken up with the most spiritual, heavenly, and necessary matters: yea, it is not so much the truth, as the matter or thing revealed by it, which the christian looks after: it is not only to understand the meaning of the Scripture, but to find, and love, and enjoy that God, that Christ, that Spirit, that life, which is revealed in those words of Scripture; but the hypocrite sticks most in a grammatical, superficial kind of knowledge.

4. Moreover, carnal love of knowledge doth draw the soul from God to the creature: it is self and the creature that is sought after in it, and therefore the more such knowledge, the farther from God. This was Adam's temptation and sin, to desire to know good and evil for himself, so that he might have less need to live in an implicit belief of God and dependence on him, but might be acquainted what was good and evil for himself, that he might trust himself, and live to himself; but spiritual knowledge carrieth us from self.

5. Carnal knowledge would break God's bounds, and would needs know that which God hath not revealed, and pry into the secrets of heaven: with a presumptuous immodesty they would reach to that which is above man, while they are wilfully or negligently ignorant of that which should heal them of their brutishness. They are so shallow that they comprehend not any one of the smallest creatures of God, and yet they have arrogant, proud conceits, that must be satisfied about the highest mysteries: and though through their own unpreparedness and ignorance, they know not that which else they might know, and cannot see the strength of a reason which the wise can see, yet will they sooner quarrel with the light than with their eyes, and suspect the reasons and words of God, rather than their purblind minds. But spiritual knowledge is modest, and humble, and obedient, and presumeth not to climb any higher than the ladder, lest he lose more by such a step too high, than he got by all his labour hitherto; and find himself all in pieces at the bottom, while he would needs climb above the top.

He finds work enough in what God hath commanded him to study in his word, and therefore hath no leisure to look after things that God hath hid from him: it is for the use of knowledge that he would know, and therefore he hath no great mind of that which is useless; and he knows that God is the best judge of that, and therefore he takes that to be best for him which is prescribed him.

6. Carnal students are apt to learn in the ways which their interests and fancies lead them to, but holy students learn of God in his prescribed way; that is, 1. In his church, which is his school. 2. And in and by his holy Scripture, which is the book he sets us to learn. And 3. By his ministers, whom he commandeth to teach us. 4. And in obedience to his Spirit, that must make all effectual. And 5. In fervent prayer to God for that Spirit and a blessing. This is God's way in which he will bring men to saving knowledge.

7. Also, carnal students observe not (commonly) God's order in their learning; but they begin at that which suiteth best with their carnal interest or disposition, as being least against it; and they catch here and there a little, and make what they list of it, and force it to their carnal sense, and to speak for that which their minds are most affected to. But the sanctified student begins at the bottom, and first seeks to know the essentials of religion, and points that life lieth most upon; and so he proceeds in order, and takes the lesson which God and his teachers set him, and takes up truths as they lie in order of necessity and use.

8. And in the manner also the difference is great. The carnal student searcheth presumptuously, self-conceitedly, and unreverently, and speaks of holy things accordingly, and censureth them when he should censure himself and actions by them, and bendeth the words of God to his own carnal interest and will. But the spiritual student searcheth meekly with fear and reverence, with self-suspicion and consciousness of his exceeding darkness, and with a willingness and resolution to submit to the light for conviction and for the guidance of his conversation.

And now you see what carnal studies are, remember that to avoid them is part of your self-denial. Restrain your ranging fantasies and understanding, as you would do a ranging appetite. If you have a mind that would fain reach higher than God hath given you light in Scripture, or a mind that must needs be satisfied of the reasons of all God's ways, and murmureth if any of its doubts be unresolved, remember that this is self that must be denied; and if any be wise in his own eyes, he must become a fool, that he may be wise, 1 Cor. iii. 18; and as little children must you come to the school of Christ, if you will indeed be his disciples. And remember that this intellectual voluptuousness, licentiousness, and presumption of carnal minds, is a higher, and in some respects greater and more dangerous vice, than brutish sensuality. And you may cheat and undo your souls in a civil course of carnal, selfish studies, as well as in a course of more gross and sensual voluptuousness.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

FACTIOUS DESIRE OF THE SUCCESS OF OUR OWN OPINIONS AND PARTIES, AS SUCH, &C.

16. Another selfish interest to be denied, is, the factious desire of the success of any odd opinions which we have espoused, and of the increase and prosperity of any dividing party in the church which we have addicted ourselves unto.

It exceedingly delighteth a carnal mind, that his judgment should be admired, and he should be taken as the light of the country round about him; and therefore when he hath hatched any opinion of his own, or espoused any whereby his singularity may be manifested, or by which his selfish interest may be promoted, he is as careful to promote these opinions, and the party that holdeth with him, as a covetous man is to promote his gain. There is indeed as much of self in many men's heresies and church divisions, as any sensualist hath in his way. And hence it is that a zeal for selfish opinions is easily got and easily maintained; when zeal for the saving truths of God is hardly kindled, and hardly kept alive. Yea, multitudes in the world do make the very truth to be the matter of their carnal interest in it; while they some way get a seeming peculiar interest, and promote it but as an opinion of their own, or of their party, and use it for selfish, carnal ends. And hence it is that many that are called orthodox, can easily get and keep a burning zeal for their orthodox opinions, when practical christians do find it a very hard matter to be zealous for the same truths in a practical way. Many ungodly men will be hot in disputing for the truth, and crying down all that are against it, and perhaps so far exceed their bounds, that the godly dare not follow them. And the reason is clear. Whether it be truth or error that a man holds, if he hold it but as a conceit of his own, or as the opinion of his party, or to be noted in the world, as one that hath found out more truth than others, or any way make it but the matter of his selfish interest, nature and corruption will furnish him with a zeal for it; it is easy to go where sin and Satan drives, and to be zealous where zeal hath so small resistance; and to swim down the stream of corrupted nature. But it is not so easy to be zealous in the practical saving entertainment of the truth, and exercising that faith and love to God and holy obedience which truth is sent to work in us. A schismatical or opinionative use of the truth itself, is but a using it for self against the God of truth; and it is no more wonder to see men zealous in this, than to see men forward and hot in any evil; we cannot tell how to quench or restrain this selfish, carnal kind of zeal. But when men should use the truth for God and their salvation against Satan, and sin, and self, then it is hard to make them zealous; they are like green wood, or wet fuel on the fire, that will not burn without much blowing, and soon goeth out when it seemeth to be kindled, if once you leave it to itself. Paul spoke not nonsense when he said, "For ye are yet carnal; for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal?" 1 Cor. iii. 3—5. How secretly soever it may lurk, there is doubtless much of self and flesh in heresies and unjust divisions. I know that most of them little perceive it. James and John in their zeal, which would have called for fire from heaven, did not know what spirit they were of. But God would not have spoke it, if it were not true, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them: for they that are such, serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches, deceive the hearts of the simple," Rom. xvi. 17. Though they little believe that there is any such wickedness in them as this, yet the Spirit of God,

that is the searcher of hearts, is acquainted with it; and assureth us, that both at the bottom and the end, church dividing courses have a carnal, selfish nature: it is some secret interest of self (though scarce discerned) that kindleth the zeal, and carrieth on the work; it is not God that is served by the divisions of his church. Many sects now among us do put a face of truth and zeal upon their cause; but self is the more dangerously powerful with them, by how much the less suspected or observed. The papists, under the pretence of the church's union, are the great dividers of the christian world, unchurching the far greatest part of the church, and separating from all that be not subjects of the pope of Rome: and do you think it is not self and flesh that is the principle, and life, and end of this their schism? Were it not for the upholding of their usurped power and worldly immunities, and greatness of the clergy, it is morally impossible that so many men of reason and learning could concur in such a schism, and in so many gross conceits as go along with it. It is not the pope that they are principally united in; for the far greatest part of them, it is too evident that it is selfish and fleshly interest that is their centre, to which the pope is but a means. Hence it is that many of their Jesuits and friars are carried abroad in the world, with such a fire of zeal, to promote their cause, that they will compass sea and land for it, and day and night are busy at the work, to plot, and contrive, and insinuate, and deceive, and think no cost or pains too great. For a selfish, sinful zeal and diligence hath so many friends, and so little hinderance, that it is easily maintained; but so is not the healing, peaceable, practical, and holy zeal of true believers.

Well! consider what I say to you from the word of the Lord: there is a selfish, dividing zeal in religion, which must be denied as well as whoredom or drunkenness. If you ask me how it is known; briefly now I shall only tell you this much of it: 1. That it is usually for either an error or a particular truth, against the interest and advantage of the body of unquestionable christian verities. They can let religion suffer by it, so their opinion do but thrive. 2. It is usually for an opinion by reason of some special endearment or interest of their own in it. 3. They cry up that opinion with a zeal and diligence much exceeding that which they bestow upon other opinions of equal weight; and lay a greater stress upon it, than any show of reason will allow them. 4. They usually are zealous for a party and division, against the unity of the catholic church. 5. Their zeal is most commonly turned against the faithful pastors of the church; for it is hard to keep in with schism, and with faithful pastors too: and if the ministers will not own their sin and error, they will disown the ministers. The anabaptists, and other sects of late, would never have been so much against Christ's ministers, if the ministers had not been against their way. 6. Their course doth, in the conclusion, bring down religion, and hinder the thriving of the gospel and of godliness. Mark what is the issue of most of those ways, that these men are so hot for. Doth it go better or worse with the church and cause of Christ in general, where they are, than it did before? Is religion in more strength, and beauty, and life, and honour? Or doth real holiness more abound? If so, be not too hasty to censure their zeal. But usually all these dividing ways are the diseases of the church; which cause its languishing, decay, and dissolution. 7. Lastly, this selfish zeal is commonly censorious, and uncharitable, and diminisheth christian love, and sets those reproaching and despising each other, that should have lived in the union and communion of saints. Where you find these properties of your zeal and desire, for the promoting of your opinions or parties in religion, you have great reason to make it presently your business to find out that insinuating self, which maketh your religion carnal, and to deny and mortify it.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

CARNAL LIBERTY TO BE DENIED: WHAT.

17. ANOTHER selfish interest to be denied, is, carnal liberty. A thing that selfishness hath strangely brought of late into so much credit, that abundance among us think they are doing some special service to God, their country, the church, and their own souls, when they are but deeply engaged for the devil, by a self-seeking spirit, in a carnal course. For the discovery of this dangerous, common disease, I must first tell you, that there is a threefold liberty which must carefully be differenced. 1. There is a holy, blessed liberty, which no man must deny. 2. There is a wicked liberty, which no man should desire. 3. And between these two there is a common, natural, and civil liberty, which is good in its place, as other worldly matters are, but must be denied when it stands in competition with higher and better things; and, as all other worldly matters, is holy when it is holily esteemed and used, that is, for God; but sinful when it is sinfully esteemed and used, and that is for carnal self.

1. The first of these is not to be denied, but all other liberty to be denied for it. This holy liberty consisteth in these following particulars. 1. To be freed from the power of sin, which is the disability, the deformity, the death of the soul. 2. From the guilt of sin, and the wrath of God, and the curse of the law. 3. To be restored to God by Christ, in union, reconciliation, and sanctification; and our enthralled spirits set free, to know, and love, and serve him, and delight in him. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, 2 Cor. iii. 17. God is the soul's freedom, who is its Lord, and Life, and End, and all. 4. To be delivered from Satan as a deceiver, and enemy, and executioner of the wrath of God. 5. To be freed from that law or covenant of works, which requireth that which to us is become impossible. 6. To be freed from the burdensome task of useless ceremonies, imposed on the church in the times of infancy and darkness. 7. To be freed from the accusations of a guilty conscience, and those self-tormentings which in the wicked are the foretastes of hell. 8. To be freed from such temporal judgments here as might hinder our salvation, or our service of God. 9. To be freed from the condemning sentence at the last day, and the everlasting torments which the wicked must endure. 10. And to be delivered into the blessed sight of God, and the perfect fruition and pleasing of him, in perfect love, and joy, and praise to all eternity. This is the liberty which you must not deny, which I therefore name, that by the way you may see, that it is not for nothing that the other sorts of liberty are to be denied.

II. The second sort of liberty is, that which is wicked and directly evil, which all men should deny; and this is a freedom from righteousness, as the apostle calls it, Rom. vi. 20. To be free from a voluntary subjection to God, and free from those sighs and groans for sin, and that godly sorrow, which the sanctified undergo; and to be free from

all those spiritual motions and changing works upon their hearts, which the Spirit doth work on all the saints; to be free from holy speeches, and holy prayer, and other duties, and from that strict and holy manner of living which God commandeth; to be at liberty to sin against God, and to please the flesh, and follow their own imaginations and wills, let God say what he will to the contrary; to be free to eat and drink what we love and have a mind of, and to be merry, and wanton, and lustful, and worldly, and take our course without being curbed by so precise a law as God hath given us; to be free from a heavenly conversation, and those preparations for death, and that communion with God which the saints partake of: this is the wicked liberty of the world, which the worst of carnal men desire; and the next beyond this, is a liberty to lie in the fire of hell, and a freedom from salvation, and from the everlasting joy and praises of the saints. If freedom from grace and holiness deserve the name of freedom, then you may next call damnation a freedom.

And it is part also of this sinful, miserable liberty to be free from the government, and officers, and good laws which rule the church and commonwealth. And such wretches there are in the world, that seriously judge it a desirable liberty to be free from these. They think that their country is free, when every man may do what he list, and they have no king or other governors, or none that will look after them, and punish their miscarriages; and they think the church is free, when they have no pastors, or when pastors have least power over them, and they may do what they list. And indeed if they were rid of magistrates and ministers, they were free! As a school is free that hath shut out the master, or have rejected him, and teach and rule one another! And as a ship is free when the master and pilot are thrown overboard; and as an army is free when they have cast off or lost their commanders! Or to speak more fitly, as an hospital is free when they are delivered from their physician; and as the mad-men in Bedlam are free when they have killed or escaped from their keepers! As infidels keep their freedom, by refusing Christ in himself; so carnal dividers and heretics keep their freedom, by refusing his officers, and Christ in those officers: "For he that heareth them, heareth him; and he that despiseth them, despiseth him; and he that despiseth, despiseth not man but God," Luke x. 16; 1 Thess. iv. 8.

And another part of this ungodly liberty is, to be free from the exercise, at least, of this power of magistrates and ministers, so far as not to be restrained from sin, though they be not free from the state of subjects. To swear, and be drunk, and live as most ale-sellers, on the damning sins of others, and make a trade of selling men their damnation, and to have no magistrate punish them, no officer trouble them, and no neighbour accuse them; this is their liberty. To game, and roar, and revel, and have nobody say to them, why do you so, is part of their liberty. To have leave without restraint to make all others as bad as themselves, and if they are infidels or heretics, to persuade other men to it: if they hold any opinion against the God that made them, against Christ, against the Spirit of God, against the word and laws of God, against his ministers, his church, his ordinances, against any necessary point of faith, or if they have any false conceit that leads straight to hell, that they may have full power, licence, and authority, to bring as many as they can to be of the same mind, that they may not be unprofitable servants to the devil, nor go to hell alone, this is a great part of their impious liberty. And because the name of conscience is become honourable, they call this by the name of liberty of conscience; when indeed it is liberty of practice that they mean, and not liberty of conscience; for their conscience cannot be altered by force, nor touched by the sword. It is they that deprive men of the liberty of their consciences, whilst by false teaching they put out the eye of conscience, and enslave it to sinful, false conceits. And conscience is science; and error is not science but ignorance; and therefore as error is not conscience, but the destruction of conscience; so liberty to error is no liberty of conscience, but a liberty to destroy conscience: much less is it liberty of conscience to sin against God, and draw others from conscience into error, and poison men's souls, and hinder the gospel, and promote the work and kingdom of the devil.

And many of our miserable, sottish people take it for a part of their desired liberty to be free from ministers' spiritual oversight and government, and not be catechised or called to an account, or examined about the state of their souls, nor questioned about their lives, but that they may do what they will, and have sacraments and all ordinances on what terms and in what manner they will, and to have ministers bow their judgments to theirs, and lay their consciences at the feet of every carnal, ignorant wretch, and be but their servants to do what they would have them; this is the liberty that Satan's servants do desire.

And withal, that they may be free from necessary payments for the safety of the commonwealth, and from the necessary retribution to God, for the church and poor, yea from giving but the ministers their own; all this they take for part of their liberty. But they are all such liberties as Christ never purchased, and the gospel never bestowed, and never made the owners happy: it is a liberty to starve their own souls, and go quietly to everlasting torment, and not be molested by preachers and puritans, but to sin against God and damn themselves, and be let alone, and have nobody tell them of it, or ask them, why will you do so? In a word, it is that liberty that Christ died to save his people from, and which the gospel would take down, and the Spirit, ministry, and ordinances would overthrow, and which no wise or good man hath reason to desire; and it is that liberty which God will save all those from, whom he will save from the flames of hell.

III. The third sort of liberty is that which is in itself indifferent, or to be reckoned among the common, transitory benefits of this life, which with God's blessing is a mercy; and well used may do good, but otherwise is hurtful, or little worth. This liberty is not the natural liberty of the will, which in regard of its own illicit acts is nothing but the power of self-determination; and in regard of internal, imperate acts, is nothing but a power or freedom to do what we will. For these are so our own, if not ourselves, that no man can take them from us; at least the first. Nor is it the ethical liberty of the soul from sin by gracious habits; for this is ever good, as was said before. Nor is it a political liberty from those tyrannous laws or practices of men that would root out the gospel, and pull down the kingdom of Christ, and set up iniquity. This liberty must be desired, and not denied, even when we submit ourselves to persecution. But it is, 1. The civil liberty of being from under the government of others, and of having a hand in government ourselves. 2. The liberty of being from under the government of strangers, conquerors, or enemies. 3. The liberty of choosing our own governors, and having them not by other men's election set over us. 4. A liberty from burdensome payments and taxes, which are of

no necessity to our good. 5. A liberty from arbitrary government, and from being liable to the mere will and passions of men. 6. A protection from the abuses and injuries of others. 7. And a liberty for our bodies from the restraint of imprisonment. All these are things that in themselves are naturally good; and especially the two last are very great mercies. But yet as the five first are smaller matters, so all of them are but temporal, transitory things, and not to be regarded in comparison of Christ and the heavenly liberties. The dearest of them must be denied when they stand in the way of duty, and cannot be had on terms of innocency. To sin for liberty, is to leap out of the frying-pan into the fire, as the proverb is; to become the prisoners of the devil, that we may not be the prisoners of men; to enslave the soul for the liberty of the body. Believe it, sin makes deeper galls than bolts or scourges do: it is an easy durance to lie in gaol, in comparison of lying in sin, or under the wrath of God. At the furthest, death will free you from imprisonment, but death alone will not free you from sin. It is but men's foolish conceits that makes imprisonment so grievous to the most. It is the same earth that they tread on, and the same air that they breathe in, as before. The great trouble is that they have not their wills; for when their own wills do as much confine them, it is then no trouble. I can confine myself to one room, to one chair, the far greatest part of the year for my studies; and why should I not bear as well to be so confined by another, if my own will could but comply with it? Never grudge at restraint or imprisonment then, but find out some employment in it, whereby you may be serviceable to God, or at least serve him by your sufferings, and then rejoice in it, and bring your minds to your condition, and so you may set yourselves at liberty in spite of the greatest tyrant in the world. Imprisonment is but a penal restraint; and if it be not involuntary, it is scarcely penal: it is therefore in your power whether you will be prisoner or not, because it is in your power whether it shall be involuntary or not. Be but willing of your confinement, and you are at liberty: and though you are not out of the place, you are out of the prison. The same room that is a prison to the rest, is none to the keeper that guards them, because apprehending it to be for his commodity, he is willing of it, and their prison is his home. And if you do but apprehend how you are called from temptations, and have an opportunity of honouring God, or at least of being more humbled and mortified, and so bring your mind to consent to your habitation, it is become your home and place of freedom: however, he is unworthy of the liberty of the saints, that cannot deny the liberty of his habitation or bodily abode for the attaining of it.

And for the things that men make such a stir about in the world, under the name of their civil liberties, some of them are no liberties, but fancies or miseries, and the rest of them are no further to be valued than they are subservient to the kingdom of Christ, and the good of souls. Conceited people call it their liberty to be governed rather by four hundred than by one, or by popularity than by other forms of government, and a great stir they make about this, as if their felicity did consist in it; whenas the true liberty of a commonwealth consisteth in the fullest conformity of their laws and their execution to the will of God; in being free from all laws or passions of men that encourage iniquity, and are against the gospel or the common good, and peace and welfare of the body; in a word, to have government best fitted to the ends of government, which is such a temporal safety and prosperity as most conduceth to the service and honour of God: but the species of government is none of this liberty in itself considered. A people may be at much more liberty under a pious monarch than an impious or unskilful democracy. The free choice of the most when they are bad (as where is it better?) may enslave the best; and the awe and interest of the rich is commonly such upon the people, that a free choice is somewhat strange. And that sort of government may be fittest for one people, that is unfit for another; and their happiness lieth not in the species of government, let them stretch their wits to invent new forms as long as they will, but in the predominancy of God and his interest in the hearts of the governors, and in their laws, their officers, and execution. This is it, and nothing but this, in government, that will give the commonwealth that desirable liberty, in which their welfare doth consist.

And therefore those persons are enemies to the liberty of their country, that under that name would advance such kind of popular interest as is plainly against the interest of Christ; and must have magistrates and ministers restrained from doing the work of the omnipotent Sovereign, the one from punishing sin, (if it be against the first table, or come but under the name of conscience,) and the other from exercising church discipline, and all under pretence of the people's liberties. All these are carnal liberties to be denied.

CHAPTER XXXV.

OUR NATIVE COUNTRY AND HABITATIONS DENIED.

18. ANOTHER part of carnal self-interest to be denied, is, our native country, or place of habitation, with all the comforts and accommodations they afford us. It is lawful to have some special love to our own country; but not such as shall prevail against the love of Christ, or seem sufficient to entangle us in sin. We must show our love to it principally by desiring and endeavouring, that God's name may be hallowed, and his kingdom maintained, and his will fulfilled among and by our countrymen; but if they should turn enemies to the gospel or to godliness, we must love the servants of God abroad much better than his enemies at home; and wish the success of his servants, though of other countries, against his enemies, though they were of our own. And if we cannot serve God, or enjoy the freedom of a good conscience, at home, another nation, though it were in the utmost parts of the earth, where we may better serve God, must seem a better place to us. And if we be banished or necessitated to forsake our country, we must not stick at it, for the cause of Christ. It is none of the greatest trials to be put to remove from one country to another, as long as we have necessaries wherever we come. We have the same God to be with us, and take care of us, beyond sea, as at home; the same earth, and air, and sun to shine upon us; the same Spirit, and grace, and promises to accompany us; the same saints of God, and ordinances of worship, may be had in other countries as our own. It is a kind of childishness to make such a matter of being driven out of one kingdom into another, when we have the same or greater mercies in the other. All is but our Father's house; and we do but remove from room to room. "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof." As I said before of imprisonment,

so I say of banishment; it is in our own wills, by consenting to it, to make it no banishment. If you will make an affliction and a great matter of it, you may. A merchant or factor can live for his commodity far from home, even among Turks and infidels, and take it for no banishment; much more should you do for the sake of Christ. Every place is our own country where our Master's work lieth. We are but pilgrims; and as long as we are not out of our way, we need not complain much for being out of our country. Indeed we are here but strangers, and this is not our country, and therefore let us not overlove it upon a mistake. The apostles of Christ did purposely leave their countries, and travel about the countries of the world, to bring them the doctrine of salvation by Christ. And is it not better be walking lights to illuminate the world, than candles shut up within the walls of our own habitation? "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed, and went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles—for he looked for a city which had foundations, whose builder and maker is God," Heb. xi. 8, 9, 19. "They confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth; for they that say such things, declare plainly that they seek a country: and truly if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned: but now they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city," ver. 13—16. It was the sorest kind of banishment that the saints endured, that is mentioned, Heb. xi. 37, 38, and yet they patiently underwent it. "They wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented; of whom the world was not worthy: they wandered in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth." We judge ourselves unworthy of Christ, and the new Jerusalem, and our heavenly country, if we cannot deny an earthly, sinful country for them.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

BODILY HEALTH AND EASE FROM TORMENTS.

19. But a far greater interest of self to be denied, doth consist in our bodily health and ease, and from those pains and torments which persecutors use to inflict upon the godly. An averseness to suffering is natural to man, and in itself no sin; but an exeessive averseness doth signify too much tenderness of the flesh, and too little power of reason, which should quiet the mind when it cannot abate the pain of the body, and must use to submit to a lesser evil to avoid a greater, or to obtain a greater good than it depriveth us of: Paul and Silas could sing with their bodies sore and their feet in the stocks. To be joyful in tribulation should be no strange matter to a saint, much more with a patient submission to undergo it. We may not thrust ourselves into the fire, nor choose suffering without a call; but we must suffer rather than sin, and choose the wounds and hurts of the body before the wounds and losses of the soul. But because flesh and blood will draw back, and make too great a matter of sufferings, I shall briefly give you ten considerations, that may persuade you herein to deny yourselves; and in two cases I desire you to make use of them. First, in case you have no way to escape suffering but by sinning, then deny yourselves and choose to suffer. Secondly, in case of God's afflictions, which unavoidably lie upon you, then deny yourselves by a quiet and patient submission: and for both consider,—

1. That is the best condition for us in which we may be most serviceable to God. And if we suffer for righteousness, we may serve God as well in such suffering as in a prosperous state; or if God himself afflict us, we may serve him in our affliction: our patience then is the service that we are called to. The sufferings of the saints have done very much to the promoting of the gospel and building of the church: men will see that there is somewhat worth the suffering for in the christian religion, and see that heaven is taken by believers for a certain thing, when they can let go earth for it; they will be moved to inquire, what it is that moves you to such constancy and patience: and why should we not be willing of that condition in which we do our Master the best service, whatever the doing of it shall cost us? The commodity of our end is the chiefest commodity.

2. That is the best condition for us in which we may have most of God. But certainly we may have as much, and usually more, of God in suffering, especially for his cause, than we can have in prosperity; especially when we sin to escape these sufferings. Is it bodily ease, or God, that you set most by? It will be seen by your choice. If you prefer your ease before him, you must expect to have no better than you choose: if you prefer him before your ease and prosperity, you must be gladder of God with adversity and pain, than of prosperity and ease without him. A beast hath health and ease as well as you, and yet you will not think him as happy. If you are tormented, or lose your health for Christ, you lose nothing but what a Turk or infidel hath; yea, but what a beast hath as well as you! But you may have that of God, by the advantage of your suffering, that none but saints have; and God's presence can make a suffering state as sweet as a prosperous. And he hath given you ground in his promises to expect it: "When thou passest through the fire I will be with thee," Isa. xliii. 1—3. "There hath no temptation taken you, but what is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it," 1 Cor. x. 13. "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified," 1 Pet. iv. 14. "If any man suffer as a christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God on this behalf," ver. 16. What is the Scripture fuller of than comforting promises to the sufferers for Christ? To fly from such sufferings, then, is but to fly from the presence of God and our own consolations.

3. At least these sufferings further our sanctification, and make us better. And is not that our best condition that makes us best? Common experience, as well as Scripture, may satisfy us that a suffering state doth very much further humiliation and mortification, and bring men to a deeper sense of sin, and help all the truths of God to work, and make them more sensible and serious than in prosperity. Then we do not only hear, but feel that sin is evil, and that the world is vain, and that the threatenings of God are true. Why, christian, if thou didst but know that thou shouldst have more of the Spirit and its graces, and less of sin, in a suffering estate than in ease and plenty, wouldst thou not even choose it

and be glad of it? Is not sin worse than suffering to thee, and holiness better than ease and peace? Alas, what senseless, careless persons should we be, if it were not for the help of suffering! Grace useth to work by means, and this is the common means.

4. Consider, that pain and suffering we shall have, whether for Christ or not. The worst men undergo almost as much by ordinary sicknesses, and losses, and crosses, as the martyrs do that suffer for Christ: sin will bring suffering, and it is better have that which is sanctified by the interest of Christ, than that which is not.

5. And a christian that hath so much ado to curb and rule the flesh in prosperity, methinks should the more patiently bear adversity, because God sets in by it, and helps him to subdue the flesh, and tame the body, and bring it in subjection. And as it is but this burdensome flesh that suffereth, which hath been the cause of so much suffering to our minds, so our warfare against this flesh, which we manage through the course of our lives, goes on more prosperously in the time of its sufferings than in prosperity. A weakened enemy is easilier conquered. Do not therefore too much take part with the suffering flesh, but self-denyingly justify the proceedings of the Lord.

6. And consider that the pains and suffering will be but short. It is but a little while, and you shall feel no more than if you had felt nothing; and that which shortly will not be, is next to that which is not. As it makes all the pleasures and glory of the world to be a dream, and next to nothing, because it is but a while, and they are gone, and never return again; so it makes our sufferings next to nothing, that they are passing away, and almost over. And then all tears will be wiped from your eyes; and pain will be forgotten, or remembered only to increase your joy. When you are past the brunt, and safe with Christ, you will never repent of your sufferings on earth, nor will it trouble you then to think of the shame or sickness, or pain and torment, that here you were put to undergo. Yet a little while and all will be over.

7. In the mean time, consider also that they are all deserved sufferings; you deserve them from God, though not from man; nay, they are a thousandfold less than your deservings. If free grace have pardoned you the main, and rescued you from the torments of hell, methinks the remembrance of this wonderful mercy should make you patiently bear the fatherly chastisements that tend to the perfecting your deliverance.

8. And so much the rather because they are sufferings more gainful to you than the greatest prosperity is to the world. When you have suffered for Christ as much as your natures are able to bear, you need not fear being losers by him: as he is engaged by promise to make you amends, and to give you the reward of inheritance of glory, so he is easily able to accomplish it. All the saints of God are in the way to glory, but his suffering saints are in the nearest way. All his servants are unspeakably gainers by him, but his sufferers are in the most thriving way; they shall have an eminency of reward, or a reward above the common reward. "These are they that come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple, and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them," Rev. vii. 14. The churches therefore glory in their martyrs, and for the patience and faith of christians in all the persecutions and tribulations which they endure, "a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that they may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which they suffer; seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble them; and to them that are troubled, rest with the saints," 2 Thess. i. 4—6. "Peter said, Behold, we have forsaken all and followed thee; what shall we have therefore? And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye shall also sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel: and every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life," Matt. xix. 27—29. And is it not better suffer under these terms of unconceivable advantage, than to suffer in a natural way for nothing?

9. And consider, that if suffering seem so great a matter to you, that you are resolved, though by the way of sin, to avoid it, you will escape it at so dear a rate, that you will wish a thousand times you had endured it. There is no escaping of christian suffering when you are called to it, but by running into eternal suffering. There is no escaping the prison, and torment, and fire of martyrdom, when you are called to it, but by running into the fire of hell. God can deliver you indeed on easier terms, by forbearing to call you to it, or rescuing by his power; but you cannot rescue yourselves by refusing to suffer and yielding to sin, without paying dearer for your freedom than it is worth. And therefore deny yourselves, and bear what God shall call you to, lest Christ deny you, and make you suffer a thousandfold more to all eternity.

10. Lastly, consider also, that this part of self-denial is it that Christ hath fully and purposely taught us by his own example. Are you better than the Lord of life? And did they not use him worse than you are used? Do they slander you? and did they not so by him, calling him a gluttonous person and a wine-bibber, and a friend of publicans and sinners, a sabbath-breaker, an enemy to Cæsar, a deceiver; yea, one that had a devil, and cast out devils by Beelzebub? Do they put a fool's coat on you, and a reed in your hand, and make a laughingstock of you? Remember what they did by Christ. They mixed scorn and cruelty together when they crowned him with a crown of thorns, and struck him when they had covered his eyes, and bid him read who smote him. And do they worse than this by you? They spit in his face, and saved a murderer, that he might be sure to die. And do they worse than this by you? "Run therefore with patience the race that is set before you, looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God: for consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your mind," Heb. xii. 1—3. "If, when ye do well and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God, for even hereunto were ye called; because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow his steps, who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously," 1 Pet. ii. 20—23.

Upon all these considerations, you may see that in the greatest afflictions or torments of the flesh, we have reason enough for the practice of self-denial: and therefore as Christ used Peter, when he

persuaded him to have favoured himself, and to have avoided suffering, when it was necessary for us, bidding him, "Get behind me, Satan, thou art an offence unto me, for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men," Matt. xvi. 23; so do you deal by carnal self, when it would persuade you to favour yourselves, and put by suffering by yielding to sin. Take this self to be but a Satan to you, that savoureth not heavenly things but earthly, and command it to be silent, and to get behind you; and do not so much as make your flesh of your counsel, nor hearken to any of its advice, in case of suffering for Christ.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

NATURAL LIFE TO BE DENIED.

20. But the greatest point of self-denial is yet behind: nothing is so near to self as life; nothing that nature doth so highly value, and dearly love, and tenderly look to, and unwillingly let go. And yet this also must be denied for Christ. All other parts of selfish interest are as it were summed up and contracted in this; and many a one can yield in other points that, when he comes to this, is utterly stalled, and will go away sorrowful, rather than follow Christ to the death. Nothing in this world is so dear to natural man as his life; and, therefore, death is a thing that he knows not how to choose, nor to submit to, if he could avoid it.

In three cases only, I remember that heathens themselves have chosen death. First, in case of some extreme torment or other misery, which they had no other hope to prevent or end. But this was but a choosing a speedier or easier death before a more grievous death, though remote; or before a death that had so great a misery for its forerunner; or at least before such a life as is a continual death. And so the conquered heathens would frequently kill themselves, to prevent a more dishonourable, cruel death, from the hand of the conqueror: and so many a one in incurable misery wisheth rather to die than endure it, partly because that the suffering is so great as to overcome all the comforts of life (for I yield that some degrees of misery with life are more terrible to nature than death); and partly, because that they know they must die at last however. Secondly, in a desire of fame, that they may leave behind them an honourable name when they are dead. But this is not to desire death but life. Fain they would live for ever; and because they know that it cannot be obtained, (on earth,) they had rather die some honourable death a little sooner, that their names may live when they are dead, than to die ignominiously shortly after. Thirdly: and some have chosen to die for the public good of their country; but as it is very uncertain whether the desire of a living name were not their greater motive, so it was but a choosing a present death for their country, before a later unavoidable death without any such advantage. In all these cases a natural man may venture on death that knows he cannot escape it long, but must shortly die whether he will or no; but if they could avoid it, there are very few would submit to death but believers, and none but in one of these cases: 1. To end or avoid some extreme, intolerable, uncurable misery. 2. To deliver their country or friends. 3. And whether any would do it upon their ungrounded hopes of better things in the life to come, I leave to consideration. But if it be taken for granted that a natural man may love —1. the comforts of life above itself; 2. and the good of his country, or the world, or his children, above his life; 3. or some carnal felicity falsely conceited to be had in another life: yet it is certain, that none but a sanctified believer can love God better than his life, or can prefer those spiritual, heavenly joys, which consist in the holy love and fruition of God, before his life; and therefore he that for these can deny his life, is indeed a christian, and none but he. Though it be an ungrateful word to the ears of some, I must say it again, and none but he; for this is the very point in which Christ, for instance, doth put our self-denial to the trial, "he that will save his life, shall lose it." Whether you love an immortal, holy life with God, or this earthly, fleshly life better, is the great question on which it will be resolved whether you are christians or infidels at the heart, and whether you are heirs of heaven or hell. Some love to God may be in the unsanctified, but not a love to him above their lives; and in some cases they may submit to death, but not for the love of God. But both these set together, that is, a submitting to death for the love of God, or a loving of God above this life, is the most infallible proof of your sincerity.

I confess flesh and blood must needs think this is a very hard saying; and though they might consent to acknowledge it a duty, and a reasonable thing, to die for Christ, and a note of excellency, and a commendable qualification of some few extraordinary saints, yet it goeth very hardly down with them that it should be the lowest measure of saving grace, and that the weakest christian must have it that will be saved: for, say they, what can the strongest do more than die for Christ? But to this I answer, 1. There is no room for objections against so plain a word of God. It is the wisdom of God, and not our reason, that disposeth of the crown of life; and therefore it is his wisdom, and not our reason, must determine by what we shall attain it. And if God say plainly, that "if any man come to Christ, and hate not his own life, (that is, love it not so much less than Christ, that for his sake he can use it as a hated thing is used,) he cannot be his disciple," Luke xiv. 26; it is too late for the vote of man, or all the clamour of foolish reason, to recall this resolution. The word of God will stand when they have talked against it never so long: we may destroy ourselves by dashing against it, but we cannot destroy or frustrate it. 2. And whereas men ask, what can the strongest do more than die for Christ? I answer, abundance more: they can die for him with far greater love, and zeal, and readiness, and joy, than the weak can do, and so bring much more honour to him by their death. Though there be no higher way of outward expressing our love to Christ, than by dying for him; yet the inward work of love may be in very different degrees, in persons that use the same expression of it. Some may come to the stake with a little love, comparatively, and some with fervent, hot affections: some have much ado to yield to die, and some die so cheerfully, that they rejoice in the opportunity of honouring God, and passing to him. Yea, and in the expressions there is much difference in the manner: some give up themselves with so much readiness, as works more on the standers-by, than their mere patience, or the death itself. And some are drawn so hardly to it, as drowneth much of the honour and fruit of their martyrdom. Of this, read Mr. Pink's sermon on Luke xiv. 26.

Object. But nature is of God, and nature teacheth us to love and save our lives: and is it like that the

God of nature will command and teach us to cast them away, and so contradict his own law of nature?

Answ. 1. As nature teacheth you to love your lives, so God doth not forbid you. But, 2. Is it natural to man to be reasonable, as well as to be sensitive and animate? to have a reasonable soul, as to have a temporal life? 3. And doth not reason tell us by the light of nature, that God should be loved better than our lives? If it did not, yet by the help of supernatural light, even reason clearly tells us this; and it is no contradiction for God to bid you, love your lives, but love him better. And he that bids you seek the preservation of your lives, doth plainly except, that you resign them to his dispose, and that you seek not to save them from him when he commandeth you to lay them down. So that it is not simply against nature, to consent to die; but when it is for him that is the Lord and end of life, it is agreeable to nature; that is, though it be against our natural inclination, as we are animate and sensitive, yet is it agreeable to our true nature as reasonable. And therefore lay all together, and it is to be said to be agreeable to nature simply in such a case, because it is agreeable to the principal part in nature which should be predominant: it is agreeable to nature also, that reason should dispose of the inferior powers of the soul.

Object. But when you have said all that you can, as long as you plead against my nature, I cannot consent to what you say; words are but wind. To persuade me to consent to die, is as much as to persuade me not to feel when I am hurt, or to be hungry, or thirsty, or sleepy, which are not in my power, because these things are natural.

Answ. 1. Though hunger and thirst, and other natural and sensitive appetites or passions, be not in your power, yet a consent of the will to deny these is in your power. As natural as it is to hunger and thirst, your superior faculty of reason can prevail with you to suffer hunger and thirst in a siege or sickness, when the suffering of it will save your life. You will be ruled by your physician to forbear not only many a dish, but many a meal which your appetite desireth; and your reason can persuade you to suffer the opening of a vein, and the drawing out of your own blood, yea, or the cutting off a member, when it is to save your life; for all that feeling and self-love is natural to you. And you are not acquainted with the nature of friendship, if you would not suffer much for a friend; nor with humane affections, if you would not suffer much for parents, or children, or your country; so that your will is free though your sense be not free, nor your natural appetite. Though you cannot choose but feel when you are hurt, you might consent to that feeling for a greater good. 2. And according to the tenour of this objection, you may as wisely and honestly plead for most of the wickedness of the world, and say, It is natural to me to lust, and therefore I may play the adulterer and fulfil it. It is natural to me to desire meat and drink, and therefore I may eat and drink as long as I desire it. It is natural to me to seek to hurt those that I am much angry with, or hate; and therefore I may beat or kill them. If you must deny the passions and sensitive appetite, and the inferior faculties of nature, in one thing, why not in another? These lower powers were made to be ruled by reason, as beasts are made to be ruled by men, and more; and therefore, seeing this argument from nature is but from the brutish part of nature, it is but a brutish argument. And if yet you say, that for all these words, death is so great an enemy to you, that you cannot choose it: I answer, that is because your reason is not illuminated and elevated by faith, to see the necessity of choosing it, and to see those higher and better things which by this means you may obtain. Had you that heavenly life of faith and love which the Spirit worketh in the saints, it would carry you above this present life, and take you up with higher matters, and show you that (and so show it you) as should procure your own consent to die.

But because this is the great point that Christ doth purposely here try our self-denial by, and a point of such great necessity to be looked after, I shall stay a little longer on it, while I give you, 1. Some reasons to move you; and, 2. Some directions to assist you, to get a self-denying submission to death when Christ requireth it.

The many lamentable defects in grace which the inordinate fear of death doth intimate, I have already opened in the fourth part of the "Saints' Rest;" and therefore may not now repeat them, but shall add some few considerations more.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

TWENTY REASONS FOR DENYING LIFE.

1. Consider that our lives are not our own, but God, that doth require them, is the absolute Lord of them: more truly than you are owner of any thing that you have in the world, is he the owner of your lives and you. And therefore both in reason and justice we should be content that he dispose of his own. If he may not freely dispose of you and your lives, you may as well deny him the dispose of any thing, and so deny him to be God; for he hath the same right to you as to any thing else, and the same power over you. And therefore if you consent that he shall be God, (for which he needs not your consent,) you must consent that he be the owner and disposer of all, and of you as well as all things else: otherwise he is not God.

2. You can be content that the lives of others, yea, that all the world, be at God's dispose: in reason you cannot wish it should be otherwise. You are content that the lives of emperors and kings, that are greater than you, should be at his dispose. And is there not the same reason that he dispose of your life as of theirs? Are you better than they, or more your own; or hath the world more need of you than them? Or rather, is it not unreasonable selfishness that makes so unreasonable a difference with you? If reason might serve, the case is plain.

3. You are contented that far greater matters than your lives should be at God's dispose. The sun in its course, the frame of nature, heaven and earth, and all therein, are at his dispose, and would you wish it otherwise? Days and nights, and summer and winter, and times and seasons, are at his dispose; and you dare not murmur that all the year is not summer or daylight, and that there is any night or winter. The angels of heaven are at his dispose to do his will, and are content to be used on earth for your service, and they desire not to be from under his dispose. And should you desire it? or rather desire that his will may be done on earth as it is in heaven? If you would not have the crowns and kingdoms of the world at his dispose, and heaven and earth at his dispose, you would not have him to be God; but if you would have these greatest things at his dispose, what are you then, that your lives should be excepted?

4. Whom would you have to be the disposer of men's lives but God? Is any other fit for the undertaking? No other can give life but he; and no

other can preserve and continue it but he. If your life had been in any creature's hand, you had been dead long ago; for no creature is able to uphold itself, much less another also. Is any creature wise enough to order the world and the affairs thereof? Is any creature powerful enough to dispose of the world and all things in it? Is any creature good enough to do it without the communication of its imperfection, which would disorder and destroy all? I know you make no doubt of any of these things. No creature is fit to be God; and therefore none is fit to undertake the work of God: and therefore it must be God or none that must have the disposal of your lives and you.

But I know what it is that self would have. You would have the disposal of your own lives, or else have God to dispose of them as you would have him, which comes all to one. But how unreasonable is this? Would you alone have the disposal of your own lives! Or would you have all men else in the world also to have the disposal of theirs? If all should have this privilege, what a miserable privilege would it prove! No man then would die; and then either you must forbear marriage, or what would you do with your posterity, when there were no room on earth? And then you could not punish a malefactor with death. And what a world would it be, if all men were disposers of themselves, when there would be as many different ends and minds as men! Every man would be for himself, and an enemy to others; and the world would run every man on his own head, and a madder confusion than can be imagined would seize on all. If you would have every man have the dispose of his own life, you would have as many gods as men, and so have no God; and you would have as many kings or rulers as men, and so have no ruler; and you would have the world to be no world, when God were to them as no God. And if you would not have it thus with all, what reason have you to desire it for yourself? What are you more than all the world, that you should be exempted from the common state of mortals, and be at your own disposal more than they, and be instead of God unto yourselves?

5. You think it neither cruelty nor injustice, that the lives of brutes should be much at your dispose. Your poor fellow-creatures must die when you require it. Birds, and beasts, and fishes, even multitudes of them, must die to feed you; yea, even for your delight, to make you a feast, when you have no necessity. The most harmless sheep you will not spare: the most laborious ox, the most beautiful bird, must give up their lives to satisfy your pleasure. And is not God ten thousand thousand times, even infinitely more above you, than you are above your fellow-creatures? Is one creature fitter to kill another, and afterwards devour it, and become its grave, than God to dispose of the lives of all.

6. Where could you wish your lives to be better, than in the hand of the most wise and gracious God? If you may rest content, or have confidence in any, it is in him. You need not doubt of his goodness, for he is goodness and love itself. And therefore though you see not the world to come that you are passing to, yet as long as you know that you are in the hands of love itself, what cause have you of disquiet or distrust? And that you know that he is wise as well as good, and almighty as well as wise; and therefore as he meaneth you no harm, (if you are his children,) so he will not mistake, nor fail in the performance. You need not fear lest your happiness should miscarry for want of skill in him that is omniscient, or for want of will in him that is your Father, or for want of power in him that is omnipotent. You may far better trust God with your lives than yourselves, for you have not wisdom enough to know what is best for you, nor skill to accomplish it, nor power to go through with it; nay, you love not yourselves so well as God doth love you. Did you but believe this, you would better trust him. You can trust yourselves in a narrow ship upon the wide and raging seas, when you never saw the country that you are going to; and all because you believe that the voyage is for your commodity, and that you have a skilful pilot. And cannot you commend your souls into the hand of God, to convey you through death to the invisible glory, as confidently as you dare commit your lives to the conduct of a man, and to a tottering ship in a hazardous ocean? You can trust your lives on the skill of a physician; and cannot you trust them on the will of God? If you had your choice, whether your lives should be at your own dispose or God's, you should far rather choose that God might dispose of them than yourselves; as it is better for an infant to be guided and disposed of by the parents than by itself. A good king will not kill his own subjects needlessly, and a natural father or mother will not needlessly kill their own children; yea, a very brute will tenderly cherish their young. And do you think that God, who is infinitely good, will causelessly or injuriously take your lives? Or that he doth not mean you good even in your death?

Object. But how can I think it for my good to die; and to have my nature dissolved?

Answ. Paul "did desire to depart, or be dissolved, and to be with Christ as best of all," Phil. i. 23. And did not he know what was for his good as well as you? He was "willing rather to be absent from the body and present with the Lord, than at home in the body and absent from the Lord; and therefore groaned, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with his house which is from heaven, that mortality might be swallowed up of life," 2 Cor. v. 1, 2, 4, 6, 8. When the hen hath sat to hatch her young ones, they must leave the shell as good for nothing, and must come into a world which they never saw before. And what of that? Should they murmur at the breaking of their former habitation? or fear the passage into so light, so wide, so strange a place, in comparison of that in which they were in before? No more should we murmur at the breaking of these bodies, and casting the shell of flesh, and passing under the conduct of angels, into the presence of our Lord. God is but hatching us here by his Spirit, that he may bring us out into the light of glory. And should we grudge at this?

7. And what if God call you to sacrifice your lives to him, as he called Abraham to sacrifice his son? What if he call you to come to him by a persecutor's hand? or at least to be willing of your natural death? He calls you but to give up a life which you cannot keep; and to do that willingly, which else you must do whether you will or not: willing or unwilling, die you must! How loth soever you are, you are sure to die! You may turn you every way, and look about you on the right hand and the left, to all the friends and means in the world, and you will never find a medicine that will here procure immortality, nor ever escape the hand of death. "It is appointed to all men once to die, and after that the judgment," Heb. ix. 27. And no man can change the decrees of Heaven. And seeing all your turnings and unwillingness cannot avoid it, is it not better to submit to it willingly than unwillingly? God doth impose it on you as a necessity. Your willingness may make a virtue of necessity, and out of necessity extract a reward;

but your unwillingness may turn your suffering into your sin, and a necessary death unto an unnecessary misery now (and hereafter if you be not true believers): as Paul saith of his ministerial labours, "If I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation is committed to me: for necessity is laid upon me," 1 Cor. ix. 16, 17. So I may say in the present case: if you give up your lives willingly in the love of God, you have a reward; but if you do not, necessity is upon you, and die you must, whether you will or no. You may escape the reward by your unwillingness, but death you cannot escape. And methinks you should see that it is little thanks to you, to give up that life which you cannot keep; and yet this is all that God requireth. Perhaps you think, that though you cannot keep it still, yet somewhat longer you may keep it. But you be not sure of that. The next hour may God deprive you of it. And oh what a dreadful thing it were, if as soon as you have denied God your lives, he should snatch them from you in his fury, and cast you into hell! and if he should distrain for his own, as soon as you have denied it him! and you should die as enemies, that would not die as martyrs, and as his friends! And in this sense hath my text been many a time fulfilled, "He that will save his life shall lose it."

8. Consider, also, that it is upon terms of the highest advantage imaginable to yourselves, that God calls you to resign and lay down your lives. It is not indeed to lose them, but to save them, as my text doth promise you, "He that loseth his life shall save it." No more than you lose your clothes which you put off at night, and put on again in the morning; or rather, no more than you lose your lousy, rotten rags, when you put them off at night, and are to have in the morning a suit of princely attire in their stead. Will any man say, these rags are lost? At least they will not say that the man is a loser by the change. That is not lost that is committed to God, upon the ground of a promise; nor that which is laid out in his service, at his command. Reason will tell us, that no man can be a loser by a course of submissive obedience to God. You cannot be at so much cost for him, or offer him so dear a service, which he is not able and willing to satisfy you for a thousandfold. God will not be beholden to any man. You cannot bring him in your debt, beyond what he doth by his bountiful promise; but if you could, he would not continue in your debt. You will make nothing of your death, if you do not either undergo it for Christ, or bear it submissively by the power of heavenly love constraining you. Merely to die whether you will or no, as a fruit of sin, is common to the most ungodly men; but if the love of God can make you voluntarily submit to death, (whether natural, or violent from persecutors,) what a glorious advantage may you make of it! You will, 1. Put your salvation more out of doubt than any other course in this world could do. For whosoever perisheth, it is most certain that such as these shall be saved. 2. And therefore you may die with the greatest confidence and joy, as having seen the matter of your doubts removed, and dying in the very exercise of those graces that have the promise of salvation; and in such a state as hath the fullest and most frequent promises in the gospel. 3. And then the crown of martyrdom is the most glorious crown. You will not have an ordinary place in heaven. These are that part of the heavenly host that stand nearest to the throne of God, and that praise him with the highest joys, who hath brought them through tribulations, and redeemed them by his blood. If a man should make a motion to you to exchange your cottage for a palace and a kingdom, you would not stick at it as if it were against you, because you must leave your ancient home: and how much less should you be against it, when you are but moved to step out of your ruinous cottage into glory, when it would shortly fall upon your heads, and you must leave it whether you will or no, for nothing!

9. What reason have you to be so tender of the flesh? Is it the greatness of its sufferings that you stick at? Why, you put poor beasts and birds to as much, and so do the butchers daily for your use; and they must suffer it. And why should the body be so dear to you? For the matter of it, what is it but earth? And wherein is it more excellent than the beasts that perish? I think God hath purposely clothed your souls with so poor a dress, that you should be the less unwilling to be unclothed, and might learn to set more by your souls than by your bodies, and to make more carefully provision for them. It seems he hath purposely lodged you in so poor a cottage, that you should not be at too much care for it, nor be too loth to leave it. You have its daily necessities, and infirmities, and pains, and somewhat of its filth and loathsomeness, to tell you of its meanness; and why should you be so loth that so poor a cottage, so frail a body, should be turned to dust? Dust it is, and to dust it is sentenced. When the soul hath left it but a week, men can scarce endure to see it or smell it! And should the breaking of such an earthen vessel be so unpleasing a thing to you? And for its usefulness, though so far as it is obedient, it was serviceable to your souls and God, yet was it so refractory, ill-disposed, and disobedient, that it proved no better than your enemy. Many a temptation it hath entertained and cherished; and many a sin hath it drawn you to commit; those senses have let in a world of vanity; those wandering eyes have called in covetousness, and pride, and lust. Those greedy appetites have been so eager on the bait, that they have too oft borne down your faith and reason, and drawn you to excess in meats and drinks, for matter or manner, for quality or quantity, or both. Many a groan those sins have cost you, and many a smarting day they have caused you, and a sad, uncomfortable life you have had by reason of them, in comparison of what you might have had. And this flesh hath been the mother or nurse of all. You were engaged by your baptismal covenant to fight against it, when you entered into the church; and if you are christians, this combat hath been your daily work, and much of the business of your lives. And yet are you loth to have the victory, and see your enemy under feet? Do you fight against it as for the life of your souls, and yet are you afraid lest death should hurt it or break it down? Have you fought yourselves friends with it, that you are so tender of it? When you are the greatest friends to it, it will be the most dangerous enemy to you. And do not think that it is only sin, and not the body, that is the flesh, that is called your enemy in Scripture. For though it be not the body as such, or as obedient to the soul, yet is it the body as inclining to creatures, from which the sinful soul cannot restrain it; and it is the body as having an inordinate sensitive appetite and imagination, and so distempered, as that it rebels against the Spirit, and casteth off the rule of reason, and would not be curbed of its desires, but have the rule of all itself. Was it not the very flesh itself that Paul saith he fought against, and kept under, and brought into subjection, lest he should be a cast-away? 1 Cor. ix. 26, 27. Why should sin be called flesh and body, but that it is the body of flesh that is the principal seat of those sins that

are so called? "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live," Rom. viii. 13. "If ye sow to the flesh, of the flesh ye shall reap corruption," Gal. vi. 8. That which is first in being, is first in sin; but it is the flesh or embryo endued with sense, that is first in being. Be not therefore too tender of that which corruption hath made your prison and your enemy: many a time you have been put to resist it, and watch and strive against it, and when you have been at the best, it hath been hindering you to be better; and when the spirit was willing the flesh was weak, and quickly hath it caused your cooling and declension. Many a blessed hour's communion between God and your souls, that flesh hath deprived you of: and therefore, though still you must love it, yet you should the less grieve or be troubled at its sufferings, seeing they are but the fruits of its sin; and a holy contentedness should possess your minds, that God should thus castigatorily revenge his own quarrel and yours upon it.

10. But yet consider, that were you never so tender of the body itself, yet faith and reason should persuade you to be content, for God is but preparing even for its felicity; his undoing it is but to make it up again. As in the new birth he broke your hearts and false hopes, that he might heal your hearts, and give you sounder hopes instead of them; so at death he breaketh your flesh and worldly hopes, not to undo you, and leave it in corruption, but to raise it again another manner of body than now it is, and give it a part in the blessedness which you hoped for. If in good sadness you believe the resurrection, what cause is there for so much fear of death? You can be content that your roses die, and your sweetest flowers fall and perish, and the green and beauteous complexion of the earth be turned into a bleak and withered hue, because you expect a kind of resurrection in the spring. You can boldly lie down at night to sleep, though sleep be a kind of death to the body, and more to the soul, and all because you shall rise again in the morning; and if every night's sleep (or one at least) were a gentle death, if you were sure to rise again the next morning, you would make no great matter of it. Were it as common to men to die every night, and rise again in the morning, as it is to sleep every night and rise in the morning, death would not seem such a dreadful thing. Those poor men that have the falling-sickness, do once in a day, or in a few days, lie as dead men, and have as much pain as many that die; and yet because they use to be up and well again in a little time, they can go merrily about their business the rest of the day, and little fear their approaching fall. How much more should the belief of a resurrection unto life confirm us against the fears of death! And why should we not as quietly commit our bodies to the dust, when we have the promise of the God of heaven, that the earth "shall deliver up her dead," and that this body "that is sown in corruption, shall be raised in incorruption? It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." So great and wonderful the change will be, as now is unconceivable! We have now a drossy lump of flesh, an aggregation of the elements to a seed of life, which out of them forms itself a body by the divine influx. Like the silkworm, which in the winter is but a seed, which in the summer doth move and attract that matter from which it gets a larger body, by a kind of resurrection: but it is another manner of body (I will not say of flesh) which at the resurrection we shall have. Not flesh and blood, nor a natural body, but of a nature so spiritual, sublime, and pure, that it shall be indeed a spiritual body. And think not that this is a contradiction, and that spirituality and corporeity are inconsistent; for "there is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body:" the root of the fleshly, natural body, was the "first man Adam, who was made a living soul," to be the root of living souls. The root of the spiritual body is Christ, who being a "quickening Spirit," doth quicken all his members by his Spirit; which Spirit of grace is the seed of glory: and as from a holy and gracious Saviour we receive a holy and gracious nature, so from a glorified Saviour we shall receive a glorious nature: we are now "changed from glory to glory" in the beginning, as "by the Spirit of the Lord;" but it is another kind of glory that this doth tend to. "Howbeit, that is not first which is spiritual, but the natural, and afterwards the spiritual. The first man was of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven." And from each of them we partake of an answerable nature. "As is the earthy, such are they that are earthy," even all of us in our fleshly state, having earthy bodies from an earthy Adam, and natural bodies from the natural Adam. "And as is the heavenly, such are they that are heavenly;" for Christ makes men like himself, even first gracious, and then glorious, as Adam begets us like himself, that is, natural (and sinful). And therefore all those that have "followed Christ in the regeneration," shall follow him into glory, and having conquered by him, shall reign by him and with him; and having received the holy nature here which is the seed of glory, they shall receive the glorious nature there, which is the perfection of that grace: and so as Christ hath a heavenly, spiritual body, and not an earthy, natural body, so shall his members have, that they may be like him. "And as we have here borne the image of the earthy," in having first a natural, fleshly body, "we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Adam," in having a spiritual body, that is not flesh. Now, lest any doubt of it, (saith the Spirit of God,) "this I say, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption," 1 Cor. xv. 42—51.

Object. If there were but as much likelihood of a resurrection, as there is of the reviving of the plants in the spring, I could believe it, for there is a life remaining in the root or seed; but the body of man hath neither root nor seed of life, and therefore it is contrary to nature that it should revive.

Answ. 1. If it be above nature, that is all, it is not contrary to it; or not so contrary as to be above the power of the Lord of nature. Will you allow no greater works for God than such as you can see a reason of, and can assign a natural cause of? What did nature in the creation of nature? It was not certainly any cause of itself! If Christ rose without a natural cause, even so shall we. 2. But why may I not say that the dead body of man hath a living root, as truly as the plants in winter? The soul is the root of the body, and the soul is still alive; and Christ is the root of the soul, and he is still alive. For though we are dead, "yet our life is hid with Christ in God: and when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, (at the spring of resurrection,) then we shall also appear with him in glory," Col. iii. 3, 4. And though there be no physical contact between this living soul and the body, yet there is a relative union, and a deep-rooted love of the soul to its body, and inclination to it; so that it is mindful of it, and

waiteth with longing for that hour when the command of God shall send it to revive that body. It is not incredible that a silly snail should, by its natural life and power, make for itself a beautiful habitation; or that the life of a rose-tree, that was buried in the root, should fabricate a sweet and beauteous rose, by which it may make an ostentation of its invisible self to the world. In how small a room doth the life of a silkworm lie (of which I spoke before) in the winter! That little grain of seed is such as yields no sign of life to the beholder: yet doth it form itself a larger body, and that body spin its silken web out of its own substance; and in that, house itself in a husk, and take to itself another shape, and thence become a winged fly, and so generate more. But nearer us, in the generation of man, the vital principle in the seed doth quickly, with concurrent causes, form itself a body. The warmth of the body of the hen, or other bird, can turn the egg into a chicken. Why then may not the living soul, that is the root and life of the body in the dust, be the instrument of God to reform its own body? as certainly it will be the principle that shall re-inform it. But you say, the body being dead hath no natural root, nor way of recess to life again, because the privation is total. To which I answer; first, the relative union between the soul and it, and the soul's disposition to the return into its body, is as potent a cause of its reviving as the natural union of the root and branches; if, withal, you consider that Christ is the root of the soul. Rational agents, if perfect, will work as certainly as natural; for natural causes do nothing but by a power communicated to them from an intellectual cause, even God himself. Why should nature do any of these things, but because God, that makes and ruleth all, will have it to be so? Now Jesus Christ is the political head of the church. The body in the grave hath its own relation to him. Christ is still living, and resolved, and engaged by promise, and inclined by love, to revive that body. And as Christ is the life of the soul, so the soul is the life of the body; and this soul, as I said, is waiting to be sent again into it. And when the hour comes, what can hinder? The love of the soul to its body, and its desire to be reunited, is a kind of natural cause of the resurrection. A candle not lighted is as far from light, and as much without it, as a dead body is without life: and yet one touch of a lighted candle will light that which never was lighted before. And so may one touch of the living soul that is now with Christ, put life into the body that lieth in the dust. And as the lighted candle makes the other like it, and communicateth of its own nature to it; so doth the glorified soul communicate a new kind of excellency to the body, which it never had before; even to be a spiritual, glorious, incorruptible, and immortal body. In the first creating of man, the new formed body, as to the matter of it, was no better than the body of a beast or any common piece of earth. But the soul made the difference; when a rational soul was breathed into that body, it advanced the very body to a dignity beyond the bodies of brutes, even such as the natural body of man had before sin. When Christ was about to repair fallen man, it was the Spirit of Christ informing the soul, that caused the renewed soul to communicate again a dignity to the bodies of sanctified men above other bodies. And so when the body was dead because of sin, (having the root of sin and death within it, and being mortal therefore,) yet the spirit was life because of righteousness, (being the root of holy and righteous dispositions, and the new life in man himself,) Rom. viii. 10. For Christ, the principal root of life, and the Spirit and holiness, are first in order of nature in the soul, and but by communication, and secondarily in the body. But contrarily, sin made its entrance first by the body, and hath its root and seat, first in order of nature in the body; and it is so communicated to the soul: thus sin comes in at the back-door, even at the wrong end, and by the baser part; but grace comes in the right way, by the nobler part: sin hath its root in the viler part; but Christ hath his seat first in the better part. And yet I must add, 1. That sin is not ripe till it reach the will, though it enter by the flesh and senses: it is not formed, nor to be called sin, till it reach the will, and as there it is situated: but yet the thing itself is first in and by the flesh. 2. And the will is truly the seat of original sin itself, as well as the sensitive part; but not the first root of the corruption. Though sin be worst in the rational part, because the corruption of the best is the worst, yet it is not first there. But holiness is first also in the soul, and so communicated to the body. And so also glory itself will be. And therefore take notice of the wise and gracious providence of God, that taketh the soul to heaven beforehand that it may be first glorified, and so may be fit to communicate glory to the body; and so as the natural soul dignified the natural body, and the sanctified soul did sanctify the body, so the glorified soul by re-union with the body, shall communicate its nature to the body at the resurrection, and so it will be made spiritual, immortal, and incorruptible by the soul; and soul and body are made such by Christ.

So that by this time you may see that there is more reason for the resurrection, for all the body is turned to earth, than there is reason that a candle that is gone out should be lighted again by another; or than there is reason that I should put on my clothes in the morning which I put off at night. It is true, those clothes have no power to put on themselves; nor is there any natural necessitating cause of it; but yet there is a free cause in me, that will infallibly (if I live and be able) produce it; for nature disposeth me to abhor nakedness, and desire my clothes, and therefore in the morning I will put them on. And so nature teacheth the separated soul to desire a re-union with its body; and therefore when the resurrection morning comes, it will gladly take the word from Christ, and give that vital touch to the body that shall revive it, and so put on its ancient garment; but wonderfully changed from fleshly to spiritual, from dishonourable into glorious.

And now I hope you see, that you may put off these clothes with patience and submission, and that it is no wrong to the flesh itself to be put off, but tendeth to its highest advancement at the last; though the first cause of sin, and the nest of sin, shall be so broken first, that it shall first be seen what sin hath done, before it be seen what grace will do; and the fruit of our own ways must first be tasted, before we shall fully feed and live upon the blessed fruit of the grace of Christ.

11. Moreover, as there is a resurrection for the body itself, and that to a more perfect estate than it can here attain, so the whole nature shall be perfected beyond our present comprehension. This life was not intended to be the place of our perfection, but the preparation for it. As the fruit is far from ripeness in the first appearance; or the flower while it is but in the husk or bud; or the oak when it is but an acorn; or any plant when it is but in the seed; no more is the very nature of man on earth. As the infant is not perfect in the womb, nor the chicken in the shell, no more are our natures perfect in this world. Methinks for the sake of the body itself, much more of the soul, if we are believers, we

should submit contentedly to death. While you are here you know that creatures will fail you, enemies will hate you, friends will grieve you, neighbours will wrong you, Satan will tempt you and molest you; the world is changeable, and will deceive you; all your comforts are mixed with discomforts; the body carrieth about with it calamities enough of its own to weary it. What daily pains must it be at for the sustentation of itself in its present state; and yet what grief and sorrow must it undergo! Every member hath either its disease, or a disposition thereto. What abundance of passages can pain and sickness find to enter at; and how many rooms that are ready to receive them! As every member hath its use, so every one is capable of sorrow; and the sorrow of one is at least as much communicated to the whole, as the usefulness is; the pain of the simplest member, even of a tooth, can make the whole body weary of itself. What is the daily condition of our flesh, but weakness and suffering, with care and labour to prevent much worse, which yet we know cannot long be avoided: the sorrow of many a man's life hath made him wish he had never been born: and why then should he not wish as much to die, which doth ten thousandfold more for him, if he be a christian, than to be unborn would have done. Not a relation so comfortable, but hath its discomforts; not a friend so suitable, but hath some discordancy; nor any so amiable and sweet, but hath somewhat loathsome, troublesome, and bitter. Not a place so pleasant and commodious, but hath its unfitness and discommodities; not a society so good and regular, but hath its corruptions and irregularities. And should we be so loth to leave (whether naturally or violently) such a life as this? When the fruit is ripe, should it not be gathered? When the corn is ripe, would you have it grow there and not be cut? When the Spirit hath hatched us for heaven, should we be so loth to leave the shell or nest? When we are begotten again to the hopes of immortality, should we be so desirous to stay in the womb? O sirs, it is another kind of life that we shall have with God! They are purer comforts that stay for us above. But if you will not have the grapes to be gathered and pressed, how can you expect to have the wine? Methinks our flesh should have enough ere this time, of sickness, and pain, and want, and crosses, and should be content to lie down in hope of the day when these shall be no more.

Little would an unbeliever think what a body God will make of this, that now is corruptible flesh and blood! It shall then be loathsome and troublesome no more. It shall be hungry, or thirsty, or weary, or cold, or pained, no more. As the stars of heaven do differ from a clod of earth, or from a carrion in a ditch, so will our glorified, immortal bodies differ from this mortal, corruptible flesh. If a skilful workman can turn a little earth and ashes into such curious transparent glasses, as we daily see; and if a little seed that bears no show of such a thing, can produce the more beautiful flowers of the earth; and if a little acorn can bring forth the greatest oak; why should we once doubt whether the seed of everlasting life and glory which is now in the blessed souls with Christ, can by him communicate a perfection to the flesh that is dissolved into its elements? There is no true beauty but that which is there received from the face of God: and if a glimpse made Moses' face to shine, what glory will God's glory communicate to us, when we have the fullest, endless intuition of it! There only is the strength, and there is the riches, and there is the honour, and there is the pleasure; and here are but the shadows, and dreams, and names, and images of these precious things.

And the perfection of the soul that is now imperfect, will be such as cannot now be known. The very nature and manner of intellection, memory, volition, and affections, will be unconceivably altered and elevated, even as the soul itself will be, and much more, because of the change on the corruptible body, which in these acts it now makes use of. But of these things I have spoken so much in the "Saints' Rest," that I shall say no more of them now, but this: that in a believer that expects this blessed change, and knows that he shall never till then be perfect, there is much unreasonableness in the inordinate unwillingness and fears of death.

12. You know that fears and unwillingness can do no good, but much increase your suffering, and make your death a double death. If it be bitter naturally, make it not more bitter wilfully. I speak this of a violent death for Christ, as well as of a natural death; for as the one cannot be avoided if we would, so the other cannot be avoided when Christ calleth us to it, without the loss of our salvation; and therefore it may be called necessary as well as the other. Necessary suffering and death is enough without the addition of unnecessary fears.

13. Nay, were it but to put an end to the inordinate fears of death, even death itself should be the less fearful to us. These very fears are troublesome to many an upright soul; and should we not desire to be past them? As a woman with child is in fear of the pain and danger of her travail, but joyful when it is over; so is the true believer himself too oft afraid of the departing hour: but death puts an end to all those fears. Is it the pain that you fear? Why, how soon will it be over! Is it the strangeness of your souls to God, and the place that you are passing to? This also will be quickly over; and one moment will give you such full acquaintance with the blessed God, and the celestial inhabitants, and the world in which you are to live, that you will find yourself no stranger there; but be more joyfully familiar and content than ever you were in the bosom of your dearest friend.

The infant in the womb is a stranger to this lighter, open world, and all the inhabitants of it; and yet it is not best to stay there. You can sail for commodity to a country that you never saw; and why cannot you pass with peace and joy to a God, a Christ, a heaven that you never saw? But yet you are not wholly a stranger there; is it not that God that you have loved, and that hath first loved you? Have you not been brought into the world by him, and lived by him, and been preserved and provided for by him? And do you not know him? Is it not your Father, and he that hath given you his Son and his Spirit? Have you not found an inclination towards him, desires after him, and some taste of his love, and communion with him, and yet are you wholly unacquainted with him? Know ye not him whom you have loved above all? in whom you have trusted? and whom you have daily served in the world? Who have you lived to but him? For whom else have you laid out your time and labour? And yet do you not know him? And know you not that Christ that hath purposely come down into flesh that you might know him? And that hath showed himself to you in a holy life, and bitter death, and in abundant precious gospel mercies, and in sacramental representations, that so he might entertain a familiarity with you, and infinite distance might not leave you too strange to God? Know you not that Spirit that hath made so many a motion to your soul? that hath sanctified you, and formed the image of

God upon you, and hath dwelt in you so long? and made your hearts his very work-house, where he hath been daily doing somewhat for God? It is not possible that you should be utterly strange to him that you live to, and live from, and live in; and not know him, by whom you know yourselves and all things, nor see that light by which you see whatever you see.

O but, you say, you never saw him, and have no distinct apprehension of his essence. *Answ.* What! would you make a creature of him, that can be limited, comprehended, or seen with fleshly, mortal eyes? Take heed of such imaginations. It is the understanding that must see him: you know that he is most wise, and good, and great; and that he is the Creator, and Sustainer, and Ruler of the world, and that he is your reconciled Father in Christ; and is this no knowledge of him? And then, the heaven that you are to go to, is it that you are an heir of, where you have laid up your treasure, and where your hearts and conversation have so long been; and yet do you not know it? You have had many a thought of it, and bestowed many a day's labour for it, and yet do you not know it? O, but you never saw it for all this! *Answ.* It is a spiritual blessedness, that flesh and blood can neither enjoy nor see; but by the eye of the mind you have often seen, at least, some glimpse of it: you know that it is the present intuition and full fruition of God himself, and your glorified Redeemer, with his blessed angels and saints in perfect love, and joy, and praise. And if you know this, you are not altogether strangers to heaven. And for the saints and heavenly inhabitants, you are not wholly strangers to them. Some of them you have known in the flesh, and others of them you have known in the spirit; you are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, and therefore cannot be utterly unacquainted with them.

But methinks the stranger you are to God, and to heaven, and to the saints, the more you should desire to be there where there is no strangeness: this is not the time or place of most intimate acquaintance. If you would be acquainted, you should draw nearer and not draw back. It is death that must open you the door into that presence where strangeness will be no more.

And if it be the doubts of your interest in Christ and life that make you shrink and loth to die; consider, that to refuse to die for Christ, is the way above all to increase those doubts; but to give up your lives for him, or cheerfully to surrender your souls to him at his call, is the readiest, surest way in the world to prove you at present in a state of grace; besides that you will be hastened into a state of glory, where you shall be quickly and fully past all doubts of your state of former grace. In a word, as all the fears and sorrows of this life will then be at an end, so with the rest will our fears of death: and therefore death should be the more welcome; because it is the end, as of all other troubles, so of these disturbing fears.

14. Consider also what a multitude have trod this bloody way before you. Almost all that ever were born have died, and are now in the world that you are passing to. You are not the first that entered at this narrow gate. The dearest saints of God have died. If Abraham, Moses, Joshua, David, Peter, and Paul could not escape the stroke of death, what are you that you should murmur to follow such and so many that have gone before you? You need not fear being solitary in heaven. There are millions and millions more of saints, than there are on earth: many that you knew, and millions more that will then be as dear to you as if you had known them. Is it not better be among innocent souls than a defiled, guilty world? Is it not better be where no sin entereth, and never a lust or passion comes, than to live as among wild beasts, with furious, unreasonable sinners? Is it not better be where light is perfect, and all your doubts are fully resolved, than in darkness, and perplexity, and among an ignorant, blind generation, that are enemies to the light that you desire? Is it not better be where is nothing but the perfect love of the infinite God, in perfect saints and blessed angels, than to live among perverse, ungodly men that make you almost weary of your lives? If it be a delight to us to read the writings of the illuminated saints of God, and we think them such jewels and ornaments in our libraries, what a pleasure would it be to converse with them that wrote these books, and that in their celestial perfection, where they have attained a thousand times more light than before they had; and where all the doubts are resolved which their books could not resolve. Oh, blessed society, in comparison of that we now converse with!

15. Nay more, lest the bloody way of death should seem too strange and terrible to us, the Lord Jesus our head hath trod that path; and that of purpose to conquer death, by taking away the sting and principal cause of terrors, and making that a passage to felicity that was a passage to everlasting misery: so that ever since Christ hath gone this way, there is no such danger in it to his followers. Where the Captain of our salvation goeth, his soldiers may boldly follow him. "Forasmuch as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part with them, that he might destroy by death him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and might deliver them that through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage," Heb. ii. 14, 15. He hath cleared our way, and taken out of it the sorest thorns, and hath prepared us a habitation with himself. And shall we fear to go the way that Christ hath gone, and purposely gone to clear it for us?

16. Moreover consider, that the celestial inhabitants have purposely made themselves familiar with us in this lower world, that they might acquaint us with themselves, and lead us up to their blessed habitation, and fit us for it. No man of common reason can doubt but that those more capacious, glorious parts of the universe are stored with inhabitants answerable to their glory; when we see every corner of the lower world to be replenished with inhabitants. And Scripture and some experience tells us, that those angels of God are conversant here about us men: they bear us up in their hands, that we dash not our foot against a stone; they pitch their tents and encamp about us, as an appointed guard for our security; it is their very office: "for what are they but ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them that shall be heirs of salvation?" Heb. i. 14. They converse with us, though we see them not, and are about us night and day; they are among us in our holy assemblies, observing our behaviour before the Lord, 1 Cor. xi. 10; and they are witnesses of our good and evil, Eccles. v. 6. From them, as the servants of God, was the law received, Acts vii. 53; Gal. iii. 19; Heb. ii. 2. They read our books, and study with us the mysteries of the gospel, 1 Pet. i. 12. And as near as they are to God, they are glad to make the church their book in which to read his manifold wisdom, and know it by beholding it in us as in a glass, Ephes. iii. 10. The nations have their angels, the churches have their angels, and the particular saints

also have their angels, Dan. x. 13, 20, 21; Rev. i. 20; Acts xii. 15; Matt. xviii. 10. They are not strangers with us, but have charge of us to keep us in all our ways, Psal. xci. 10—12. They rejoice in our conversion, Luke xv. 10. They are part of the heavenly society that we are already listed in, Heb. xii. 22. They ascend and descend as ordinary passengers between heaven and earth, Gen. xxviii. 12. They are round about us, and we live as in their camp, Psal. xxxiv. 7. Before them we must be confessed or denied, Luke xii. 8, 9. They convoy our departed souls to Christ, Luke xvi. 22. They shall attend Christ at his second coming, as they proclaimed his first, and attended him on earth, Matt. xxv. 31; Mark viii. 38. They shall be his heralds to call up the dead to judgment, Matt. xiii. 39, 49; xxiv. 31. And at last we shall be their companions and equal to them, Luke xx. 36. So that you see we have the same society invisible, which we shall have in heaven; yea, and sometimes, when God is pleased, they manifest their presence by visible or audible apparitions. And shall we fear to remove into the presence of these blessed spirits that now attend us and are still about us, and the instruments of so much of our good?

Yea, the Lord Jesus Christ came down to be familiar with us, and to bring us into a state of friendship, and holy boldness with God himself: and yet shall we draw back?

17. I would put this question to you for your serious answer: Can you be contented, yea, do you desire, to have no more of God than here you have? Is this much of the knowledge of him, and his will and works, sufficient for you? Would you be no nearer him, and enjoy no more of him? Whatever your flesh say, sure the love of God in your hearts will not suffer you considerately to say so. Consult with your new nature, with the holy principle that is in you; methinks you should not be content to remain for ever at such a distance from God as you are. If you can, I blame you not to be afraid of death: if not, why then are you loth to go to him?

18. And I would ask you also, whether you are content with the measure of sanctification which you have, or which is to be attained in this life? Are you content to live for ever with no more knowledge or love of God? no more faith or love to Christ? no more sense of the worth of grace? no more righteousness, or peace, or joy in the Holy Ghost? no more meekness, humility, or heavenly-mindedness? Are you contented rather to live for ever under all the pride, and ignorance, and passion, and selfishness, and lust, and worldliness, and all other sins that here beset you, rather than to remove to the place of perfection, and yield that death shall break the vessel and nest of your corruptions? If you care so little for the grace of God, and see so little beauty in his image, and see so little odiousness in sin, that you had rather keep it for ever than go to God by the passage of death, I blame you not to be afraid to die; but if otherwise, why do you desire perfection and deliverance, and yet be so loth to come and receive it, when you know that it is not to be had on earth?

19. Moreover, are you contented to remain for ever as unserviceable to God as here you are? Alas! how little do you for him! how much do you to displease him! Lay together all the service of your lives, and how small and poor a matter is it! And would you still live at these rates? Will this content you? Methinks it should not if you have grace in your hearts. Why then do you not desire to depart, and to be with Christ? There you shall be perfectly fitted for his service, and therefore perfectly perform it. What other service God will have for us, we cannot yet tell; but love and praise we are sure will be the chief, and the rest will be good, and holy, and honourable, whatever it be. If you are christians, methinks the sense of your unprofitableness, and of your unpleasing frame of heart and life, should be your daily grief; and therefore you should desire the state where you may be more serviceable, and not be so unwilling of it.

20. Lastly, I would ask you, are you contented to attain no other end of all your life, and labours, and sufferings, than here you do attain? What is it that you pray for, and seek and strive for? Is it for no more than is to be had on earth? If you have no higher design, intentions, or desires, I cannot much blame you to be loth to die; but if you have, methinks no man should be unwilling to attain his end. What! have you done and suffered so much for heaven, and now would you not go to it? Had you rather all your labour were lost? Do you desire to be happy, or do you not? If you do, (as certainly you do,) would you not go where happiness is to be had, when you are sure that it is not to be had on earth? What say you? is there not plain reason in all this that I propound to you? It is a sad case when men seek not God and heaven as their felicity, but only as a lesser evil than hell, which they would endure, rather than enjoy, when they can keep no longer this earthly life, which they account their felicity. Where this is the case, it is a sad case; and were not this a common case, there would not be so much unwillingness to depart.

And now, christian reader, I beseech thee weigh these foregoing considerations, and judge whether it be not a contradiction to thy profession, and unseemly for a believer to be unwilling to die when God shall call him; much more to cast away everlasting life, for the saving of his temporal life but a little longer! O learn the needful lesson of self-denial, especially in this point of denying your lives! He that can do this can do all, and may be sure that he is mortified indeed; and he that can do all the rest, and sticks but at this, and could part with any thing for Christ save his life, doth indeed do nothing, nor is it esteemed self-denying. It is a lesson therefore that is exceeding necessary to be learnt, and worthy all your time and diligence, even to deny your lives for the love of Christ.

Perhaps you will say, we live in days of peace and liberty, and therefore are not like to be called to martyrdom; what need then have we to learn this lesson? I answer, 1. You are uncertain what changes you may see; but if you never suffer, yet you must be sure that you have a heart that would suffer if God did call you to it; for though you may be saved without suffering, where you are not called to it, yet you cannot be saved without a heart that would suffer if you were put upon it. 2. And if you cannot deny your lives for Christ, you will not sincerely deny your pleasures, or profits, or honours for him. If you would not suffer death for him if he called you to it, you will not sincerely suffer losses, and wrongs, and reproaches for him, which almost every christian must expect; so that to try your own sincerity, you should look after it. 3. And it is certain that death will shortly come; and then if you have not learnt this lesson, to deny yourselves even in case of life, you will die unwillingly and uncomfortably.

At least, methinks I might reason thus with any man of you, good or bad: either death is indeed terrible, or not. If it be not, why do you so fear it when it comes? If it be, why do you not as well fear it before it comes, even in your youth and health; for you are sure then that you must die, as if it were

upon you. A wonderful thing it is that man's heart should be so unreasonably insensible, and that there should be so great a difference in the affections of most in regard of death. It is no matter of doubt or controversy whether they shall die. He is a block, and not a man, that knoweth it not as certainly now as he shall do in his sickness; and yet, in health, these wretches will not be awakened so much to fear it as may restrain them from sin, and help them to prepare for it. It is troublesome, precise talk with them, to talk of making ready to die: either they slight it, or love not to hear or think of it. And yet the same men, when death is coming, and they see they must away, are even amazed with fear and horror; and I cannot blame them, unless they were in a better case. But this I must blame them for, as most unreasonable; that they can make such a lamentable complaint when death and hell are near at hand, and yet make so light of it all their life-time.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

ANSWER TO THEIR DOUBTS THAT FEAR DEATH.

BUT because this is the hardest part of self-denial, and yet most necessary, and the particular subject of my text, I shall stay upon it yet so much longer as to resolve a question of some doubting christians, and to give you some directions for the furtherance of self-denial herein.

Object. If it be a necessary part of self-denial to deny our own lives, I am much afraid that I am no disciple of Christ, as having no true self-denial, for I find that for all these reasons I cannot be willing to die; but when you have said all that can be said, death is the most terrible thing in the world to me.

Answ. I pray you lay together these following particulars for answer to this great and common doubt. 1. Death, as death, is naturally dreadful to all; and the best men, as men, are naturally averse to it, and abhor it. No man can desire death, as death, nor ought to do it. If it had not been an evil to nature, it had not been fit to be the matter of God's punishment, and to be threatened to the world. Threatenings would not do their work, if that which is threatened were not naturally evil, or hurtful and dreadful to the subject. To threaten men with a benefit is a contradiction, as much as to promise him a mischief, and more. 2. It is not therefore a simple displacency, or averseness to die, that God requireth you to lay by. Self-denial consisteth not in reconciling us to death, as death; for then he might as well persuade us to become angels as to deny ourselves, and preachers had as hard a work to do, as to persuade men to cease to be men. Death will be an enemy as long as it is death. Even the separated soul hath so natural an inclination to union with its body, that the separation is part of the penalty to it: and though heaven be their joy, and Christ their life and fulness, yet the separation from the body which they have even with Christ, is a penalty, and they have not that perfect measure of joy and glory, as they shall have when they are joined to the body again: so that separation, as such, is penal to the soul in blessedness. And even the separated soul of Jesus Christ, that was more blessed than ours, was, as separated, in a state of penalty, when his body was in the grave (of which, see my Appendix to the Reformed Pastor, about the descent into hell). 3. That which you have to look after, therefore, in your souls, is not a love to death, or willingness to death as death, which no man hath or should have; but it is, 1. A submission to it, as a less evil than sin and hell, and the displeasure of God, and a choosing rather to die than wilfully to sin and forsake the Lord. 2. And a love to that glory in the fruition of God which death is the passage to. Seeing we cannot obtain the end of our faith and patience by any easier passage than death, you must rather be content to go this strait and grievous way than miss of the state of eternal blessedness. Let death be never so odious and dreadful to you, if you had but rather die than forsake Christ by sin, or miss of everlasting life with God, you have that true self-denial, even of life itself, which is required in my text. 4. And yet even a gracious soul may be so much unprepared, as to desire to stay yet longer on earth, though he be absent from the Lord while he is present in the body, that so a better preparation may be made. And also the love of God may make a man desire to stay yet longer for the service of the church, or to be, with Paul, in a strait between two, Phil. i. 21—23. 5. Have you not such pleasant apprehensions of the new Jerusalem, and the coming of Christ in glory, and the blessed state of the saints in heaven, as that you could most gladly enter into that blessed state by any other way than death; and had you not rather die than miss of that felicity? At least, when you know that die you must, had you not rather die sooner, even a violent death by persecution, than miss of your eternal life by saving your lives a little longer? 6. And for your unwillingness to die, as death is the last enemy to be conquered by Christ at the resurrection, so the fears of death, and the power of it, is the last evil that we shall be troubled with: and you must not expect to be fully freed from these fears in this life, for death will be death, and man will be man. But yet let me tell you, that before you die God may very much abate your fears, and very ordinarily doth so with his servants: 1. By giving them that grace that is suited to a dying state; and 2. By the help of sickness and pain itself: and that is one great reason why sickness shall usually go before death, that pain and misery may make the flesh even weary of itself, and make the soul weary of its companion, and both weary of this miserable life.

And now I shall briefly name some few directions, which, if you will practise, you will more easily submit to death.

CHAPTER XL.

DIRECTIONS TO BE WILLING TO DIE.

Direct. 1. BY all means endeavour the strengthening of your belief of the reality of eternal life, and the truth of the promise of Christ concerning it; for if you believe it not, you cannot die for it, nor cheerfully submit to a natural death through the hopes of it. This is the sum or principal work of the christian faith, to believe the everlasting life, as procured for us by the love of the Father, the obedience, death, resurrection, and intercession of the Son, and the sanctification of the Holy Ghost. It is the unsoundness or the weakness of this belief that is the principal cause of our unwillingness to die.

Direct. 2. By all means endeavour to get and maintain the assurance of your title to this promise and felicity. Get sound evidence, and keep it clear: expunge all blots without delay. Take heed of such sin as woundeth conscience, and wasteth comfort,

and grieveth the Spirit of adoption by which you are sealed to the day of redemption, and by which you have your peace and comforts. If by such sin your souls are clouded and estranged from God, be diligent in seeking for healing and reconciliation, and rest not till your peace be made with God; for while you think of him as displeased, you will be afraid of coming to him, and this will double the fears of death.

Direct. 3. Deny yourselves first in the carnal and worldly comforts of this life, or else you are unlikely to deny yourselves in the matter of life itself. Disuse yourselves from unnecessary pleasures of the flesh, and learn to endure dishonour, contempt, and reproach from the world, and sickness and poverty, when it is inflicted on you by the hand of God. Till you can deny your ease, and profit, and appetite, and honour, and all the delight of this present world, you are never likely to deny your lives sincerely. To deny your lives, doth contain the denying of all these, and more; and therefore you must learn the lesser if you would do the greater. These are the parts of life, as it were, and it is easier thus to overcome it in its parts, than in the whole: when particular soldiers are destroyed, the army is the weaker.

And the use of suffering the afflictions of this life, will make you hardy, and make death seem a smaller matter; for when you thus die daily, you will the more easily die once.

Besides, death is half disarmed when the pleasures and interests of the flesh are first denied; for the leaving of fleshly contents and pleasures is much of the reason of men's unwillingness to die: and therefore when these are denied beforehand, the reasons of your unwillingness are taken away. If you pull down the nest, the birds will be gone. Men that are loth to leave their country would willingly be gone if their houses were fired, or they were turned out of doors and their friends and goods were all sent away. This is it that makes men so unwilling to die, because they practise not mortification in their health, but contrarily study to live as pleasingly as may be to the flesh, and think it part of their christian liberty, thus making Christ a carnal Saviour, as the Jews conceive of their expected Messiah; and taking up with a carnal, false salvation, not purchased by Christ, but given by Satan in the name of Christ, and assumed by themselves. They make it their business to have buildings, and lands, and meats, and drinks, and honours, and all things as pleasing as may be to the flesh, and then they complain that they are unwilling to die, and I easily believe them: it is no wonder. They make it the work of their lives to feather their nests, and make provision for the flesh, and then complain that they are loth to leave those nests that they have been feathering so long, and loth to scatter all the heap and treasure which they have been gathering. And did you think that gathering it was the way to make you willing to leave it? Men load themselves with the lumber and baggage of the world, and then complain that they cannot travel on their journey, but had rather sit down. They fall a building them habitations in their way, when they should have none but inns or tents; and when they have bestowed all their time, and cost, and charges on them, they complain of their hearts for being loth to leave them. Such mad doings as these are not the way to be willing to die: to provide for self and flesh in your life-time, is not the way to deny your lives. Sirs, the way is this, if you will learn it, and stick not at the cost and trouble: self must be here stript naked of all its carnal comforts, so that it shall have nothing left to fly to, or trust upon, nor nothing left that it can take delight in, and then it will away. If you would drive out an ill tenant, you will cast out all their goods, and leave them nothing but the bare walls, and not so much as a bed to lie on, and uncover the house over their heads, and then they will be gone. So if you cast out all your sensual commodities and delights, that when the flesh looks about it shall see nothing but the bare walls, and cannot find a resting-place, then death will be less grievous and less unwelcome; or rather, indeed, even the flesh and self must be mortified, and in the sense in which it must be denied, it must have no being or life, (that is, as it is withdrawn from its subordination to God,) and then there will be nothing to rise up against your submission to death. Though nature, as nature, will keep you from loving death as death, yet were but self-denial perfect, there would be nothing to keep you from submitting to it, and desiring to pass through it to immortality. Oh that you would but try such a self-denying life, and you would certainly die an easy, comfortable death.

Direct. 4. Suffer not unworthy thoughts of God to abide in your soul. Think not of his infinite love and goodness with doubtfulness or diminution. You will never be willing to come to God while you think of him as cruel, or as a despiser of his creatures, or unwilling to do good; but when once you think of him as the surest, greatest good, and your fastest friend, and the most lovely object that can be conceived of, and these thoughts are deep and wrought into the very nature of your soul, then you will be ready more cheerfully to die. No man can love the presence of a tyrant, or an enemy, or of him that is so far above him that there is no communion with him to be had. If you entertain such blasphemous thoughts of God, you are unlikely ever to desire his presence. See you think as honourably and magnificently of the goodness and love of God, as you do of his knowledge or his power; and as you would abhor any extenuating conceptions of the one, so do of the other; and then the loveliness and glory of his face will draw out your desires, and make you long to be with God.

Direct. 5. And by such means as this aforesaid, labour to bring up your souls to live in the love of God. It is love that is the divine and heavenly nature in us; and therefore must needs incline us heavenwards. The nature of love is to long after communion with him that we love. The more love, the more of God in the soul, and the more desire after God. This is the grace that must live for ever, and therefore bendeth towards the place of its perfection. It is want of love to God, that maketh most of us so contented to be from him. Strengthen and exercise all other graces, as far as in you lieth; but above all, live in the exercise of this enjoying, heavenly grace.

Direct. 6. Consider of all the burdens that are here upon you, which should make you long to be with God. One would think the feeling of them should force you to consideration and weariness of them, and make the thoughts of rest to be sweet to you. Have you yet not sin enough, and sorrow, and fear, and trouble enough? Or must God lay a greater load on you, to make you desire to be disburdened? Every hour you spend, and every creature you have to do with, afford you some occasion of renewing your desires to depart from these, and be with Christ.

Direct. 7. Observe and magnify that of God which is here revealed to you in his word and works. Study him and admire him in Scripture, study and admire him in the frame of nature; and when you look towards sun, or moon, or sea, or land, and perceive how little it is that you know, and how desir-

able it is to know them perfectly, think then of that estate, where you shall know them all in God himself, who is more than all. Study and admire him in the course of providences; study and admire him in the person of Christ, in the frame of his holy life, in the work of redemption, in the holy frame of his laws and covenants; study and admire him in his saints, and the frame of his holy image on their souls. This life of studying and admiring God, and dwelling upon him with all our souls, will exceedingly dispose us to be willing to come to him, and to submit to death.

Direct. 8. Live also in the daily exercise of holy joy and praise to God; which is the heavenly employment. For if you use yourselves to this heavenly life, it will much incline you to desire to be there. Exercise fear, and godly sorrow, and care, in their places; but especially after faith and love, be sure to live in holy joy and praise. Be much in the consideration of all that riches of grace in Christ, communicated and to be communicated to you. And be much in thanks to God for his mercies, and cheering and comforting your soul in the Lord your God; and thus the joy of grace will much dispose you to the joys of glory; and the peace which the kingdom of God consisteth in, will incline you to the peace of the everlasting kingdom; and the cheerful praising of God on earth, in psalms or other ways of praise, will prepare and dispose you to the heavenly praises. And therefore christians exceedingly wrong their souls, and hinder themselves from a willingness to be with God, in spending all their days in drooping, or doubting, or worldly dulness, and laying by so much the joy of the saints, and the praises of God.

Direct. 9. Dwell on the believing forethoughts of the everlasting glory which you must possess. Think what it is that others are enjoying while you are here; and what you must be, and possess, and do for ever. Daily think of the certainty, perfection, and perpetuity of your blessedness. What a life it will be, to see the blessed God in his glory, and taste of the fulness of his love, and to see the glorified Son of God, and with a perfected soul and body to be perfectly taken up in the love, and joy, and praises of the Lord, among all his holy saints and angels, in the heavenly Jerusalem! You must by the exercise of faith and love, in holy meditation and prayer, even dwell in the spirit, and converse in heaven, while your bodies are on earth, if you would entertain the news of death as beseems a christian. But of this at large elsewhere.

Direct. 10. Lastly, if you would be willing to submit to death, resign up your own understandings and wills to the wisdom and the will of God; and know not good and evil for your carnal selves; but wholly trust your lives and souls to the wisdom and love of your dearest Lord. Must you be carking and caring for yourselves; when you have an infinite God engaged to care for you? Oh, saith self, I am not able to bear the terrors and pangs of death. Oh, saith faith, My Lord is easily able to support me, and it is his undertaken work to do it; my work is but to please him; and it is his work to take care of me in life and death; and therefore "though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, yet will I fear no evil." Oh, saith self, I am utterly a stranger to another world! I know not what I shall see, nor what I shall be, nor whither I shall go the next minute after death: none come from the dead to satisfy us of these things! Oh, but saith faith, My blessed Father and Redeemer is not a stranger to the place that I must go to! He knows it, though I do not! He knows what I shall be and do, and whither I shall go; and all is in his power; and seeing it belongs not to me but to him to dispose of me, and give me the promised reward, it is meet that I rest in his understanding; and it is better for me, that his infinite wisdom dispose of my departing soul, than my shallow, insufficient knowledge. I may much more acquiesce in his knowledge than my own. Oh, but saith self, I fear it may prove a change of darkness and confusion to my soul! what will become of me, I cannot tell. Oh, but saith faith, I am sure I am in the hands of Love! and such love as is omnipotent, and engaged for my good! And how can it then go ill with me? If I had my own will, I should not fear. And how much less should I fear, when I am at the will of God, even of most wise, almighty Love?

There is no true centre for the soul to rest in but the will of God. It is our business to obey and please his will, as dutiful children; and to commit ourselves contentedly to his will for the absolute disposal of us. It is not possible that the will of a heavenly Father should be against his children, whose desire and sincere endeavour hath been to obey and please his will. And therefore learn this, as your great and necessary lesson, with joyful confidence to commit yourselves, and your departing souls, to your Father's will, as knowing that your death is but the execution of that will, which is engaged to cause "all things to work together for your good," Rom. viii. 28. And say with Paul, I suffer, but am not ashamed, "for I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day," 2 Tim. i. 12. "Therefore we labour and suffer—because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe," 1 Tim. iv. 10. Say therefore as Job, "Though he kill me, yet will I trust in him." Or rather as Christ, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit," Luke xxiii. 46. If the hands and will of the Father were the rock and comfort of Christ in his suffering and death, so also they must be to us. See therefore that in your health you kill your own wills, that when death comes, self may have no will to strive against the will of God; but as your heaven itself will be your rest in the will of God, so rest in it in death, that you may have a taste of heaven in death, and sure that will sweeten it if any thing will.

II. I have hitherto showed you wherein self-denial doth consist, first, as to the heart and root of it, which is the mortification of the selfish inclination or disposition; and then, as to the first of the three parts of its objective interest, which is sensitive pleasure; I should now proceed to the other two parts of its objective interest: and the second is, worldly gain or profit, which the apostle John calleth "the lust of the eyes," and puts next to the "lust of the flesh." But I have already written a treatise of this by itself, viz. "Of our Crucifixion of the World," and therefore I may well forbear it here.

CHAPTER XLI.

III. HONOUR AND PRIDE, AND, 1. CLIMBING HIGH, &c.

THE third part of the objective interest of self, is that which goes commonly under the name of honour; and is called by the apostle, "pride of life," and put by him in the third place. And of this I intend, if God will give me time and strength, to write also a treatise by itself, and therefore should say nothing of it here; but only lest I should not have time to do that which I desire, I shall briefly

name you ten of the particulars under this head of honour, which you must deny: that is, ten ways wherein men exercise their pride.

1. One work of pride is to climb higher into places of superiority, and honour, and command. Poor men that are out of hope, and in no capacity for rising, feel not much of this, though the disposition to it be in them as well as others, because it is not drawn forth by temptations. But where opportunity serveth, there is nothing wherein selfishness and pride doth more constantly and obstinately show itself than in this. It is the nature of selfishness to aspire after the highest exaltation in the world that can be attained. We may easily observe in kingdoms and corporations, and all societies of men, what Christ observed at their feasts, that "they choose out the chief rooms and sit with the highest," Luke xiv. 7, 8. What eager desires have they to be above other men! If any office or seat of honour be void, there are few, that apprehend any possibility of attaining it, that want a will to it; yea, few that will not seek and strive for it, and envy those that carry it before them; and hate or bear a grudge to those that were against their rising: yea, few but venture on the most unlawful means to accomplish their desires, and yet will scarce believe that they are unlawful, because they think them necessary to their ends. There are few, if they had the choice of a man to any vacant place of honour, that would choose any other but themselves; unless their unfitness were likely more to dishonour them, or some way to make their honours too burdensome to them. No man in their eyes is so fit as themselves, or so worthy as themselves: or, if it be their children or kinsmen that stand for it, or any that self hath special interest in, they seem the worthiest for the place, because they are related to them. Especially if it be any eminent dignity or command, that seems to them a prey that is worth the hunting after. Oh the blinding, bewitching, befooling power of pride and selfishness! How commonly doth it rule! How few are those holy, happy men, that have escaped and overcome it! How few societies be there in the world, whether corporations, colleges, or the like, but pride and selfishness make their governors! How few nations on the earth, where pride and selfishness make not their kings or sovereigns! And is it any wonder if they be all ill-governed then, where the devil doth so much to choose the governors? I know that God overruleth all, and restraineth the lusts of men, and crosseth their designs; but yet their lusts and the devil may rule to their destruction for all that.

Object. But is it not lawful to seek for dignity and superiority?

Answ. No, not for self; but for God it is. You have warnings enough, and plain enough, from Christ, if warnings would serve turn: he hath bid you "sit not down in the highest room;" he hath sharply rebuked them that strive for precedency, and who shall be the greatest. He hath told you, he that will be the greatest, must be the servant of all; and hath told you of stooping to the feet of the meanest, and condescending to men of low degree; and hath set little children before you to be your teachers, and assured you that there is no entrance into his kingdom in any other posture. He hath told you that God resisteth and abhorreth the proud, and that he that humbleth himself shall be exalted, and he that exalteth himself shall be brought low.

Object. But how shall I know whether I seek preferment for God or myself? I hope it is God that I seek it for.

Answ. 1. How shall a man know his own mind? You have dark hearts indeed if you cannot know your own intentions, if you are but observant, and diligent, and willing to know them. 2. He that seeketh not dignities for himself, but for God, will never seek to put by another that is as able and likely to do God service in the place as he; nor will he seek it at all, if he see that God may be served as well without his seeking it: but will stay till God call him to it, and then he may expect his help and blessing. Few do intend God in it, that are exalters of themselves. Indeed if you see that an enemy of the gospel, or some unworthy, ungodly man, is like to come into the place if you seek it not, by which the church or the commonwealth is like to be much injured, then you may seek it by lawful means; so that you can truly say, I would not do it for myself, but it is to serve God for his people's good. 3. Nay, he that seeketh not the dignity for himself, will seek first and more to get in another, if he know another that is fitter than himself, and likely to do God more service; and this he will do heartily, and not dissemblingly. If you had not rather a worthier and more useful man were preferred before you, and seek not more for such than for yourselves, you are plain self-seekers, whatever you may pretend. If a man should come to almost any of the rulers of nations, churches, colleges, or corporations, that have screwed themselves into the place of government, and ask them, did you know no man fitter for this place than yourself, and have you sought first to get in a fitter man? What can they for shame say to it? If they say, no; they proclaim themselves notorious self-seekers! For it is very seldom that a humble man is allowed to judge himself the fittest. 4. And he that seeketh dignities for God, and not for himself, will use them for God, and not for himself. For the intention will command the use. He will deny himself in his superiority, as well as if he were in the lowest place; and he will contrive how he may most serve and honour God; and this will be easily seen in his endeavours, whether it be God or self that he serves and liveth to.

And now I advise all that love their souls, to take heed of this aspiring act of selfishness. If you will needs seek yourselves, and be your own exalters, you must trust to yourselves, and be your own defenders; and then you will find that the lowest condition in the hand of God, is more safe and comfortable than the highest in your own hand. If God should lift you up to the top of the highest mountains, you may expect either a calm, or his protection in the storm, and to be as safe as those below; but if you lift up yourselves, and Satan carry you to the pinnacle of the temple, take heed lest you thence cast down yourselves by his temptation that did lift you up. Dignities and honours are not indeed the things that they seem to be to carnal eyes, that see not the inside, but judge by the outward, glittering show. There is most holy duty and work to be done, where is the greatest dignity. And certainly the life of greatest work and labour, is not the life of greatest ease or carnal pleasure; especially when it is the work of God that you must do; a work which all the world is against, and which Satan and all his power will resist; and which must meet with enmity, and abundance of enmity, whenever you set about it. Though you are commanders, yet you are soldiers; and you that are leaders have the hottest standing, and must expect the sharpest conflicts. Do you think of your dignities and offices as places of mere superiority and honour, and accommodation to your carnal selves? Then are you carnal men, and enter upon you know not what, and make yourselves traitors and enemies to God, whom he is en-

gaged to bring down and be avenged on at last; you debase the sacred coin which bears the stamp and name of God. Magistracy is holy, and the image of God, and you basely turn it into the image of the flesh; and blot out God's name from it, and stamp upon it the name of self, and traitorously make it your own, which was eminently his. Believe it, whoever you are, if you seek for places of rule and dignity with carnal, selfish expeetations, you must either use them accordingly when you have them, which is the readiest way to damnation in the world, or else you must find your expectations crossed, and miss of all your carnal ends; and find that the greatest toil and burden, which you expected should have been your chief content. God hath annexed the honour and outward greatness, partly to eneourage you to so hard a work, lest the burden should be too heavy, and partly to enable you to perform it, and give you some advantages against opposition. But though the clothing of authority and rule be splendid, the substance thus covered is extraordinary labour, and duty, and suffering. It is honourable, but it is an honourable burden, and an honourable, painful, difficult work. So that if men understood what office and authority is in church or commonwealth, and looked after the substance as well as the ornaments; the work as well as the honour and greatness; it would be an eminent piece of self-denial for a man to submit to the call of God, to be a prince, a judge, a justice, or but a constable; and men would as hardly be drawn to take the office, as they are now to do the work of the office in faithfulness, and with courage and zeal for God; and that is almost as hard as an offender is drawn to the stocks. Offices and high places are not intended to accommodate the flesh; nor are they things to be ambitiously desired and sought for, by such as understand the ends and use of them; but they are such laborious, hazardous ways of serving God, which a wise man knows must cost him more than the honour will repay; and which a good man will not run away from, when God calleth him thereto, but will so far deny himself as to submit to them, but not thrust himself into them, as the proud and foolish do. It is a work of patience to a godly man to be thus exalted; but it is a work of pride and self-seeking in others. Deny yourselves so far as to submit to government and dignity, and bear it patiently if it be cast upon you, as being an excellent opportunity of serving God; but wish not for it, because of the honour and advantages to the flesh; much less contend for it, or set your hearts on it. He that seeketh an office or honour for himself, must have another heart before he will use it for God. It is better with Saul to hide ourselves from honour, than with Absalom to contrive and seek it; but best of all with David to stay till God call us, and then obey.

CHAPTER XLII.

THE LOVE AND GOOD WORD OF OTHERS DENIED.

2. ANOTHER part of selfish interest to be denied, is the love and good will and word of others. This is a thing that may and must be desired to good ends; but not for carnal self. When Paul looked at God's honour and the good of souls, he "became all things to all men that he might by all means save some;" and this he did, not for self but for the gospel's sake, and yet for himself in subordination to God, that he "might be partaker of it with them." He would "give no offence to Jew or gentile, or the church of God; but pleased all men in all things, (that tended to their good,) not seeking his own profit, but the profit of many that they may be saved," 1 Cor. x. 32, 33. And he hath left it as the duty of the strongest christians, "not to please themselves, but every one to please his neighbour for his good to edification." But when Paul looked at himself, and his esteem among men, then he saith, "With me it is a very small thing, that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment," 1 Cor. iv. 3. And, "Do I seek to please men? For if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ," Gal. i. 10. Good natures are loth to provoke others to displeasure; and grace moveth us to please men for the saving of their souls. But it is pride and self-seeking to desire to set up ourselves in men's esteem; and to endear ourselves for ourselves into their affections. It is God's highest honour to be highliest esteemed, and dearliest beloved, as being the most perfect and transcendent good. And proud men in this would aspire to his prerogative; and much affect to be beloved of all; and fain they would sit near men's hearts, and be the darlings of the world. This is a fine, but dangerous sin; and I doubt many that are guilty of it, never well considered that it is a sin, and so great a sin as indeed it is. Deny yourselves in this. It is God that must be loved of all, and not you; you must be content to "be hated of all men for his name's sake," that he may be beloved. Men's hearts were not made to be your throne, but God's. Your work is to love, and not ambitiously to seek for love. So far as your interest in men's affections doth conduce to God's honour and service and their good, desire it, and spare not; but see that these be really your ends. But for yourselves, take heed of desiring or seeking for men's love. They are apt enough to have inordinate affections to the creature without your temptations. To love God in you, and love you for God, is their duty which you may provoke them to in season; but seek not for any nearer interest in them, nor for such a love as terminateth in yourselves. Nature is exceeding ambitious of being beloved; but steal not God's due. You are to be suitors and solicitors for him, to win the hearts of as many to him as you can; and not to speak for yourselves in his stead. Thankfully accept of men's ordinate love to you, if you have it; but if they deny it for you, or for the sake of Christ, and turn it into hatred, do you deny yourselves herein, and remember that it is no more than you were forewarned of; and no more than your Lord and his worthiest servants have endured. What a pattern is Paul, that tells his converts, he "seeks not theirs but them, as parents lay up for the children, and not children for the parents, and would gladly spend and be spent for them, though the more he love the less he were beloved," 2 Cor. xii. 14, 15. See that you love God and them, and that is your duty; do that, and you need not take care for the love of men to you. Their love is none of your felicity, and therefore their hatred depriveth you not of your felicity; for that lieth only in the love of God. Here therefore self must be denied.

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE REPUTATION OF RICHES TO BE DENIED.

3. ANOTHER part of the honour which self must be denied in, is the reputation of your riches; for

wealth is one thing that men are proud of. Some desire to be esteemed richer than they are, and therefore go in the best apparel they can get, that they may not be thought to be persons of the lowest, poorest sort. And some that are rich do glory in their riches, and think they are much more to be honoured than the poor; but alas, if they had well read and considered what Christ hath said of the danger of the rich, particularly in Luke xii. xvi. xviii. and viii. 14; Matt. xiii. 22; Mark x. 23; and what James saith to them, James v. 1, 2, &c.; they would see that riches is not a thing to be proud of: "Not many great and noble are called. God hath chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, to be heirs of the kingdom." The talents for which we must give such an account at the bar of Christ, should be rather the matter of our fear and trembling than of our pride. That which makes our passage to heaven to be as the camel's through a needle's eye, I think should not much lift us up. All the riches of the world do make you never the better thought of with God, or any wise man; nor will they cause you to live a month the longer, or quiet your consciences, or save you from death, or the wrath of God. The only worth of riches is, that you are better furnished than others to do God some good service, by relieving the poor, and helping the church, and furthering many such good works; and for the sake of these good ends, you must patiently bear a state of riches, yea, and thankfully receive them, if they are given you by God: though the care and labour in a faithful distribution of them, and the danger of abusing them, and the reckoning to be made for them, are so great, as may deter a wise man from a greedy seeking them, or glorying in them.

CHAPTER XLIV.

COMELINESS AND BEAUTY TO BE DENIED.

4. ANOTHER part of the honour that self must be denied in, is the reputation of your personal comeliness or beauty; for such fools and children sin hath made folks, that many much set by the reputation of these: and hence is most commonly the abuse of apparel. Every proud person is desirous of that which will make them seem the handsomest or beautifullest persons unto others, and make it their care to set forth themselves to the eyes of beholders. What they indeed are, we can see as well in the meanest attire; but what they would be thought to be, we may best see in this: but of this I spoke before. Yea, some that think they are not proud of their comeliness, yet cannot endure to be esteemed ill-favoured or uncomely, and so show that pride which they would deny. I confess these are commonly but the temptations of women, and procacious youth; but one would think it should be easy for a few sober thoughts to cut their combs, and let them see how little cause they have to be proud of beauty or comeliness of the flesh. Alas, what is that body that you are proud of? Filth and corruption, covered with a cleaner skin than some of your neighbours. Ah, but the skin is thin: and if that be all you have to glory in, it is as frail as contemptible. There is many a pretty flower in the common field that is trodden down by the feet of beasts, that have a gloss and hue incomparably beyond your beauty. I asked you before, what beauty you will have to glory of when you have dwelt but a few months in the grave; or if the small-pox, or leprosy, should clothe you with another coloured skin; or if a cancer should but seize upon your face, and turn it into such an ugly shape, as makes men tremble to behold it; or when wrinkled age hath made you as another person; or when death hath deprived you of that soul, which was your beauty, and laid you out as a prey and sacrifice to corruption. Ah, that ever such a skin full of dirt, such a bag of filth, should yet be proud, that is carried about by a living soul, and by it kept a little while from falling down as a senseless clod, and turning into a stinking corpse! They are short-sighted, and short-witted, as well as graceless, that cannot look so far before them, or within them, as to see that which may take them down from being proud of any comeliness of the flesh. One would think this should be so easy a part of self-denial, as any graceless one might reach by a little use of the reason that is left them.

CHAPTER XLV.

STRENGTH AND VALOUR TO BE DENIED.

3. ANOTHER piece of vain-glory to be denied, is in the reputation of strength and valour. The witless part of men, especially in their procacious humours, do use to be carried away with this, as witless women with the former. Hence commonly are their matches of running and wrestling, and many exercises of activity and strength; yea, and hence commonly are their duels and murders. It seems such a dishonourable thing to them to be thought a coward, or unable to defend themselves, and to be crowed over by their enemy, that they will venture body and soul upon it rather than they will put up such indignities, or lie under the dishonour of being cowards. Yea, and (would one think it) some Jesuits are such carnal doctors, that they teach men that if they be challenged, and their honour lie upon it, they may meet the challenger there in a defensive posture, and fight with him to defend their honour: yea, and in many other cases, they may kill another for their honour, seeing their honour is more to them than their lives. O miserable teachers, and miserable souls that do obey them! Christ hath taught you another lesson, even "to despise the shame," Heb. xii. 2, 3; and to humble yourselves; and intimateth that such cannot be believers which "receive honour of one another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only," John v. 44. It is more honour to obey God in suffering than to be so valiant as to murder another man. The day is near, when he will appear the honourable man that was likest to Jesus Christ, that when he "was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously," 1 Pet. ii. 23. Blind sinners! do you think it more honourable to do hurt than to suffer hurt? yea, to be liker the devil, who is a murderer, than to Christ, that was a sufferer, and came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them and lay down his own? Can any thing be more honourable than to be the children of the heavenly Father? and if you be such, you must "love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you," Matt. v. 44. What a case are those men's understandings in, that think it their honour to revenge themselves when God hath so forbidden it! Rom. xii. 19.

CHAPTER XLVI.

WISDOM AND LEARNING TO BE DENIED.

6. ANOTHER piece of vain-glory to be denied, is in the reputation of wisdom and learning. The things themselves are very excellent, and to be desired and much sought after, but not for our own honour, but the service and honour of the Lord; and the greater is the worth of the thing, the greater is the temptation to vain-glory in them that have it, and the harder it is to deny themselves herein. This part of self-denial consisteth not in a contempt of learning or wisdom, nor a neglect of it, for this were a sin; but in a neglect of self, that would make an advantage of it for its own carnal exaltation, and in a contempt of the honour and vain-glory which may redound by it to ourselves, further than such honour is serviceable to God. Oh how sinful and miserable a life do abundance of learned men live in the world! Their whole life is but one continued vice, and that a sin of a most heinous nature, even the exercise of pride and self-seeking, when yet they take themselves for saints, because they are not such as are accounted scandalous sinners in the world. They sacrifice their precious time and studies to their pride and fancies, and not to God. Too many hours and years are spent to gain the reputation of being learned men; too many disputations are managed; yea, (odious sacrilege,) too many sermons are preached, and too many learned books are written, to gain the reputation of being learned men. Ah, miserable, low, unworthy studies! Profane sermons! Ungodly labours, and poor reward! Oh, how it nettleth some proud spirits, if they hear that they are taken to be no scholars; and how many take their university degrees to be merely the wings of this part of their vain-glory. Learning and degrees, and the reputation of it, are all good, if they be valued and used but for God; but they are so much the worse when they are sacrificed to self, and made the food and fuel of pride. Learn, therefore, this part of self-denial.

CHAPTER XLVII.

REPUTATION OF GIFTS AND SPIRITUAL ABILITIES, &C.

7. ANOTHER piece of vain-glory to be denied, is the reputation of our gifts and spiritual abilities: I mean such as praying, and preaching, and disputing, and good conference, to have readiness for words, and liveliness of expression, and exactness of method: to be esteemed in all these a very able man to others, is a high part of self-interest to be denied. The duties themselves must be denied by none, for they are the service of God, commanded us by his word; but it is the honour that self presumeth to hunt after in these holy things. And it is a double sin here to seek ourselves, when we are specially commanded to seek God, and where the work is instituted for that end; and when we pretend to seek God and to deny ourselves. The greater are our abilities to do God service, the more resolutely and thankfully we should improve them in his service; but we must remember that they are given us to save others by our improvement, and not to destroy ourselves by our pride. Get as great abilities as you can, and when you have them, thank God for them, and use them for him to the uttermost of your power; but take heed lest pride should sacrifice them to yourselves, and pervert them from your Master's service.

The persons that have most need of this advice are especially these following: 1. Young, unexperienced professors, that are but lately turned to a profession of a godly life; that have so much illumination as showeth them much that before they knew not, and raiseth them above the vulgar measure, but yet hath made them but smatterers and half-knowing men. These are they that the apostle requireth should not be made bishops or pastors of the church, because of their proneness to this very sin that now we are speaking of; "not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil," 1 Tim. iii. 6: the Spirit of God here intimateth to us, that novices are the most likely to be lifted up with pride, and that this pride is the way to the condemnation of the devil.

2. And men of great abilities, natural or acquired, that have withal unsanctified hearts, are ordinarily transported with this odious vice. A strong wit and a voluble tongue, and learning to furnish it with matter, are notable servants to pride of heart, where that spiritual illumination and holiness is wanting, that should abase the proud, and turn men's parts a better way. To all that are apt to be tainted with this odious vice, I would recommend these following considerations:

1. Consider what a dangerous sign it is of a graceless, hypocritical heart, where pride of gifts doth much prevail. It is as inseparable from a child of God to be humble and little in his own esteem, as from a new-born child to be really lesser than men at age. No more sincerity than humility in any.

2. Consider what cause of deep humiliation you carry about you in every duty. Besides all the wants and loathsome corruptions of your souls, which follow you wherever you go, the very sins of your duties, one would think, should humble you. Oh, to have such low conceptions, such dull apprehensions, such heartless, unreverent, poor expressions of such a God, such a Christ, such a glory, and such a holy truth, should make us ashamed to open our lips before the Lord, and wonder that he doth not tread us into hell, instead of regarding us or our services, and that fire doth not come forth from his jealousy and consume us! It should make us so far from glorying in our performances, that it should drive us to Christ in every duty, to take him with us to shelter us from the flames of holy jealousy, so that we should not dare to go any further than he goes before us, and stands between us and the wrath of God, nor to speak a word but in his name, nor to expect any welcome but on his account. Shall a wretch be proud of that performance whose failings deserve everlasting torments? Must you be beholden to Christ to save you from the hell that the sins of your performances deserve, and yet dare you be proud of them? Let a papist run that desperate path, that rails at us for saying that our best duties are mixed with sin, and that this sin deserves the wrath of God; let them refuse a physician that think not themselves sick; and let them tell Christ they will not be beholden to him for a pardon for the sins of their prayers and other duties; but for shame let not us be guilty of this, who profess to be better acquainted with our infirmities.

3. Consider also that you have to do with so holy and glorious a God, that to be proud before him, and that in and of our very service of him, is a sin whose greatness surpasseth our apprehensions. Had you

to do with a man like yourselves, you might better lift up yourselves against him. There is nothing comparatively in the presence of the greatest prince, to humble and abase you; but to be proud before the God of heaven, and that in and of our lamentably weak addresses to him; oh, what a horridly impious, unreasonable thing is this! O man! if thy eyes were opened to see a little, a very little of the glory of that blessed God thou speakest to, how flat wouldst thou fall down! How wouldst thou fear and tremble! and cry out as the prophet, "Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts," Isaiah vi. 5. Or, "Behold I am vile, what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth," Job xl. 4. And, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee: wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes," Job xlii. 5, 6. One glimpse of God's majesty would take down thy self-exalting thoughts, and humble thee with a witness.

4. Consider the examples of the holiest of God's servants. The example of Job and Isaiah I have now mentioned. Moses himself did think himself unmeet to speak in God's message; "He said unto the Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken to thy servant: but I am of slow speech and of a slow tongue," Exod. iv. 10. And, "He said, O my Lord, send I pray thee by the hand of him whom thou wilt send," ver. 13. When God sent Jeremiah he said, "Ah, Lord God, behold I cannot speak; for I am a child," Jer. i. 6. And Paul cries out, "Who is sufficient for these things?" 2 Cor. ii. 16. So that it hath been the course of the most seraphical prophets and holy apostles to have low thoughts of their own abilities for duty; and yet have you enough to be proud of?

5. And consider that the nature of the holy employment that you are upon, one would think, should be enough to humble you. It is a confessing of sin, unworthiness, and guilt; and will you be proud of this? It is a confessing that you deserve everlasting torment; and will you be proud of such a confession as this? The Lord be merciful to us, and save us from this unreasonable vice; who would think that it should be thus with a man in his wits? To confess that he deserveth hell-fire; and to be proud of that confession! Your petitions are all humbling, if they be according to the word; you are beggars for your lives, for pardon of many and heinous sins, and should come as with a rope about your necks; you beg for deliverance from eternal misery: and should you be proud of such requests? Should beggars be proud, yea, such needy, miserable beggars, and be proud of their very begging? Nay, your very thanksgiving itself is humbling; for what do you give thanks for, but for salvation from these odious sins, and the damnation which you have deserved? And shall a thief be proud that he is pardoned and taken from the gallows? Pride is contrary to the very nature and meaning of all those holy duties that you are proud of.

6. Yea, the gifts themselves that you are proud of should humble you. For, 1. They are from God, and not yourselves. "For who maketh thee to differ? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?" 1 Cor. iv. 7. 2. You received them not for yourselves, but for God; and therefore have no reason yourselves to be lifted up by them. 3. All gifts are for labour and duty, and must be once accounted for; and therefore should keep you in humility and fear. To be proud of God's gifts, is to be proud of that which is given you to destroy pride in yourselves and others; for this is the end of them.

7. And it is a sign that you want exceeding much of that which you are proud of. You are proud of knowledge; whereas, if it were not for want of knowledge of that which should humble you, you would not be so proud. You are proud of your worth; and it is for want of real worth that you are proud. More light, and grace, and parts, would show you that which would make you blush at the things that you were proud of.

8. And consider that you take the course to provoke God to bereave you of his gifts. He gave them to you for another use. If you will turn them against his face by pride, when he gave them to keep you humble; when you will exalt your carnal selves by it, which he gave you to exalt his Majesty; what can you expect but he should take them from you? And it is an easy matter with him to do it; yea, to take away your very understandings, and leave you to the heavy plague of madness, seeing you were proud of your understandings, when alas, poor worms, you had so little cause.

9. If once you grow proud of your parts and gifts, you are in the high way to be given over to some fearful fall; at best to particular scandals, if not to some damnable heresy or apostasy. God may prevent it by your humiliation, but you are in the common road that leads to it. It is much to be feared that God will so far leave you to yourselves, as to let you fall into the dirt of some notorious sin, that your shame may fly abroad the world, instead of the vain-glorious fame which you desired; and that you may have somewhat to humble you, that shall be written in your foreheads, and cannot be denied or hid. Or if you be hypocrites, and for damnation, it is most likely that you are in the ready way to some desperate heresy, or flat apostasy. For we see that these are too frequently the consequents of spiritual pride.

10. Lastly, consider that the gifts you are proud of, are in danger of being unsuccessful to the church: God may, I confess, do good to others by them, though they do but choke yourselves; but ordinarily he denieth success to the proud, and blesseth weaker endeavours of the humble. Yea, often such men and all their parts become a plague and trouble to the church. For they use them to foment the heresies and divisions which they are given over to; and do more hurt than the ignorant, or the common sort of the profane. Learn therefore to deny yourselves in the reputation of your performances. If you feel any tickling delight when you are applauded, cast water on it suddenly, as on a fire kindled in your souls from hell. If you perceive the least stirring of discontent or envy, when the preaching or prayers of another are preferred, and yours less set by, take heed, and quench it; for you are entertaining a dangerous temptation. But if you should be so far lifted up, as to set up your judgments above their worth, and rise against your teachers and the church of Christ, and desire to step beyond your callings, that your parts may be taken notice of, and you may be somebody in the church, and verify the prophecy of Paul, "Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them," Acts xx. 30; I say, when once you come to this, it is time to fear lest you be utterly forsaken, and become the shame and scorn of men, as you became the scourge and troublers of the church, and lest your self-exalting lay you as low as hell.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

REPUTATION OF BEING ORTHODOX, HOW FAR—

8. ANOTHER piece of vain-glory to be denied, is the reputation of being orthodox, or of the right religion. The thing itself is in the essentials of absolute necessity to salvation; but the reputation of it is a thing that we must deny ourselves in. For it commonly falls out in most of the world, that the thing itself, and the reputation of it, are inconsistent; and no man can be orthodox, and of the right religion, but he must be taken to be heterodox, and of the wrong religion; for the wrong is in most places taken for the right. But through the great mercy of God, it is not commonly so in England, nor in the reformed churches abroad, in any great and necessary points. Among us truth hath the advantage of reputation; and so may it continue while the sun endureth! But yet there is use for this part of self-denial, even with us. We converse among many sects and parties of various opinions; and all of them are confident that they are in the right, and that we are erroneous, and against the truth: so say the papists, and so say the libertines, and many others. And there is no way to gain the reputation of being sound and orthodox with any of these men, but by turning to them, and forsaking the truth, and ceasing to be orthodox indeed. In Spain, or Italy, or with English papists, you must be accounted heretics, or yield to heresy; you must either cease to be true catholics, or be content to be esteemed no catholics; you have your choice whether you will really be schismatics, or be esteemed and called schismatics. And so you will be used among most sects, who judge of truth and error according to their own deluded apprehensions. Yea, and among the orthodox indeed, because they also have their errors, and are not orthodox in all things, you must look for the same measure in those particulars wherein they are mistaken. For thinking themselves in the right, they will too often take it for their duty to let fly at others, as erroneous or dangerous persons, that are not of their mind: and in this mistake, they think they do God service to defame dissenters, and raise jealousies and suspicions of them, and bid men take heed of them, as of them that hold some dangerous opinions; when it is themselves that are deceived, and should turn those jealousies and cautions homewards. In such cases as these it is a hard strait that a servant of Christ is put to, when he must either err or be supposed to err. But the principal temptation lieth in those countries, where error hath got the major vote, and is patronized both by book and sword, and custom hath fixed the name of truth upon the foulest heresies, and the name of heresy upon saving truths: here a poor christian is sorely tempted, and put to a lamentable strait. Oh, saith he, if I were reputed but to be base, or beggarly, or contemptible, I could bear it; but heresy and schism are such odious things that no man should be patient under the imputation of them. *Answ.* Are they such odious things? Take heed of them then, lest out of your own mouths you be judged. If you think the matter so small that you will rather be a heretic or schismatic, than be called or accounted one, it seems you take it for no odious thing. Is the name or the thing more odious to you? Had you rather be erroneous, or be thought to be so? If the thing be most odious to you, the name will be the more tolerable. But if the name be most odious to you, it is dishonour, and not error or schism, that you are against. Had you rather part with truth and religion, or with the name and reputation of them? If you set so much by self, and so little by truth, as to let go truth for fear of being thought to let it go; for shame, do not take on you to be lovers of truth, but of yourselves; nor haters of error, but of dishonour.

And consider further, that you may lose the reputation of being orthodox, and catholic, and of the right religion, without losing any of the favour of God; nay, it may be a suffering for his sake that may advance you in his favour, and assure you of the reward of martyrs. For saith Christ, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you," Matt. v. 11, 12. So that you see the thing that you so abhor, is matter of exceeding joy, even to be falsely counted a heretic or erroneous for the sake of Christ and truth; we are blessed when we are falsely reviled as erroneous, and have all these evil sayings against us. But to be such indeed, is to be accursed; though the name of heresy will stand with the special love of God, yet heresy itself he utterly abhors. And whether do you think it is better to part with truth, and the favour of God with it; or with the name and reputation of truth, while we keep both truth and the favour of God? Deny yourselves then, even as to the reputation of faith and orthodoxness; for you will certainly deny the faith, if you cannot deny the name of it, to preserve it.

CHAPTER XLIX.

REPUTATION OF GODLINESS AND HONESTY, HOW FAR—

9. ANOTHER piece of honour that self must be denied in, is the reputation of godliness and honesty. Concerning both the former and this, I must say, by way of caution, that the reputation both of faith and godliness is a great mercy, and not to be despised, nor prodigally cast away by our own negligence or miscarriages; nor unthankfully to be received: but yet, 1. It is not to be desired for itself, but for God, that it may help and advantage us to serve him, or as it is a mercy that brings the report of his love. 2. And the greater the mercy is, the greater is our temptation, when it would deprive us of a far greater mercy than itself: I have oft thought it was a very high passage for a heathen to say as Seneca did, that No man doth show a higher esteem of goodness, than he that can let go the name or reputation of being a good man, rather than let go his goodness itself. The world is so much unacquainted with goodness, that they know it not when they see it; but call it by those odious names that least agree with it. Their judgments follow their natures, dispositions, and interests; and therefore they cannot take that to be good, which is contrary to these. A feather-bed is no better to a swine than a mire-lake; a banquet is not so good to a cow as a green pasture. As the person is himself, so do all things seem good or evil to him. The toad or snake hath no such odious apprehensions of itself as men have. And hence it is that to ungodly men, the best men and best actions seem to be the worst. And hence also it is, that in all ages godliness hath been matter of reproach; and the best have been laden with calumnies. David had enemies that laid to his

charge the things that he never thought of. And it seems by the strain of Shimei in his railing, that they took him to be but a traitor, because king Saul was against him; and to be a bloody man, because he had been engaged in the wars: "Come out, come out, thou bloody man, and thou man of Belial: the Lord hath returned upon thee all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose stead thou hast reigned," 2 Sam. xvi. 7, 8. See what a wicked person David was esteemed by such fellows as this! and yet he so far denied himself here, as that he would not hear of revenge upon the railer, but makes it as a trial sent from God. And two special reasons moved him to bear it. One was the remembrance of that sin against God and his servant Uriah, which he knew God was now chastising him for; and therefore being under the rod of the Lord, he durst not think of revenge upon the instrument; and being sensible that he had brought all this upon himself, he durst not let fly too much at others. The other was that God had raised up (by permissive Providence) the son of his bowels against him; and therefore he thought it an unseemly thing to be much offended with a stranger for less. And such reasons as these have we also to persuade us to patience and self-denial in the like case. The Lord Jesus himself, who had no sin at all, escaped not these censures of malicious men. He was esteemed a friend or companion of publicans and sinners, yea, a gluttonous person and a wine-bibber; yea, a deceiver; yea, a conjurer, that did his works by the help of the devil, Matt. xi. 19; Luke vii. 34; Matt. xxvii. 63; John vii. 12; Matt. xii. 27. What usage the holy apostles themselves had, and how they behaved themselves under all, you may conjecture by that one passage, (to mention no more,) "For I think God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were men appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle to the world, and to angels, and to men: we are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised; even to this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling-place; and labour working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it; being defamed, we entreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and the offscouring of all things to this day," 1 Cor. iv. 9—13. The like usage had the christians after the apostles' days. They were slandered by the pagans as if they sacrificed and ate their own children, and putting out the lights had commonly been unclean together after their holy exercises: and when they cast them to the lions to be devoured, and many ways tormented them, it was as ungodly men, for preaching against the heathen gods, and refusing to offer sacrifice to them. And therefore the rabble was wont thus to cry for judgment against them, *Tollite impios! Tollite impios!* Away with the ungodly christians! The wicked multitude that were drowned in filthiness and ungodliness, did think themselves religious men, and the christians to be ungodly. So that they were fain to live and die under a reputation as contrary to the truth, as darkness is contrary to light.

And this usage hath still been the attendant of true godliness. When the papists burn God's servants at the stake, it is for supposed heresy and impiety: they put a painted cap and coat upon them, made of paper, on which the images of devils are pictured, to make the people believe that they are ungodly persons, the servants of the devil, and possessed by him already, and unworthy to live any longer among men. When they butchered the poor Waldenses and Albigenses by thousands, it was under the name of ungodly heretics. The ignorant, ungodly rabble among us now, that hate and revile those that seek after God more diligently than themselves, have yet more devilish wit than to oppose them directly under the name of honest, godly men; but they first make the world believe that they are hypocrites, and proud, and self-conceited, and covetous, and secretly are as bad as others, and these are the things, if you will believe them, that they hate and speak against them for. But then how comes it to pass that it is their praying and preciseness that is so much in the scorners' mouths? Doth that signify hypocrisy or pride? Why do they not commend the good, while they speak against the evil? and join with them in the holy worship and ways of God, while they oppose their supposed viciousness? Doth the name "puritan" signify a covetous man, or a vicious person? or rather one that will not be content to venture his soul in the common, impure, ungodly courses of the world? And how comes it to pass that a man may quietly enough follow such vices, if he will but forbear the profession of godliness? But (to leave these wretches in the dirt where we find them) by this you may see the common measure that is to be expected from the world. If you will be truly godly, you must be taken for ungodly, or for hypocrites, that seem to be godly when you are not.

But it is easy to bear this charge when it falls upon a whole society, and takes us but in the crowd among the rest, and when we have so much honourable company to suffer with us; but it goes nearer us when we are singled out by name, and noted and talked of all about as hypocrites, or proud, or worse than others. But that also must be borne by those that will be christians.

But the greatest trial of all is, when the servants of God that should help us in our suffering, have got a hard report of us, and by misinformation we have lost our credit even with them. Under all these false and injurious reports, direct and stablish your own minds by the help of these considerations following.

1. It may be there is some special cause that you should try and judge yourselves; and so God doth suffer other men to judge you, to awaken you to self-judging. However, make this use of it, and you are sure to be no losers by the reproach. Enter into your hearts, and search them throughly as before the Lord, and see if there be any way of wickedness in them which hitherto you have not discovered: try whether there be hypocrisy and pride or not; especially when it is the servants of God that think hardly of you; and above all, if it be wise, impartial men that are acquainted with you, it is then your duty to be very jealous of your hearts and ways, and to fear lest you are guilty, and to search the more diligently, and not be quiet till you either find out your sin, or be sure that you are clear. And if you be clear in that point, yet suspect and search lest there be some other secret or allowed sin, which God would detect to you, or excite you against, by the injurious censures of those that have reproached you.

2. When you have searched and cleared your own consciences, then consider further, that though you are not such as you are censured to be, yet sinners you are, and you know your sins in other kinds are so many and so great, that you should bear the more patiently to be hardly thought of, when you know yourselves to be so bad. If indeed you are godly, you have seen a sink of uncleanness in yourselves, and have condemned yourselves oft, and loathed yourselves for your abominations, and bewailed them

before the Lord. And is it suitable for such a spirit to be eager after the reputation of sincerity, and to be much troubled that you are taken by others to be naught?

3. And consider also that your case may be as David's was, and God may possibly make this reproach a chastisement for former sin, and a means to humble you for it more thoroughly, and to reclaim you from it. Perhaps he bids (by permissive providence) some Shimei curse you. It may be the voice of a slanderer must do that which the voice of a preacher could not do. And then it is your work to look behind you and within you, more than without you, and to hearken more to the voice of God and conscience, than of the slanderer; and to take it as the rod of God, and a call to a more serious repentance.

4. And consider that when you are under the false censures of the world, you may have the inward peace of a good conscience, which is better than all the applause of men; and this being a continual feast, they cannot do much against your quietness, as long as they cannot deprive you of this.

5. Yea, moreover, you have the approbation of God himself, and that should satisfy against the censure of all the world. Even a proud man, if he have any wit, can bear the contempt of the ignorant vulgar, if he have but the applause of great, and wise, and learned men; as that orator that valued the judgment of Socrates above all the rest of his auditory. But all the wisest men in the world are fools in comparison of God. Having his approbation, you have the greatest, the best, and the wisest on your side; and a judgment for you that will weigh down the judgment of ten thousand worlds.

6. And if you value not God's approbation above man's, it is a sign that you are hypocrites indeed, and so the censure is not unjust; but if you do, then you will acquiesce in it, though man condemn you; and say as the apostle, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth?" Rom. viii. 33, 34 And, "With me it is a very small thing, that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment——but he that judgeth me is the Lord," 1 Cor. iv. 3, 4.

7. And remember that the great day of judgment is near at hand, that will set all straight which the slanderous tongues of men made crooked. Stay but a while, and the glory of Christ, and the sentence of your Judge, will dispel all the unjust reproaches that were on you, and wash off all the blots that were falsely laid on your good name; "and he will bring forth your righteousness as the light, and your judgment as the noon-day;" for "there is nothing hid that shall not be then revealed."

8. In the mean time God will take care of your name; he will make the very tongues that slander you to honour you; in the blindness of their reproaches, crossing themselves. As the papists by the poor Waldenses, saying they were the more dangerous heretics, because they held all the articles of faith, and lived godly and honestly, and were reputed holy, but only that they were against the church of Rome. As you trust God with your health and wealth, so must you with your reputation, even in point of honesty, and be satisfied that he can clear you when he pleases.

9. And it is not God's ordinary way to leave the reputation of his servants wholly uncleared even in this world. If one condemn them, another shall justify them; and commonly the wisest and best men justify them; and the most foolish and ungodly are they that condemn them. And cannot you bear the words of fools and children? The proudest man can pass by a contempt or slander from a drunken man, an idiot, or a madman, as being no dishonour to him; and cannot you bear the censures of the distracted world? Or if they are better men that slander you, it is two to one but it is the more foolish or passionate sort of them; and that the judgment of the more wise and sober is against them, and vindicateth your reputation. Or if at the present they do not, it is ten to one but Providence shall work to the clearing of your reputation, either in your life-time, or when you are dead. Most of the servants of God that were most hated and slandered while they lived on earth, are cleared and honoured now they are dead. God is not disregardful of his servants' names.

10. But however it go, you are secured of the main; that which you expected or covenanted for with God, you shall be sure of. If you have the thing, you may easily bear the want of the name. Hath the Spirit of God renewed and sanctified you? Are you made the living members of Christ, and the sons of God, and the heirs of heaven? I hope you may well spare then the applause of men, and easily bear it, if you be reputed to be destitute of what you have. If you are in health, it will not much trouble you if it be reported that you are sick; and if you are alive, you can bear it if the report go that you are dead: for as long as you have the thing, you can spare the name. And if you have Christ, and grace, and pardon, and justification, and title to eternal life, cannot you endure to have men think that you are without them? How basely do you undervalue these inestimable things, when the thoughts of a man's mind, or the words of a man's mouth, can blast the comforts of them all! As if you said to the world, it is not Christ, and grace, and pardon, and salvation, that will serve me, without the applause of men! How basely think you of God, and how highly of men, if this be your mind! It is more excusable for a Haman to say of all his honour and wealth that they satisfy him not, or do him no good, as long as he wants but Mordecai's obeisance, than for a christian to say of God, of Christ, of glory, all this will not serve my turn as long as men take me for a hypocrite or ungodly. For there is not a satisfying sufficiency in honours and wealth, as there is in God and glory. As long as you have the precious treasure, methinks you may give losers leave to talk. It was not for the good words of men that you became christians, and covenanted with God, but for pardon and salvation; and these you shall have; God will perform his covenant to you, and give you both his kingdom, and so much of worldly things as overplus, as is truly good for you; and what would you have more? You shall have the inheritance and crown of blessedness; and will not that serve your turn without a few good words from silly man? I hope you would be loth to change rewards with the hypocrite! Why then do you so much desire his reward, and so much undervalue your own? Though his be present, and yours be future, I hope you think it but a doleful hearing, to have Christ say, "Verily they have their reward;" in comparison of his promise to his reproached servants, "Verily great is your reward in heaven," Matt. vi. 2; v. 12.

And now, I hope, in all these ten particular considerations, you may see reason enough for self-denial in the very reputation of your godliness and honesty; and why you should endure joyfully to be esteemed ungodly and dishonest, rather than to be so.

CHAPTER L.

A RENOWNED AND PERPETUATED NAME TO BE DENIED.

10. THE last point of honour which self must be denied in, is a renowned and perpetuated name. For to that height doth pride aspire, that no less will satisfy, where there is any apparent hope of this; though in those that sit so low that they see no ground to hope for such a thing, the desires after it are not so kindled as they be in others, that think the prey is within their reach. Fain men would be famous and talked of through the world; they would have their real and supposed worth made known as far as may be. And when they die, they would fain have their names survive, that they may be great in the estimation of posterity, and magnified by all that mention them. And so deeply are men possessed with this dangerous sin, that they account this perpetuated fame for their felicity. And there was nothing that most of the heathens did prefer before it; but when they seemed to be most virtuous, heroical, and patient, it was but to be thus esteemed of after they were dead.

If you ask me, how far a surviving reputation may be regarded? I answer, 1. So far as the interest of God, or his gospel, church, or cause, or the public good, or the good of our posterity, is concerned in it, and may be promoted by it, thus far it is lawful and a duty to value it, desire it, and seek it. For if we have thoroughly searched our hearts, and can say unfeignedly that it is God, and his cause and honour, that we principally intend, and desire our own honour but as a means to his, and therefore desire it no further than it is such a means; then we may justly desire both the extension and surviving of our reputation, if we are groundedly persuaded that it is like to conduce to these happy ends. As for example: A prince that owns the cause of God, and makes such laws for the common good as may exceedingly promote it, if they be observed by posterity, must have a great regard to his present and surviving fame, because the honour of his laws will depend much upon the honour of his name; and if once the people vilify him, they will be likely to vilify and cast off his laws, to the hurt of church and commonwealth, and their own undoing. And even to the success of their present government, they should be very careful of their fame. So also a minister of the gospel must be very careful of his present and future reputation. For at present, the saving good of his auditors doth much depend upon it. For if they have a base esteem of the pastor, they will be unlikely to give diligent attention to his doctrine, but disesteem it as they do the speaker, and it is not likely to go to their hearts; nor will they seek his advice in the great matters of salvation, and the difficult cases and dangers that they meet with; but to the great hazard of their souls will slight the necessary assistance of him that is appointed to be their guide to heaven, and will set light by all the ordinances of God. And therefore the pastor's reputation is ten thousand times more beneficial and nccessary to the people than to himself. For, alas, it is but their good thoughts and words that he receiveth, which add little to his happiness; but it is everlasting life which they may reccive by that word of God and help from him, which is furthered by his reputation. And therefore, as ministers should be exceeding watchful against pride, that they desire not honour for themselves; so when they are sure that God is their end, they must be exceeding careful of their own reputation, and avoid all occasions and appearances of evil, and purchase it by all just means: for though honour be worth little, yet the cause of God and the souls of men are worth much; and we must not be prodigal of our Master's talents, and such as are very useful to his service: our reputation is God's and the church's due, and to be cherished for their use. Especially those ministers must be careful of their reputation, that by reformation or public useful writings are capable of profiting posterity: and they may desire the surviving of their honours, which for itself might not be desired; because their works, and writings, and doctrine are like to be much blasted by their own defamations, and do little good to any that come after; nay, the precious truths and cause of God may be most dangerously wronged and disadvantaged by it; and get such a blot and dishonour by their dishonour, that any that shall seek the promoting of it hereafter may be greatly hindered and disadvantaged thereby: for it will seem enough to cast off such a doctrine for ever, that by the dishonour of the maintainers it was once dishonourable, and rejected as an error. And doubtless some things have been thus made heresies, and so will be long rejected as heresies in many parts of the christian world, because they were once called by that name; and that was because the person that did own them had some such dishonour or disadvantage as left his doctrine open to this reproach. And therefore you may here see what a potent instrument reputation is in the devil's hand, to do his work; and what abundanee of advantage he gets by defaming God's servants. Principally by this means did he long keep the world from the entertainment of the gospel, the servants of Christ being contemptible in their eyes, and the preaching of the cross but foolishness to them. By this means did the Pharisees hinder the Jews from believing in Christ; and by this means is heathenism, infidelity, and Mahometanism continued in possession of most of the world to this day. By this means it is that popery keeps the common people in thraldom: as the voluminous lies of Cochlæus, Bolsecus, and many others concerning Luther, Calvin, Zuinglius, and other of our reformers and writers, do fully testify. And by personal reproaches and dishonours it is that the doctrine of the reformed divines is made so odious among the Lutherans; and the like instances might be given in others. If now any weighty christian verity should be asserted by any pastor of the church, in a sounder and clearer manner, than is commonly known or owned, if the person that doth it should but fall under any reproach, (which he shall be sure of, if the devil can procure it,) it is two to one but for his sake his doctrine will be stigmatized with the name of error, and so lie buried for ever, till Divine Omnipotency commands its resurrection. And hence it is that there is not one instrument that ever God raiseth up to vindicate any truth, or ordinance, or do him any special service, but Satan raiseth up tongues and pens, if not hands and swords, against him; and an army of reproachers will presently be on the back of him.

Now in all such cases as these, it is a great duty for any servant of Christ to be very regardful of his reputation even with posterity: for his good name may much promote the truth, as we know the name of Austin, Calvin, and many another doth at this day. And if it be our great duty to extend our service of God as far as we can, to all countries, and to all posterity, to do them good; then it is our duty to endeavour that a good reputation should go along with our labours to further the success, or remove impediments. And thus while we are sincere, and

intend all for God, we may and must regard our honour; and yet in so doing we deny ourselves, because we do it not for ourselves, but for God and his church.

And if honour be given in to us this way, even as we partake of it ourselves, as a means to God's honour, we must thankfully accept it, esteem it, and rejoice in it. And therefore it is made the matter of many promises, and spoken of in Scripture as a blessing: "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches," Prov. xxii. 1. "The memory of the just is blessed: but the name of the wicked shall rot," Prov. x. 7. "A good name is better than precious ointment," Eccles. vii. 1: with many the like.

Thus much I have said to prevent a misapplication of that which followeth; and to help you so to understand me on this point of honour, as not to run from extreme into extreme, and to sin by seeking to avoid sin.

But alas, this kind of seeking our honour for God and his church, and not for ourselves, and as our own, I doubt is more rare than the neglect of honour. The sin that I dissuade you from, is in these two points. 1. That you do not affect and seek after extending or surviving reputation for yourselves; and out of a proud desire to be still somebody in the estimation of the world. 2. That if God deny you even that honour which in the lawfullest manner you desire, that you submit to his pleasure, and take it patiently; and in these two respects you must here deny yourselves.

Above all others, these sorts of persons following are in danger of this odious pride, in desiring for themselves an extended and surviving name: 1. Princes and soldiers that have the management of the great affairs of the world, fain would they be renowned to posterity; and hence are their aspiring, ambitious designs. For this are their wars and conquests, that they may be famous when they are dead as well as while they live; and thus they make their noble conquests to be but murders of the vilest sort, and worse than any cut-throats and robbers by the high-way, while they intend them but for themselves and their own vain-glory; and better might they seek honour by whoredom, drunkenness, or theft, which are far smaller sins. Whereas, if their wars had been undertaken for God, and managed according to his will, they had made them truly honoured and renowned. And from this odious pride it is, that Absalom's pillars must be erected, and monuments must be built to perpetuate their names, and tell the world what need they have of means to keep alive their memories, and how destitute they are of nobler means, when marbles and monuments must be the great preservers of their fame. Yea, it were well if this pride and selfishness did not corrupt the noblest of their works, and turn them into deadly sins; if they did not build their hospitals, colleges, or churches, and endow them with revenues to perpetuate their own names, rather than to do good. Though the works themselves are so good and so rare that I would not cast any dishonour upon them, seeing all that can be said is too little to provoke men to do the like; yet am I bound in duty to tell them, that if self should be the end, instead of God, and pride the cause, instead of charity, hell would be the reward, instead of heaven; so great a matter it is to have an honest heart and right intentions in the most excellent and noble works. Insomuch that a poor man that hath a heart to build a college or a hospital, if he had but means, shall be rewarded by God, as if he had done it, if God were the end and charity the principle; when a rich man that doth the work itself, shall have but a poor and temporary reward, if self be the end and pride the principle.

2. Another sort that are specially in danger of this sin, are all rich men who would be the great in the world, and perpetuate their names and memory in their houses, lands, and posterity; and therefore they would purchase towns and lordships, that their houses may be famous when they are gone: for it seems a kind of life to them if their greatness do but live in their posterity; "their inward thought is that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling-places to all generations: they call their lands after their own names.—This, their way, is their folly; yet their posterity approve their sayings," Psal. xlix. 11, 12. Hence also is that ostentation of escutcheons, and arms, and of ancient gentility or nobility, and much more such proud and selfish vanity.

3. Another sort that are in danger of this sin are divines, and learned men in all professions, who make their writings but a means to perpetuate their own names to posterity. Temptations to this sin may be offered to the best, and too much entertainment they may have with our natures, because of the remnants of selfishness and pride. But yet they do not prevail with the sanctified so far as to aim more at their own honour than at God's. The labours that in themselves are excellent, and a blessing to the church, are lost to him that was the author of them, if self be the end, and pride the fountain. And exceeding great need have the godliest men to watch their hearts in this particular, for they are very deceitful, and selfishness will too often interpose, where nothing but God and public good is discerned. And now, because that the sin is very great and dangerous, I shall here annex a few considerations, which, by opening the evil of it, may help you to abhor it.

1. These proud desires of a great and surviving name, do show that you lamentably overlook the true eternal honour of the saints. Must you have honour? Choose that which lieth in the esteem of God. Must you be great and glorious? Why you may be so, and God would have you be so, if you will but know where greatness and glory is to be had, even in that blessedness that Christ hath purchased. Must you have your greatness and honour perpetuated? Why you may have that which will never have an end; and when God hath set before you such an endless glory, are you looking after a name among mortal men, to leave behind you on the earth? Do you think to be saved indeed or not? If you do, what need have you of the smoke of man's applause when you are with God? What unworthy thoughts have you of heaven, if you think when you are there you shall have need of men's good thoughts or words on earth! But it is a dangerous sign that you are indeed unbelievers, and lay not up your treasure in heaven, when you are so careful to perpetuate your names and shadows here with men. The true relish of heavenly honour would put you out of love with this.

2. And do you not plainly see in your own desires the vanity of all these earthly things, when you are put at last to take up with such a shadow, such a nothing, as is a surviving name? Is this all that the world can do for you? And do you not see here the wondrous deceitfulness of the world, and the foolishness of unsanctified men, that they will thus stick to the world for very nothing! When they know that they shall have no more from it, they are contriving for a name when they are dead. Wonderful blindness! that experience and the approach and thoughts of death should no more open your eyes. Surely, if

this be all that the world will do for you at the last, you should even renounce it, and use it accordingly at the first.

3. You cannot but know, that when you are dead and gone, the honour of the world is none of yours, nor can it do you any good any further than it relateth to your eternal blessedness, and your honour is serviceable to the honour of God. What good will it do you to be magnified by men when you neither know nor feel it? What the better is a tree or house, if men commend it? And for your souls, if they be with God, they will be far above the praise of men.

4. Nay, as such a design is a dangerous sign of your damnation, so I beseech you think what comfort it will be to your soul in hell to be extolled and well spoken of on earth? Will you cast away your souls to leave a name of renown behind you? And how unsuitable will such honour be to your condition! Surely, if you be there acquainted with it, you must needs be more tormented, both to remember that you were seeking the fame of the world, instead of the eternal glory, and to consider what a miserable wretch it is that men are praising and magnifying on earth. Ah, then you will think with yourselves, Little do the poor inhabitants of the earth know what I am suffering while they are extolling me. Is the applause of mortals suitable to a poor tormented soul? Alas, that at one and the same time, men should be extolling me and devils tormenting me! How little ease do all their acclamations afford this poor distressed soul! How honourable are the names of Alexander the Great, and Cæsar, and Aristotle, here on earth! But, alas, what cause have we to fear that they are lamenting their misery, while we are speaking of their glory!

5. And the sin is much the greater, because it is not a mischosen means, but a mistaken end, that your souls have fastened on. For it seems your very hearts are set upon your honours, and deeply and desperately set upon them, when you dare contrive the continuation of them when you are dead. Were it not a matter exceeding dear to you, undoubtedly you durst not lay such a design for it.

6. And consider whether there be not a love of the deadly sin of pride, and a final impenitency, implied in this ambition of a surviving name; for you lay a design that is supposed to be executed after death. And as if you desired an eternity of wickedness, because your pride itself can live no where but with yourself, you would have it leave those tokens behind it by which the world may know that you are proud, and the effects of it you would have perpetuated on earth! And had not the world enough of your pride while you were alive? And had not you enough of it? Is this your repentance, that you would leave the monuments of your pride unto posterity, as if you were afraid there would be no surviving witness against you to condemn you? This is a certain transcendency of sin! The common wicked ones would fain die the death of the righteous, and wish their last end were like to his. But these men would have their pride to live for ever; and when they themselves are in another world, they would have the demonstrations of their iniquity survive them.

7. And I beseech you consider what a fearful thing it is to die in contrived, beloved sin! When men have none but a death-bed repentance, we have much cause to fear, lest it be but fear that is the life of their repentance; but when they have not this much, but are desirous to leave the monuments of their vice to all generations, from whence then shall we fetch our hopes of their forgiveness? And, oh! what a power hath pride in that soul, where the thoughts of death itself will give no stop to it, but still they are desirous that pride may overlive them! One would think that the serious thoughts of a grave, much more of our passage into another world, should level all such thoughts of a surviving honour, even in an unsanctified soul! But I much fear lest it be infidelity itself that is the root of all, and that men do not soundly believe an everlasting life with God, which makes them desire to have somewhat like an immortality here on earth.

8. And consider what a silly immortality you desire. The honour can be no greater than the persons are that honour you, nor no longer. And it is but poor mortals that will magnify your names; and what can they add to you? And it will be but a very little while; for it is not long that the world is to continue.

9. And consider what a wickedness is here commonly included. Proud men desire to be thought better than they are, and spoken of accordingly: they limit not men's estimation to the truth of their deserts; otherwise, if the best and greatest of you all were thought no better or greater than you are, alas, how far would men be from admiring you. What would you be thought but worms and sinners; and such as, after all your glory, cannot forbid a crawling worm to feed upon your face or heart? And such as deserve no less than hell; and have many a secret sin that the world was unacquainted with. But it is not a true but false esteem that the proud desire; they care not how great, or how good, or how wise and learned the world and succeeding ages think them; and thus they desire to cheat men's understandings, and to leave a false history of themselves on earth, and to have all men believe and report untruths, to magnify men whose souls, it is much to be doubted, are in hell, or if they be not, must needs abhor such doings. And thus every proud and selfish man would be a false historian and cheater of the world.

10. Yea, which is yet the worst of all, they would continue sacrilegiously to rob the Lord of his honour, even when they are dead. It is an undue honour, which is stolen from God, which they so much seek for (for were it but such as is a useful means to his honour, he would not be offended with them). And when the saints say, "Not unto us, Lord, but unto thy name give the glory," these sinners are not content to rob God of his honour as long as they live, but they would do it even after death. If we had not certainly known the truth of it, we should have thought it an incredible thing that ever any man should come to that impiety, pride, and madness, as to desire to be worshipped as a god when he was dead; much more, that the most of the world should be so far distracted as to do it: and yet so it hath been, and so it is in too great a measure. And truly the wicked or proud disposition that is predominant in the hearts of all the unsanctified, doth take up no shorter where it hath but hopes of success to actuate it. Not a man of them but would be honoured as gods when they are dead; though I know those of them that feel not this much in themselves, will hardly believe it. Consider what a heinous injury this is to God, and to the souls of men, that you should leave your names as idols to the world, to entice so many thousand men to sin, and to be a standing enemy to the honour of God, by encroaching on his right, and turning the eye of men's observation and admiration from him to you.

11. Consider also, how that by these desires of earthly honour to yourselves, and making this the end of your endeavours, you corrupt abundance of

excellent works, (materially considered,) and turn them into mortal sins. If princes rule and fight for themselves, I have told you already what they do; but if this were done for God, it would have another form, and another reward, as it had another end. What a doleful case is it that such excellent works, as alms-deeds, and acts of bounty to church, or poor, or commonwealth, in buildings, lands, or any the like works, should be all turned into sin and death, by such a selfish, vain-glorious intent! and that their souls should be suffering for those works that others receive much good by! What a sad case is it, that historians, lawyers, physicians, philosophers, linguists, and the professors of all the sciences, should undo themselves for ever by those excellent works that edify the world! Nay, what can be more lamentable to think of, than that able and learned divines themselves should lose their own souls in the studying and preaching those precious truths, that are saving unto others; and that such excellent writings as remain a standing blessing to the church, should be the authors of mortal sin! And yet so it is, if the renown and immortality of a name on earth be the end that all this work is done for.

12. Lastly, Consider that if honour be good for you, it is better attained by minding your duty for the honour of God, and denying your own honour, than by seeking it; for honour is the shadow that will follow you if you fly from it, and fly from you if you follow it. What Christ here saith of life, is true of honour; he that seeketh and saveth it shall lose it, and he that loseth it for Christ shall find it. The greatest honour is to deny ourselves, and our own honour, and to do most for the honour of God; and to be contented to be nothing, that God may be all. For you have his promise, that them that honour him he will honour, but they that despise him shall be lightly esteemed.

Though I have endeavoured by a right limitation and exposition of the foregoing parts of self-denial, to prevent mistakes, and give you those grounds by which objections may be answered, yet the stir that is made in the world about this point, by papists and many other mistaking sects, doth persuade me to give a more distinct resolution of some of the principal doubts that are before us, and therein to show you that self-denial consisteth not in all things that by some are pretended to be parts of it; but that there is a great deal of sin that goes under the name of self-denial among many of these sorts of mistaken persons.

CHAPTER LI.

WHETHER SELF-DENIAL LIE IN RENOUNCING PROPRIETY?

Quest 1. WHETHER doth self-denial require us to renounce propriety, and to know nothing as our own, as the monks among the papists swear to do, as part of their state of perfection; and a book called, "The Way to the Sabbath of Rest," doth teach us?

Answ. 1. That there should be no propriety in goods or estate among men, is contrary to the will of God, who hath made men his stewards, and trusted several persons with several talents, and forbidden stealing, and commanded men to labour that they may have to give to him that needeth; and he that hath this world's goods and seeth his brother have need, must not shut up the bowels of his compassion. It is a standing duty to give to the poor; and we shall therefore have the poor always with us for this exercise of our charity. And he that hath nothing, can give nothing, nor use it for God. Why did Paul require them to give to the distressed saints, and maintain the ministry, and gather for such uses every first day of the week, if he would have men have nothing to give? This therefore is a conceit which needs nothing but reason, and the reading and belief of Scripture, to confute it.

2. But as no man is a proprietary, or hath any thing of his own, in the strict and absolute sense, because all is God's, and we are but stewards; so no man may retain his human analogical propriety, when God calleth him to give it up. No man may retain any thing from God's use and service which he hath a propriety in. We have so much propriety as that no man must rob us; and so much as our works of charity are rewardable, though it be but giving a cup of cold water, which could not be without propriety; for who will reward him that gives that which is none of his own? yea, it is made the matter of the last judgment; "I was hungry, and ye fed me; I was naked, and ye clothed me," &c.; which they could not have done if they had not had food and clothing to bestow. So that the denial of propriety would destroy all exercise of charity in such kinds, and destroy all societies and orderly converse and industry in the world.

But yet when God calls for any thing from us, we must presently obey, and quit all title to it, and resign it freely and gladly to his will.

And, 3. There must be so much vigour of charity, and sense of our neighbour's wants, as that no man must shut up the bowels of compassion; but as we must love our neighbours as ourselves, so must we relieve them as a second self; yea, and before ourselves, if God's service or honour should require it. If we must lay down our lives for the brethren, much more our estates. So that levelling community is abominable; but charitable community is a christian duty, and the great character of sincere love to Christ in his members. And therefore in the primitive church there was no forbidding of propriety; but there was, 1. A resignation of all to God, to signify that they were contented to forsake all for him, and did prefer Christ and the kingdom of God before all. And, 2. There was so great vigour of true charity, as that all men voluntarily supplied the wants of the church and poor, and voluntarily made all things as common, that is, common by voluntary communication for use, though not common in primary title; and so no man took any thing as his own, when God, and his churches, and his brethren's wants, did call for it. Oh that we had more of that christian love that should cause a charitable community, which is the true mean between the monkish community and the selfish, tenacious propriety! Levelling hath not destroyed one soul for ten thousand that an inordinate love of propriety hath destroyed.

CHAPTER LII.

WHETHER IT LIE IN RENOUNCING MARRIAGE?

Quest. 2. WHETHER self-denial consist in the forswearing or renouncing of marriage, or the natural use of it by those that are married?

Answ. To forbid marriage simply, is called by the Holy Ghost, "a doctrine of devils," 1 Tim. iv. 1, 3; and was one of the heresies that the apostles were called out to encounter in their own days. But yet a married state doth ordinarily (not always) call men off from that free attendance on the service of God without distraction which is very desirable; and therefore those that are capable of doing God any notable service, which marriage is like to hinder them from, should avoid it, if they can, without a greater evil. And therefore the church did think it for many ages so fit for ministers to be single, that they might have the less of worldly affairs and cares to call them off from the work of God, and their carnal relations might not hinder them from more public duties or charitable works. The papists, therefore, mistakingly take the vow of chastity to be an entering into a state of perfection, and sinfully condemn the marriage of priests; when the apostle expressly saith, "A bishop must be blameless, the husband of one wife——having his children in subjection," 1 Tim. iii. 24. And so of deacons, verse 12. And others run into the other extreme. But the true meaning is this: 1. Ordinarily marriage is more distracting and hindering to us in the service of God, than a single life; especially to ministers, and such as should wholly addict themselves to the public service of the church. 2. But yet all men are not alike obliged to it or from it. Some may be necessitated to it by the temper of their bodies to avoid a greater evil, even sin itself; and some may have no such necessity. Some may have their worldly estate and affairs in such a plight, that they can far better manage them with freedom for God's service in a married than a single state; but with others it is not so; and especially with very few ministers. So that a single or married life is in itself indifferent; but as a means to God's service, that is a duty to one that is a sin to another; but because that a single life is more commonly free and fittest for this great end, therefore the apostle preferreth it as better, because more suitable to the state of the most, (at least in those times,) though to some marriage may be a duty. So that every one should impartially inquire, in which state they may do God the greatest service, and that they should choose, not on popish ground, as if it were commended to that particular person to whom it is not commanded, and were an evangelical counsel of perfection, and to be vowed; but in a prudent ordering of our lives, applying the general rules of Scripture to our several estates. And thus according to the command of Christ, "He that can receive this saying, let him."

CHAPTER LIII.

OR IN SOLITUDE AND RENOUNCING SECULAR AFFAIRS?

Quest. 3. WHETHER self-denial consist in solitude, and avoiding secular affairs, as trades, merchandise, labour, &c.?

Answ. 1. It is the standing rule of the apostle, of all that are able, "That if any man will not work, neither should he eat," 2 Thess. iii. 10; and he calls those "disorderly walkers, that work not at all," verse 11: and requireth us to have "no company with such," commanding men, with "quietness to work, and eat their own bread," verse 12, 14. But yet there are several sorts of labour: some labour with the body, which is usually more private, as to the extent (if not the intent) of the benefit; and some labour with the mind, which is usually more for public good; as princes, judges, magistrates of all sorts, lawyers, physicians, ministers, &c. Now men are to consider whether by the labour of the mind or of the body they are like to be more serviceable to God, and which they are fittest for, and called to; and that they ought to set themselves to, and that in true self-denial, and for God. To be idle, is so far from being a part of self-denial, that it is a sinful part of flesh-pleasing. And so is it to choose any calling or employment principally for fleshly ease and accommodation. The apostles were some fishermen, and some of other callings, and none of them renounced worldly labour or affairs, save only so far as they hindered them from the work of God, to which they (and all ministers) were wholly to addict themselves, as appears, 1 Tim. iv. 15; 2 Tim. ii. 4. To do therefore as many monks do, to be employed in no calling for the public good, under pretence of being religious for themselves, is to be burdens to the earth, and gross violaters of the laws of God.

CHAPTER LIV.

OR IN RENOUNCING PUBLIC OFFICES AND HONOURS?

Quest. 4. WHETHER self-denial require men to renounce all public offices and honours, and not to be magistrates, ministers, or the like?

Answ. It requireth us not to have such carnal thoughts of these offices, as to look on them only as places of honour, and power, and ease; nor yet to desire them for such carnal ends; nor yet to thrust ourselves upon them without a call, as being the judges of our own sufficiency. But self-denial is so far from forbidding the offices and employments themselves, as that it is a great point of self-denial for a man that understandeth them well, to undertake them, if he mean to manage them sincerely and faithfully. For were it not that the sweetness of God's interest and his acceptance, and the benefits of the church, our brethren, and our souls, did ingratiate these offices and employments to an honest mind, they would be so very burdensome, that flesh and blood would either make them carnal by abuse, or never endure them. And therefore hath God given them an addition of honour to encourage them, and to put an honour on their work, for the furthering of its success. Experience certifieth me that the work of the ministry is far more troublesome to the flesh, than the bodily labour of a poor artificer or ploughman is; so that without great self-denial no man will be a minister, that doth not carnally mistake the function for another thing than indeed it is. And I think I may say the like in its degree, by the magistracy; especially by them in highest power, who have the greatest work. Certain I am, if they faithfully do their duties, they will find more burden to the flesh and mind, than poor men that have only a family to provide for. Though many ignorant, ungodly poor people, that sit at home in peace, and little know the care, and grief, and trouble of their rulers, do wickedly murmur at their very calling, as if they had nothing but honour, and idleness, and excess; yet if they had tried and tasted their care and trouble a few months, they would think a private life the easier, and confess that there is need of much self-denial for a man to accept of magistracy or ministry, that understandeth them, and resolveth to use them accordingly.

Moreover, these offices are of necessity to the common good, and established to that end by God himself. And the fifth commandment requires us to pay our superiors their honour and obedience. And therefore to imagine that it is any part of self-denial to refuse the office of magistracy or ministry, is to make it self-denial to destroy the church and commonwealth, and be a cruel enemy to mankind and to our country, and to rebel against the powers that are ordained of God, and thereby to receive damnation to ourselves, Rom. xiii. 1—3; Heb. xiii. 17.

But yet this I must say, that if a worthy person stand in competition with us, self-denial requireth us to prefer them before ourselves, and to refuse honours and dignities, when the good of the public doth not call us to deny ourselves more in the accepting them.

CHAPTER LV.

WHETHER IT BE A DENYING OUR RELATIONS?

Quest. 5. WHETHER self-denial consist in denying of natural or contracted relations, as of father and mother to sons and daughters, of brothers and sisters, husband and wife, master and servant, prince and people, pastor and flock?

Answ. You might as wisely imagine that self-denial lieth in hating or denying any of God's works, even the frame of nature; or in denying food and raiment to our bodies, or in denying our own lives, so as to cut our throats. For the same law of nature that made me a man, and requireth me to preserve my life, did make me a son, and require me to love and honour my parents: and it is in the decalogue, the "first commandment with promise," as the apostle calleth it, Eph. vi. 2. It is frequently and expressly commanded in Scripture, that children love, honour, obey their parents; and terrible curses are pronounced on the breakers of these commands, Eph. vi. 1, 4; v. 22, 25; Col. iii. 20—22; iv. 1; Exod. xxi. 17; Lev. xx. 9; Deut. xxi. 18, 19; xxvii. 16; Prov. xxx. 17; Matt. xv. 4; xix. 19. And if children were not bound to parents, then parents should not be bound to educate children, and then they would be exposed to misery and perish. One would think that there should never such a sect have risen up, that should be worse than the very brutes, who by the instinct of nature love their young ones, and their dams. But the Spirit foretold us that which is come to pass, that in the last and perilous times, there should be men that are "disobedient to parents, without natural affection," 2 Tim. iii. 3.

And for contracted relations, they are the express institution of God, so frequently owned by him in Scripture, and the duties of them so frequently commanded, that I will not trouble you with the recital of the passages. And as for the adversaries' objections, they are frivolous. The meaning of the apostle's words, "that we know no man after the flesh," I have told you before. The words of Christ to his mother, "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" (John ii. 4,) which they allege, are nothing for their wicked cause; they being no more but Christ's due reprehension of his mother's mistake, who would prescribe him the time and manner of doing miracles, and have him do them in a way of ostentation; which things did not belong to her, but to the Spirit of God, and the Lord himself. And whereas they allege that text, "that father, mother, brother, sisters, &c. are to be hated for Christ," Luke xiv. 26; I answer, even as our own lives are to be hated, which are also numbered with them; that is, they must be all forsaken, rather than Christ should be forsaken; and therefore loved less than he, and but for his sake. If therefore this text require you not at all to cut your own throats, or some way kill yourselves, then it doth not require you to withdraw your due affections from natural or contracted relations. I must crave the reader's pardon that I trouble him with confuting such unnatural opinions, and desire him to believe that it is not before I am urged to it by the arguments of some deluded souls that are not unlikely to do hurt by them with some.

CHAPTER LVI.

OR RELIEVING STRANGERS BEFORE KINDRED?

Quest. 6. WHETHER self-denial require that we should relieve godly strangers, before our natural kindred, especially that are ungodly? Or that we love them better?

Answ. 1. Where our natural kindred are as holy and needy as others, there is a double obligation on us, both natural and spiritual, to love and relieve them. 2. Where they are as holy as others, but less needy, there may lie a double obligation on us, to love them, and yet not to give to them. 3. If they be more needy, or as needy as others, though withal they be ungodly, we are not thereby excused from natural affections or charitable relief. 4. We must distinguish between children, or such kindred as nature casteth upon our care for provision, and such kindred as are by nature cast upon others. If parents were not obliged to relieve and provide for their own children, they would be exposed to misery, and man should be more unnatural than brutes. So that even when by ungodliness they are less amiable than others, yet God hath bound men to provide for them more. 5. Natural love and spiritual are much different; you may have a stronger natural love to an ungodly child, than to a godly stranger, but you must have a spiritual love to that godly stranger, more than to your child; and that spiritual love must be (at least as to the rational and estimative part) much greater than the other natural love: and yet you may be bound to give more, where you are not bound to love more. For it is not love only that is the cause of giving; but we are God's stewards, and must dispose of what we have as he prescribeth us: and his standing law of nature for the preservation of mankind, is, that parents take care of their children, as such.

6. The will and service of God, being it that should dispose of all that we have, we must in all such doubts look to these two things for our direction: First, to the particular precepts of the word; and there we find the foresaid duty of parents expressed, and withal the duty of relieving all that are needy, to our power: Secondly, to the general precept; and there we find, that we must honour God with our substance, and lay out all our talents to his service. And so the duty lieth plain before us. If you have a child that is wicked, yet as parents, provide him his daily bread; and leave him enough for daily bread when you die. But more he should not have from me; but the rest (had I ten thousand pounds a year) I would lay out that way that my con-

science told me may be most serviceable to God. For, 1. I am not bound to strengthen an enemy of Christ, and enable him to do the greater mischief. 2. Nor to cast away the mercies of God. 3. If the law required the parents to cause such a rebellious son to be put to death, (Deut. xxi. 18,) then surely to provide him daily bread, is now as much as a parent is obliged to. And if it be an express command, "That he that will not labour, shall not eat," (2 Thess. iii. 10,) such useless members forfeiting their very sustenance, then surely he that is such or worse speeds fair if you leave him food and raiment. 4. And the great command of "doing all to God's glory," and "serving him with our substance," will not be obeyed, if you leave your riches and estates in the hands of such persons, merely because they are your children. No doubt but that is a selfish and unconscionable course, and the thing that sets up the ungodly to disturb the church, and lord it over the world, while parents furnish them with riches to do the devil eminent service with.

Object. But who knows but God may convert them?

Answ. You cannot guide your actions by things unknown. You have no promise of their conversion; nor much probability, when they have frustrated all your counsels and means of their good education; and grace is supernatural: and therefore you must proceed upon grounds that are known.

And for remoter kindred, if they may be as serviceable to God with what I give them as others, nature teacheth me to prefer them before others; but otherwise grace teacheth me, both to love a godly stranger better than ungodly kindred, and to lay out all that I have, as may be most serviceable to God.

CHAPTER LVII.

HOW WE MUST LOVE OUR NEIGHBOURS AS OURSELVES.

Quest. 7. How is it that self-denial requireth us to love our neighbour as ourselves? is it with the same degree of love?

Answ. I answered this on the by, before. Briefly, 1. The chief part of the precept is negative: thus q. d. Set not up thyself against the welfare of thy neighbour: draw not from him, or covet not that which is his, to thyself, and confine not thy love and care to thyself. 2. And it comprehendeth this positive, and that as to the kind of love, we should love both ourselves and neighbours as means to God, and for the interest of God; and in that respect there is an equality: we must *appretiative* or estimatively love a better and more serviceable man that hath more of God's Spirit in him above ourselves; and an equal person equally with ourselves, with this rational love, which intendeth all for God. 3. But natural love which is put into a man for self-preservation will be stronger to self than to another, and alloweth us, *cæteris paribus*, to prefer, and first preserve and provide for ourselves. And in this regard, our neighbour must be loved but as a second self, or next ourselves. 4. But this natural love in the exercise of it, at least in imperate acts, is to be subservient to our rational spiritual love, and to be over-mastered by it. And therefore it is that as reason teacheth a heathen to prefer his country before his life, (though the instinct of nature incline us more to life,) so faith teacheth a christian much more to prefer God's honour, and the gospel, church, commonwealth, and his neighbour's good, when it more conduceth to these ends, than his own, before himself, his liberty or life.

CHAPTER LVIII.

IS SELF-REVENGE AND PENANCE SELF-DENIAL?

Quest. 8. WHETHER self-denial require us after sin, to use vindictive penance or punishment of the flesh, by fasting, watching, going barefoot, lying hard, wearing haircloth, or to do this ordinarily; as some of the papists, monks, and friars do?

Answ. The easiness of this case may allow a brief decision. 1. The body must be so far afflicted, as is needful to humble it, and subdue it to the spirit, and tame its rebellion, and fit it for the service of God. 2. The exercise of a holy revenge on ourselves may be a lower end, subservient to this. 3. It must also be so far humbled as is necessary to express repentance to the church, when absolution is expected upon public repentance. 4. As also to concur with the soul in secret or open humiliation.

But, 1. He that shall think that whippings, or sackcloth, or going barefoot, or other self-punishing, are of themselves good works, and meritorious with God, or satisfy his justice, or are a state of perfection, doth offer God a heinous sin, under the name and conceit of a good work. 2. And he that shall by such self-afflicting unfit his body for the service of God, yea, that doth not cherish it so far as is necessary to fit it for duty, is guilty of self-murder, and defrauding God of his service, and abusing his creature, and depriving others of the help we owe them; so that in one word, the body must be so used as may best fit it for God's service. And to think that self-afflicting is a good work, merely as it is penalty or suffering to the body, or that we may go further herein, is to think, 1. That we should use our body worse than our beast; for we will no further afflict him than is necessary to tame him, or serve ourselves by him, and not to disable him for service. 2. And it will teach men to kill themselves; for that is a greater penalty to the body than whipping or fasting. 3. And it is an offering God a sacrifice of cruelty and robbery, which we commit against himself and man.

But I must needs add, that though some friars and melancholy people are apt to go too far in this, and pine their bodies, or misuse them with conceits of merit and satisfaction; yet almost all the common people run into the contrary extreme, and pamper and please their flesh, to the displeasing of God, and the ruin of their souls. And I know but few that have need to be restrained from afflicting or taking down the flesh too much.

CHAPTER LIX.

IS SELF-DENIAL TO BE WITHOUT PASSION?

Quest. 9. WHETHER self-denial consist in the laying by of all passions, and bringing the soul to an impassionate serenity?

Answ. The Stoics and some Behmenists think so; but so doth not God, or any well-informed

man. For, 1. God would not have made the affections in vain. It is not the passions, but the disorder of them, that is sinful, or the fruit of sin. 2. We are commanded to exercise all the affections or passions for God, and on other suitable objects. We must love God with all the heart, and soul, and might, which is not without affection, or passion. We must love his servants, his church, his word, his ways. We must fear him above them that can kill us. We must hunger and thirst after his righteousness, and pant after him as the hart doth after the water-brooks. We must be angry and sin not. A zeal for God is the life of our graces: we must "always be zealous in a good matter; fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." We must "hate evil," and "sorrow for it," when we are guilty, and grieve under the sense of our miscarriages and God's displeasure. And all these (expressly commanded in the word) are holy affections or passions of the soul.

3. Yea, it is the work of the Holy Ghost to sanctify all these passions that they may be used for God; and they are called by the names of the several graces of the Spirit. And it is not passion, but disordered passion, that must be denied.

CHAPTER LX.

HOW FAR MUST WE DENY OUR REASON?

Quest. 10. How far must we deny our own reason?

Answ. 1. We must not be unreasonable, nor live unreasonably, nor believe unreasonably, nor love, or choose, or let out any affection unreasonably. We are commanded to be ready to give a "reason of our hopes." It is our rational faculty that proveth us men, and is essential to us; and without it we can neither understand the things of God or man; for how should we understand without an understanding?

But yet reason must thus far be denied: 1. We must not think highlier of our reason than it deserves, either in itself, or as compared to others. 2. We must not satisfy its curiosity in prying into unrevealed things. 3. Nor must we satisfy or suffer its presumption in judging our brethren, or censuring men's hearts or ways uncharitably. 4. Nor must we endure it to rise up against the word or ways of God, or contradict or quarrel with divine revelations, though we cannot see the particular evidence or reason of each truth, nor reconcile them together in our apprehensions. Though we may not take any thing to be the word of God without reason; yet when we have reason to take it to be his word, we must believe and submit to all that is in it, without any more reason for our belief. For the formal reason of our belief is because God is true, that did reveal this word; and we have the greatest reason in the world to believe all that he revealeth.

CHAPTER LXI.

MUST WE BE CONTENT WITH AFFLICTIONS, PERMITTED SIN, &C.?

Quest. 11. IF self-denial require us to content our souls in the will of God, then whether must we be content with his afflictions, or permission of sin, or the church's sufferings? and, 1. How will this stand with our due sense of God's displeasure and chastisements? 2. And with our praying against them? 3. And our use of means for their removal?

Answ. 1. The will of God is one thing, and the hurt which he willeth us is another, and the end for which he willeth it is a third. The afflicting will of God is good, and must be loved as good; and the end and benefit of chastisement is good, and must be loved; but the hurt, as hurt, must not be loved. It is not God's will that we must resist, or seek to change; nor yet is it the end or benefit of the chastisement; but only the hurt, which our folly hath made a suitable means. And we may not seek to remove this hurt, till the effect be procured, or on terms that may consist with the end of it. And this is not against the will of God, that when the good is attained, the affliction be removed.

2. And you must distinguish between his pleased and displeased will, his complacency and acceptance, and his displacency and rejecting will. Every act of God's will must be approved and loved as good in God: but it is not every one that we may rest and rejoice in as good to us, and as our felicity. We must be grieved for God's displeasure, and yet love even that holy will that is displeased with us; and we must be sensible of God's judgments, and yet love the will that doth inflict them. But it is only the love of God and pleasure of his will to us, that can be the rest and felicity of our souls.

3. Some acts of God's will are about the means, and have a tendency to a further end; and some are about the end itself. His commanding will we must love and obey: his forbidding will must have the same affections: his threatening will we must love and fear: his rewarding will we must love and rejoice in: his full accepting will, that is, his love and complaceney in us, we must rest and delight our souls in for ever. And thus we must comply with the will of God.

CHAPTER LXII.

MAY GOD BE FINALLY LOVED AS OUR FELICITY AND PORTION?

Quest. 12. YOU tell us that we must seek ourselves but as means to God: how then may we make our salvation our end; or desire the fruition of God, when fruition is for ourselves, of somewhat that may make us happy? Doth he not desire God as a means for himself as the end, that desireth him as his portion, treasure, refuge, and felicity?

Answ. There are such abundance of abstruse philosophical controversies *de anima et fine*, that stand here in the way, that I must only decide this briefly and imperfectly for vulgar capacities. Schoolmen and other philosophers are not so much as agreed what a final cause is. But this much briefly may give some degree of satisfaction to the moderate. 1. No fleshly profits, pleasures, or honours must be made our end. This we are agreed on. 2. The ultimate end of all the saints, is an end that is suitable to the nature of love; and that is, perfectly to love God, and please him, and serve him, and to be perfectly beloved of him, and behold his glory. So that it is not an end of self-love, or love of concupiscence, or for our commodity only; but it is the end of the love of friendship: now all love of friendship

doth take in both the party loving, and the party beloved, into the end; for the end is a perfect union of both, according to their capacities. And it being *intentio amantis*, the end of love, both God and ourselves must be comprehended in it, as the parties to be united; and so it is both for him and for ourselves.

3. But yet though both parties as united be comprised in the end, it is not equally, but with great inequality. For, 1. God being infinite goodness itself, must *appretiative*, in estimation and affection, be preferred exceedingly before ourselves; so that in desiring this blessed union, we must more desire it to please and praise him, and give him his due, for which he created, redeemed, and glorified us, than to be ourselves happy in him. 2. And God being not a mere friend, but our absolute Lord of infinite power and glory, it must be more in our intention to bring to him eternally, than to receive from him (though both must be comprised): for receiving is for ourselves, further than we intend it for returns; but returning is for God; not to add to his blessedness, but to please his will, and give him his own; for he made all things for himself. And so that in union with him we may give him his own in fullest love, and praise, and service, and thus please him, must be the highest part of our intention, about our own felicity in enjoying him.

So that you may see, that self-denial teacheth no man to ask, Whether he could be content to be damned for Christ? For this is contrary to our propounded end, in the whole. For a damned man hath no union of love with God, and giveth him not his own in love or praises.

Object. What say you then by the wishes of Moses and Paul?

Answ. 1. The saying of Moses is very plain, Exod. xxxii. 32. He doth not desire that his soul might be made a ransom for Israel, but that if God would not pardon them, but destroy them and cast them off, he would blot out Moses' name from his book, that is, from among the number of the living; so that his saying is no other than such as Elias' or Jonas' was: What good will my life do me, if I live to see thy people cast off, and all thy wonders for them buried? Therefore either let them live in thy sight or kill me with them. This is the plain meaning of Moses' request.

And for Paul's, the difficulty is somewhat greater: 1. Some think that Paul meaneth, (Rom. ix. 3,) that he once wished himself to be no christian in the days of his ignorance, and all through his zeal for the Jewish nation. But this is improbable. 2. Some think that he meaneth only, I could wish to be given up to death for them, as the accursed under the law. 3. Some think that he meaneth only, I could wish myself yet unconverted to Christ, so they were converted.

4. Some think the meaning is, I could wish myself cast out of the church, and given up to Satan for any bodily suffering.

5. Some say it is only to have his salvation deferred.

6. And some, that it is damnation for a time.

But, 7. The plain meaning seemeth to be this; So great is my love to my countrymen, the Jews, that if it were offered to my choice, whether they, or I without them, should enjoy Christ, I would yield to be cast out of his sight for ever, rather than they should. Where mark; 1. That it is not a wish that it were so, for he knew that this was no means to promote their salvation; but it is a discovery of his affection that would wish or choose this if it were a means to that end. 2. And it is not the sin of not loving Christ that he would choose, but only the misery of being deprived of his blessed presence. 3. And the reasons of this, his choice, are these two conjunct: 1. Because the souls of so many thousands is, in impartial reason, more to be valued than the soul of one; 2. And principally because by the conversion and salvation of a whole nation, God may be more honoured and served than by one.

And note further, 1. That this is not set as a mark for every christian to try the truth of his love by. 2. But yet no doubt but it is a duty and degree of grace that every one should aim at. For, 1. We see among heathens that nature itself teacheth them that a man should lay down his life for his country, because a country is better than a man. And proportionably, reason tells us that the salvation of a country being a greater good than of any one, it should be more preferred; and self-love goeth against plain reason when it contradicteth this. What man's reason doth not tell him that it were better he should die than the world should be destroyed, or the sun turned into darkness; yea, or that one church or country perish? And so of salvation.

2. And it is agreeable to the nature of love to desire that most, that most pleaseth him whom we love: and therefore to desire rather that God may have multitudes than one, and be served and praised by them. So much about the matter of self-denial.

III. I have finished the two first things which I promised to you under the use of exhortation, viz. the trial of your self-denial, and the partieulars in which it consisteth, and must be exercised: and there I have showed you, 1. In what respect self must be denied; 2. What that selfishness is that must be denied, as to the inward disposition; and, 3. What is that objective self-interest that must be denied, which consisteth in so many particulars that I cannot undertake to enumerate all; but I have mentioned twenty particulars under the general head of pleasure, and ten under the general head of honour, and have referred you to another treatise for that which consisteth in worldly profits. And now I come to the third part of my work, which is to show you a little more fully the greatness of the sin of selfishness, and give you thence sueh moving reasons as may conduee to the eure of it; whieh are these that follow.

CHAPTER LXIII.

MOTIVES: 1. SELFISHNESS THE GRAND IDOLATRY OF THE WORLD.

1. SELFISHNESS is the grand idolatry of the world, and self the world's idol, as I have told you before. It usurpeth the place of God himself in men's judgments, wills, affections, and endeavours. It was the work of the ten diseoveries in the beginning of the book to demonstrate this; and therefore I shall say but little more. But self-denial destroyeth the world's great idol, and giveth God his own again. The selfish lean most to their own understandings; but the self-denying trust the wisdom of God. The selfish arc careful principally for themselves, and their own felicity, even a terrene and carnal kind of felieity; but the self-denying arc prineipally careful how they may please and honour God, and promote the welfare of his church, and in this way attain the spiritual, everlasting felieity of the saints. The selfish must have their own humours pleased, and

their own wills accomplished, and their own desires granted; but the self-denying do slay their own carnal wills, desires, and conceits, and lay them dead at the feet of Christ, that his will alone may be exalted. The selfish would have all men love them, admire them, and commend them. But the self-denying would have all men to love, admire, and glorify the Lord, above himself and all the world. The selfish can bear with God's enemies, but not with their own; and they can suffer men to wrong God, and sin against him, more patiently than they can suffer them to wrong themselves. But it is contrary with the self-denying: a wrong to God and his church seemeth far greater to them than a wrong against themselves. In a word, the selfish intend themselves, and live to themselves; and the self-denying intend God, and live to him, in the course of their lives. And therefore when the selfish are troubled about many things, the self-denying are minding the one thing necessary. And when the selfish are seeking to know what is good or evil to their flesh, the self-denying are seeking to please the Lord, and desire to know nothing but him in Christ crucified; and they could part with all the knowledge of the creatures, as useful to themselves, if they could but know more of God in Christ. The selfish would be in his own hands, at his own dispose and government; and the self-denying would be in the hands of God, and at his dispose and government.

And doubtless, the very state of man's apostasy did lie in turning from God to self, and to the creature for self; so that he now studieth, and useth, and loveth the creature but for himself: and so he would have himself, and all, as far out of the hands of God in his own, as possibly he can. I gave you my thoughts in the beginning, that this was the meaning of man's knowing good and evil by the fall. And since I wrote that, I met with the same exposition in Damascene, de Orthodox. fid. li. 11. c. 11. p. (mihi) 113, part of whose words I shall here translate:—In the midst of Paradise, God planted the tree of life, and the tree of knowledge: and the tree of knowledge was for the trial, and proof, and the exercise of man's obedience and disobedience. And therefore it is called the tree of knowledge of good and evil; or because it gave man a power to know his own nature; which indeed to the perfect is good, but to the infirm is evil; and to them that are yet prone to concupiscence, as strong meats to the weak and those that need milk. For the Lord that created us, would not have us careful and troubled about many things, nor to become contrivers and providers for our own lives: into which it was that Adam fell. For when he had eaten, he knew that he was naked, and made himself an apron of fig-leaves to cover his nakedness. But before both Adam and Eve were naked and not ashamed. And God would have had us insensible of (or not to suffer by) such things; for this is but an insensibility or impassibility. But we had one work only to do without vexation and care; which is the work of angels, unweariedly and continually to praise our Creator, and to delight in the contemplation of him, and to cast all our care on him, as he taught us by the prophet David, saying, "Cast thy care on the Lord, and he shall nourish thee;" and the Lord taught his own disciples in the gospel, "Take no care what ye shall eat, nor wherewith you shall be clothed;" and again, "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and these things shall be added to you;" and to Martha, "Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things, but one thing is needful: Mary hath chosen the best part, which shall not be taken from her;" that is, to sit at his feet, and hear his word; and this is the tree of life.—So far Damascene, who you see driveth at the same sense, though it be not clearly and fully expressed by him.

And as man, by his fall, desired to know what was good and evil for himself, that is, to his own nature, for his daily provision and safety, that he might be able to choose for himself, and not trust himself wholly on the provision of God; so accordingly God in judgment hath given him over to himself, according to his desire, of which more anon.

And accordingly our restoration from this lapsed state, consisteth in retiring from ourselves to God; and giving up to him again those minds, those thoughts, those wills, those affections that have been all this while detained from him, and misemployed by self; down then with this idol, and set up God. Did you make yourselves? or redeem yourselves? or do you sustain yourselves, or are you sufficient for yourselves? Let him that doth all this for you be acknowledged to have the only title to you; and consider what an odious crime it is for such worms to exalt themselves as gods, and so deny the Lord to be their God.

CHAPTER LXIV.

ENEMY TO ALL MORALITY; FAITH; PRAYER; OBEDIENCE.

2. MOREOVER, this self is the enemy, as of God himself, so also of all the frame of morality; of every article of your belief, and every petition in the Lord's prayer, and of every one of the ten commandments, and of the whole word of God.

1. For your belief, it advanceth your own reason against it, as to the truth of it; so that you cannot discern these things of God, because they are spiritually discerned. It shutteth up your understandings against the meaning of it; so that when you know the grammatical sense of the words, you know not half the meaning yet for all that. The words are written to signify the spiritual apprehensions and affections which the holy inditers had of the matter signified by them; and till you come by the help of those words to have the same impress upon your souls, the same apprehensions and affections, which the inditers had, and intended to express by them, you have not the perfect understanding of the Scriptures: and therefore while you are wholly without their spiritual apprehensions and affections, you do not so much as sincerely or truly understand them; however you may be able to speak as good grammarians, and true expositors, in the explaining of them to others. And also selfishness in the will doth make you disrelish the doctrine which you should believe, because that being practical, either the doctrine, or its consequence, or the practice that it puts you on, is against your carnal self and interest.

2. And for prayer, I might easily show you, that self contradicteth all the parts of it. You should first pray that the name of God may be hallowed, making his glory the end of your desires; but self must be its own end, and seek the honour of its own name, and less regardeth the hallowing of God's.

You must pray that the kingdom of God may come; but this kingdom treadeth down self as an enemy, and therefore no marvel if self be unwilling of it. Would you be deposed, and subjected to a

spiritual government, and do nothing nor have nothing but at the pleasure of Christ? The reign of self is contrary to his reign.

You must pray that the will of God may be done. But self hath a will that is contrary to God's will; and every carnal man would be a lawgiver to himself, and unto others, and had rather have his own will done than God's. Or else whence come all the sins of your lives, which are nothing but the doing of your own wills, and the not doing the will of God?

You must pray each day for your daily bread, as children that live not on their own provision, but on their Father's love and bounty, and have their address to him for all they want, desiring but such supplies as are necessary or useful to them for his service. But self desireth more than daily bread, and desireth it not so much to strengthen you for God's service, as to delight and gratify the flesh; and had rather have its stock in its own possession, than daily to fetch it as you use it from God.

You must pray daily for the forgiveness of your sins, as people that are grieved for them, and weary of them, and hate them, and are sensible of the want and worth of pardon, and of the abundant grace of Christ that purchased it, and the preciousness of the gospel promises that convey it, and of your own unworthiness by reason of this sin. But self is not easily so far abased as to be heavy laden, and sick of sin; nor is it easily drawn to value grace, or feel how much you are unworthy of it, or need it; nor easily driven to renounce all sufficiency and conceits of a righteousness of your own, and wholly to go out of yourselves to Christ for life; self cannot spare sin; for it is its darling and play-fellow, its food, its recreation, and its life.

You must daily pray to be saved from temptation, and delivered from evil; even the evil of sin, as well as of punishment. But self doth love the sin, and therefore cannot long to be delivered from it, and therefore loveth the temptation that leadeth to it, and indeed is a continual tempter to itself. Would the covetous worldling be delivered from his worldliness? Would the ambitious, proud person be delivered from his pride or honours? or the sensual person from his sensual delights? No, they do not love the preacher or people that are against them in these ways; nor the holy self-denial that is contrary to them; nor the Scripture that condemneth them; nor indeed the Lord himself that forbids them, and is the author of all these laws and holy ways which they abhor. So that you see how self is an enemy to every petition in the Lord's prayer.

3. And it is a violation of all the ten commandments. The first and second it is most directly against, and is the very thing forbidden in them: and all the rest it is against consequentially, and is the virtual breach of them, as disposing and drawing the soul thereunto.

The two tables have two great commandments, which are the sum of the whole law, and all the other commandments are consequents or particulars from these. The sum of the first table is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," or above all. This is the first commandment, "Thou shalt have none other gods before me;" which is put first as being the fundamental law, commanding subjection of self to the sovereign power of God, which necessarily goes before all actual obedience to particular precepts. But self is directly against this, and sets up man as a god to himself; and all the unsanctified love themselves better than God, and therefore cannot love him above all.

And therefore neither second, third, or fourth command can be sincerely kept by such; for when self is set up, and God denied, instead of the right worshipping of God, they are worshipping themselves, or suiting God's worship to the conceit and will of self. Instead of the reverent use of his name, they are setting up their own names, and will venture on the grossest abuse of God's name, rather than self shall suffer or be crossed. And instead of hallowing the Lord's day, they devote both that and every day to themselves.

The sum of the second table is, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;" and this is the meaning of the tenth commandment, which forbiddeth us to covet any thing from him to ourselves; that is, that we set not up self and its interest against our neighbour and his good; and be not like a bruised or inflamed part of the body, that draweth the blood or humours to itself, or like a wen or other tumour, that is sucking from the body for its own nutrition: so that it is but plainly this; Be not selfish, or drawing, or desiring any thing to thyself, which is not thy due, but belongeth to another; but let love run by even proportions, between thy neighbour and thyself, in order to God and the public good. And this commandment brings up the rear, that it may summarily comprehend and gather up all other particulars that be not instanced in, in the foregoing commandments. Now selfishness being the very sin that is here forbidden, I need to say no more to tell you that self is the breaker of this law.

Next to this summary concluding precept, the greatest in the second table (if not one of the first) is the fifth commandment; which requireth the preservation of relations and societies, and the duties of those relations, especially of inferiors to superiors, for the honour of God and the common good. And this is set before the rest, because the public good is preferred to the personal good of any; and magistrates and superiors being God's officers, and for the public good, are to be preferred before the subjects. But what an enemy selfishness is to this commandment, I intend anon to show you distinctly, and therefore now pass it by.

And for the following commandments, who ever murdered another but out of some inordinate respect to himself, either to remove that other out of the way of his selfish ends, or to be revenged on him for depriving self of profit, or honour, or something that it would have had, or in some way or other to attain your own ends by another's blood?

And what is it but the satisfaction of your own filthy lusts, that causeth adultery and all uncleanness? And what is it but the furnishing and providing for self that provoketh any man to rob another? And what is it but some selfish end that causeth any man to pervert justice, or slander, or bear false witness against his neighbour? So that nothing is more plain than that selfishness is all sin and villany against God and man, comprised in one word.

And therefore you need not ask me, which commandment it is that doth forbid it; for it is forbidden in every one of the ten commandments. The first condemneth self as it is the idol set up, and loved, trusted, and served, before God; the second condemneth it as the enemy of his worship; and the third condemneth it as the profaner of his name; and the fourth as the profaner of his hallowed time. The second table in the tenth commandment condemneth self as it is the tumour and gulf that is contrary to the love of our neighbour, and would draw all to itself. The fifth commandment condemneth it as the enemy of authority and society; the sixth as the enemy to our neighbour's life; the seventh, eighth, and ninth, condemn it as the enemy

to our neighbour's chastity, estates, and cause or name.

So that if you see any mischief done in persons, families, towns, countries, courts, armies, or any where in the world, you need not send out hue-and-cry to find out and apprehend the actor: it is selfishness that is the author of all. If the poor be oppressed by the rich, and their lives made almost like the life of a labouring ox or horse, till the cry of the oppressed reach to heaven, who is it that doth all this but self? The landlords and rich men must rule and be served by them. I warrant you they would not do thus by themselves.

If the poor be discontented and murmur at their condition, and steal from others, who is it that is the cause of this but self? If another were in poverty, they would not murmur nor steal for him.

It is selfishness that blemishes judges, and justices, and officers with the stains of partiality, avarice, and injustice: it is this that disturbeth the peace of nations; that will not let princes rule for God, and consequently overthrows their thrones; that will not let subjects obey them in the Lord, but lets in wars and miseries upon them; that sets the nations together by the ears, and so continueth them: yea, it is self that will not let neighbours live together in peace; that provoketh people to disobey their teachers, and teachers to be man-pleasers, and neglect the people; that will not let masters and servants, parents and children, husband and wife, live peaceably and lovingly one with another; it is the common make-bate and troubler of the world.

Nay, it is self that causeth most of the new opinions and practices in religion; that sets up popery, and most other sects; and causeth the pastors to contend for superiority to the troubling of the church, after all the plain prohibitions of Christ.

In a word, selfishness is the grand enemy of God and man; the disease of depraved, lapsed nature; the very heart of original sin and the old man; the root of all iniquity in the world; the breach of every commandment of the law; the enemy of every article of faith, and every petition in the Lord's prayer: and by that time we have added the rest of its deformity, you will see whether it be not the very image of the devil, as the love of God and our neighbour, which is its contrary, is the image of God.

But now on the contrary side, self-denial complieth with all divine revelations, and disposeth the soul to all holy requests, and to the observation of every command of God.

It humbly stoopeth to the mysteries of faith, which others proudly quarrel with in the dark. It makes a man say, Oh what am I that I should set my wit against the Lord, and make my reason the touchstone of his truth, and think to comprehend his judgments that are incomprehensible! It causeth a man to sit as a little child at the feet of Christ, to learn his will, and say, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." It silenceth the carpings of an unsatisfied understanding, and limiteth the inquiries of a busy, prying, presumptuous wit; and subdueth the contradictions of flesh and blood: it casteth off that pride and self-conceitedness that hindereth others from believing.

In prayer it bringeth an emptied soul, that is not stopped up against the grace and blessings of God; it layeth us low in a receiving posture; it emptieth us of ourselves, that we may be filled with God; it hath nothing to say against any one of those requests which Christ hath put into our mouths, but subscribeth to them all. It is the highest ambition, the greatest desire, of a self-denying soul, that God's name may be hallowed and honoured, whatever become of his own name or honour; and that the kingdom of God may flourish, in which he desireth to be a subject; and that the will of God may be done, and the will of himself and all the world conformed and subjected to it: and so of the rest of the petitions. Self-denial is half the life of prayer.

And it is a dutiful observer of all the commandments. It giveth up our love to God as his own, and consequently worshippeth him in love, and reverenceth his name, and observeth his time, and indeed is wholly devoted to him. And it giveth our neighbour that part of our love which belongeth to him; and therefore will not dishonour superiors, or encroach upon the possessions of others, or injure them for his own ends.

And indeed what should draw a self-denying man to sin (were he but perfect in self-denial)? when the poise is taken off, the wheels all stand still. Self-denial doth frustrate temptations, and leave them little to work upon. What should move a self-denying man to be proud, or covetous, or injurious to others? No man doth evil, but as it seemeth good, and for some good that he imagineth it will do him; and this seeming good is to carnal self: and therefore a self-denying man hath taken off the bias of sin, and turned out the deceiver, and when Satan comes, he hath little in him to make advantage of. Oh how easily may you take sin out of the hands of the self-denying, and make them cast it away with lamentation, when other men will hold it as fast as their lives! O try this speedy way of mortification. Would you but destroy this original breeding sin, you would destroy all. All the sins of your lives are the fruits of your selfishness; kill them at the heart and root, if you would go the nearest way to work. What abundance of sin doth self-denial kill at once! Indeed it is the sum of mortification. And therefore be sure that you deny yourselves.

CHAPTER LXV.

CONTRARY TO THE STATE OF HOLINESS AND HAPPINESS.

3. MOREOVER, selfishness is contrary to the state of holiness and happiness; contrary to every grace, and contrary to the life of glory. For it is the use of all grace to recover the soul from selfishness to God; that God may be loved, and self-love may be overcome; that God may be trusted and pleased, and his service may be our care and business, when before our care was to please ourselves.

And the very felicity of the soul consisteth in a closing and communion with God. The soul that will be happy, must be conscious of self-insufficiency, and must go out of itself, and seek after life in God; it must forsake itself, and apply itself to him. Men lose their labour till they deny themselves, by going to a broken, empty cistern, and forsaking the fountain of living waters. The nearer men are to God, and the more fully they are conformed to him, and close with him, and know him, and love him, the happier they are. Glory itself is but the nearest and fullest intuition and fruition of God. And he that hath most of him here in his soul, and in the creatures, providences, and ordinances, is the happiest man on earth, and likest to the glorified. And there is no approach to God but by departing from carnal self. I know self-seeking men do think of finding more peace and comfort in that way; but

they are always deceived of their hopes: it is self-denial that is the way to peace and comfort. While we rest on ourselves, or are taken up with anxious caring for ourselves, we are but tossed up and down as on a tempestuous sea; and are seeking rest but never find it: but when we retire from ourselves to God, we are presently at the harbour, and find that peace which before we sought in vain. I confess, in the too little experience that I have myself of the way of peace and quiet to the soul, I must needs say, there is none to this, there is none but this. Never can I step out, but self meets with somewhat that is vexatious and displeasing to it: this business goes cross, and that business is troublesome: this person is troublesome, and that person is abusive and injurious: one is false and treacherous, or slanderous; and another is imprudent and weak, and burdensome: what between the baits of prosperity and the troubles of affliction, the perverseness of adversaries, and the weakness of friends, and the changes that all states and persons are liable to; the multitudes that would be pleased, and the labour and the cost that it will stand us in to please them, and the multitudes that will be displeased when we have done our best; and the murmurings, reproaches, and false accusations that we shall be sure of from the displeased; and, which is the worst of all, the burdensome weaknesses and corruptions of our own souls, and the sins of our lives, and the daily vexation that our dark and shattered condition doth occasion to ourselves; I say, between all these disquieting perplexities, enough to rack and tear in pieces the heart of man, I have no way but to shut up the eyes of sense, and forget all self-interest, and withdraw from the creature, as if there were no self or creature for it in the world, and to retire into God, and satisfy my soul with his goodness, and all-sufficiency, and faithfulness, and immutability. And in him is nothing to disquiet or discontent, unless you will call his enmity to our own diseases and unhappiness a discontenting thing. And this is not my own experience alone, but all that know what christian peace and comfort is, do know that they lose it, and are torn in pieces while they are caring and contriving for themselves; and that retiring into God, and casting all their care on him, and satisfying themselves with him alone, though all the creatures should turn against them, is the way to their content and quietness of mind. The example of David is exceedingly observable, 1 Sam. xxx. 6. When besides the distressed estate that he was before in, the city where he left his family and the families of his followers, was taken and burnt down, and their wives and children carried away, and all gone, so that David and the people that were with him "lift up their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep;" and to make up his calamity, the soldiers that were with him talked of stoning him because of the loss of their wives and children; in this desperate condition, saith the text, "But David encouraged (or comforted) himself in the Lord his God." And it is good for us sometimes to have nothing in this world left us that will afford us comfort, that we may be driven to God for it: till the house be as on fire over our heads, and we are as it were fired out of every room of it, we will hardly be gone, and partake ourselves to God our only rest. Try it, christians, when you will, and you shall find it true, that selfish contents do but tice you to straggle away from your true comfort; and when you have done all, it is in returning unto God that you must find the comfort which you lost by seeking it abroad. It is only in the God of peace that your souls will find peace, and therefore away from self and creatures, and retire into God.

CHAPTER LXVI.

SELF-SEEKING IS SELF-LOSING: SELF-DENYING OUR SAFETY.

4. MOREOVER, consider that self-seeking is self-destroying, and self-denial is the only way to our safety. We were well when we were in the hands of God, and had no need to care for ourselves. But we were lost as soon as we left him and turned to ourselves. If God care for you, Infinite Wisdom cares for you; whom no enemy is able to overwit or circumvent; who can foresee all your dangers, and is acquainted with all the ways of your enemies, and with all that is necessary to your preservation. But if you be at your own care, you are at the care of fools, and short-witted people, that are not acquainted with the depths of Satan, the subtleties of men, nor the way of your escape, but may easily be overreached to your undoing. If you are in your own hands, you are in the hands of bad men, that though they have self-love, yet are so blinded by impiety that they will live like self-haters; and this experience fully manifesteth, in that all sinners are self-destroyers: no enemy could do so much against us as the best of us doth against himself: did a man hate himself as bad as the devil hateth him he could show it by no worse a way than sin; nor do himself a greater mischief than by neglecting God, and the life to come, and undoing his own soul, as the ungodly do. Should you sit down of purpose to study how to do all the hurt to yourselves that you can, and to play the part of your deadliest enemies, I know not what you could do more than is ordinary with ungodly men to do, except to go a little further in the same way. Nothing but sin could alienate you from God, or make you liable to his heavy wrath; and this no man else could make you guilty of, if you did not voluntarily choose to be evil. If you could ask any man that is this day in hell, or that will ever be there, what brought him thither, and who it was long of that he came to such a miserable end, he must needs tell you it was himself. If you come to any in earthly misery, and ask them, who brought this upon them? If they speak truly they must say, it was themselves. And this will be a great aggravation of their misery, and the fuel that will feed the unquenchable fire, to think that all this was their own doing, and that they had not been deprived of the heavenly glory but for their own refusal or neglect. It will fill the soul with an everlasting indignation against itself, to consider that it hath cast itself wilfully into such misery! that, when Satan could not, and men could not, and God would not, if he had not done it himself, he should be so witless and graceless as to be the chooser of sin, the refuser of holiness, and his own undoer. So that the experience of all the world telleth you, how unsafe man is in his own hands; the experience of those in hell may tell us, whither it is that self would lead us, if we follow its conduct. Whither did self lead Adam when he hearkened to it, but to sin and death? What work hath it made over all the earth! Do we not see a whole world of people, not one excepted, wounded, and slain, and brought into so low and sad a state, and all this by themselves? and yet shall we go on in selfishness still? Of all the enemies you have in the world, pray God to save you from yourselves; escape yourselves and you shall escape all. You will never miscarry by any other hands. The devil and wicked men will do their worst; but without

you they can do nothing. Never will you come to hell if you run not yourselves thither: never will you be shut out of heaven if you run not from it by your own neglect, and prefer not the prosperity of the world before it. And therefore you see that we are no where more unsafe than in our own hands. God's will is good, and would make a good choice for us; but our wills are bad, and will make a bad choice for themselves. God is unchangeable, and the same for ever; but we are giddy and uncertain, and if we are in a good mind to-day, are in danger of being in a bad to-morrow. God is able to secure us against all the subtlety, and rage, and power of earth or hell; but we are silly, impotent worms, and unable to defend ourselves, or to accomplish our own desires. So that our safety consisteth in forsaking ourselves and cleaving to the Lord. The more of your happiness lieth on your own hands, the greater is your danger; and the more of it is on the hands of God, the greater is your safety. Fly therefore from yourselves to God, as you would fly out of a torn or sinking vessel into the strongest ship; or as you would haste away from a tottering house that is ready to fall upon your heads: so haste away from self to God. Study his love, and fall in love with him; and that will be more gainful to you, than studying and carnally loving yourselves. Forget yourselves, and remember him; and he will remember you to your greater advantage than if you had remembered yourselves. When any interest of your own riseth up against the interest or will of God, care not then for yourselves or for your own; set as light by it as if it were nothing worth; and say as the three witnesses of God in Dan. iii. 16, 17, when they were ready to be cast into a flaming furnace, "We are not careful to answer thee in this matter: if it be so, the God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thy hand, O king: but if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." Care you for your duty, and God will care for your safety better than you can do: you are safer under God's care in the midst of a flaming fire, than under your own care in the greatest prosperity or honour in the world. While Abraham and Isaac depended upon God, they were safe, though in the midst of dangers; but when they fell upon carnal shifting for themselves, to say their wives were their sisters, they brought themselves but into a snare and double danger: when you have cared, and contrived, and shifted for yourselves as long as you can, it is God that must do the deed, and defend and deliver you, and provide for you when all is done. Is it wise, or safe, or profitable for your child to be casting for provision of meat, and drink, and clothes for itself? Cannot you do it better? and is it not your work? and had you not rather your child would trust you with it, and meddle with his own business, and be careful to please you, and then to depend on your care and love? What good will it do a simple patient, to know the ingredients of every medicine compounded for him, and given by his physician? or to desire to be acquainted with his physic himself, that so he may be tampering with his own body, and have the doing of the business himself, till by his unskilfulness he hath undone himself, when he had a wise and faithful physician that he might have trusted to? Oh that men knew how ready a way it is to their undoing, when they must be satisfied of all the reasons of the ways of God! and when they must have their own wills and ways, and must see a ground of safety in the creature! and must take that course that self tells them is the best! when they are resolved to look to their estates, and honours, and lives, and dare not cast them on the wisdom, and care, and will of God! Oh that men knew how sure and near a way it is to their felicity, to be contented to be nothing, that God may be all! and then they would be more in God than they could have been in themselves: and to be contented to die, that they may live in God; and to lose their lives, that they may find them in him. Let go your reputation with men, and you will find it made up a thousandfold in the approbation of God. Let men condemn you, so that God may but justify you! Let riches go, and see whether you will not find more in God, than you could possibly lose for him. Can any man be a loser by God? or can he make an ill bargain that makes sure of heaven? Do you think there is any want of riches or honour there? O sirs, win God and win all: win heaven and never fear being losers. It seems a great loss to flesh and blood to lay down your estates, and honour, and life, for Christ, and the hopes of a life to come; but it is because the flesh is blind, and cannot see so far off as everlasting is. The loss is not so great as to exchange your brass, your dirt, for gold and jewels; or to exchange your sickness for health. It is the most profitable usury to make God your debtor, by putting all your stock into his hand, and venturing it all on his service upon the confidence of his promise.

But if you will go about to shift for yourselves, you will lose yourselves; and if you will save yourselves, you will undo yourselves; and if you will keep your riches, or honours, you do but cast them away: for all is lost that is saved from God; and that is best saved that is lost for God.

CHAPTER LXVII.

SELFISHNESS THE POWERFUL ENEMY OF ALL ORDINANCES.

5. MOREOVER, it is self that is the most powerful resister of all the ordinances of God; and it is self-denial that boweth the soul to that holy compliance with them, which wonderfully furthereth their success.

Were it not for this one prevailing enemy, what work would the gospel make in the world! Oh with what confidence should we come into the pulpit, and speak the word of God to our hearers, had we any to deal with but this carnal self! God can overcome it by his victorious grace; but it is so blind, so wilful, so near men, and so constant with them, that it will overcome us, and all that we can say or do, till God set in. When I come to convince a sinner of his guilt, and show him the heinous nature of his sin, because it is his own, he will not be convinced of it: when I tell them of their misery, they will not be convinced of it, because it is their own. Were I to speak all this to another, and tell another of his sin and misery, I might have these men's consent, so it reflected not upon themselves. Were I to wring the unlawful gains out of the hands of another, I might have their consent: or were I to persuade another from his pride, or lust, or passion, they would give me free leave, because it is not self that is concerned in it, nor self-denial that is necessary to it in them. But when we come to themselves, there is no dealing with them, till God by grace or judgment deal with them. They cannot endure to know the worst by themselves; much less to come out of it. If we

tell them of their sin and danger, they say, we speak against them. And therefore they say, It is out of malice, or humour, or pride. And as well might all diseased persons say so of their physicians, that when they tell them of their disease and danger, they speak against them, and speak out of malice or ill-will. It is natural for men to think well of all that they love, and of all that they do; and whom do they love better than themselves? Pride will not let men think so meanly and hardly of themselves as the Scripture speaks of them, and ministers must plainly tell them. The prophet wept that foresaw the cruelty of Hazael; but he had so good a conceit of himself that he would not believe he should be so cruel: "Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this?" 2 Kings viii. 13. The false prophet, Zedekiah, could not forbear, but struck Micaiah, when he made it known that he was a lying prophet, 1 Kings xxii. 24. And Ahab hated him, "because he prophesied not good of him, but evil." It was all the proud men that rose up against Jeremiah, and contradicted his prophecy, and rejected his word, Jer. xliii. 2. The word of God is quick and powerful, and a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart; and it is the plain word of that God, that feareth not the faces of the proudest sinners on earth, and will not flatter nor daub with any of them all, but will tell them to their faces what they are, and what will become of them if they do not turn, and what they must trust to. This is the word that God hath put into our mouths, and commanded us to preach to them; not the flattering words of an inferior, nor the tender language of a man-pleaser, but the commanding words of the God of heaven, and the peremptory threatenings of everlasting fire, against all unconverted, unsanctified men, denounced from him that feareth none of them all, but will make them all stoop at last to him, and fear, and tremble before his Majesty. And is it any wonder if proud and selfish sinners are displeased with such a word as this? They stand all the while they are hearing a plain and powerful preacher, as prisoners arraigned at the bar; and sometimes are ready to tremble as Felix did, when he heard Paul dilating of righteousness, and temperance, and the judgment to come, Acts xxiv. 25. And can self endure to be thus used and arraigned for its life? especially when they think it is but by a man? For they have not the understanding to know that it is Christ that owneth all that his messengers speak by his commission. Hence it is that men hate those ministers that they feel thus to judge them in their doctrine, and take them for their enemies for telling them the truth, Gal. iv. 16; and think they are but the troublers of the country, as Ahab called Elijah the troubler of Israel, which he had troubled himself, 1 Kings xviii. 17; and meet them as he did the same prophet, "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" 1 Kings xxi. 20. They meet not a minister as the messenger of God that calls them to repentance, but as an enemy in the field, to strive against him, and raise up all the reasonings and passions of their souls against him, because he condemneth their unregenerate state, tells them but what God hath charged him to tell them; when the poor sinners consider not, that before God hath done with them, as sure as they breathe, he will make them, either by grace or judgment, condemn themselves as much as any of his ministers condemned them, (from the word of God,) at whom they were most offended. Ah! little do these proud worms, that rage at us now for faithful dealing, and for telling them that which they will shortly find true, little do they think that they shall shortly say the very same against themselves, which they hated us for saying: nay, with a hundred times more bitterness and self-revenge will they speak these things against themselves, than ever we spoke them. Hence it is that faithful, plain-dealing ministers are commonly hated and persecuted by the ungodly, especially by the great ones and honourable sinners. For their message is against self, and therefore self will rise up against them; and so many selfish, unmortified persons as there be in the congregation, so many enemies usually hath such a minister. And therefore the lords of Israel petition the king that Jeremy may be put to death, Jer. xxxviii. 4. And Amaziah, the priest, calls Amos a conspirator against the king, and tells the king that the land was not able to bear his words, and commands him to preach no more at the king's chapel or his court, Amos vii. 10—13. And what was the matter that deserved all this, yea, and the death of almost all the prophets and apostles of Christ? Why, it was for speaking against self and its carnal interest. But was it not a truth that was spoken? True or false, if it be against self, it cannot be borne! As the bishop of Mentz that Luther speaks of, meeting with a Bible, and reading an hour in it, I know not, saith he, what book this is, but I am sure it is against us; meaning the popish clergy. So these men say by our preaching and by the word of God itself, Be it never so true, we are sure it is against us; or, rather, we will not believe it, because it is against us. But if these men had their wits about them, they would see that this is for them, which they think is against them. It is for their healing and salvation, had they hearts to entertain it, though it be for the troubling of them at the present by humiliation. Oh how tender are carnal persons of this self! How quickly do they feel, if a minister do but touch them! How impatiently do they smart, if he meddle with the galled place, and plainly open their most disgraceful sins, and most dangerous courses, as one that had rather be guilty of displeasing them, than of silently permitting them to displease God, and undo their souls! They fret and fume at the sermon, and go home with passion in their hearts and reproaches in their mouths against the minister; and are of the mind of the desperate Sodomites, that said to Lot when he exhorted them, "Stand back: this one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge: now will we deal worse with thee than with them," Gen. xix. 9. What, say they, can he not preach and let alone? hath he none to rebuke before the congregation but me? And thus will every ungodly person reject the word as they are selfish, and self must be let alone in all. But why must you be let alone? will you be ever the safer or better for that? will God let you alone if we should let you alone? No, he will not be frightened from dealing with you as you are; whatever his word hath said against you, he will certainly make good, though you should never more be told of it by ministers. You have not silenced your Judge, when you have silenced his messengers. He will handle you in another manner than ministers do. Oh how easy is it to hear a preacher threatening the everlasting wrath, in comparison of hearing the sentence of the Judge and feeling the execution! If we should yield to your desires, and let you alone, God would neither let you nor us alone; you would but go the quietlier to hell; and your blood will be required also at our hands, Ezek. xxxiii. 6—9; and then what would become both of us and you?

Oh were it not for the powerful resistance of this selfishness, what work would every sermon make that we preach to you! Oh what abundance would be converted at a sermon! for what should hinder

it? I should make no doubt of persuading you all to close with the Lord upon his reasonable terms, and to become a holy and heavenly people, and presently to forsake your former sin, even this hour. Nay, some ordinances there are that selfishness hath almost shut out of the church; as most of the exercise of the ancient discipline, in open and personal admonitions, and public confessions and lamentation of sin, with rejection of the impenitent, and the absolution of the penitent; besides most of that private address to pastors for their advice in case of falls, and spiritual decays, or weaknesses, and difficulties that meet them in doctrine or duty. Self will not suffer men to stoop to most of these. What! will they be brought to open confessions and lamentations of sin, and to follow the guidance and persuasions of a priest? No, all the priests in England shall not make such fools of them; so wise are these selfish men for a little while! But how long will this hold? and how long will madness go for wisdom? when they are dying, then they will send for the minister and confess; and when some of them come to the gallows, they will confess: and every one of them shall confess at last, whether they will or no; and God will indite their confession for them, and open their shame to all the world in another manner than ministers required them to open it: but then confession will do nothing for remission, and the preventing of execution, as now it might have done.

So also the duty of brotherly reproof and admonition of offenders, is almost quite cast out by selfishness; and especially the patient and thankful receiving of it. And those ordinances that are continued, are very much frustrated by the opposition of selfishness. It is a very hard task that Scripture, and good books, and preachers have to do; when we speak every word to enemies of the doctrine which we preach, and we can do them no good but by their own consent: and who will consent to that which he is an enemy to? Our work is to subdue their flesh and carnal wills to Christ; and this flesh is so dear to them that it is themselves; so that they take all that doctrine to be against them which should save them; and we have as many enemies as unconverted hearers in our assemblies; no wonder, therefore, if they carp, and quarrel, and strive, when the self-denying humbly submit and obey.

Self-denial openeth the heart to Christ, and giveth the ordinances leave to work; it taketh down all opposition and contradiction; so that though the soul may stay to search the Scripture, and see whether the things that are taught be so, yet it searcheth with a child-like charitableness, and willingness to learn, and know, and obey. It hath no mind to quarrel with God. How easily will a self-denying man submit to those duties which another man abhors! How easily will he be persuaded to forgive a wrong, to part with his right for a greater good to others, to let go a gainful trade that is unlawful, or any sinful way of thriving! how easily is he brought to ask forgiveness of those that he hath wronged, to make a public confession of his sins, if the greatness of them, or his duty to God, or the good of others, do require it; to make restitution of all that he hath gotten wrongfully; to bear a plain and sharp reproof; to part with his own for the relief of the poor; to lay out his estate to the best advantage of the cause and church of God, and the common good; to let go any unlawful vanity; any excess in meat and drink, or sport, or sleep, or any vanity in apparel, or other work of pride! how easily can he bear all rebukes, reproaches, and neglects, and undervaluing or ingratitude from others! But what ado shall we have with carnal, unsanctified wretches, to persuade them to all, or any of this! From them a preacher hath such a work to pull their beloved, profitable sins, (they seem profitable to them till the reckoning comes,) as a man hath to pull the prey from the jaws of a hungry wolf, or meat from the mouth of a greedy dog; but when we require the self-denying to do the same thing, it is but as to bid a child obey his father whom he loveth and honoureth. The doing of these duties, and forsaking these sins, is to an ungodly man as the parting with a right hand, or a right eye, or the skin from his back, or the flesh from his bones; as we see by the rarity, and the unsuccessfulness of the plainest reasons, and great authority of God himself, and the few works of piety, charity, or self-denial that are done by such at any great cost. But to the self-denying, it is but as the casting away a handful of earth, or casting off an upper garment, for the doing of their work.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

ENEMY OF ALL SOCIETY, RELATIONS, AND COMMON GOOD.

6. Moreover, this selfishness is the enemy to all societies, and relations, and consequently to the common good. And it is not only indirectly and consequentially, but directly, that it strikes at the very foundation of all. For the manifesting of this, consider in what respects this selfishness is at enmity with societies.

1. The end of societies is essential to them; and this end is the common good of the society; and therefore a republic hath its name from hence, because it is constituted and to be administered for the commonweal, or the good of all. Now selfishness is contrary to this common good which is the end of all societies. Every selfish person is his own end; and cares not to hinder the common good, if he do but think it will promote his own. And how is that family, church, or commonwealth like to prosper, where most (alas, most indeed) have an end of their own, that is set up against the end and being of the society? For though the real good of particular persons is usually comprehended in the common good, yet that is but in subserviency to the public good, and is not observed usually by these persons, who principally look at themselves. And it commonly falls out that the public welfare cannot be obtained but by such self-denial of the members, which these men will not submit to; though they incur a greater hurt by their selfishness. Little do they think of the common good; it is their own matters that they regard and mind. So it go well with them, let church and commonwealth do what it will; they can bear any one's trouble or losses save their own. They are every man as a church, as a commonwealth, as a world to themselves. If they be well, all is well with them; if they prosper, they think it is a good world, whatever others undergo. If they be poor, or sick, or under any other suffering, it is all one to them as if calamity had covered the earth; and if they see that they must die, they take it as if it were the dissolution of the world, (unless as they leave either name or posterity behind them, in which a shadow of them may survive,) and therefore they use to say, When I am gone, all the world is gone with me.

2. Moreover, selfishness is contrary to that dispo-

sition and spirit that every member of a society should be possessed with. The public good will not be attained without a public spirit, to which a private spirit is contrary. Men must be disposed to the work that they must be employed in. The work of every member of a society, is such as Mordecai is approved for: "Seeking the wealth of his people, and speaking peace to all his seed," Esth. x. 3. Every true member of the church must have such a spirit as Nehemiah, that in the midst of his own prosperity and honours is cast down in fasting, tears, and prayers, when he heareth of the affliction, reproach, and ruins of Jerusalem; and saith, "Why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste?" Neh. i. 3; ii. 3, 4. And as the captivated Jews, (Psal. cxxxvii.) that lay by all their mirth and music, and sit down and weep at the remembrance of Zion. A private, selfish disposition is quite contrary to this; and is busy about his own matters, and principally looketh to his own ends and interests, whatever come of the church; and falls under the reproof that Baruch had from God: "Behold, that which I have built will I break down, and that which I have planted I will pluck up, even this whole land: and seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not," Jer. xlv. 4, 5. This private disposition makes men so foolish as to lose themselves, by seeking themselves; looking to their own goods or cabins, when the ship is sinking in which they are; and to their own rooms, when the house is all on fire. But a public spirit saith, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy," Psal. cxxxvii. 5, 6. His love is to the church as the spouse of Christ, and as to the body of which he is himself a member, and his prayers and endeavours are for its prosperity and peace. "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee. Because of the house of the Lord our God I will seek thy good," Psal. cxxii. 6—9. The body of Christ is all animated by one spirit, that it might aim at one end; and it is so tempered by God, that there should be no schism in it, but that the "members should have the same care one for another; that if one member suffer, all the members should suffer with it; or if one member be honoured, all should rejoice with it," 1 Cor. xii. 13, 24—27. There is no serving public ends with a private, selfish spirit.

3. Moreover, selfishness is an enemy to the laws of societies, whether it be the laws of God or man. For it would have them all bended to their private interest, and fitted to their selfish disposition. And therefore for the immutable laws of God, which they cannot change, they corrupt them by misinterpretations, expounding them according to the dictates of the flesh, and putting such a sense on all, as self can bear with. And what they cannot misinterpret, they murmur at and disobey. And for the laws of men, where selfish persons are the makers of them, you shall perceive by the warping of them, who they were made for. Hence it is that princes and parliaments have looked at the laws, and church, and ministers of Christ, with an eye of jealousy, as if they had been some enemies that they stood in danger of; and all for fear lest the personal, selfish, fleshly interest of noblemen, and gentlemen, and others, should be encroached upon by the laws and government of Christ. And hence it is that so many endeavours and hopes of a reformation have been so long frustrated, and even among wise and pious lawmakers there hath been so much pains to keep ministers from doing their duty in governing the churches, and laying such restrictions on them, that pastors might be no pastors, that is, no guides and overseers of the church in the worship of God. And when good laws are made, they have as many enemies as selfish men. If the law were not hated, the execution of it would not be hated so much.

4. Also selfishness is an enemy to the very being of magistracy, and to all public officers, and their work; for the very end of the magistracy is the public benefit, as I said before of the end of a commonwealth; and therefore this selfishness is contrary to this end: and such men will not value a magistrate as a public officer, but only as one that is able to help them, or to hurt them; which is but to fear him as a potent enemy, and not to love or honour him as a ruler. They look at magistrates as tyrants that are too strong for them; and as a cur will crouch to a mastiff dog, so they will crouch to them to save themselves; and this is their love, and honour, and obedience (even such as Hobbs hath taught them in his "Leviathan"). But they do not reverence that beam of divinity which God hath communicated to them in their authority; nor love their governors as the fathers of the church and commonwealth, for the common good and the honour of God, which they are appointed to promote.

5. And this selfishness is the deadly enemy of all right administrations of justice, and the due exercise of authority in church or commonwealth. If a minister be selfish, he will be shifting off the troublesome part of his duty, and will overrule his understanding to believe that it is no duty, because disbelieving is easier than obeying. He will be forward in those duties that are necessary to his maintenance and applause, and are imposed on him by the laws of men, but out of the pulpit it is little that he will do: as if it were the pulpit only that were God's vineyard where he is set to labour. Flesh and blood shall be consulted, and men shall be pleased, and all that the interest of self may be maintained.

And if the people be selfish, they will rebel against their faithfullest guides, and kick against their doctrine and reproofs, and fly from discipline, which seems to their distempered minds to be against them. Let but one most notorious, lamentable instance suffice. The greater part of our parishioners in most places of the land are lamentably ignorant and careless in the matters of their salvation, and all that we can do is too little to bring them to understand the matters of absolute necessity: and yet almost all of them are so much wiser in their own conceits than the ablest of their teachers, that if we do not humour them, and be not ruled by them in our doctrine and administrations, about sacraments, prayers, burial, and the rest, yea, if we obey them not in gestures and forms, they turn their backs upon officers, and ordinances, and the church itself, and pour out their reproach upon their teachers, as if we were ignorant in comparison of them (even of them that know not so much as children of seven or eight years old should know). See here the wonderful bewitched power of a selfish disposition.

And in matters of the commonwealth, what is it more than this, nay, what is it besides this, that maketh princes become tyrants, and rulers keep under the ordinances and interest of Christ, or fearfully neglect them, and look after the church in the last place, when they have no business of their own to call them off, and to begin to build God's house when they have first built their own? Not imitating

Nehemiah's labourers, that had the sword in one hand, and the trowel in the other, and builded in their arms. What else makes them give God but their leavings, who giveth them all? And what else could make them such enemies to truth, as to side with those parties, whatever they be, that side most with them, and promote their interest?

And, alas, what work doth selfishness make with inferior magistrates! It is this only that opens the hand to a reward, and the ear to the solicitations of their friends; and it is this that perverteth the judgment, and this that oppresseth the poor and innocent, and this that tieth the tongues and hands of justices, so that abundance of them do little more than possess the room, and stand like an armed statue or a sign post, which hurteth none: ale-houses do what they list for them, and drunkards and swearers are bold at their noses, and they are no terror to evil-doers, nor revengers to execute wrath upon them, nor ministers that use their power for much good, but bear the sword almost in vain, contrary to the very nature of their office, Rom. xiii. 1—4.

And it is selfishness in the people that causeth the trouble of faithful magistrates: every man would do what he lists. The worst offender abhors him that would punish him; and those that would commend justice and cry down vice in the general, yet when they fall under justice themselves, they take all that they suffer to be injury, and will do all that they can against justice, and the officers of it, when it is to defend themselves, or theirs, from the execution of it; so rare a thing is it to meet with a man that is a friend to laws and justice, when themselves must suffer by it.

6. Selfishness also makes men withdraw from all those necessary burdens and duties that are for the preservation of church or commonwealth. Such wretches had rather the gospel were thrust out of doors than it should cost them much; and had rather have the unworthiest man that would be their teacher for a little, than allow the best that maintenance that the gospel doth command, or give them what the law hath made their own. They would venture the ruin of church and state, and let all fall into the hands of the common enemies, rather than hazard their persons, or lay out their estates for the common preservation. So that if the hand of violence did not sometimes squeeze these spunges, and force these leeches to disgorge themselves, they would but impoverish the commonwealth by their riches, and weaken the body, like wens or imposthumes, by drawing to themselves.

7. And then the selfish are such causes of division, that if they did no other harm, they would break both church and state into pieces, if their humour were predominant, and not restrained or purged out. And in this regard selfishness is the direct enemy of societies, and is always at work to dissolve them into independent individuals. A society is a political body which must have but one head, and one interest, and one end; but when selfishness prevaileth, there are as many heads, and ends, and interests as persons. If they be in a church, every one is the teacher and ruler; and every one must have his opinion countenanced, and his humour satisfied; every one must have his way and will: and how is this possible, when their minds are so various and contrary to one another; and their interests so inconsistent, and there are as many rulers as persons? When every man is drawing to himself, and there is no centre in which they can unite, that work is there like to be in the church! What progress could be made in the building of Babel, when no man was ruled by another, but every man ran confusedly after his single imagination? What an army will it be, and how are they like to speed in fight, where every soldier is instead of a captain and general to himself, and one runs this way, and another that way, and one will have one course taken, and another another course, and every one fighteth on his own head! Such work doth selfishness make in the church; it is this that hath broken it into so many parcels, and would crumble it all to dust if it should prevail.

And it is this also that causeth the divisions of the commonwealth; faction rising up against faction, and prince and people living in jealousies of each other, as having contradictory interests; which would not be, if the pleasing of God, and the common good, were the principal end and interest of them all, and selfishness did not prevail.

And this is it that keepeth christian princes in most ungodly wars, to the shedding of christian blood, and the weakening of the common interest, and the strengthening of the common enemy, whom they should all join together to resist.

This also keepeth up so many parties on religious pretences to seek the undermining and ruin of each other, when they should all join together against the common profaneness of the world; and all their conjunct endeavours would be too little. Thus selfishness is the grand enemy that by divisions and subdivisions is still at work for the dissolution and ruin of church and state, and the confusion of the world, and the disturbance and destruction of order and government.

8. Yea, selfishness makes men false and treacherous, so that they are not to be trusted, and are unmeet materials for any society. For whatever they promise, pretend, or seem, they are all for themselves, and will be no further true and faithful to the society, or any member of it, than suiteth with their own ends. Never trust a selfish person, if it be your own brother, further than you can accommodate and please him, and so oblige him to you upon his own account. It is the complication of interests, that makes husband and wife so much agree and love each other; because that which one hath, the other hath; but if their interests fall out to be any whit divided, it is two to one but selfishness will divide their affections. One would think that the bond of nature should be so strong to constrain a son to love his father, that nothing could dissolve it; and yet sad experience telleth us that even here, it is a unity of interest that doth more with many children than either nature or grace: and that when they have no more dependence upon their parents for their commodity, their affections and respects are gone; and if they shall gain much by their death, they can bear it without much sorrow, if not desire it. So potent is selfishness, that it makes not men unfaithful only to their friends, and treacherous to their governors, and false to all they have to do with, but also unnatural to their nearest relations.

And therefore, (next to true piety, which leads up all to a unity in God, and therefore is the most perfect polity,) the chief point of human polity, for the preservation of commonwealths, and all societies, is, a complication of interest; when the constitution makes the governor and the governed as husband and wife, that have nothing dividedly as their own, but all in common, and take each other for better or worse, and know they must stand or fall together, and that the good or hurt of one is the good or hurt of both, and that there is no manner of hope that either of them should thrive by the ruin of the other. If politicians had the skill and will to make such a union of interests between the sovereign and the

subject, and to make it visible that all might understand it, their republics would be immortal, till either the wrath of a neglected God, or the power of a foreign enemy, should dissolve them : for nothing else but self could do it; and self will not do it when it sees its own interest lie in the preservation of the present state.

CHAPTER LXIX.

CORRUPTETH AND DEBASETH ALL THAT IT DISPOSETH OF.

7. ANOTHER aggravation of the evil of selfishness, is, that it corrupteth and debaseth every thing that it disposeth of. And on the contrary, it is the excellency of self-denial (as joined with the love of God) that it rectifieth and ennobleth all your actions.

Let the work be never so holy in its nature, yet if you do it but for yourselves, you make a profane employment of it; and to you it is not holy. A selfish, carnal person is serving himself even in preaching, and hearing, and praying, and sacraments, and other acts of worship and church communion ; much more in the common business of his life. Even when he thinks he is serving God, he is but serving himself of God, and provoking God by this abuse; when he thinks he is very holy because of his services, he is doubly unholy, in that he even profaneth holy things. And as it is not God indeed that he serveth, so from God he must not expect a reward. And as far as a man's self and flesh is below the blessed God, so far, in a sort, is the work of selfish men debased, in comparison of those works of the saints that are performed purely for God. They make but a low, unprofitable drudgery of that which in the hands of others is the highest and noblest work on earth. For the action can be no better than the end; and therefore is base as it is base.

But on the other side, self-denial makes noble the actions that in themselves seem base. If you are gone out of yourselves, and can truly say, that it is God you serve and seek in your employments, you may be sure that God will take them for his service, and set them on your account among the works that he hath promised to reward (supposing that the matter be such as he alloweth of, and that you think not by good intentions to turn sin to holiness, and make him a service of that which he forbiddeth). Oh what an honour, what an encouragement, what a comfort is this, to every christian ! The actions of a prince or conqueror are base, if self be their end, and the respect to God do not ennoble them. And the work of the poorest person is honourable that is done for God. It is a great temptation to some poor christians to grudge at their condition, because they are so unserviceable to God. Alas, thinks a poor tradesman, or ploughman, or servant, what do I but drudge in the world! I have neither parts nor place to do God service with ! But such do very much mistake the matter. It is not the parts and place, but the hearty performance of your works for God, that makes them such as he will take for service. Oh, thinks a poor woman, or toiling servant, I can do nothing either for the conversion of souls, or the good of church or commonwealth, but am made unserviceable. But do you not know that any thing is acceptable service which God commandeth, and is heartily intended to his honour and his pleasure : it is not the metal, but the stamp of the prince, that makes a piece to be current money. If the king's stamp were put by his appointment on a piece of brass or copper, it would pass for coin. Believe it, sirs, if your study be to please the Lord in your callings, and you can but get above yourselves, and do the basest servile works as commanded you by God, that you may be accepted by him, and offer yourselves and all your labours purely to him, and to his honour and his will, God will take these for honourable services; and you are as truly at his work, even in your shops and fields, as princes are in ruling, or pastors in teaching or guiding the flock : you that are poor, and cannot set so much time apart for reading and other holy duties as some others do, see that you neglect no holy opportunity that you can take; and then consider, that if God set you to do him service even by washing dishes, or sweeping channels, or the meanest drudgery, he will accept it ; and the more, by how much the more humble submission and self-denial is found in it. Take him as the only Lord and Master of your souls and lives, and all that you have, and when you are called to your daily labour, look but to your hearts that God be your end, and that you can truly say, I do not this principally to provide for myself, but as an obedient child in my Father's service, because he bids me do it, and it is pleasing to him through Christ; I do it not principally from self-love, but from the love of God, that commandeth me my work; and as a traveller that laboureth in his way for the love of his home, so I am here at labour in this world, in the place that God hath set me, that I may in his appointed way attain the everlasting glory that he hath promised. I say, do but see to it that thus you dedicate your labours to God, and you may take comfort in the daily labours of your lives, even the meanest and most contemptible, as well as princes and preachers may in their more honourable works. Nay, all your labours are honoured and sanctified by this; for all is holy that is heartily devoted to God, upon his invitation. And thus all things are pure to the pure. For it is God's interest in your works that is the holiness and excellency of them. Were servants and labouring people more holy and self-denying, they might have more true comfort in their daily labour, than the best of the unsanctified can have from their prayers or other worship of God. Not that worship may be therefore neglected; but that a christian must do nothing at all but for God; and then he may be sure of God's acceptance.

CHAPTER LXX.

DENY SELF, OR YOU WILL DENY CHRIST.

8. MOREOVER, the selfish will never suffer as christians, but deny Christ in a day of trial; when the self-denying will go through all, and be saved. Nothing doth so thoroughly try whether self or God be best beloved, as suffering for his cause. In this it is that Christ useth to try men's self-denial; and it is a principal use of persecution. When you hear of coming before rulers and judges, and being hated of all men for Christ's name's sake, then self riseth up to plead for its interest, and never maketh more ado than when it seeth the flames. The flesh cannot reason, but it can strive against reason, and draw it to its side. No reason seemeth sufficient to it, to persuade it to choose a suffering state. If you persuade a carnal man to let go his estate, to be poor

and despised in the world, and to give up life itself, if it be called for, and all this for the hope of an invisible felicity, you lose your labour, (till God set in,) and all such reasoning seems to him most unreasonable. And what a dreadful ease such souls are in, my text and many another passage in Scripture may convince you. If you cannot drink of his cup, and be baptized with his baptism, you cannot be advanced with him to glory. Through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God. The pleasing of the flesh is the high-way to misery by displeasing God; and the voluntary submission to the suffering of the flesh for the cause of Christ, is the high-way to felicity. 2 Tim. ii. 11, 12, "It is a faithful saying. For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him; if we suffer, we shall also reign with him; if we deny him, he also will deny us." Rom. viii. 17. "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution," 2 Tim. iii. 12. The day of trial is a kind of judgment day to the selfish, unsanctified man; for it discovereth his hypocrisy, and showeth him to be but dross, and separateth him from the suffering servants of Christ.

But self-denial maketh suffering light, and will make you wish that you had any thing worth the resigning unto Christ, and any thing by the denial whereof you might serve him. For him you would suffer the loss of all things, and account them dross and dung that you may win him, Phil. iii. 8. He will count us "worthy of the kingdom for which we suffer," 2 Thess. i. 5. As the "Captain of our salvation was made perfect by suffering," Heb. ii. 10; so also must his members, by "filling up the measure," and being "made partakers of his sufferings," and "knowing the fellowship of them," 2 Cor. i. 5—7; Phil. iii. 10. And the "God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after we have suffered awhile, will make us perfect, stablish, strengthen, and settle us," 1 Pet. v. 10.

If therefore you would not prove apostates, and deny Christ in a day of trial, and be denied by him before his Father and the holy angels, see that you now learn this needful lesson of self-denial.

CHAPTER LXXI.

THE SELFISH DEAL WORSE WITH GOD THAN WITH SATAN.

9. CONSIDER also that selfish, carnal men deal worse with God, than they do with the devil and sin itself. God offereth them Christ, and pardon, and eternal life, if they will but deny themselves in a thing of nought, and they will not be ruled or persuaded by him: the devil offereth them but the delights of the flesh, and the pleasures of sin for a season, and they will deny ten thousandfold more for this. They will deny God their Maker and Redeemer, their Lord and Judge, their Preserver and their Hope; though he have the only title to them, and their lives and souls be in his hand; they will, for the sake of a filthy lust, or of a short and miserable life, deny him that never did them wrong; nay, that hath always showed them kindness, even all the kindness that ever they received; and that when they know that their everlasting state must stand or fall according to his judgment: they will deny the Lord Jesus the Redeemer of their souls; they will deny and resist the Holy Spirit of God; they will deny his laws, his gospel promises, and all his mercies; they will deny his ministers, and all their persuasions and daily labours; they will deny their dearest christian friends, and deny their own consciences and convictions; and deny themselves the peace and joy which they might find in a holy walking with God; yea, they will deny themselves everlasting life, and the favour of God, and cast themselves into endless misery: and all this for a thing that is ten thousand times worse than nothing, or for a very sensual, brutish pleasure. And yet these men cannot deny themselves in life or liberty, in gain or honour, no nor in the filthiest lusts, for the sake of Christ and their own salvation; even when they may know that they most deny themselves when they will not deny themselves. They deny themselves eternal glory, because they will not deny themselves in temporal vanity. Heaven and earth will witness against such sottish and unrighteous dealing as this, if true conversion do not prevent it. Hath God, hath Christ, hath your own salvation deserved no better at your hands than this? O miserable souls! All things can be easily denied save sin and carnal self, and these cannot be denied. God can be denied, Christ, and Scripture, and heaven itself can be denied, for flesh and sin; and flesh and sin cannot be denied for God, and for eternal glory. Do you think that this will look like wise or righteous dealing when you stand in judgment? Ask now any stander-by that is impartial, whether God or the flesh should be denied? whether heaven or earth should be denied, seeing one of them you must deny? And if any impartial man will be now against you, what think you will God be, who is not only impartial, but wronged by you, and a hater of your unrighteous dealing?

CHAPTER LXXII.

TO BE LEFT TO SELF, IS THE SOREST PLAGUE.

10. LASTLY, remember, that to be given over to ourselves, is the heaviest plague on this side hell; and therefore he that delighteth not to be miserable should not desire to be selfish. To be given over to the love of yourselves, is to turn from the love of the blessed God to the love of a filthy sinner, and so to forfeit God's love to you. To be given over to care for yourselves, is to forfeit the fatherly care of God, and to be at the care of a silly, insufficient, improvident sinner. To be given over to your own conceits or wisdom, is to be forsaken of the sun, and left in darkness, and spend the rest of your days in a dungeon, the beginning of the endless utter darkness. To be given over to your own wills, is to be at the choice and disposal of a fool and of an enemy; and to be in such hands as will certainly undo you, and to be cast out of the hands of God. To be given over to seek yourselves, is to lose yourselves and God, and your salvation. To be given over to live as your own, is to forfeit the protection of God, without which you cannot be kept an hour out of hell. To be given over to the defending of yourselves, and delivering yourselves in danger of soul and body, is even to be exposed to certain and perpetual perdition. To be given over to be ruled by yourselves, is to be relinquished as rebels, and exposed to the tyranny of sin and Satan. So that in all things it is most certain, that you are never well but in the hands of God, and never so ill as when you are most

in your own hands. In Paradise innocent man was wholly at the government of God; and when by casting off his government he had forfeited the benefit of it, the most of the world became even brutish: and when God had owned the government of Israel above other nations, and kept the choice of the sovereign under him in his own hands; at last the foolish people, in imitation of the nations, must needs have a king, and extort the nomination out of the hands of special extraordinary Providence, that they might have more of it in their own; and this was an increase of their misery. Woe to that man that ever he was born, that is finally given over to himself! for this is a sign that God hath forsaken him, and he stands at the brink of eternal death. O think of this, you that are self-conceited, and self-willed, and self-lovers, and self-seekers, and know not how to deny yourselves. Must self be so regarded and tenderly used? Take heed, you may have enough of self with everlasting vengeance, if God once give you over to yourselves, and say of you as of them, "But my people would not hearken unto my voice; and Israel would none of me: so I gave them up to their own hearts' lusts, and they walked in their own counsels," Psal. lxxxi. 11, 12. So much for the aggravations.

CHAPTER LXXIII.

TEN DIRECTIONS TO GET SELF-DENIAL.

IV. I come now to the last part of my task, which is to tell you what course you should take to procure self-denial. For though it be the gift of God, yet there are certain means appointed us for the attainment of it, and God useth to give it men in the use of his means, and by those means must it be confirmed and continued.

Direct. 1. Set faith a work upon the promises of God and upon everlasting life; for the flesh will not be taken off these lower things, till you have found out better, and such as will be sure to save you harmless. The most covetous man will let go silver, if he might have gold instead of it. Set faith a pleading the case with the flesh; and urge your own hearts with the certainty, the nearness, the glory, the eternity of the kingdom which by self-denial you may attain; and if they will not yield to such a change as this, they are unreasonable, unbelieving hearts.

Direct. 2. Never be deluded to forget the vanity, the brevity, and the emptiness and insufficiency of all these earthly things, which self so adhereth to, as to neglect the promised life of blessedness. Acquaint your own hearts what a nothing it is that they make so much of, and follow so greedily, and hold so fast; show them in the sanctuary the glass of the word of God, which will tell them what will be the end of all, and where all their worldly prosperity will leave them. Ask your hearts, Can I keep these things for ever, or not? If not, is it not better let them go for something, than for nothing? and to part with them as a child, at the command of my heavenly Father, than to part with them as a thief doth with his prize at the gallows? Is it not better let them go to ease me, and to secure my eternal peace, than let them go to wound me and torment me? And while I keep them, what will they do for me, that I should buy them at so dear a rate? Oh how dear must I pay for my ease, and honour, and gluttony, and drunkenness, and sensual delights, if I part not with them when God commandeth! How cheap is a holy, blessed life, in comparison of this which I must pay so dear for!

Direct. 3. To promote your self-denial, consider frequently and seriously, who God is, and to what end he made, redeemed, sustaineth, and governeth the world: and then bethink you, whether it be meet that this glorious God should be neglected, and frustrated of the end of all these works; and whether any thing besides him be fit to be the creature's end. You think it meet that every workman should have the use of his own work. Doth any man make a house for its own sake, or for his use to dwell in? Is it for the thing's sake that any man makes an instrument, or for his service by it? Do you think that God made you for yourselves, and not for himself and service? Give therefore to God the things that are God's: all souls are his, and therefore all should acknowledge him, and submit to his dispose and pleasure. Shall the pot quarrel with the potter, or claim title to itself, and say, I am mine own? It is against the clearest reason in the world, that any but the Creator, Redeemer, and Preserver of the world should be Lord, and the Governor and the end of it; and that men should prefer themselves before him.

Direct. 4. Moreover, it will further your self-denial to remember what you will get by selfishness. God will have his ends and honour out of you one way or other, whether you will or no: he will have your goods from you, and your lives from you; and the faster you hold them, the more you will suffer when he wringeth them out of your hands. The most covetous man would part with his money to buy a lordship, if he knew it would else be taken from him. A worldly treasure is obnoxious to rust, and moths, and thieves; and if you exchange it not for the heavenly treasure in time, and remove not your riches to the world that you must for ever live in, what will you do when you must remove yourselves? And all your self-denial is but such an exchange or removal which all should be glad of, that know they must be gone themselves. Nay, more, consider still that selfishness makes you an idol to yourself, and therefore you do but set up yourselves as a mark for the jealous God to shoot at, and every hour you have reason to expect, that the terrible hand of justice should lay hold upon you, and try you at the bar of that God whose prerogative you did usurp.

Direct. 5. And it may much further your self-denial to take a considerate survey of all the world, and see but what self-seeking hath already done, and is still doing in it. What a doleful sight of wickedness, confusion, and misery must you see, which way ever you look; and all is most evidently the fruit of selfishness. Methinks it should awaken every sober man against it, that doth but observe what work it hath made; that seeth families disordered and ruined by it; neighbours set in dissension by it; churches divided by it; religion dishonoured by it; and multitudes of them that seem to be religious, to be so lamentably deceived and enslaved by it. Princes and great men blinded by it; judges and learned men befooled by it; and the nations of the world almost all set together by the ears by it: so that it hath turned the world into the confusion of Babel, that no man can understand a word of the language that tendeth to unity, peace, and building up. Princes understand it not: too many preachers understand it not; but the language of scorn, and strife, and dissension they understand: so that the world is cast all into a hurly-burly, and every man's hand is against his brother when he scarce knows why. No

church or state can stand without disturbance; no truths without contradiction. Under pretence of coming in to Christ, they are busily uncovering his house, when the door is wide open, and there are more to invite them than to hinder them. Methinks as a man that observeth the carriage of mad-men or drunken men, should never have any mind to be mad or drunken; so he that observeth but what self-seeking hath done in the world, should have little mind to be self-conceited, self-willed, or self-seeking, but should love and honour self-denial.

Direct. 6. If you would promote self-denial, keep with you the continual feeling of your own unworthiness and insufficiency. No man will trust upon a broken staff if he know it; nor be so foolish as to go about to walk upon the water, which he knows will not bear him. One would think this should be an easy and an effectual remedy. Should it not be easy for such wretched sinners as we, to carry about with us a sense of our unworthiness? for such lepers to carry about us a sense of our uncleanness? Methinks so many and great diseases should make us feel them. O then consider, as creatures, you are utterly insufficient for yourselves; and as sinners, much more. God never made you to live upon or to yourselves; or without him, or without the help of others. There are few beasts when they are first brought forth into the world, but are more able to help themselves than man; when he is newly born he can do nothing to help himself. And when he comes to age, he is naturally formed to a sociable life; so that if he should retire from the world, and live only by and of himself, he would soon find what it is to be selfish: much more if he be left to himself by God, or forsake God, and trust to and depend upon himself. But if ever innocent man had been sufficient for himself; yet sinful man can have no pretence to such a privilege, while he beareth about him so many convincing evidences of the contrary every day. Do you not feel sin as a heavy burden pressing you down, and perceive how easily it entangleth and besetteth you? sure you do, if you be not past feeling. And do you not know enough of the nature and desert of sin, to drive you out of yourselves, and bring you to him that calleth the weary and heavy laden to come to him for ease and rest? Matt. xi. 28. Do you not feel a continual burden of infirmities? and doth not experience tell you that you are not sufficient to relieve yourselves in any pain or sickness that doth befall you? You cannot support yourselves a moment; you are still in the hands of that invisible God whom you abuse by your self-seeking. You would drop into hell if he withdrew the hand of his patience and support, as sure as a stone would fall to the earth that were loose in the air! As truly as the earth beareth you, so truly doth he bear the earth and you. It is easier for houses, and towns, and mountains to stand in the air without the earth, than for you, or any thing, to subsist a moment without the Lord. Who keeps your heart and pulse still beating, and your blood and spirits in continual motion, and warm in your veins? Is it God, or you? Who is it that causeth your lungs to breathe, your stomach to turn your meat to nourishment; and that nourishment into blood, and spirits, and strength? Is it God, or you? Who is it that causeth the sun to rise upon you in the morning to light you to your labours, and to set upon you at night, that the curtains of darkness may be drawn about you, and you may quietly repose yourselves to rest? Who giveth you strength to labour in the day, and refresheth you with sleep at night, and provideth all the creatures for your assistance? Is it you or God? O sirs, methinks such silly worms, that cannot live a minute of themselves, and cannot fetch a breath of themselves, should easily see that they should not live to themselves, but to him from whom and by whom they live.

Direct. 7. If you would live in self-denial, be sure that you keep the mastery of your senses; and do not let them be ungoverned, but shut them up when reason doth require it. It is your appetite and senses that feed this carnal, selfish vice; but reason and faith are both against it. Whenever you consult with sense, you may know what brutish advice you may expect. Ask not therefore what is delightful, nor what is for your carnal ease and peace; but what is necessary to please the Lord, and for your everlasting peace. And if the tempter tell you, This is the easier and the broader way; tell him that it is not the honester nor the safer way: and the question is not, which is the fairest way? but, which is the way to heaven? It is better go the hardest way to glory, than the smoothest to damnation. If you cannot keep under your sensitive appetite, and subdue the eager desires of the flesh, and learn to want, as well as to abound; to be empty, as well as to be full; you will never attain to self-denial.

Direct. 8. To promote your self-denial, methinks it should be effectual to understand the great advantage that you have by the communion and society which you enter into when you deny yourselves. Though a prince or lord would be loth to enter into a college, or monastery, where there is no propriety, and yet withal no care or want; yet a poor labouring man, or a beggar, would be glad of such a life. So you that cannot live of yourselves, methinks should be glad of such a community.

1. Consider that the Lord Jesus is the Head of the society, who hath undertaken to make provision for the whole, and is engaged for their security, and to save them harmless: and all the riches of his grace and love belong to that society, and will be yours; which is more than all that you can part with of your own, yea more than all the treasures of the world. It is therefore the noblest and richest society in the world that you shall live in communion with, if you will deny yourselves.

2. And the saints that are the members of that society are the brethren of Christ and the heirs of heaven. And all these are your brethren; endeared in special love to you, engaged to assist you, by prayers, and counsel, and pains, and purse, and every way that they can; so that well might Christ say that he that forsaketh any thing for him, shall receive even a hundredfold in this life, and in the world to come eternal life. For this one sorry self that you forsake, and its poor accommodations, you have God for your Father, and Christ for your Head, and the Holy Ghost for your Sanctifier and Comforter, and the Scripture for your guide, and saints for your brethren, companions, and assistants, engaged to you in truer and dearer love than your unsanctified friends, that cast you off for the sake of Christ. And had you rather be toiling and caring for yourselves, than let go self, and enter into so blessed a community, where you may cast all your care away upon God, who hath promised to care for you; and may feed yourselves in the daily delightful forethoughts of life eternal?

Direct. 9. And methinks it should much promote your self-denial, to study well the self-denying example of Christ, and his eminent servants that have trod in his steps. Christ had no sinful self to deny, nor any corrupted flesh to mortify or subdue. And yet he had a self-denial in which we must imitate him; "For even Christ pleased not himself, but as

it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me," Rom. xv. 3. We are told therefore by Christ's example, that it is not only the pleasing of self as corrupted by sin, but also a pleasing of natural self, in things where God may lay a restraint upon it, or put it to the trial, that we must avoid, and in which we must deny ourselves: even as Adam was to have denied his natural appetite before sin had corrupted it; and Christ had an innocent natural will, of which yet he saith, "Not my will, but thine be done." His whole life was a wonderful example of self-denial: he lived in a low estate, and denied himself of the glory and riches of the world, and "became poor, though he were Lord of all, that by his poverty we might be made rich," 2 Cor. viii. 9. He lived under the reproach of sinners; of sinners that he created; of sinners whom he died for. He would wear no crown but a crown of thorns; he would wear no robes but the robes of their reproach; he yielded his cheeks to be smitten, and his face to be spit upon, by the vilest sinners, whom he could with a word have turned into hell. And at last he gave himself for us on the cross, in suffering a reproachful, cursed death, Heb. vii. 27; Tit. ii. 14; Eph. v. 2, 25; Gal. i. 4. And can you read such an example of self-denial, given you by the Lord of glory, and not be transformed into the image of it? I think the study of a self-denying Christ is one of the most excellent helps to self-denial. Take it from the apostle himself; "Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him," Phil. ii. 2—9. "Look therefore unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him that endured such contradictions of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds," Heb. xii. 2—4.

Direct. 10. But the greatest help to self-denial is, to retire from the creature into God, and live in the love of him, and employ the soul continually upon him. Men will not be frightened from self-love. It must be another more powerful love that must draw them from it: and that can be none but the love of God. When you have soundly discerned a surer friend than self, a wiser, a better, an abler governor and defender, and one that much more deserveth all your love and care; then you will turn away from self, and never till then. See therefore that you espouse no interest but God's; and then you will have nothing to call you from him. Let love so close you with him, and unite you to him, that you may know no happiness but his love and glory, and see with no other light than his; and know no will but the will of God; nor meddle with any work, which, for matter and end, you cannot call the work of God. Then you have indeed denied yourselves, when you are nothing, have nothing, and do nothing, but as from God, and by him, and for him. Own not any self but in and for God, and then you may love and seek it freely; for this is to be called a loving and seeking of God, and not of self. Own not any knowledge, but that which is from the light of God, by his word, works, Spirit, and ordinances, and which leadeth you to God in holiness and peace, and guideth you in his service, and then you need not condemn yourselves of self-conceitedness, or a selfish understanding. Know not any will in yourselves, but that which is caused by the will of God, and directed by it, and intended to fulfil it; so that you may be able to say of every desire of your soul, I desire this because that God would have me desire it, and I am resolved to follow his will in the seeking of it, and the end of my desire is, that I may please him, and his will may be done; and then you may say, you have conquered self-will. O see then that you be more with God; and study his mind and will, his excellency, sufficiency, and love; and remember that you are a dependent being, that are nothing but in and by him, and therefore should know no interest but him and his interest, nor possess any thing but for him, nor know any will or way but his will and way; and so let his be yours, and yours be his, by a holy resignation, conformity and subserviency unto his: and this is the true rectitude and holiness of man, this is a finding ourselves by losing ourselves, and the only saving and exalting of ourselves, by denying ourselves. Nothing but the light of God will master self-conceitedness; and nothing but the love of God will overcome self-love; and nothing but a union and closure with the will of God will overcome self-will; and nothing but an espousing and intending God and his interest will cause a true denial of carnal self-interest; and nothing but a seeking of God, conversing as with him, and living to him, will cure the soul of self-seeking, and an ungodly and unprofitable living to ourselves.

One other direction I should add, which is to be always jealous and suspicious of self; but this will fall in the conclusion.

THE CONCLUSION.

I have now finished what I had to say to you on this great and needful subject; and I have staid the longer on it, that I might occasion your own thoughts to be the longer on it; for it is not a few hasty, running thoughts that will make any great impression on the soul. And now, christian friends, whoever you are that hear or read these words, I earnestly entreat you in the name of God, that you will set your hearts to the deep consideration of the nature and odiousness of this sin of selfishness, and of the nature and necessity of self-denial. You will never effectually hate and resist the sin which you think lightly of, and is not in any great discredit with you; nor will you fly from it with fear, and care, and vigilancy, till you apprehend the dangerousness of it. I have not only told you, but proved it to you, that this is one of the most odious and dangerous sins in the world, even the sum of all iniquity, that containeth a thousand sins in the bowels of it: this is it that generateth all other vices, and fills the world with swarms of mischief. It is this selfishness that corrupteth all estates, and distracteth all societies, and disturbeth all affairs. Never look further for the cause of our calamities: it is self that causeth the miscarriages and negligence of the princes, governors, and magistrates of the world, while they look all at

their own interest, and little at the things of Jesus Christ, or at least prefer themselves before him. It is self that causeth the disobedience of subjects, while they judge themselves capable of censuring their rulers for matters that are beyond their reach; and grudge at all necessary burdens for the common good, because they are a little pinched by them. It is self that hath kindled the miserable wars that are laying waste so many countries, and that makes such woeful havoc in the world. It is self that hath so lamentably abused religion, and introduced so many fantastical self-conceits under the name of high scholastical subtleties; and that hath let in so many errors in doctrine and worship, and defiled God's ordinances, and corrupted and almost extinguished the discipline of Christ in the church. It is self that hath caused the leaders of the assemblies, that should be exemplary in unity, and holiness, and industry, to be some of them idle and negligent, and some of them carnal and vicious, and so many of them in discord and fierce opposition of one another: so that every man that is grown up to a high degree of wisdom in his own eyes, (and such degrees are soon attained,) is presently venting his own conceits, and perhaps publishing them to the world, and seeking out an adversary to show his manhood upon, and reviling all that are not of his opinion; as if there were no difficulty in the matter, but he is learned and wise, and they are all unlearned and ignorant; he is orthodox, and they are heretics, or what his pride and self-conceitedness is pleased to call them. It is this selfishness that makes even godly ministers the dividers of the church, the reproach of their holy calling, the occasion of the increase of triumph of the adversaries, and the causes of no small part of all our unreformedness, distractions, and calamity; and the refusers and resisters of the remedies that are tendered for healing and reformation. I dare boldly say, if this one sin were but rooted out of the hearts of the ministers themselves that are the preachers of self-denial, it would make so sudden and wonderful a change in the church, as would be the glory of our profession, the joy of the godly, and the admiration of all! O happy and honourable magistrates at court and country, if self were but thoroughly conquered and denied! O happy and reverend ministry, the pillars of religion, the honour of the church, if it were not for the shameful prevalency of self! O happy churches, happy cities, corporations, societies, and countries, were it not for self! But alas! this is it that saddeth our hearts, and makes us look for more and more sad tidings concerning the affairs of the church, from all parts of the world; or frustrates our hopes, when we look for better. For we know on the one side, that without self-denial there will never be true reformation or unity; neither sin nor division will ever be overcome: and on the other side, we see that selfishness is so natural, and common, and obstinate, that so many men as are born into the world, so many enemies are there to holiness and peace, till grace shall change them; and that all endeavours, persuasions, convictions, do little prevail against this deadly rooted sin: so that men will preach against it, and yet most shamefully live in it; and after all rebukes, chastisements, and heavy judgments of God, the church is still bleeding, and princes, pastors, and people are self-conceited, self-willed, and self-seekers still. Alas for the cause and church of Christ! Must we give it up to the lusts of self? Must we sit down and look on its miserable torn condition with lamentation and despair? and shall we deliver down this despair to our posterity? Were not our hope only in the omnipotent God, it must be so. When we look at men, at magistrates, or ministers, we see no hope. What higher professions can be made by those in succeeding ages, than have now been made? And yet what negligence of magistrates, and what contentiousness of ministers, destroy all hopes! So that we look at the restoration of the church, as at the resurrection, that must be done by Omnipotency. God must raise up another generation of more self-denying, prudent, zealous magistrates, and of more self-studying, peaceable, humble, zealous, industrious ministers, before the healing work be done. The selfish spirit that prevaileth now in the most, is neither fit to be the matter or instrument of the reformed, peaceable state which we expect. While the enemies are destroying us by secret fraud and open force, we stand at a distance and unite not against them; yea, we are calling each other heretics and deceivers, and teaching them how to revile us, and putting such words into their mouth against us, as may help our people to despise us, and reject us, and warrant them from our own mouths or pens to rail at us, and forsake us: one part of us being heretics or deceivers by the testimony of the other part, and the other part by the testimony of too many of them.

Dear brethren, if selfishness shall not now be left, when we are in the sight of the havoc it hath made, and stand in the field among those that it hath slain, and see the church of God so horribly abused by it; when then shall it be forsaken? I here entreat every man that loveth his present or everlasting peace, and the peace of the church or commonwealth, that he will resolve upon a deadly enmity with this selfishness in himself and others! And that you will suspect it and watch against it in every work you have to do. Are you upon any employment, spiritual or secular? Presently inquire when you set upon it, Is there no self-interest and selfish disposition lurking here? How far is my own worldly, fleshly ends or prosperity concerned in it? And if you discover that self is any way concerned in it, I beseech you suspect it, and follow self with an exceeding watchful eye; and when you have done your best, it is ten to one but it will overreach you. Oh look to it that you be not insnared before you are aware. Take heed of it, especially you that are great and honourable, and have so much self-interest to tempt you in the world! How hardly will you escape! When all other enemies are conquered, you have yet self, the greatest enemy, to overcome. Take heed of it, you that have any rising, thriving project; little know you on what a precipice you stand. Take heed of it, you that are in deep and pinching wants, lest self make them seem more grievous than they are, and provoke you to venture upon sin for your relief. Take heed, all you that have raging appetites or passions, or lustful inclinations, and remember that your enemy is now discovered, and you have him to deal with before your face; and therefore see that you be resolute and vigilant. Take heed, all you that have learning, parts, or fame and honour, or any thing that self hath to glory in, and to abuse, lest the noblest gifts should by this deadly principle be turned into a plague to the church, and to your souls. Suspect self in the choice of your parties and opinions; suspect it in your public labours; yea, and in your private duties, and greatest diligence in religious works; lest when your eyes are opened at last, it should appear, that you preached, or prayed, or professed, or wrote, or lived for self, and not for God. I do but transcribe the counsel to you, that God is daily giving in to my own soul: and as I feel exceeding great use of it to myself, so I am sure there is to others; and woe to me and you if we take

it not, and be not found among the self-denying! Doubtless God will put you to the trial, and find you frequent use for this grace. Let me take the boldness to tell you from my own (though, alas, too small) experience, that as it is mere selfishness, that is the perplexer and disquieter of the mind, without which nothing that befalls us could discompose it; so it is God only that quiets it, and gives it rest: and I bless the Lord, I can truly say, that I have found that content in loving and closing with the will of God, and endeavouring to know no interest but his, to disquiet or quiet me, which I never could find in any other way. When God is enough for us, and his will is in our eyes the will of a Father infinitely good, it may satisfy the soul in the darkest condition; when we understand not the particular meaning of his providence, nor what he is doing with us, yet still we may be sure that he is doing us good; and therefore a child may not only submit to the will of God, because it cannot be resisted, as enemies must be forced to do; but he may rest in that will as the centre of his desires, and the very felicity and heaven of his soul.

And now, sirs, I must let go this subject, as to you that have heard it preached; for we must not be always on one thing: but I am exceedingly afraid lest I have lost my labour with most of you, and shall leave you as selfish as I found you; because sad experience tells me that it is so natural and obstinate an enemy that I have discovered, and that you have now to set yourselves against. I have done my work; but self hath not done, but is still at work in you. I cannot now go home with every one of you, but self will go home with you. I cannot be at hand with every one of you, when the next temptation comes, but self will be at hand to draw you to entertain it. When you are next tempted to error, to pride, to lust, to contention with your brethren, by words or real injuries, what will you do then, and how will you stand against this enemy? If God be not your interest, and the dearest to your souls, and you see not with his light, and will not by his will, and self-denial be not become as it were your nature; you will never stand after all this that I have said, but self will be your undoing for ever! If you have not somewhat within you, as selfishness is within you, to be always at hand as it is, and ready, and constant, and powerful to overcome it, it will be your ruin after all the warnings that have been given you. And this preserving principle must be the Spirit of God, by causing you to deny yourselves; believe in Christ, and love God above all. I say again, that you may think on it, and live upon it: the sum of all your religion or saving grace is in these three, Faith, Self-denial, and the Love of God. Departing from carnal self, returning home to God by love, and this by faith in the Redeemer, is the true christianity, and the life that leadeth to everlasting life.

A DIALOGUE OF SELF-DENIAL.

FLESH.

What! become nothing! ne'er persuade me to it.
God made me something; and I 'll not undo it.

SPIRIT.

Thy something is not thine, but his that gave it;
Resign it to him, if thou mean to save it.

FLESH.

God gave me life: and shall I choose to die
Before my time? or pine in misery?

SPIRIT.

God is thy life: if then thou fearest death,
Let him be all thy soul, thy pulse, and breath.

FLESH.

What! must I hate myself? whenas my brother
Must love me? and I may not hate another?

SPIRIT.

Loathe what is loathsome: love God in the rest:
He truly loves himself, that loves God best.

FLESH.

Doth God our ease and pleasure to us grudge?
Or doth religion make a man a drudge?

SPIRIT.

That is thy poison which thou callest pleasure;
And that thy drudgery which thou count'st thy treasure.

FLESH.

Who can endure to be thus mewed up?
And under laws for every bit and cup?

SPIRIT.

God's cage is better than the wilderness:
When winter comes, liberty brings distress.

FLESH.

Pleasure 's man's happiness: the will 's not free
To choose our misery: this cannot be.

SPIRIT.

God is man's end: with him are highest joys:
Sensual pleasures are but dreams and toys.
Should sin seem sweet? Is Satan turn'd thy friend?
Will not thy sweet prove bitter in the end?
Hast thou found sweeter pleasures than God's love?
Is a fool's laughter like the joys above?
Beauty surpasseth all deceitful paints:
What 's empty mirth to the delights of saints?
God would not have thee have less joy, but more;
And therefore shows thee the eternal store.

FLESH.

Who can love baseness, poverty, and want?
And under pining sickness be content?

SPIRIT.

He that hath laid his treasure up above,
And plac'd his portion only in God's love;
That waits for glory when his life is done:
This man will be content with God alone.

FLESH.

What good will sorrow do us? Is not mirth
Fitter to warm a cold heart here on earth?
Troubles will come whether we will or no:
I 'll never banish pleasure and choose woe.

SPIRIT.

Then choose not sin: touch not forbidden things:
Taste not the sweet that endless sorrow brings.
If thou love pleasure, take in God thy fill:
Look not for lasting joys in doing ill.

FLESH.

Affliction 's bitter: life will soon be done:
Pleasure shall be my part ere all be gone.

SPIRIT.

Prosperity is barren: all men say,
The soil is best where there's the deepest way.
Life is for work, and not to spend in play.
Now sow thy seed: labour while it is day.
The huntsman seeks his game in barren plains.
Dirty land answers best the ploughman's pains.
Passengers care not, so the way be fair.
Husbandmen would have the best ground and air.
First think what's safe and fruitful; there's no pleasure
Like the beholding of thy chiefest treasure.

FLESH.

Nature made me a man, and gave me sense:
Changing of nature is a vain pretence:
It taught me to love women, honour, ease,
And every thing that doth my senses please.

SPIRIT.

Nature hath made thee rational; and reason
Must rule the sense, in ends, degrees, and season.
Reason 's the rider, sense is but the horse:
Which then is fittest to direct thy course?
Give up the reins, and thou becom'st a beast;
Thy fall at death will sadly end thy feast.

FLESH.

Religion is a dull and heavy thing,
Whereas a merry cup will make me sing.
Love's entertainments warm both heart and brain;
And wind my fancy to the highest strain.

SPIRIT.

Cupid hath stuck a feather in thy cap,
And lull'd thee dead asleep on Venus' lap:
Thy brains are tippled with some wanton's eyes:
Thy reason is become lust's sacrifice.
Playing a game at folly, thou hast lost
Thy wit, and soul, and winnest to thy cost.
Thy soul now in a filthy channel lies,
While fancy seems to soar above the skies.
Beauty will soon be stinking, loathsome earth:
Sickness and death mar all the wanton's mirth.
It is not all the pleasure thou canst find
Will countervail the sting that 's left behind.
Blind, brutish souls! that cannot love their God!
And yet can dote on a defiled clod!

FLESH.

Why should I think of what will be to-morrow?
An ounce of mirth is worth a pound of sorrow.

SPIRIT.

But where 's that mirth when sorrows overtake thee?
Will it then hold when life and God forsake thee?
Forgetting death or hell will not prevent it:
Now lose thy day, thou'lt then too late repent it.

FLESH.

Must I be pain'd and wronged, and not feel;
As if my heart were made of flint or steel?

SPIRIT.

Dost thou delight to feel thy hurt and smart?
Would not an antidote preserve thy heart?
Impatience is but self-tormenting folly:
Patience is cordial, easy, sweet, and holy.
Is not that better which turns grief to peace,
Than that which doth thy misery increase?

FLESH.

When sport, and wine, and beauty do invite,
Who is it whom such baits will not incite?

SPIRIT.

He that perceives the hook, and sees the end,
Whither it is that fleshly pleasures tend:
He that by faith hath seen both heav'n and hell,
And what sin costeth at the last can tell:
He that hath tried and tasted better things,
And felt that love from which all pleasure springs.
They that still watch, and for Christ's coming wait,
Can turn away from, or despise, the bait.

FLESH.

Must I be made the football of disdain?
And call'd a precise fool or puritan?

SPIRIT.

Remember him that did despise the shame,
And for thy sake bore undeserved blame:
Thy journey 's of small moment if thou stay
Because dogs bark, or stones lie in the way.
If life lay on it, wouldst thou turn again,
For the wind's blowing, or a little rain?
Is this thy greatest love to thy dear Lord,
That canst not for his sake bear a foul word?
Wilt thou not bear for him a scorner's breath,
That underwent for thee a cursed death?
Is not heav'n worth the bearing of a flout?
Then blame not justice when it shuts thee out.
Will these deriders stand to what they say,
And own their words at the great dreadful day?
Then they 'd be glad, when wrath shall overtake them,
To eat their words, and say they never spake them.

FLESH.

How? forsake all! Ne'er mention it more to me,
I 'll be of no religion to undo me.

SPIRIT.

Is it not thine more in thy Father's hand,
Than when it is laid out at sin's command?
And is that sav'd that 's spent upon thy lust?
Or which must be a prey to thieves or rust?
And wouldst thou have thy riches in thy way,
Where thou art passing on, and canst not stay?
And is that lost that 's sent to heav'n before?
Hadst thou not rather have thy friends and store,
Where thou mayst dwell for ever in the light
Of that long glorious day that fears no night?

FLESH.

But who can willingly submit to death,
Which will bereave us of our life and breath;
That lays our flesh to rot in loathsome graves,
Where brains and eyes were, leaves but ugly caves?

SPIRIT.

So nature breaks and casts away the shell,
Where the now beauteous singing-bird did dwell.
The secundine that once the infant cloth'd,
After the birth, is cast away and loath'd.
Thus roses drop their sweet leaves under foot;
But the spring shows that life was in the root.
Souls are the roots of bodies: Christ the head
Is root of both, and will revive the dead.
Our sun still shineth when with us it 's night:
When he returns, we shall shine in his light.
Souls that behold and praise God with the just,
Mourn not because their bodies are but dust.
Graves are but beds, where flesh till morning sleeps;
Or chests where God awhile our garments keeps.
Our folly thinks he spoils them in the keeping;
Which causeth our excessive fears and weeping;
But God, that doth our rising day foresee,
Pities not rotting flesh so much as we.

The birth of nature was deform'd by sin:
The birth of grace did our repair begin:
The birth of glory at the resurrection
Finisheth all, and brings both to perfection.
Why should not fruit when it is mellow, fall?
Why should we linger here when God doth call?

FLESH.

The things and persons in this world I see;
But after death, I know not what will be.

SPIRIT.

Know'st thou not that which God himself hath spoken?
Thou hast his promise which was never broken.
Reason proclaims that noble, heav'n-born souls,
Are made for higher things than worms and moles.
God hath not made such faculties in vain,
Nor made his service a deluding pain.
But faith resolves all doubts, and hears the Lord
Telling us plainly by his holy word,
That uncloth'd souls shall with their Saviour dwell,
Triumphing over sin, and death, and hell.
And by the power of Almighty love,
Stars shall arise from graves to shine above.
There we shall see the glorious face of God:
His blessed presence shall be our abode:
The face that banisheth all doubts and fears;
Shuts out all sins, and drieth up all tears.
That face which darkeneth the sun's bright rays,
Shall shine us into everlasting joys.
Where saints and angels shall make up one choir,
To praise the Great Jehovah evermore.

FLESH.

Reason not with me against sight and sense:
I doubt all this is but a vain pretence.
Words against nature are not worth a rush:
One bird in hand is worth two in the bush.
If God will give me heav'n at last, I 'll take it:
But for my pleasure here, I 'll not forsake it.

SPIRIT.

And wilt thou keep it? brutish flesh, how long?
Wilt thou not shortly sing another song?
When conscience is awaken'd, keep thy mirth!
When sickness and death comes, hold fast this earth:
Live if thou canst, when God saith, Come away:
Try whether all thy friends can cause thy stay.
Wilt thou tell death and God, thou wilt not die?
And wilt thou the consuming fire defy?
Art thou not sure to let go what thou hast?
And doth not reason bid thee then forecast,
And value the least hope of endless joys,
Before known vanities and dying toys?
And can the Lord that is most just and wise,
Found all man's duty in deceit and lies?

GET thee behind me, Satan; thou dost savour
The things of flesh, and not his dearest favour,
Who is my life, and light, and love, and all,
And so shall be whatever shall befall.
It is not thou, but I, that must discern,
And must resolve: it 's I that hold the stern:
Be silent, Flesh; speak not against my God;
Or else he 'll teach thee better by the rod.
I am resolved thou shalt live and die,
A servant, or a conquered enemy.

LORD, charge not on me what this rebel says,
That always was against me and thy ways
Now stop its mouth by grace, that shortly must
Through just but gainful death, be stopt with dust.
The thoughts and words of Flesh are none of mine,
Let Flesh say what it will, I will be thine.
Whatever this rebellious Flesh shall prate,
Let me but serve thee, Lord, at any rate.
Use me on earth as seemeth good to thee,
So I in heaven thy glorious face may see.
Take down my pride; let me dwell at thy feet:
The humble are for earth and heav'n most meet.
Renouncing Flesh, I vow myself to thee,
With all the talents thou hast lent to me.
Let me not stick at honour, wealth, or blood:
Let all my days be spent in doing good.
Let me not trifle out more precious hours;
But serve thee now with all my strength and powers.
If Flesh would tempt me to deny my hand;
Lord, these are the resolves to which I stand.

RICHARD BAXTER.

October 29, 1659.

THE

CRUCIFYING OF THE WORLD

BY THE

CROSS OF CHRIST.

TO MY WORTHY FRIEND, THOMAS FOLEY, ESQ.

SIR,

UPON a double account I have thought it meet to direct this Treatise first to you. First, Because the first embryo of it was an Assize Sermon preached at your desire, when you were high sheriff of this county, which drew me to add more, till it swelled to this, which some of my brethren have persuaded to venture into the open world. Secondly, Because God hath given you a heart to be exemplary in practising the doctrine here delivered: and I think I shall teach men the more successfully, when I can show them a living lesson for their imitation. I never knew that you refused a work of charity that was motioned to you; but oft have you offered me that for the church's service, which I was not ready to accept and improve. I would not do you the displeasure as to mention this, but that forward charity is grown so rare in many places, that some may grow shortly to think that we preach to them of a chimera, a non-existent thing, if we do not tell them where it is to be seen: especially now infidelity is grown up to that strength, that seeing is taken by many for the only true informer of their reason, and believing for an unreasonable thing. And I take myself to owe much thankfulness to God, when I see him choose a faithful steward for any of his gifts. It is a sign he meaneth good by it to his church.

Some rich men sacrifice all they have to their bellies, which are their gods, even to an epicurean momentary delight, and cast all into the filthy sink of their sensuality; these are worse than infidels, defrauding their posterity; and swine alive, but worse than swine when they are dead. Some rich men are provident, but it is only for their posterity. The ravenous brutes are greedy for their young. Some will begin to be bountiful at death, and give that to God which they can keep no longer, as if he would be thus bribed to receive their souls, and forgive their worldly hearts and lives. Some will give in their life-time; but it is but part of their sinful gains; like the thief that would pay tithes of all that he had stolen. Some give a part of their more lawful increase, but it is against their will; it being forced from them by law, for church and poor; and therefore properly it is no gift. Some will give freely, but it is on some corrupt design, to strengthen a party, or a carnal interest, or make their way to some preferment. Some give, but only to those of their own opinion, and not to a disciple in the name of a disciple. Some give in contention, as the troublers of the church of Corinth preached, to add afflictions to our bonds; as many of the papists, that think by their works of charity, they are warranted uncharitably to slander almost all besides themselves: as if we were all enemies to good works, or solifidians, that took them for indifferent things, or made them not our business. Yea, the best work that the Jesuits ever did, even the preaching of the gospel to the heathens, they would not endure us to join with them in, where they could hinder us, unless we would do it in their papal way. Some will do good, to stop the cries of a guilty conscience, for some secret odious sin which they live in. Some will be liberal with the hypocrite for applause. And some will give with a pharisaical conceit of merit (even *ex condigno*, from the proportion of their work to the reward, as the greatest popish doctors teach). Some through mere fears of being damned will be liberal, especially out of their superfluities; choosing rather to forsake their money than their sin. Some do pretend the highest ends, and that it is Christ himself to whom they do devote it; but they will part with no more than the flesh can spare: and that they may yet seem to be true christians, they will not believe that any thing is a duty, which requireth much self-denial, and standeth not with their prosperity in the world. And some will give much out of a mere natural kindness of disposition, or upon mere natural motives; though not as to Christ, nor from the love of God, nor from that spirit of christian special love, by which the members of Christ have their communion. What excellent precepts of clemency and beneficence hath Seneca! Yea, what abundance of self-denial doth he seem to join with them! And yet so strange was this highest naturalist to the truest charity or self-denial, that it is self that is his principle, end, and all. For a man to be sufficient for himself, and happy in himself, without troubling God by prayer, or needing man, was the sum of his religion. Pride was their master-virtue, which with us is the greatest vice. And for all his seeming contempt of riches and pleasures, yet Seneca keeps up in such a height of riches and

greatness, as that he was like to have been emperor. And sometimes to be drunken he commends, to drive away cares and raise the mind; pleading the example of Solon and Arcesilaus; confessing that drunkenness was objected even to Cato, their highest pattern of virtue; affirming, that the objectors may sooner make the crime honest, than Cato dishonest.

Among all this seeming charity and self-denial, that proveth not a sanctified heart, how excellent (but too rare) is the true self-denial and charity of the christian; who hath quit all pretence of title to himself, or any thing that he hath, and hath consecrated himself and all to God; resolving to employ himself and it entirely for him; studying only to be well informed, which way it is that God would have him lay it out. And among these saints themselves, how rare is that excellent man, that is covetous and laborious for God, and for the church, and for his brethren; and that doth as providently get and keep, and as painfully labour, (how rich soever he be,) and as much pinch his flesh, (in prudent moderation,) that he may have the more to give and to do good with, and make the best of his Master's stock, as other men do in making provision for the flesh, and laying up for their posterity.

Sir, as far as you have proceeded in this christian art, you are yet in the world among the snares and lime-twigs of the devil, in a station that makes salvation difficult; and therefore have need of daily watchfulness, and to proceed and persevere in an enmity to the world, and a believing crucifixion of it, if you will be saved from it, and restore it to its proper use, and captivate it, that captivateth so many. As some help hereunto, I crave your perusal of this Treatise. And that it may do you good, and the many blessings promised to the charitable may rest upon you, and on your yokefellow, (that hath learned this crucifying of the world) and upon your posterity, shall be the prayers of

Your fellow-soldier against the flesh and world,

February 20, 1657. RICHARD BAXTER.

THE PREFACE,

TO THE NOBILITY AND GENTRY, AND ALL THAT HAVE THE RICHES OF THIS WORLD.

Honourable, Worshipful, &c.

Having written here of a subject that nearly concerneth you, I have thought it my duty to give you a place, and according to your dignity the first place, in the application of it. Of which I shall first tender you my reasons, and then set before you the matter of this address.

1. You are among us the most eminent and honoured persons, and therefore not to be neglected and passed by: you are first, and therefore should first be served. You hold yourselves most worthy of any temporal honour that is to be had; and therefore I shall honour you so much more, as to judge you fit to be first spoken to by the ministers of Christ, in a case that doth much concern you. As you have, and would have, the precedency in worldly matters, here also you shall have the precedency. It is pity that you should be first in hell, that are first in a christian state on earth; or that you should be least in the kingdom of heaven, that are greatest in that which is esteemed in the world. 2. You are pillars in the commonwealth, and the stakes that bear up the rest of the hedge. Your influence is great in lower bodies. You sin not to yourselves only; nor are you gracious only to yourselves. The spots in the moon are seen by more, and its eclipses felt by more, than the blemishes or changes of many of us inferior wights. You are our first figures, that stand for more in matters of public concernment than all that follow. You are the copies that the rest write after, and they are more prone to copy out your vices than your graces. You are the first sheets in the press. You are the stewards of God, who are intrusted with his talents for the use of many. You are the noble members of the body politic, whose health or sickness is communicated to the rest: if you be ungodly, the whole body languisheth; if you live and prosper, it will go the better with us all: for your wisdom, and holiness, and justice will be operative; and your station alloweth them great advantage to work upon many, and to emulate a kind of universal causality. Interest is the world's bias, and all power hath respect to use. You that have possession of the treasure that is so commonly and highly esteemed, may do much to lead the sensual world by it, which way you please. Be it better or be it worse, they will follow him that bears the purse. If money can do wonders, you may do wonders. As money can persuade the blind to part with God and life everlasting, and to renounce religion and reason itself, so no doubt but it might do something, were it faithfully used, though not directly to sanctify the heart, yet somewhat to incline it to the means by which it may be sanctified. You that have power to help or hurt, to make it summer or winter to your subjects, and to promote or cross the interest of the flesh, are hereby become a kind of gods in the eyes of them that mind this interest (as in higher respects you are unto believers). Especially seeing they want that eye of faith, by which they should know the Sovereign Majesty, who at his pleasure doth dispose both of you and them; these purblind sinners can reach no further, but are contented to be ruled by you, as terrestrial deities: they see you, but they see not God; they know you, and perceive the effects of your favour and displeasure; but being dead to God, and savouring only fleshly things, they scarce observe his smiles or frowns. They see that which is visible to the eye, which they have the use of; but the objects of faith are to them as nothing, because they have no eye to see them. And seeing you have such public interest and influence, it is our duty first to look after your souls, and to see that you receive the heavenly impress. 3. To which I may add, that no men have usually more need of advice and help than you; for your temptations are the strongest. The world killeth

by its flatteries; it is not the having it, but the loving it, that undoes men: and he is much liker to overlove it, that hath what he would have, and liveth in plentiful provisions for his flesh, than he that hath nothing from it but trouble and vexation. It is not poverty, and prisons, and sickness, that are the flattering panders of the world, but prosperity and content to the flesh. Though I know that many of the poor do most of all overvalue the world, because they never tried so much of its vanity, but standing at a distance from prosperity, do think it a greater felicity than it is; for those are most in love with the world, that least know it; as those that least know him, are least in love with God and eternal glory. But yet it is pleasing, and not displeasing, flattering rather than buffeting, that is the means of deceiving silly souls, and stealing their hearts from God to the world: your mountains lie open to stronger winds than our valleys do: and gulfs and greater streams are not so fordable as our more shallow waters. He never studied God and heaven, nor his own heart, that knoweth not that it is a very diffieult thing, to have a heavenly mind in earthly prosperity, and to live in the desires of another world while we feel all seems to go well with us in this. How hard to be weaned from the world, till we suffer in it; yea, till we are plunged into an utter despair of ever receiving here the satisfaction of our desires! 4. And truly we have too much sad experience of the sensuality and ungodliness of most of the rich, to suffer us to think that you have least need of our admonitions: which leadeth me up to the matter of my address, which is first to complain of you to yourselves, and then to admonish you, and lastly to direct you.

1. I know I speak to those (for the most part) that profess to believe a life to come; but oh that you had the honesty to live as you do profess! You durst not put it into your creed, that you believe that earth is more desirable than heaven, and that it is better seek first after carnal prosperity and delight, than for the kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof. You would be ashamed to say that it is the wisest course first to make provision for the flesh, and to put off God and your salvation with the leavings of the world. And do you think it is not as bad and as dangerous to do so, as to say so? Would it bring you to your journey's end, to be of the opinion that you should be up and going, as long as you sit still? Right opinions in religion are so unlikely to save a man that crosseth them in his practice, that such shall be beaten with many stripes. I had rather be in a case of many a popish friar, that renounceth the world, though in a way that hath many errors, than in the case of many an orthodox gentleman, that is drowned in the cares and pleasures of this life: yea, I think it will be easier for a Socrates, a Plato, in the day of judgment, than for such. Christianity is a practical religion; it is a devoted seeking for another life, by the improvement and contempt of this. Put not that into your life, that you are ashamed to put into your profession or belief. If you do as infidels, you will be as miserable as if you believed but as infidels. And practising awhile against your conscience, may cause God to forsake your judgment also, and give you over to believe as you live, because you would not live as you believed. And I fear that this is the case of some of you: nay, I have too much reason to know it, that some of our gentry, even persons of note and honour among us, have forsaken Christ and are turned infidels; and by the love of this world, have carnally adhered to it so long, till they are so far forsaken of God, as to think that there is no other life for them hereafter. God hath an eye on these wretches; and men have an eye on some of them. I shall now leave them in their slippery station, till a fitter opportunity. Some we have of our nobility and gentry that are learned, studious, and pious, and an honour and blessing to this unworthy land; or else it were not like to be so well with us as it is. But oh how numerous are the sensual and profane! which provoked that heavenly poet, of noble extract, (Mr. G. Herbert, "Church Porch,") to say,

"O England, full of sin, but most of sloth,
Spit out thy phlegm, and fill thy breast with glory:
Thy gentry bleats, as if thy native cloth
Transfus'd a sheepiness into thy story:
Not that they all are so; but that the most
Are gone to grass, and in the pasture lost."

Gentlemen, I have no mind to dishonour you; but compassion on your souls, and on the nation, commands me to complain, in order to reform you: and if you sinned and perished alone, we were the less unexcusable if we let you alone. What abundance of you are fitter to swill in a buttery, or gorge yourselves at a feast, or ride over poor men's corn in hawking and hunting, than to govern the commonwealth, and by judgment and example to lead the people in the ways of life! What abundance of you waste your precious hours in feasting, and sports, and idleness, and complimenting, and things impertinent to your great business in the world, as if you had no greater things to mind! Had you been by another commanded to a dung-cart, or like a carrier to follow pack-horses, (an honester and more honourable life than yours,) you would think yourselves enslaved and dishonoured: and yet when God hath set before you an eternal glory, you debase your own souls by wilful drenching them in the pleasures, and cares, and vanities of the world, and have no mind of that high and noble work which God appointed you. So that when many poor men are ennobled by a heavenly disposition, and a heavenly conversation, you enslave yourselves to that which they tread under feet, and refuse the only noble life: that which they account as loss, and dross, and dung, that they may win Christ, and be found in him, (Phil. iii. 7, 8,) that do you delight in, and live upon as your treasure. When once you know whether God or your money be better, whether heaven or earth, whether eternity or time, be better, you will then know which is the noblest life.

Nay, what abundance are there among you, that make a very trade of sensuality, and turn your sumptuous houses into sties, and your gorgeous apparel into handsome trappings, if the appurtenances may receive their names from the possessors; that never knew what it was to spend one day or hour of your lives in a diligent search of your hearts and ways, and heart-breaking lamentation of your sin and misery, and in serious thoughts of the life to come; but go on from feast to feast, and company to company, and from one pleasure to another, as if you must never hear of this again; and as if you were so drunken and besotted with the world, that you had forgotten that you are men, or that you have a God to please and a soul to save or lose for ever. Nay, how many of you hate a faithful preacher and a holy life, and make them the ordinary matter of your scorn; and cheat you souls with a few ceremonics and formalities; as if by such a carnal religiousness you could make all whole, when you have lived to the flesh, and loathed the spiritual worship of God that is a Spirit, and the heavenly lives of his sanctified ones, and consequently the law

that commandeth such a life, and the God that is the maker of that law. I call not your civil controversies your malignity; but it is the proper title of your enmity to holiness: and is it not enough that man in honour will be without understanding, and make himself like the beasts that perish, (Psal. xlix. 20,) but you must also take up the serpentine nature, and hissing and stinging must be the requital that you return to Christ for all your honours? Think, if you have yet a thinking faculty, whether this be kindly, or honestly, or wisely done, and what it is like to be to yourselves in the end. Your riches and honours do now hide a great deal of your shame; but will it not appear when these rags are torn from your backs, and your souls are left in naked guilt? Saith Chrysostom, If it were possible to do justice on the rich as commonly as on the poor, we should have all the prisons filled with them; but riches with their other evils have also this evil, that they save men from the punishment of their evil. (Oh, but how long will they do so?) This was plain dealing of a holy father; and is it not such as is as needful now as then? Is it not greatness more than innocency that saves abundance of you from shame and punishment?

Nay, many of you think, that because you are rich, it is lawful for you to be idle, and lawful voluptuously to give up yourselves to pleasures and recreations; and you think that you may do with your own as you list; as if it had been given you to gratify the flesh. The words that converted Austin never sunk yet into your hearts; Rom. xiii. 13, 14, "Let us walk honestly as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying; but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof." You never felt the meaning of those words, Rom. viii. 13, "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if by the Spirit ye mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."

But to turn my complaint into an admonition, I beseech you, consider what you are, and what you do.

1. How unlike are you to Jesus Christ your pattern, that denied himself all the honours, and riches, and carnal delights of the world! Read over his life, and read your own, and judge whether any man on earth be more unlike to Christ, than a voluptuous, worldly gentleman? Especially if malignity be added to his sensuality.

2. How unlike are you to the holy laws of Christ! Are his precepts of mortification and self-denial imprinted in your hearts, and predominant in your lives? Is a beast any more unlike a man, than your hearts and lives are unlike Christ's laws?

3. How unlike are you to the ancient christians, that forsook all and followed Christ, and lived in a community of charity! And how unlike to every gracious soul, that is dead to the world, and hath mortified his members upon earth, and hath his conversation in another world! Are you not such as Paul wept over, Phil. iii. 18, "Whose god is their belly, who glory in their shame, and who mind earthly things, and that are enemies to the cross of Christ?" though perhaps you are no enemies to his name. Believe it, gentlemen, whatever your thoughts of yourselves may be, you will find that no religion will save you, that stoopeth to the world, and is but an underling to your fleshly interest.

4. How unlike are you to your profession and your covenant with God! and to your confessions and prayers to him! Did you not renounce the flesh, the world, and the devil in your baptism? Do you not still profess that heaven is best, and God is to be preferred? and yet will you not do it, but let your own professions condemn you? Do you not ordinarily confess that the world is vain? and yet will you show yourselves such dissemblers, as to love and seek it more than God? As if there were no more power in the spirit of christianity, than in the opinion of Zeno the philosopher, who having oft said that poverty and riches were neither good nor bad, but things indifferent, was yet dismayed when he heard that his farms were seized on by the enemies, the prince having sent one with the report to try him; telling him when he had done, That now riches and poverty were not things indifferent. How oft have you prayed to be saved from temptation! And yet will you still dote upon your snares and fetters; and show yourselves such hypocrites as to love the temptations which you pray against?

5. You are guilty of a double injury to God; in that you are obliged to him as his created subjects, and yet more obliged by your riches and honours, which he hath given you for your Master's use; "To whom men give much, from them will they expect the more," Luke xii. 48. For a servant that hath double wages, to abuse you; for a friend that hath received double kindness, to prove false to you; for a commander in the army to betray his general, is sure an aggravation of the crime. Must God advance you highest, and will you thrust him lowest in your heart? Must he feed you with the best, and clothe you with the best, and will you put him off with the worst? Have you ten times, or a hundred times, more wealth from him, than many an honest, heavenly believer? and yet will you love and serve him less?

6. Is it not pity and shame, that you should thus turn mercies themselves into sin, and draw your bane from that which might have been a blessing? Will ye be the worse because God is so good to you? Must he give you health and time for his service, and give you such plentiful provision and assistance, and will you be worse in health than others are in sickness, and worse in plenty than others are in want? Is not this the way to dry up the streams of mercy, when the more you have the worse you are?

7. You exceedingly wrong the church and commonwealth: for it is for the public good that you are advanced; and you should be a blessing to the land. And will you cast away that time and wealth upon the flesh, which you have received for such noble ends? Rob not the church and commonwealth of what you owe it, by engrossing it to yourselves, or consuming it on your lusts.

8. Great men have a great account to make: you shall shortly hear, "Give account of thy stewardship, for thou shalt be no longer steward." If God have intrusted you with a thousand pounds a year, it is not the same reckoning that must serve your turn, as would serve his turn that had but a hundred. Your improvement must be somewhat answerable to your receivings. Do you need to be told, how sad a reckoning will it then be, to say, Lord, I employed most of it in maintaining the pomp and pleasure of myself and family, even that pomp of the world, and those sinful lusts of the flesh, which in my baptism I forswore; and the rest I left to my children, to maintain them in the same pomp and pleasure, except a few scraps of my revenues, which I gave to the church or poor?

9. Your wealth and greatness do afford you great opportunities to do good, and to further the salvation of yourselves and others; and worldliness and sensuality will rob you of these opportunities. Oh how

many good works might you have done, to the honour of your Lord, and the benefit of others and yourselves, if you had made the best of your interest and estates! The loss of the reward will shortly appear to you a greater loss, than that which you now account the loss of your estates.

10. Your worldliness and sensuality is a sin against your own experience, and the experience of all the world. You have long tried the world; and what hath it done for you, that you should so overvalue it? You know that it is the common vote of all that ever tried it, sooner or later, that it is vanity and vexation. And have you not the wit or grace to learn from so plain a teacher as experience, yea, your own experience, yea, and all the world's experience?

11. You sin also against your very reason itself, and against your certain knowledge. You know most certainly that the world will serve you but a little while. You know the day is hard at hand when it will turn you off; and you shall say, I have now had all that the world can do for me. Naked you came into it, and naked you must go out of it. *Haud ullas portabis opes Acherontis ad undas.* And then you shall more sensibly know what you now so overvalued, and what you preferred before God and your salvation, than now I am able to make you know. Oh what low thoughts will every one of you have of all your pomp and pleasure, your vain-glory and all your fleshly accommodations, when you perceive that they are gone, and leave your souls to the justice of that God, whom for the love of them you wilfully neglected. If poor men of mean and low education, were so sottish as not to know these things, methinks it should not be so with you, that are bred to more understanding than they.

12. Lastly, you sin against the most plain and terrible passages of Scripture, seconded with dreadful judgments of God, inflicted either upon yourselves, or at least on others of your rank before your eyes. You have read or heard the words of Christ, (Luke ix. 25,) "For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, and be cast away?" And chap. xii. 33, 34, "Sell all that you have and give alms. Provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is there will your hearts be also." You have heard there the terrible parable of the rich man, (ver. 16—20,) which endeth with "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: and then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?" with this general application, "So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God." And you have heard that more dreadful parable (chap. xvi.) of the rich man that was "clothed in purple and fared sumptuously," and what was his endless end. You have heard the difficulty of the salvation of the rich, (chap. xviii. 24, 25,) "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!" because they are so hardly kept from loving them inordinately, and trusting in them. You have heard how fully Christ is resolved that no man can be his disciple that forsaketh not all that he hath for him, chap. xiv. 23, 26, 27. And if you go never so far in your obedience, and yet lack this one thing, to part with all, (in affection, and resolution, and practice, when he requireth it,) and follow Christ in sufferings and wants, in hope of a treasure in heaven, it is certain that Christ and you must part, Luke xviii. 22. You have heard the terrible passages in James v. 1, 2, &c. and abundance such in the word of God. And yet are you not afraid of worldliness or sensuality? You have seen in England the riches of abundance quickly scattered, that were long in gathering; and God knows how many lost their souls, to build that which a few years' wars pulled down. And yet when you have but a little breathing time, you are at it again as eagerly as ever; as men that knew no greater good, and are acquainted with no better and more gainful an employment.

Gentlemen, do you know indeed, what it is that you make so great a stir for? which you value at so high a rate? which you hold so fast? which you enjoy so delightfully? You do not know. I dare say by your using of it, that you do not know it. Or else you would soon have other thoughts of it, and use it in another manner. Come nearer, and see it through; and look into the inside. Consult not with blind and partial sense; but put on awhile the spectacles of faith; go into the sanctuary and see the end. Nay, reason itself may tell you much of it. When you must part with it, you will wish it hanged loose from you, and had not been so glued to you, as to tear your hearts. You feel not what the devil's lime-twigs have done, till you are about to take wing, either by a heavenly contemplation, or by death; and then you will find yourselves entangled. The world is like to bad physicians, *quorum successus sol intuetur, errores autem tellus operit.* The earth beareth yet all the good it doth you, but hell hath hidden from you the mischief that it hath done to millions of your aneestors: and therefore though this their way was their folly, yet do their posterity approve their sayings, Psal. xix. 13. *Dic mihi*, saith Bernard, *ubi sunt amatores mundi, qui ante pauca tempora nobiscum fuerunt? Nihil ex eis remansit, nisi cineres et vermes. Attende diligenter, qui sunt et fuerunt, sicut tu, comederunt et biberunt, riserunt, duxerunt in bonis dies suos, et in puncto ad inferna descenderunt. Hic caro eorum vermibus, illic anima eorum flammis deputatur, donec rursus infelici collegio colligati sempiternis ignibus involvantur.* Who would so value that which he must eternally complain of, and not only say, It hath done me no good, but also say, It hath deceived me and undone me? I would not thank you to make me the owner of all your lands and honours to-day, and take it from me all to-morrow. What the better now are your grandfathers and great grandfathers for living in those houses, and possessing those lands, and honours, and pleasures, that you possess? Unless they used them spiritually and holily for God, and heaven, and the common good, they are now in hell for their sensuality upon earth, and are reaping as they have sown, (Gal. vi. 7, 8,) and paying dear for all their pleasures. Their bones and dust do give you no notice of any remnants of their honours or delights; and if you saw their souls, you would be further satisfied. It may be there stands a gilded monument over their rottenness and dust; and it may be they have left an honourable name with those that follow them in their deceit (and so might the tormented rich man with his brethren (Luke xvi.) who were following him towards that place of torment). A just judgment of God it is, to give up men that choose deceit, to be thus befooled. That they should not only despise the durable riches, and choose a dream of honour, wealth, and pleasure here; but also, that their end may answer their beginning, they should also take up with a picture of honour and felicity when they are dead. That their deceived posterity may see a gilded image bearing an honourable mention of their names, and hear them named with applause, and so may be allured the more boldly to go after them. And so a shadow of wisdom and virtue, hath a shadow of surviving honour for its reward; which alas, neither soul nor body is the better for. You see that all your wealth and honour

will not preserve your honourable corpse from loathsome putrefaction. How much less will it keep your guilty souls from the place that you have here been purchasing by your mammon!

Sic metit Orcus
Grandia cum parvis, non exorabilis auro?

If this be your wealth, and honour, and delight, the Lord deliver me from such a felicity——

Hæc alii capiant; liceat mihi paupere cultu
Securo, charo numine posse frui.

"For what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, (or scraped together, as the Hebrew may be turned,) when God shall take (or pull) away his soul?" Job xxvii. 8. "The triumphing (or praise) of the wicked is short, (or but at hand,) and the joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment," Job xx. 5.

Yea, one would think that the very troubles and smart that in this life accompanieth your wealth and honour, in the getting and keeping, and the gripes of conscience, that the forethoughts of the parting hour, and your heavy reckoning, must needs mix with all your pleasure and vain-glory, unless you have laid asleep your wits; besides your experience of the emptiness and deceit of all that you have overvalued. I say, one would think that this much should somewhat allay your thirst, and calm your minds, and make you think of a better treasure. Sure I am that God would do ten thousandfold more for you, and be better to you; and yet, because of some fleshly arguments, you are turned away from him. He cannot be thus loved, and delighted in, and sought, and yet he offereth more for you than the world doth. Saith Augustine, *Ecce mundus turbat, et amatur; quid si tranquillus esset? formoso quomodo hæreres, qui sic amplecteris fœdum. Flores ejus quomodo colligeres, qui spinis non revocas manum?* And it is just that they should have a bed of thorns, that wilfully make choice of it. Seneca thus justifieth God, that though he give men such perplexities and vexations, it is *nullis nisi optantibus*, only to them that will needs have it so, and are choosers of their own destruction. Choosers, do I say? yea, and will compass sea and land for it; stretch conscience for it till it tear, or can stretch no further; oppress and defraud for it, some of them; break vows and covenants for it; sell God and heaven for it; scrambling with such distracted violence for the smoky honours, the nominal wealth, the intoxicating pleasures of a few hasty days, that they care not what they part with for them, nor who they bear down that standeth on their way.

Quid non mortalia pectora cogis
Auri sacra fames?

And is Christ worth no more than to be sold with Judas for so base a price? Is our heavenly birthright a thing so base, or the promise of our immortal crown so uncertain, as to be parted with on Esau's terms? Is God and endless glory worth no more than this comes to? *Propter nummos Deum contemnere*, saith Jerome. To despise and cast off God for a thing so base, is the basest kind of despising him. The idolaters who vilified him by making images of him, were asked, "To whom will you liken me, saith the Holy One?" Isa. xl. 18, 25. And these sensual and covetous idolaters must be asked, Whom will you match with God, or set up against him, and prefer before him? What will you choose, if you choose not him? What shall be your portion instead of heaven? Doth it excuse you that the world hath so lovely an aspect? Yes, if God be not more amiable than it, and if his face and favour be not more desirable. Doth it excuse you that the baits of the world are pleasant, and that it offered you fair? Yes, if God had not outbid it, and offered you ten thousand times more. Doth it excuse you that the world is near and certain, and heaven uncertain or out of sight? Yes, if you are beasts that have no reason to know what will be, but only sense to feel what is; or if God have not given you an infallible promise, befriended by reason, sealed by multitudes of uncontrolled miracles, and transcribed on his servants' hearts; and if the greatness of the glory promised were not sufficient to do more at a distance with a man of faith and reason, than childish trifles near at hand; as the sun at a distance giveth us more light than a glowworm that is hard by. Yea, and if the world, which you think so certain, were not certainly transitory and vain; so that he that gets it, is certain shortly to be no gainer; and he that loseth it, to be no loser. You look on a poor, praying, self-denying believer; but you look not before you, on a saint that shall reign with Christ, "and judge the world, when he cometh to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe," 2 Thess. i. 10. You see them "sow their seed in tears," but see it not springing up, nor do you foresee the joyful harvest. You see them following Christ through tribulations, bearing his cross, and despising the shame; but you see them not yet set down with him on their thrones. The fight you see, but the triumph you see not. You see them tossed at sea, but you know not how sure a pilot they have, nor do you see the riches of their freight. You see sickness or persecution unpinning their corruptible rags, and death undressing them, but you see not the clothes which they are putting on. You see them laid asleep by death, but you see not their awaking, nor the rising of their sun, when the "righteous shall have dominion in the morning." The man that is dead to the world you see, but you see not the life that is hid with Christ in God, nor their appearing with him in glory, when Christ who is their life appears. Your unbelieving souls imagine there will be no May or harvest because it is now winter with us. You think the rose and beauteous flowers which are promised us in that spring, are but delusions, because you know not the virtue of that life that is in the root, nor the powerful influence of that sun of the believers. You see the dead body, but you see not the soul alive with Christ, retired into its root. You see the candle put out, and know not whither the flame is gone, and think not how small a touch of the yet living soul will light it again.

And so on the other side, you look on the swaggering gallant, but you look not on the ulcerous soul: you hear them laughing and jesting in their joviality, but you hear them not yet groaning in their pains: you see them clambering into the seat of honour, but see them not cast into the grave: you see them run and ride in pomp and pleasure, following the delights of the flesh, attended by their followers that honour and applaud them; but you see them not yet gasping under the pangs of death, nor laid in the dust as still as stones: you see their beauty and glittering attire, but you see not the pale and ghastly face that death will give them, nor the skulls that are stript of all those ornaments: you smell their perfumes, but you smell not their putrefaction: you see their lands, and spacious houses, and sumptuous furniture, but you see not

how narrow a room will serve them in the grave, nor how little there they differ from the most contemptible of men. Nay more, you see them with Ahab going forth to battle, and leaving the prophets with the bread and water of affliction, but you see them not yet returning with the mortal blow: you see them in their honours and abundance, but see them not on Christ's left hand in judgment: you see them clothed richly and faring deliciously every day, but you see them not in hell torments, wishing in vain for a drop of water to abate their flames: you hear them honoured, and hear their words of pride and ostentation, but you hear them not yet crying out of their folly, and bewailing their loss of present time, and lamenting in vain the unhappy choice that now they make. Sirs, believe it, future things are as sure as present. These things are no fables because they are not visible yet. You see not God, and yet he is the principal intelligible object. You see not your own intellectual souls, and yet you know you have them, by the intellection of other things. You see not your own eyesight, and yet you know that an eyesight you have, by the seeing of other things. If there were not an invisible God, there would have been no visible creatures. Visibles are more vile, and are for invisibles that are more noble. Our visible bodies are for our invisible souls. This visible life is the womb of our everlasting life that is invisible: we are hatched by the Spirit in this shell, till we are ready to pass forth into that glorious light that here we see not. I beseech you, gentlemen, awake, and be not so lamentably deceived, as to think that your honourable, pleasant dreams are the only realities. O no! it is the last awaking hour that will shew you the now unconceivable realities. You are now but as in jest in your pomp and pleasure; but you shall then be in good sadness in your pains and loss, if sanctifying grace do not prevent it, by putting you out of your jesting vein, and making you in good sadness to be men of real faith and holiness, and lay about you for the real joys. Believe it, sirs, the life of christianity is not a bare opinion. It is a living by faith upon a life invisible; and so serious resolving a belief of the truth of the everlasting blessedness, (as purchased and given by Jesus Christ to persevering saints,) as effectually turneth the affections and endeavours of the man to the loving and seeking it above all this world. It is one thing to take God and heaven for your portion, as believers do; and another thing to be desirous of it as a reserve, when you can keep the world no longer. It is one thing to submit to heaven, as a lesser evil than hell; and another thing to desire it as a greater good than earth. It is one thing to lay up your treasures and hopes in heaven, and to seek it first; and another thing to be contented with it in your necessity, and to seek the world before it, and give God that the flesh can spare. Thus differeth the religion of serious christians, and of carnal, worldly hypocrites. But I shall break off my admonition, and end with some advice.

Direct. 1. Look upon this world, and all things in it, with the foreseeing eye of faith and reason, and value it but as it deserves: and then you will neither be eager after it, nor too much delighted in it, nor puffed up by it, nor will it so prevalently entice you to venture or neglect eternal things. Did you know and well consider but what an empty, fading thing it is, you could never be satisfied with so poor a portion, nor quiet your souls till you had assurance or sound hopes of better things. Nor would you take such pleasure in childish trifles; nor debase yourselves, to be so inordinately employed about such low and sordid matters, while God and your eternal happiness are laid by. You take not yourselves for the basest of men, much less for brutes or idiots. O then do not make yourselves the basest, and do not unman yourselves, and brutify your immortal souls. A heathen could say, *Nemo alius est Deo dignus, nisi qui opes contempsit.* If you would be rich, choose that which will make you rich indeed. Make sure of his favour that is the absolute Lord of all, and then you can want nothing, whatever you may be without. And if yet you thirst for worldly riches, or inordinately love them, and tenaciously keep them from your Master's use, remember that this discovereth your disease; and therefore should mind you rather to cure it than to feed it. It is not money, nor any thing in this world, that will cure such an empty, depraved soul. As Seneca saith, If a sick man be carried about, whether in a bed of gold or a bed of wood, his disease is carried with him. It is not a golden bed that will cure a diseased man. Nor is it all the gold or honour in the world that will help such a deluded soul, as thinks this world will make him happy. Get but the cure of your carnal minds, and a little will serve you. For it is your sinful fancy that would have much, and not your nature that needs much. Saith Seneca, *Si ad naturam vives, nunquam eris pauper; si ad opinionem, nunquam eris dives. Exiguum natura desiderat; opinio immensum.* He is not the poor man that hath but little, but he that would have more. Nor is he the rich man that hath much, but he that is content with what he hath. If you pray but for your daily bread, be not such hypocrites as by the bent of your desires to cross your prayers. The nearest way to riches, saith the moralist, is the contempt of riches; and saith the christian, to be rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which God hath promised all that love him, James ii. 5. The greatest riches are got (proportionably) on the easiest terms. Loving the world will not procure it; but loving God will procure the everlasting fruition of his love. Millions love the world that miss of it; but no man misseth of God that loveth him above the world. Buy not these gawds then at a dearer rate than you may have the kingdom. If you have not enough, make sure of heaven, and that will be enough for you. And get a cure for your diseased minds, which is easier and more profitable than to fulfil them. "No man (saith Seneca) can have all the world; but he may have a mind that can contemn all the world." No man can have all that he will; but he may be content to be without it. The disease is within you, and there must be the cure.

Direct. 2. Be sure to fix with a serious faith upon the invisible glory as your portion; and then look at all things in this world, as good or bad, as they respect your end; and judge of them as they help or hinder you in the main. Nothing but a truly heavenly mind is the saving cure of an earthly mind. No man will rightly let go earth, till he have the powerful light that hath showed him the greater good, and given him a taste of the world to come. Had you not been strangers to God and heaven, (in heart, whatever you were in tongue and fancy,) you could never have so fallen in love with earth. None are so much disposed to travel into other countries, as they that are fallen out with their own. Remember that you have not one penny or pennyworth in the world, but what you had from God, and must be accountable to God for; and must employ with an eye upon his will, and your salvation. I do not call you to cast away your riches, but to see that you use all that ever you have, as will be most comfortable to you in your last review. I know, as Seneca saith, He is a wise man that can make use of earthen vessels, as if they were all silver; and he is wise too, that can make use of silver vessels, as if they were but earth. *Infirmi est animi pati*

non posse divitias; but it is one thing to bear riches, and use them for God, and another thing to enjoy them with delight. I neither take the monastics to be the only or the highest in perfection; nor yet do I condemn necessitated retirements. For I know it is hard to most to converse with God in tumults, and to hear the still voice of his Spirit in the murmuring noise of a crowd. I know that the commons are usually more barren and fruitless than enclosures; and that the fruit tree that groweth by the highway side, shall have many a stone and cudgel thrown at it, which those that are in your orchard escape. But still look to your end, and secure the main. Dream not that you have any full propriety. Remember that you are God's stewards: set therefore your Master's name, and not your own, upon every pennyworth you possess; let "Holiness to the Lord" be written upon all. Possess nothing but what is devoted to him, to be used as he would have you. Put him not off with scraps and leavings, that gave you all. So much as you save from him, you lose, and worse than lose; and so much as you lose for him, and surrender to him, and improve for him, you save, and more than save. For "godliness with contentment is great gain." And he that is "faithful in a little, shall be made ruler over much." It is thus that all things are sanctified with the saints.

Direct. 3. Think not that your riches are given you to fulfil the least inordinate desire of the flesh; or that you may take ever the more sensual ease or pleasure, if you had all the world: but remember that better wages obligeth you to more work: and therefore rise as early, and labour as hard in your own employment, (the more for the common good the better,) yea, and deny your flesh as much, as if you had but food and raiment. If you have much, give the more, and use the more, but enjoy never the more; and let not your sensual desires find ever the more provision. A rich man that is wise, and a faithful steward, may live in as much self-denial, and labour as hard, and humble his flesh as much, as he that hath but his daily bread. God sent you not in provision for his enemy. All that is made the food of sin, or that doth not help you up to God, is employed contrary to the end that you received it for.

Direct. 4. Be sure that you deal with the world as a deceiver: be very suspicious of all your riches, and honours, and delights. Feed not on these luscious summer-fruits too boldly, or without fear. Remember how many millions the world hath deceived before you. None come to hell but those that are cheated thither by the flesh and the world. With what exceeding vigilancy then have you need to deal with such a dangerous deceiver; when all your happiness, and all your hopes, are at the stake; and if you be deceived, you are undone! Its force is nothing so perilous as its fraud.

——————Ubi vincere aperte
Non datur, insidias armaque, tecta parat.

They that have to do with such a cheater, in a case of such everlasting consequence, should be suspicious of every thing, and trust the world as little as is possible, when, *Qui cavet ne decipiatur, vix cavet, cum etiam cavet. Et cum cavisse ratus est, sæpe is cautor captus est, (ut* Plaut.)

As Bucholcer was wont to say when his friends extolled him, *terreri se etiam laudationibus illis, ut fulminibus;* so should you possess your honours and riches in the world. And as the same Bucholcer said to Hubner, when he went to be a courtier; *Fidem diabolorum tibi commendo: credere et contremiscere: viz. promissionibus aulicis credere, sed caute, sed timide:* so should you be affected to the world. Trust and tremble; or rather trust it not at all. Nay, have you not been deceived by it already? And will you be more foolish than the silly fish, that will scarcely take the hook that he was once pricked by; or than the silly fowls, that will be afraid of the net that once they have escaped from, and of the kite that once hath had them in her claws? *Tranquillas etiam naufragus horret aquas.* Nay, at the present, if you take any heed of your souls, you may easily perceive what a clog the world is: we are commonly better when we have least of it, or are leaving it, than when we have it at our will. A man may see the utmost visible part of the earth and the horizon at once; but if he look on the earth that is near him, he cannot see the heavens at that time, much less the zenith. Our own riches, our present riches, our nearest and dearest temporal good, is the greatest averter of the mind from heaven. We are commonly like Antigonus's sick soldier, that fought well because he looked to die; but grew a coward as soon as he was cured. So that most of us have need of the counsel which the bishop of Colen gave the emperor Sigismund that asked him, "What he should do to be happy?" "Live," saith he, "as you promised to do when you were last sick of the stone and gout." Even the most notorious sinners seem saints when they see the world is leaving them. And doth not common reason tell us, that that which will so move us then, should prevail with us as much before, when we are certain all our lifetime that this parting time will come? Indeed the creature, as it is annexed unto God, and subservient to him, may have an answerable trust and love: the smallest twig that is fast to the tree, may help you out of the water, if you lay hold of it; but if it be broken from the tree, it will deceive you, though you hold it never so fast. O therefore look for surer footing: a handful of water will not save you from being drowned. Build on the Rock of Ages, that never faileth them that trust him; though yet the blind unbelieving world be more distrustful of him, than of that which they have tried is not to be trusted. A wise man should know him to be trusty, that he trusteth in a case that concerneth his salvation. And true believers, and none but they, may say with Paul, "I know in whom I have trusted," 1 Tim. i. 12.

Direct. 5. Let it be your daily care to keep clear accounts between God and you, of your receivings and disbursements. It is time to bewail the expense of that, if it be but a groat, that you cannot give a comfortable account of. Whenever you have several ways before you for the laying out of your money or your time, let the question be seriously put to your heart, Which of these ways shall I wish at death and judgment that I had expended it in? And let that be chosen as the way.

Direct. 6. Be sure to watch those thieves that would rob you of your Master's talents, that should be employed for his use. And will you give me leave to be plain with you in instancing in a few of them.

1. How many ungodly gentlemen do waste that in a thing that they call great housekeeping, (that is, the inordinate provisions for the flesh, and a freedom for men to play the gluttons or drunkards in their houses,) which might have been expended to their greater honour and commodity!

2. How many be there that spend that in unnecessary feasting of their friends, that might have been far more advantageously improved!

3. How many be there that spend more in the excess of one or two suits of apparel, than would have sufficed to the relief of a distressed family for a twelvemonth's space!

4. How many be there that lay out more in needless buildings, walks, and gardens, than would save the lives of a hundred or a thousand of the poor that perish by hunger (or by diseases bred by want)! They will not spare from their own superfluities, to supply the necessities of their brethren. Is this loving their neighbours as themselves, and doing as they would be done by?

5. How many be there that spend more needlessly on horses, dogs, or hawks, and cast away more at one game at dice, or at a cock-fight, or a horse-race, than would keep a poor scholar at the university! (But I hope the parliament hath cured this.)

6. But the principal and least lamented abuse of riches, is children's excessive portions; for children are as a surviving self. Men think themselves but half dead while their children live: and therefore as self is that idol of the wicked, to whom all the creatures of God are sacrificed, so they employ all one way or other for themselves as long as they live, and then leave it when they die to themselves in their posterity. When they have, like unfaithful stewards, detained God's due from him as long as they live, they leave it to their children to detain it after them. Mistake me not; I persuade you not to be unnatural. Your children must be provided for, if you be not worse than infidels. But I tell you by what rules I should proceed, were it my ease. (1.) If I had never such ungodly children, I should provide for them, if I could, their daily bread, and leave them enough for food and raiment, unless they were such as ought not to live, or be maintained. (2.) If I had better children, that were likely to use what they had for God, I should leave them all that could be spared from more necessary uses, that their lives might be more free from care, and they might be serviceable to God with their wealth, when I am dead. And the more confident I were that they would be faithful stewards of it, the more I should commit to their trust. (3.) I should not take it to be my duty to level my posterity with the poorer sort, unless some special call of God, or extraordinary public exigence, did require it. So much for the affirmative, what I should do for them. But for the negative, what I should not do for them: (1.) I should think that in a case of some extraordinary necessities to the church or commonwealth, I were bound to alienate all from my posterity, at least, except their food and raiment. (2.) I should still in the general conclude that all must be for God, as he is the owner of me and all; and therefore I should inquire which way it is his will that I should dispose of it. And where my conscience tells me he would have me use it, I should do it, though to the denial of myself or posterity. (3.) I should always prefer the public good of church or commonwealth, before the personal wealth of my posterity, and therefore should provide for them in a subserviency to the greater good, and not prefer their wealth before it. (4.) I should think myself bound to expend all that I had, in that way as might most promote the principal interest of my Lord, unless in cases where he had tied me by any special obligation to a more private expenditure of it. (5.) I should judge that the ordinary necessities of the church and poor are so great, as should command me very much to abate of full provisions for my posterity. And for the proportion, I should labour to discern, whether the times were such, and my posterity such, as that the stock of my estate would be more serviceable to God in their hands, or otherwise laid out. For the times and quality of children may make a great alteration in the case. (6.) Had I an only son that was notoriously ungodly, I would leave him no more than food and raiment, if I had ten thousand pounds a year, but would give it to God for the works in which I might promote his interest. My reasons are many, which I have touched upon in another discourse. As, 1. Such as forfeit their very daily bread, should not have any more than their daily bread. But such notorious wicked ones forfeit their daily bread. "He that will not labour," saith Paul, "let him not eat," 2 Thess. iii; much more in such greater cases. 2. According to God's ancient law, Deut. xxi. they forfeit their lives, and the parents there were to cause them to be put to death, that were obstinately unreformed. And is the case so altered think you now, as that you are bound to make such children rich, that parents then were bound to put to death? 3. I am not bound to give unnecessary provisions to an enemy of God, to misemploy them, and strengthen him to do mischief, and be more able to oppress God's servants, or oppose his truth, or serve the devil.

I forbear to mention the proportion of men's estates that I think they are ordinarily bound to alienate, but shall leave you to prudence and the general rules, lest I seem to you to go beyond my line. But in general I must say that it is a selfish and a heinous error, to think that men should lay up all that they can gather for their posterity, and all to leave them rich and honourable; and put off God, and all charitable uses, with the crumbs that fall from their tables, or with some inconsiderable driblets. If the rich man in Luke xviii. might have followed Christ on such terms as these, he would hardly have gone sorrowfully from him.

1. By this men show that they prefer their children before God. 2. And that they prefer them before the church, and gospel, and the commonwealth: when an heroic heathen would have confessed that his estate and children, and his life, were not too good to be sacrificed to his country, as the case of the Decii and many other Romans, that gave their lives for their country, witnesseth. 3. These men prefer the worldly riches of their children before the souls of men: when they have so many calls to employ their wealth to the furthering of men's salvation, and put by all, that their children may be rich. 4. They prefer their children's riches before their own everlasting good; or else they would not deny themselves the reward of a holy improvement of their talents, and cast themselves upon the terrible sentence that is passed upon unprofitable servants, and all to leave their children wealthy. 5. They prefer the bodily prosperity of their children before their spiritual; or else they would not be so eager to leave them that riches, which Christ hath told them is such a snare and hinderance to men's salvation. 6. They would teach all the world the easy art of never doing good in life or in death. For if all must follow their principles, then the parents must keep almost all for their children, and the children must do the like by their children, and so it must run on to all generations, that their posterity may be kept as rich as their predecessors. 7. How unlike is this to the ancient saints; and how unlike to the general precepts of self-denial, and doing good to all while we have time, &c. which Christ hath left us in the gospel! Enable your children to be serviceable in the church and commonwealth, as far as you may; but prefer them not before the church or commonwealth. Wrong not God, nor your own souls, nor the souls or bodies of other men, to procure your children to be rich. It will not ease your pains in hell, to think that you have left your children

rich on earth. It is few of the great and noble that are called. They will have an easier way to heaven in a mean estate. Their nurse's milk contented them when first they lived in the world; and will nothing but lands, and lordships, and superlative matters now content them, when they have a shorter time to use it? Poor men can sing as merrily as the rich, and sleep as quietly, and live as comfortably, and die as easily: *cantabit vacuus*,——they are free from abundance of your cares and fears. The philosopher that had received a great gift of gold from a prince, sent it back to him the next morning, and told him that he loved no such gifts as would not let him take his sleep (for thinking what to do with it).

Direct. 7. Lastly, Study the art of doing good, and making yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when you go hence you may be received into the everlasting habitations. Remember how much of your religion doth consist in the devoting of yourselves and all to God, and improving his stock, and being rich in good works, ready to distribute and communicate, 1 Tim. vi. 18; and how much will be laid upon this at judgment, Matt. xxv. God doth not call upon you for your charity, as if he would be beholden to you, or needed any thing that you can give him; but because he will thus difference his hearty followers from complimenting hypocrites. The poor you shall have always with you; and the church shall always want your help, and Christ will be still distressed in his members, to try the reality of men's professions, whether they love him above all, or else dissemble with him, and whether they have any thing that they think too good for him. It is a certain mark of a hypocrite, to have any thing in this world so dear to you, that you cannot spare it for Christ.

Remember then that it is your own concernment; if you would be ever the better for all your wealth, nay, if you would not be undone by it, study how you may be most serviceable to God with it. Cicero could say, that to be rich is not to possess much, but to use much. And Seneca could rebuke them that so study to increase their wealth, that they forget to use it. If really you be christians, heaven is your portion and your end: and if so, you can love nothing else, nor use any thing else, rationally, but as a means to attain that end. See, therefore, in all your expenses, how you attain or promote your end. Alas, men are so busily building in their way, that they show us that they take not themselves for travellers; they are so familiar with the world, that they show us they are not strangers, but at home. They make their garments so fine, and lay such mountains on their backs, that we see they mean not to be serious runners in the christian race. The thorny cares that choke Christ's seed, do show that they are barren, and nigh to burning. If you gather riches for yourselves, (Luke xii. 21,) you are standing pits: if you are rich to God, you will be running springs, or cisterns. There is a blessed art of sending all your riches to heaven before you, if you could learn it, and were willing to be happy at those rates. It is not for your riches that God will either condemn or save you; but for the abusing or improving them. Though Lazarus was a beggar, yet Abraham had been rich whose bosom he was in. Rich men must know, (saith Ambrose,) that the fault is not in riches, but in them that know not how to use them. *Nam divitiæ ut impedimenta sunt improbis, ita bonis sunt adjumenta virtutum.* Oh that you could but be sensible of the difference, betwixt them that can say at last, We have used our stock for the service of our Lord; we studied his will and interest, and accordingly employed all that we had in the world; and them that must say, We gave now and then an alms to the poor; but for the substance of our estates, we spent it carnally for the flesh, to bear up our pomp and greatness in the world, and then we left it to our children to do the like when we were dead! There is as wide a difference between the end of these two ways, as there is betwixt heaven and hell; and surely the way is connected to the end. Think not either that you can serve God and mammon, or that you may live to the world, and die to God. When one was asked whether he had rather be Crœsus or Socrates, he answered, that he had rather be Crœsus while he lived, and Socrates when he came to die; but dream not you of such a choice. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked. Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap: if you sow to the flesh, of the flesh you shall reap corruption; but if you sow to the Spirit, of the Spirit you shall reap everlasting life," Gal. vi. 7, 8.

And this much more let me add, that if you intend your wealth for God, you must not think of evil getting it; for God will not accept a sacrifice that is got by falsehood, rapine, or injustice. Nay, if you intended it indeed for God, you would not dare to procure it by sin. For God needeth not fraud, perfidiousness, or injustice to promote his service. *Pietas sua federa servat.* As Austin saith, *Ream linguam non facit, nisi rea mens;* so I say here. Your mind is first guilty of denying God, whatever you pretend, when you dare thus by your deeds deny him.

Yea, let me add, that so far should you be from yielding to any temptation to be covetous, for God, for your family, or any good end that may be offered you, that you should make an advantage of such temptations, to watch the world and your deceitful hearts the more narrowly hereafter. And if in all temptations to worldliness, you could turn them to a gain and duty, and overshoot the tempter in his bow, it were a point of singular zeal and prudence. When he would put any covetous motion into your mind, or work it into your hands, give then more liberally, or do more good than you did before. Let this be all that the deceitful flesh and world shall get by you. *Fallite fallentes.—Et in laqueos, quos posuere, cadant.*

I know that flesh and blood will stand in your way with abundance of dissuasives, and make you believe that this so plain and great a duty, is no duty. In the verbal part of godliness, it would allow God but little; but in the more costly, practical part, much less. Sometimes it will tell you that men are so naught, that they deserve not your charity; but Christ deserveth it; give it therefore to him. Sometimes it will tell you of men's unthankfulness; but *satis est dedisse;* you have done your duty; God accepteth it: other men's thankfulness is not your reward. You are more unthankful yourselves to God. You are called to imitate him that causeth his sun to shine, and his rain to fall, on the just and on the unjust, and that daily bestoweth his mercies on the unthankful. Sometimes it will tell you of the uncertainty of reaching the end of your charity: that if you maintain scholars to learning, they may prove ungodly; if you leave any considerable gift to pious uses, sacrilegious and rapacious hands may alienate it. But you are sure of succeeding in your ultimate end, which is the pleasing of God, and your own salvation. It is not loss to you if it be to others. Cast your bread upon the waters; if you cannot trust God, you cannot obey him. Do your part, and leave his part to himself. It is your part to give, and it is God's part to succeed it for the attainment of the end. He that is worst is likest to fail. And whether think you is better, God or you? and which should be more suspected? He is unworthy the name of a servant of God, that will run

no hazard for him. Venture your charity in a way of duty, or pretend not to be charitable. Will you not sow your master's corn, till you are certain of a plenteous increase? And do you think that he will take this for a good account? This is the foolish excuse that Christ hath told you shall have a terrible sentence: you will hide God's talent, for fear of losing it: but woe to such unprofitable servants!

Sometimes the flesh will tell you that you may want yourselves, or your posterity at least; and that you were best gather till your stock arise to so much, or so much, and then God shall have some. A fair bargain! Just like ungodly men by their repentance and conversion; they will sin till they are old, and then they will turn. But few turn that delay with such resolutions. If God hath not right to all, he hath right to none. If he hath right to all, will you give him none but your leavings? A swine will let another eat when his belly is full. What if you are never richer, will you never do good therefore with what you have?

And for the impoverishing of yourself, if you fear being a loser by God, you may keep your riches as long as you can, and try how you can save yourself and them. A man's life consisteth not in the abundance that he possesseth. Do not imagine that you need more than you do. If monastics think it their perfection to be wilfully poor, and Seneca thought it the cynic's wisdom, *quod effecit nequid sibi eripi posset;* you may much more rejoice in such an estate, if God bring you to it by or for well-doing. You live in dangerous times: wars and thieves may soon level your estates; can there be greater wisdom than to send it all to heaven, and lay it up with God, and put it into the surest hands, and put it to the only usury? *Aut ego fallor, aut regnum est, inter avaros, circumscriptores, latrones, plagiarios, unum esse, cui noceri non possit.* Cannot a man live, think you, without wealth and honour? *Siquis de talium fælicitate dubitat, potest idem dubitare, et te deorum immortalium statu, an parum beate degant, quod illis non prædia, nec horti sint,* &c. Sen. As it is the honour of God, the first Mover, *omnia movere ipse non motus;* so it is the honour of the greatest benefactors, *omnia dare nihil habentes:* he that hath it to give, hath it more transcendently, than he that hath it but to use. He that hath most, hath most care, and trouble, and envy, and danger, and the greatest reckoning. Neither poverty nor riches, was the wise man's wish, but convenient food. *Optimus pecuniæ modus est, qui nec in paupertatem cadit, nec procul a paupertate discedit.* Sen. No man doth dissemble, lie, oppress, defraud, for love of poverty; but thousands do it for love of riches. *Neminem vidi tyrannidem gerere propter paupertatem, plurimus vero propter divitias,* saith the Cynic, *citante* Stob. Poverty is one of the cheapest medicines for the mind, and riches a dear deceit. A philosopher calls poverty a self-taught virtue, and riches a vice to be acquired with great labour and diligence. Poverty is a natural philosophy, an effectual doctrine of temperance; and riches a nursery of pride, voluptuousness, and every vice. And Paul comes near it, and speaketh more cautelously, yet home enough, that "the love of money is the root of all evil," 1 Tim. vi. 10, and therefore is itself a transcendent evil.

Sweet healthful temperance is cheap, and may be maintained without any great revenues, it is killing luxury, excess, and pride that are so dear, and require so much for their maintenance. Our journey is not of such small moment, nor our way so fair, nor our day so long, nor our strength and patience so great, as to encourage us to load ourselves with things unnecessary. Christian living is daily fighting; and we use not to fight with our riches on our backs, but for them. He that swimmeth with the greatest load is likeliest to sink. Men fancy that evil in a low estate, which else they would not feel; and when they have picked a causeless quarrel with it, and undeservedly fallen out with it, they speak abusively of it, and of God himself for casting it upon them. Men love riches so well, because they love sin so well. Did poverty accommodate men's vices, and feed and satisfy their sinful lusts as well as riches, it would be loved as well. And if riches did starve up luxury and voluptuousness as much as poverty, they would be as much abhorred. Few men speak highly of honours, or riches, or pleasures at the last; nor hardly of a low or suffering state. And the last judgment is commonly the wisest.

Let not therefore the fear of poverty deter you from good works. Yea rather give speedily, and do good while you have it, before all be gone, and you be disabled. Saith Nazianzen, (Orat. de Amor. Pauper.) *Deo gratitudinis ergo aliquid tribue, quod ex eorum numero sis, qui de aliis bene mereri possunt, non qui aliorum beneficentia opus habeant: quod in alienas manus non oculos conjectos habeas, sed alii in tuas. Da operam, ut non solum opibus, sed etiam pietate, non solum auro, sed etiam virtute sis locuples. Cura ut proximo tuo id circo præstantior sis, quia benignior. Fac calamitoso sis Deus, Dei misericordiam imitando. Nihil enim tam divinum homo habet, quam de aliis bene mereri.* If you have no pity on others, have some on your souls. Give not all your lands and wealth to your flesh and your posterity: give some of it to your souls, by giving it to God. Shall your bodies have it, and your souls have none, or but a little? *Hoc solum quod in opibus bonum est, lucremur; nempe ut animas nostras in eleemosynis acquiramus, facultates nostras pauperibus impertiamus, ut cœlestibus ditemur. Animæ quoque partem da; non carni duntaxat: Deo quoque partem da, non mundo tantum: ex ventre aliquid subtrahe, et spiritui consecra: ex igne aliquid eripe, ac procul, a depascente flamma reconde; a tyranno eripe, ac Domino committe.—Da exiguum ei a quo multa habes: da etiam omnia ei, qui omnia donavit: nunquam Dei munificentiam vinces, etiamsi omnia tua bona projicias, etiamsi te etiam ipsum bonis tuis adjungas. Nam hoc quoque ipsum accipere est, nempe Deo donare;* saith Gregory Nazianzen, ubi sup.

Of any kind of covetousness, there is none more plausibly pretended against works of charity, than that of some ministers, that can spare no money, because their libraries are yet unfurnished with many books which they would fain have. Yet here we must see that greater works be not for this omitted. Saith Seneca, (de Tranquil.) *Studiorum quoque quæ liberalissima impensa est, tamdiu rationem habebo, quamdiu modum. Quo mihi innumerabiles libros et bibliothecas, quorum Dominus vix tota vita sua indices perlegit? Onerat discentem turba, non instruit: multoque satius est paucis te authoribus tradere, quam errare per multos.—Studiosa hæc luxuria; imo ne studiosa quidem, quoniam non in studium, sed in spectaculum.—Paretur librorum quantum satis sit; nihil in apparatum—Vitiosum est, ubique quod nimium est.*

Yea more, let me tell you all, and beseech you to consider it. It is your duty even to pinch your flesh, and spare it from your back and belly, that you may have wherewithal to do good. It is no thanks to you to relieve others out of that which you need not yourselves; and to give God that which your flesh can spare. Such liberality may stand with little suffering or self-denial, and therefore will be but a poor proof of your grace. Had I ten thousand pounds a year, I should think it my duty for all that, to pinch my flesh that I might spare as much of it as possible for God. David would not offer that to God which cost him

nothing, 2 Sam. xxiv. 24. If you fare the hardlier, and go the plainer in your attire, and deny yourselves that which is for any needless pomp, or ostentation, or splendour in the world, that you may have so much the more to do good with, you deal then like good husbands for God and your souls, and faithful stewards. Why should a covetous miser pinch his flesh more to gather riches for himself and his posterity, than you should do to gather it for God, and to expend it on the church and poor? Be as frugal as they, but not to the same end; so you use it for God and your poor brethren, an honest parsimony and gathering is a duty; and such a holy covetousness is so far from condemnable, that it is the truest charity, which God and all wise men will applaud. I do not mean only to deny your flesh in gross excesses, but to pinch it by a just frugality and abstinence. And yet you shall not say that I am drawing you to extremes. I would not have you so far pinch your flesh as to disable it for duty, but to deny it whatsoever doth not some way help it for duty, that we may not feed our own unnecessary delights, though with a seeming decorum and moderation, while so many about us are pinched with the want of neccssaries, and so many public, excellent works are calling for our help. The flesh is to be tamed, and humbled, and brought in subjection, and scanted when greater things require it, but not to be destroyed and made unserviceable. *Infido huic corpori quomodo conjunctus sim, haud equidem scio; quoque pacto simul et imago Dei sim, et cum cœno voluter; quod et cum pulchra valetudine est, bello me lacessit, et cum bello premitur, mœrore me afficit: quod, et ut conservum amo; et ut inimicum odi atque aversor: quod, et ut vinculum fugio, et ut cohæres vereor. Si debilitare illud et conficere studeo, jam non habeo quo socio et opitulatore ad res præclarissimas utar; nimirum haud ignorans quam ob causam procreatus sim, quodque me per actiones ad deum ascendere oporteat. Sin contra ut cum socio et adjutore mitius agam, nulla jam ratio occurrit, qua rebellantis impetum fugiam, atque a Deo uon excidam, compedibus degravatus, vel in terram detrahentibus, vel in ea detinentibus. Hostis est blandus et placidus: invidiosus amicus. O miram conjunctionem et alienationem! Quod metuo amplector, quod amo pertimesco. Antequam bellum gesserim in gratiam redeo. Antequam pace fruar, ab eo dissideo.* Greg. Naz. ubi sup. And for delight, at least learn of a heathen how to esteem of it. Sen. de vita beata. *Tu voluptatem complecteris, ego compesco: tu voluptate fueris, ego utor: tu illam summum bonum putas, ego nec bonum: tu omnia voluptatis causa facis, ego nihil.*

What remains now, gentlemen, but that you be up and doing, and look about you where you may have the best bargain to lay out your money on, for God and for your souls? Stay not till the market is over, till thieves have robbed you, till God in judgment have impoverished you; till mere necessity do constrain you to part with that which you cannot keep; or till the souls or bodies that need your help are removed from your sight. Seek after an object for your alms, as diligently as beggars seek the alms; you have more cause; for you get more by giving, than they do by receiving. If you believe not this, you believe not Christ; and so are infidels.

The sum of my advice is, That as men that are drawing near to their account, and love Christ in his members, and believe the promise of reward, you would devote yourselves and your estates to Christ, and study to do good, and make it your daily trade and business, as men that are "zealous of good works, and created to walk in them," Tit. ii. 14; Eph. ii. 10; and not as dropping a little upon the by. Say not that you have not wealth, or interest, or opportunity. The rich have full opportunities: the poor have their two mites or their cup of cold water to give to a disciple. And he that hath neither, may have a will to give thousands a year. And this is our comfort that have but little, that "if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not," 2 Cor. viii. 12. But where "there is a readiness to will, there will also be a performance out of that which you have," if you be sincere, ver. 11. *Et nunquam usque eo interclusa sunt omnia, ut nulli actioni honestæ locus sit. Nunquam inutilis est opera civis boni. Auditu enim, visu, vultu, nutu, obstinatione tacita, incessuque ipso prodest. Ut salutaria quædam citra gustum tactumque odore proficiunt; ita virtus utilitatem etiam ex longinquo et latens fundit: sive spargitur, et se utitur suo jure; sive precarios habet excessus, cogiturque, vela contrahere; sive otiosa mutaque est, et angusto circumscripta; sive adaperta: in quocunque habitu est, prodest.* Seneca de Tranq. (I give you not these passages of strangers to Christ, as if his doctrine needed any such patches; but as imagining that the temper of those I speak to, may need such a double testimony, and to see the book of nature as well as of grace; and to let you understand, how unexcusable a professed christian is, that is worse than an infidel.)

I have been long, and yet I would I had done. I have taught you, and yet I fear lest you have not learned. I have told you what you knew before, (unless it be because you will not know it,) and yet have more need to hear it, than a thousand things that you never knew. I have set you an easy lesson hard to be learned. Were but your senses rational, or were your will but disengaged and morally free, the work were done, and that would be learnt in an hour, that the church and commonwealth might rejoice in till the sun shall be no more. Oh had we but such princes, nobles, and gentlemen as were thus zealous and studious of good works, and wholly devoted and dedicated unto God, what a resemblance should we have of heaven on earth! How then would our princes and nobles be both loved and honoured, when their addictedness to God did make them so divine! How honourable then would our parliament be, and how cheerfully should we flock together for their election! How dear would our judges and country magistrates be to all that have any thing of piety or humanity in them! "Kings then would reign in righteousness, and princes rule in judgment; and a man would be as a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. And the eyes of them that see should not be dim, and the ears of them that hear should hearken; the heart also of the rash should understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers should be ready to speak elegantly," Isa. xxxii. 1—5. What help then should ministers have in their work, and the souls of all the people for their happiness! And what a shaking would Satan's kingdom feel! Then neither seducers should have this pretence, nor the seduced this temptation as now they have, to call their various models of republics by such splendid names, and to think Christ reigns when they reign; or that it is the only government, to have all to be governors, or to have the greatest liberty to be had. No forms will reform us, and heal our maladies, till we are healed and reformed within. Lead will not be gold, what form soever you mould it into. And though some ways may be more effectual to restrain the evil, and improve the good, that is among them, yet still the wicked will do wickedly. The swordfish and the thresher would be the tor-

mentors of Leviathan, and God himself would be impatient of his tyranny. And his brother would mend the matter, who by giving the power to the vast tumultuous ocean itself, may find that his republic is not only inconsistent with a clergy, (a high commendation,) but may possibly be as injurious to his moral honesty, as any other sort of tyranny; and might have learned of his chiefest master, Seneca, (de Tranquil. Anim.) that the free city of Athens could less endure Socrates than the tyrants, and did put him to death, whom they had tolerated. *Nunquid potes inveuire urbem miseriorem quam Atheniensium fuit cum illam triginta tyranni divellerent? Mille trecentos cives, optimum quemque occiderant. Socrates tamen in medio erat. Et imitari volentibus, magnum circumferebat exemplar, cum inter triginta dominos liber incederet. Hunc tamen Athenæ ipsæ in carcere occiderunt. Et qui tuto insultaverat agmini tyrannorum, ejus libertatem libera civitas non tulit.*

Gentlemen, for the Lord's sake, for your souls' sake, for the church's and the gospel's sake, for your country's sake, and the spiritual and corporal good of thousands, awake now from your sloth and selfishness, from your ambition, voluptuousness, and sordid worldliness, and give up yourselves and all that you have to God by Christ, and to the common good, and make the best of all your faculties and interest, for the high and noble ends of christians: and convince all self-conceited founders or troublers of the commonwealth, that you have hit the way of a true reformation, without any alteration of the form, by correcting yourselves, the principal materials. And let them see by your seeking the weal of all, that your form is as truly a commonweal as theirs, and that they absurdly appropriate the title to their own. If you deny us this, on you shall lie the blame and shame, and not on our want of a popular form.

But because I have gone so far with you by persuasion, (though yet I doubt whether indeed you will be persuaded,) I shall not leave you till I have added the last part of my task, which is to set some rules and matter for good works before you, that if you are but willing, you may set your money to the happiest usury, and that upon the best security.

1. (For general rules) Aim at no lower an ultimate end in your charity, than the pleasing of God; and move from no lower a first moral principle, than the love of God within you. Seek not self, while you seem to deny it. Give and do good to Christ in his servants.

2. Consider therefore of men's relations to Christ, and understand where his interest lieth in the world. Avoid both their extremes, that would have you do good to none but saints, and that would have you do it to all alike. As God hath a special love to his children, and yet doth good to all, his mercy being over all his works; and as he is the Saviour of all men, but especially of them that believe; so must you love all men as men, and saints as saints; and do good to all men, but especially to them of the household of faith, Gal. vi. 10. The new command of special love must not be thought to abrogate the old commandment of common love, even of loving our neighbour as ourselves. You must do good to a disciple in the name of a disciple; and to a prophet in the name of a prophet, Matt. x. 42; and yet take the wounded man for your neighbour, that you see lie in your way, Luke x. 30. I know the serpentine seed had rather you would kick against the pricks, and tread down Christ's interest, than there to lay out your greatest charity. But it is God that you have to reckon with, who judgeth not as they. The philosopher being asked, Why all men were more ready to give to the halt and blind, than to philosophers, answered, That they thought they might come to be halt and blind themselves, but were never like to be philosophers: so I may say of many that would be content that you feed the common poor with bread, but the disciples of Christ with stones; They think they may be poor themselves, but they are never like to be Christ's disciples: nay, some of them (such as Clem. Writer in his mock Fides Divina) will persuade you that it is a sottish thing to conceive that any have Christ's Spirit now, that work not miracles; and that he hath no church, ministry, or saints, that is, that christianity is not the right religion, unless it had present miracles to warrant it. And then you might be excused rather for your uncharitableness to it, than for your charity. But wisdom is justified of all her children: and the mouths of her enemies will be quickly stopped; and they shall then know that Christ is Lord and Judge, without either faith or further miracles.

3. When you have two good works before you, prefer the greater, and choose not the less.

4. *Cæteris paribus*, let works of spiritual and everlasting concernment be preferred to those that are merely temporal.

5. And let works for the public good, of church or commonwealth, be preferred before private works.

6. Let God have all in one way or other, even that which yourselves and families receive; take it but as your daily bread to support you in his service. Do not limit God, or tie him to any part. Take heed of reserving any thing from him, or of halving with him, as Ananias and Sapphira. He deserveth and he expecteth all. That which he hath not, you have not, but Satan hath it. You lose it, if you return it not to him.

And now in the conclusion, I shall presume (though I foresee I may incur a censure for it) to give you a catalogue of some of those good works which are seasonable in our days, by which you may make your reckoning comfortable. And do not think that God is beholden to you for it, if you perform them all; but take it as the happiest bargain that you can make; and thankfully take the opportunity while it is offered you, remembering that there is no such security or advantage to be made of your money in any way, as for God; and that it is more blessed to give than to receive. Say not another day but that you had a price in your hands; if you have not a heart, you must suffer with the unfaithful.

A Catalogue of seasonable Good Works, presented to them that are sanctified to God, and dare trust him with their Riches, expecting the everlasting Riches which he hath promised; and are zealous of Good Works, and take it for a precious mercy that they may be exercised therein.

1. Inquire what persons, burdened with children, or sickness, or on any such occasion labour under necessities, and relieve them as you are able and find them fit. And still make advantage of it for the benefit of their souls, instructing, admonishing, and exhorting them, as they have need. If you give them any

annual gift of clothes, bread, or money, engage them to learn some catechism withal, and to go to the minister and give him an account of it. Some I know that set up a monthly lecture to be fitted to the poor, and give sixpence or twelvepence to a certain number of poor that hear it.

2. As far as law will enable you, bind all your tenants in their leases to learn a catechism, and read the Scripture, and be once a year at least accountable to the minister of their profiting. If you cannot do this, at least use your interest in every tenant you have, to do it, and to seek God and worship him in their families (in which let your own families be eminently exemplary). It is very much that landlords might do for God if they had hearts. Discountenance the ungodly: encourage the good; give them back some little, when they pay their rent, to hire them to some duty. And think not too much to go to their houses for sueh ends.

3. Buy some plain and rousing books, that tend to conversion, and are fittest for their condition, and give them to the families that most need them, getting them to promise you to read them twice over at least, and then to give their teachers an account of the effect, and receive instructions from them for their further profit. Many have this way received much good. Or you may buy the books, and trust the ministers to distribute them, and engage the receivers to read them, or to hear them read.

4. Take the children of the poor, and set them apprentices to some honest trade, and be sure you choose them godly masters, that may take care of their souls as well as of their bodies. Or if you are able, settle a perpetual allowance for this use, intrusting the minister with the choice of a godly master for them, and whom you see meet with the choice of the boys.

5. In very great congregations that have but one minister, nor are able and willing to maintain another, it is a very good work to settle some maintenance for an assistant, without whom the flock must needs be much neglected. Impropriations may be bought in to that use.

6. To settle schools in the more rude parts of the country, where they use not to teach their children to read, or in market-towns where people are numerous, is a very good work.

7. It is one of the best works I know within the reach of a mean man's purse, to maintain scholars (in sizers' places) at about £10 per annum charge, till they are capable either of the ministry, or of some other station in order to it, where they can maintain themselves. As also to maintain some of the choicest parts for some special studies. There is an intent of some to propound this work in a method fit for the whole nation to concur in. Till that be done, any rich man that is willing to do good, may intrust some able, godly ministers with the choice of the fittest youths, (which is the greatest matter,) and may allow them necessary maintenance. How many souls may be saved by the ministry of one of these! And how can money be better husbanded?

8. It will be a very good work, also, conjunctly to encourage manufactures or other trades, and piety too, if, in cities and corporations, some yearly rents being given on these terms; that several of the honestest tradesmen may have £5 or £10 a piece yearly of this rent, lent them freely for four or five years to trade with, putting in security to repay it: and so the stock will increase, and more land may be bought by it after certain years, to go on to the same use (only let the trustees have power to remit all, or part, where there is an extraordinary unexpected failing). And that the fittest men may still receive it, some godly trustees may be chosen who may choose their successors; the minister being one, as likest to choose the fittest subjects of this beneficence. If honest men be kept up, they will better relieve the poor, than if it were left to their own hands.

9. It would be a blessed work for our rulers, and some rich men, to erect a college (at Salop I think the only fit place, for many reasons) for the education of scholars for the use of Wales; a country whose present misery, and ancient honour, and readiness to receive the gospel, and zealous profession of what they know, should encourage all good men to help them. Too few will send their sons to our present universities, and too few of those that come thither are willing to return. But if this may not be done, the next way will be to add some charitable help for them in Oxford, obliging them to return to the service of their country.

10. Were I to speak to princes, or men so rich and potent as to be able to do so good a work, I would provoke them to do as much as the Jesuits have done, in seeking the conversion of some of the vast nations of infidels, that are possessed of so great a part of the world; viz. To erect a college for those whom the Spirit of God shall animate for so great a work, and to procure one or two of the natives out of the countries whose conversion you design, to teach the students in this college their language (which it is like might be effected). And when they have learned the tongues, to devote themselves to the work; where by the countenance of ambassadors, merchants, plantations, or any other means, they may procure access and liberty of speech. Doubtless God would stir up some among us, to venture on the labour and apparent danger, for so great a work. If we be not better principled, disposed, and resolved to do or suffer in so good a cause, than the Jesuits are, we are much to blame. And where we can but have opportunity, we are like to do much more good than they. 1. Because they are so importunate every where for the interest of the pope, that the people presently smell it to be but a selfish, secular design. 2. Because when they have taken them from their heathenish idolatry, and taken down their images, they set up the divine worship of the host, and the cross, and the religious worship of the Virgin Mary and the saints, with prayers to them in the stead; with such abundance of ceremonious additions, that the people think it is as good be where they are: as if it were but the taking down one Daimon or Divus, to set up another in a kind of emulation, and they think that every country should continue the worship of their ancient patrons or Daimons. Whereas if we went among them with the plain and pure gospel, not sophisticated by these superstitions, with a simple intention of their spiritual good, without any designs of advantage to ourselves, it is like we might do much more, and might expect a greater blessing from God; as Mr. Elliot and his helpers find of their blessed labours in New England, where, if the languages, and remote habitations (or rather no habitations, but dispersions) of the inhabitants did not deny them opportunity of speech, much more might be effected. And though the Mahometans are more cruel than the heathens against any that openly speak against their superstition and deceit, yet God would persuade some, it is like, to think it worth the loss of their lives to make some prudent attempt in some of those vast Tartarian or Indian countries, where christianity hath had least access and audience. As difficult works as these are, the christian princes and people

are exceedingly to blame, that they have done no more in attempting them, and have not turned their private quarrels into a common agreement for the good of the poor uncalled world.

I have told you of divers ways in which you may secure your wealth from loss, and make an everlasting advantage of it. Those that have power and not a will, shall lose the reward, and have the condemnation of unfaithful stewards. Those that have power and an envious, evil will, that desireth not the church's good, shall moreover have the punishment of malignant enemies. Those that have neither power nor will, or are both impotent and malignant, shall be judged according to what they would have done, if they had been able. Those that have an unfeigned will, but not power, shall be accounted as if they had done the works; for God accepteth the will for the deed. All these good works are yours, poor christians, that never did them, if certainly you would have done them, notwithstanding the difficulty, cost, and suffering, if you had been able. But it is the godly rich, that are both able and willing, and actually perform them, that will profit both themselves and others, that both their own and others' souls may have the comfort of it. I shall lay some of the words of God himself before your eyes, and heartily pray for the sake of your own souls, and the public good, that you may excel papists as far in works of charity, as you do in the soundness of doctrine, discipline, and worship.

Gentlemen, excuse the necessary freedom of speech, and accept the seasonable, honourable, gainful motion, propounded to you from the word of God, by

Your faithful monitor,

RICHARD BAXTER.

February 20, 1657.

Sophronius, Bishop of Jerusalem, (Prat. spir. c. 195, *referente Baronio ad an.* 411,*) delivereth his history following to posterity, as a most certain thing:*

"That Leontius Apamiensis, a most faithful, religious man that had lived many years at Cyrene, assured them that Synesius (who of a philosopher became a bishop) found at Cyrene one Evagrius a philosopher who had been his old acquaintance, fellow-student, and intimate friend, but an obstinate heathen; and Synesius was earnest with him to become a christian, but all in vain; yet did still follow him with those arguments that might satisfy him of the christian verity; and at last the philosopher told him, that to him it seemed but a mere fable and deceit that the christian religion teacheth men, that this world shall have an end, and that all men shall rise again in these bodies, and their flesh be made immortal and incorruptible, and that they shall so live for ever, and receive the reward of all that they have done in the body; and that he that hath pity on the poor, lendeth to the Lord; and he that gives to the poor and needy shall have treasure in heaven, and shall receive a hundredfold from Christ together with eternal life: these things he derided. Synesius by many arguments assured him that all these things were certainly true: and at last the philosopher and his children were baptized. Awhile after, he comes to Synesius, and brings him three hundred pounds of gold for the poor, and bid him take it, but give him a bill under his hand that Christ should repay it him in another world. Synesius took the money for the poor, and gave him under his hand such a bill as he desired. Not long after, the philosopher being near to death, commanded his sons that when they buried him, they should put Synesius's bill in his hand in the grave, which they did: and the third day after, the philosopher seemed to appear to Synesius in the night, and said to him, Come to my sepulchre, where I lie, and take thy bill, for I have received the debt and am satisfied; which for thy assurance I have subscribed with my own hand. The bishop knew not that the bill was buried with him, but sent to his sons who told him all; and taking them and the chief men of the city, he went to the grave, and found the paper in the hands of the corpse, thus subscribed, *Ego Evagrius philosophus, tibi Sanctissimo Domino Synesio episcopo salutem: accepi debitum in his literis manu tua conscriptum, satisfactumque mihi est: et nullum contra te habeo jus propter aurum quod dedi tibi, et per te Christo Deo et Salvatori nostro;* that is, I Evagrius the philosopher, to thee most holy sir, bishop Synesius, greeting: I have received the debt which in this paper is written with thy hands, and I am satisfied; and I have no law (or action) against thee for the gold which I gave to thee, and by thee to Christ our God and Saviour. They that saw the thing, admired and glorified God that gave such wonderful evidence of his promises to his servants: and, saith Leontius, this bill subscribed thus by the philosopher, is kept at Cyrene most carefully in the church to this day, to be seen of such as do desire it."

Though we have a sure word of promise, sufficient for us to build our hopes on, yet I thought it not wholly unprofitable, to cite this one history from so credible antiquity, that the works of God may be had in remembrance. Though if any be causelessly incredulous, there are surer arguments that we have ready at hand to convince him by.

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy," Matt. v. 7.

Read Matt. vi. 19, to the end of the chapter.

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven," Matt. vii. 21.

"Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them, I will liken him to a wise man that built his house upon a rock," &c. Matt. vii. 24.

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven," Matt. v. 16.

"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive," Acts xx. 35.

"Give to him that asketh thee, and of him that would borrow of thee, turn thou not away," Matt. v. 42.

"All these have I kept from my youth up.—Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me. And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful, for he was very rich. And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!" Luke xviii. 21—24.

Read and consider Luke xii. 15—49. And Luke xvi. 19, to the end.

"So likewise whosoever he be of you, that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple," Luke xiv. 23, 26—28.

"We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them," Eph. ii. 10.

"What profiteth it, my brethren, if a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him?" James ii. 14.

"Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works," Tit. ii. 14.

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life," 1 Tim. vi. 17—19.

"But to do good and to communicate, forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased," Heb. xiii. 16.

"I say unto you, make you friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations. If ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches. Ye cannot serve God and mammon," Luke xvi. 9, 13.

"Blessed is he that considereth the poor, the Lord will deliver him in the time of trouble," &c. Psal. xli. 1, 2, &c.

Read Deut. xv. 7—9, &c.; 2 Cor. ix. 8, 9, &c.; Dan. iv. 27; Lev. xxiii. 22; Prov. xxii. 9.

"He that giveth to the poor shall not lack; but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse," Prov. xxviii. 27.

Read Isaiah lviii. throughout.

"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted of the world," James i. 27.

"Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten: your gold and silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days—Ye have lived in pleasure on earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts as in a day of slaughter—" James v. 1—3, 5.

"We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren: but whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, nor in tongue, but in deed and in truth," 1 John iii. 16—18.

"Let him that is taught in the word, communicate unto him that teacheth in all his goods (or good things). Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.—Let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men; especially to them who are of the household of faith," Gal. vi. 6, 7, 9, 10.

"Let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth," Eph. iv. 28.

"He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward: and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward. And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward," Matt. x. 41, 42.

Read 1 Cor. ix. 4—16.

"Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.—Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not unto me," Matt. xxv. 40, 45.

"But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth; that thine alms may be in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret, himself shall reward thee openly," Matt. vi. 3, 4.

"But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth that both they that have wives be as though they had none;—and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusing it; for the fashion of this world passeth away," 1 Cor. vii. 29—31.

GALATIANS VI. 14.

BUT GOD FORBID THAT I SHOULD GLORY, SAVE IN THE CROSS OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, BY WHOM THE WORLD IS CRUCIFIED UNTO ME, AND I UNTO THE WORLD.

SECTION I.

EVER since mankind had a being upon earth, the malicious apostate spirits have been their enemies. If it was the will of our Creator that we should be militaries in our innocency, and keep our standing, and attain our confirmation and glory by a victory, or else come short of it if we lost the day; no wonder that our lapsed condition must be militant, and that by conquest we must obtain the crown. But there is a great deal of difference between these combats. In our first state we were the sole combatants against the enemy ourselves, and we fought in that sufficient strength of our own which was then given us, and by our wilful yielding we were overcome. But since our fall we fight under the banner of another, who having first conquered for us, will afterwards conquer in us and by us. All the great transactions and bustles of the world, which our fathers have reported to us, which have filled all the histories of ages, and which our eyes have seen, or our ears have heard of, are nothing but the various actions or successes of this great war; and all the persons in the world are the soldiers of these two armies, whereof the Lord of life and prince of darkness are the generals: the whole inhabited world is the field. The great onset of the enemy was made upon the person of our Lord himself; and as oft as he was assaulted or did assault, so oft did he overcome. In the wilderness he had that first appointed conflict with Satan himself, hand to hand. Through his whole life after, he was assaulted by the inferior sort of enemies. And a leader in his own army, even Peter himself, is once seduced to become a Satan, (Matt. xvi. 22,) and a traitor Judas is the means of his apprehension, and then the blinded Jews and rulers of his crucifixion, and there had he the last and greatest conflict; in which when he seemed conquered he did overcome, and so his personal war was finished. When the Captain of our salvation was thus made perfect through sufferings, (Heb. ii. 10,) that he might bring many sons to glory, his next work was to form his army; which he did, by giving first commission to his officers, and appointing them to gather the common soldiers, and to fill his bands. No sooner did they set themselves upon the work, but Satan sendeth forth his bands against them; persecutors assault them openly; and heretics are traitors in their own societies, and make mutinies among the soldiers of Christ, and do them more mischief by perfidiousness, than the rest could do by open hostility. The first sort of them took advantage, 1. By the reputation of Moses' law, and the zeal of the blinded Jews for its defence. And, 2. From the dangers, sufferings, and fleshly tenderness of many professors of the christian faith, which made them too ready to listen to any doctrine that promised them peace and safety in the world: and as they were themselves a carnal generation, that looked after worldly glory and felicity, and could not bear persecution for Christ, and so were enemies to his cross, while they profess themselves to be his disciples, so would they have persuaded the churches to be of the same mind, and to take the same course as they; that so they might not be noted for carnal and cowardly professors themselves, while they brought others to believe the justness of their way; but rather might have matter of glorying in their followers, instead of being either sufferers with the true christians, or rejected by them whose profession they had undertaken.

These were the persons that Paul had here to deal with, against whom having opposed many arguments through the epistle, in the words of my text he opposeth his own resolutions, "God forbid that I should glory," &c.

The words contain Paul's renouncing the carnal disposition and practice of the false apostles, and his professed resolution of the contrary. Where you have, 1. The terms of detestation and renunciation, "God forbid," or "be it far from me." 2. The thing detested and renounced, viz. To glory in any thing save the cross of Christ. His own positive profession containeth, 1. His resolution to glory in the cross of Christ. 2. The effects of the cross of Christ upon his soul; which being contrary to the disposition, and doctrine, and endeavour of the false teachers, is added as a reason of his abhorring their ways, and as the ground and principle of his contrary course: "Hereby the world is crucified to him, and he to the world."

The difficulties in the world being so great, I shall take leave to be briefer in their explication. The verb *καυχᾶσθαι*, signifieth not only external boasting, but first internal confidence and acquiescence. By "the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ," we are to understand both his cross as suffered by him, and as considered by us, and as imitated by us, or the cross we suffer in conformity to him: for I see no reason to take it in a more restrained sense.

By "the world," is meant, the whole inferior creation, or all that is subjected to our sense, or is the bait or provision for the flesh, or by the tempter is put in competition with God: both the things and the men of the world.

To have "the world crucified to him," doth signify, 1. That it is killed, and so disabled from doing him any deadly harm, or from being able to steal away his affections, as it doth theirs that are unsanctified. 2. That he esteemeth it but as a dead and contemptible thing. So that this phrase expresseth both its disabling, and his positive contempt of it.

The other phrase, that Paul was "crucified to the world," doth signify on the other side, 1. That his estimation and affections were as dead to it; that is, he had no more esteem of it, or love to it, nor did he further mind or regard it, (so far as he was sanctified,) than a dead man would do. 2. It signifieth that he was also contemned by worldly men, and looked on as his crucified Lord was, whom he preached.

This is said to be done "by Christ," or "by his cross;" for the relative may relate to either antecedent. But I should rather refer it to the latter, though in sense the difference is small; because the one is implied in the other.

The further explication of the nature of this crucifixion, and the influence that Christ and his cross have thereunto, and how they are the causes of it, must be further spoke to, in the handling of the doctrines, which are as follow:

SECT. II.

Doct. I. The carnal glorying of worldly professors, is a thing detested and renounced by the saints.

Doct. II. A crucified Christ, or Christ and his cross, is the glorying of the saints.

Doct. III. The world is crucified to the saints, and they to the world.

Doct. IV. It is by a crucified Christ, or by Christ and his cross, that this is done.

But because our limited time will not allow us to handle each of these distinctly, I shall reduce them all to one general doctrine, which is the sense of the text.

Doct. The world is crucified to the saints, and the saints are crucified to the world, by the cross of Christ; and there in it alone must they glory, abhorring the glorying of carnal men.

The method which I shall observe, as fittest for your edification in handling this doctrine, is this:

I. I shall more fully show you negatively what it is not, and affirmatively what it is, to have the world crucified to us, and to be crucified to the world.

II. I shall show you how this is wrought by the cross of Christ.

III. I shall give you the reasons, which prove that so it is.

IV. I shall give you the reasons why it must be so.

V. I shall make application of this first part of the doctrine. And then handle the latter part as time shall permit.

I. There are few doctrines of faith, or ways of holiness, but have their extremes, which men will reel into from side to side, when few will consist in the sacred mean. The purblind world cannot cut by so small a thread, as the word of God directeth them to do, and as all must do, that will be conducted into truth. We have much ado to take men off these vanities; but yet when many of them are convinced, and see that the world must be cast aside, they mistake the nature of holy mortification, and embrace instead of it some superstitious and cynical conceits; in which they are as fast bemired almost as they were before.

I shall therefore first tell you what is not the crucifixion which we are to treat of.

1. It is not to think that the world is indeed nothing; and that in a proper sense our life is but a dream: nor yet sceptically to take the being and modes of all things as uncertain. Nor to imagine that sense is so far fallible, that a man of sound sense and understanding, may not be sure of the objects conveniently presented to his sense. There still remaineth one argument which the sceptics were never able to confute, but will make them at any time to yield the cause; even to scourge them, as fools, till they are sure they feel it. But we have few of these to deal with; the scepticism of our times being restrained to those things which closelier concern the matter of salvation.

2. Nor is it any part of the meaning of this text, that we should entertain a low and base esteem of the world, or any thing therein, as in its natural state considered, it is the work of God. For though man be eminently created in his image, yet all his works are like him in their measure, and therefore have all an excellency to be admired. It cannot be that Infinite Wisdom can make any thing which shall not have some impressions and demonstrations thereof. Nor can goodness make any thing but what is good. And never did the Almighty make any thing that is absolutely contemptible; nor any thing so mean, which can be done by any other without him; so far unimitable is he in the smallest of his works. Nor did he ever make any thing in vain; but those things which seem small and useless to us, have an unsearchable excellency and usefulness which we know not of. If the unskilful have the modesty to believe that the smallest string in an instrument of music, and the smallest pin in a watch, have their use, though he know not of it, we have great reason to think as modestly of the frame of all the works of God. And those things that in themselves considered are small, yet respectively and virtually may be very great. The heart may do more to the preservation of life, than a part much bigger; and the eye may see more than all the rest of the body besides. And the order, location, and respects of several parts, doth give them such an admirable usefulness and excellency, which none can know that seeth not the whole frame.

Yea, our own selves, souls or bodies, considered as the workmanship of God, must not be thought or spoke contemptibly of. For so by all that we say against the work, we do but reproach and dishonour the workman. In all our self-accusations and condemnations, we must take heed of accusing or condemning our Creator. Our naturals therefore must be honoured, while our corrupt morals are vilified. We must disgrace nothing that is of God, but only that which may be truly called our own; nor in the accusation of our own, must we by reflections and consequences accuse that which is God's, as if the fault in the original were his. By giving us our natural free will, which is a self-determining power, he made us capable of having somewhat in morality which we may too justly call our own; and our loss and want of moral freedom (which is but our right dispositions and inclinations) were not to be charged ultimately on ourselves, if the foresaid natural freedom did not make us capable of such a culpability. It is a strange way that some men have devised, of magnifying the Creator by vilifying his works; and it is a strange conceit that all the praise that is given to the creature is taken from God: they would not do so by man: the praise of a house is taken to be no dishonour to the carpenter; nor the commendation of a watch a dishonour to the watch-maker. God did not dishonour himself, when he said, his works in the beginning were all good: he would never have been a Creator, if all the good which he made and communicated had been to his dishonour: when there was nothing but himself in being, there was nothing but himself to be commended; but doubtless, God intended his glory by his works; and all that is in them proceeding from himself, the praise of them redoundeth to himself. In a word, we must be very careful of God's interest in his creatures, and take heed of any such contempt or vilifying of them, which may reflect upon himself.

3. The crucifying of the world to us, doth not consist in our looking upon it as a useless thing, or laying it aside as to all spiritual improvement. No; so far is this from being any part of our duty, that it is none of the least of our sins; the creature was the first book that ever God did make for us, in which we might read his blessed perfections: and the perverting it to another use, with the neglect of this, was man's first sin. As it was the great work of the Redeemer, to bring us back to God that made us, and restore us to his favour, so also to restore us to a capacity of serving him, even in that employment which he appointed to us in our innocency; which was to see God in the face of his creatures, and there to love and honour him, and by them to serve him. Though this be not our highest felicity, yet it is the

way thereto; till we come to see face to face, we must be glad to see the face of God in the glass of his works. But of this we have more to say anon in the application.

4. Our crucifying of or to the world, requireth not any secession from the world, nor a withdrawing ourselves from the society of men, nor the casting away the propriety or possession of the necessaries which we possess. It is an easier thing to throw away our Master's talents, than faithfully to improve them. The papists glory in the holiness of their church, because they have many among them that have vowed never to marry, and have no propriety in lands or houses, and have separated themselves into a monastical society: a high commendation to their church, when men must be sainted with them, if they will do no mischief, though they make themselves useless to the rest of the world. The servant that hid his talent in a napkin, was condemned by Christ as wicked and slothful; and shall he be commended by us for extraordinarily devout? Will you reward that servant that will lock up himself in his chamber, or hide his head in a hole, when he should be busy at your work? Or will you reward that soldier that will withdraw from the army into a corner, when he should be fighting? The world swarms on every side with multitudes of ignorant and impenitent sinners, whose miserable condition crieth aloud for some relief, to all that are any way able to relieve them. And these religious monks make haste from among them, and leave them to themselves to sink or swim, and they think this cruelty to be the top of piety. Unworthy is that man to live on the earth, that liveth only to himself, and communicateth not the gifts of God to others. And yet do these idle, unprofitable drones esteem their course the life of perfection. When we must charge through the thickest of our enemies, and bear all the unthankful requitals of the world, and undergo their scorns and persecutions, these wary soldiers can look to their skin, and get out of the reach of such encounters; and when they have done, imagine that they have got the victory. To live to ourselves, were it never so spiritually, is far unlike the life of a christian: a good man is a common good, and compassionate to the miserable, and desirous to bring others to the participation of his felicity. To withdraw from the world to do God service, is to get out of the vineyard or shop, that we may do our master's work.

If you have riches, it is not casting them away that shall excuse you, instead of a holy improving them for God. If you have possessions, it is not a renouncing of propriety that shall excuse you from the prudent and charitable use of them. The same I say also of relations, of offices in the church and commonwealth. God calleth you not to renounce them: to crucify the world is not to disclaim all the relations, possessions, or honours of the world. These are not yours but God's; and as he put them into your hand, and commanded you faithfully to use them as his stewards, so you must do it; and not think it a good account of your stewardship, to tell God that you threw away the talents that he trusted you with, because they were temptations to you, or because he was austere. I should have no great need to speak of this, were there not such a multitude of deluded souls that have lately received the popish dotages herein. It is one thing to creep into a monk's cell, or an anchorite's cave, or a hermit's wilderness, or Diogenes' tub; and another thing truly to be crucified to the world; and in the midst of the creatures to live above them unto God; as we are anon to show.

5. To be crucified to the world, is not to forbear our lawful trades and labours in the world. He that bids us eat our bread in the sweat of our brows, and would not have him eat that will not labour, (Gen. iii. 19; 2 Thess. iii. 6, 10, 12,) did never call men to be begging friars, nor licentious prodigals, nor idle gentlemen, nor lazy, unprofitable burdens of the earth. All idleness that is wilful, is sinful; but that which is cloaked with the pretence of religion is a double sin. When some servants grow lazy, they will pretend piety for it, and accuse their masters of worldliness for setting them to work. And some that have families will neglect their duty for them, and all upon pretences of a contempt of the world. But he that bid us "use the world as not abusing it," 1 Cor. vii. 31, did never mean to forbid us the use of it. While such hypocrites will needs be more than christians, they become in Paul's judgment worse than infidels, 1 Tim. v. 8. They should not labour with a desire to be rich, yet must they "labour to give to him that needeth," Eph. iv. 28. Idleness is not mortification.

6. To be crucified to the world, or the world to us, containeth not an unthankful undervaluing of our mercies. It will not warrant us to say, Health, and riches, and honours are contemptible; and therefore I owe God but little thanks for them; nor will it excuse any ungrateful insensibility of our deliverances.

7. To crucify the world, is not to take away the lives of the men of the world, nor actually to use them as they used Christ. Though the magistrate must bring a false prophet to capital punishment that sought to turn the people from God, yet every one might not do so: nor is that any part of the sense of this text; nor was it thus that Paul did crucify the world.

8. Much less may it encourage any poor, melancholy, tempted souls to be weary of their lives, and to seek to make away with themselves. This horrid sin is far from the duty here required. To be crucified to the world is not to rid ourselves out of the world; nor to do that to ourselves, which were so heinous a sin if we did it to another, as not here to be lightlier punished than with death.

And thus I have showed you negatively, what it is not to have the world crucified to us; which I do both to prevent extremes, and to prevent your unjust censures of the doctrine which I must next deliver, that you may see that I am not leading you into extremes, but insisting on a plain and needful truth.

SECTION III.

I AM next affirmatively to show what this crucifixion is. And first of the former branch: What it is to have the world to be crucified to us. Where we shall speak of the object, and then of the acts.

Quest. 1. In what respects is it that the world must be crucified to us?

Answ. In general: 1. In those respects in which men fell to the world from God. The state of man's apostasy is an adhesion to the creature, and a departure from God; and the state of his recovery must be a departing from the creature, and an adhering unto God. 2. In those respects in which Christ himself hath opposed and overcome the world, in those must his people oppose and overcome it.

More particularly; though it be but one and the same thing which they all import, yet I think it may the better insinuate into your understandings, if I present it to you in these various notions.

1. As the creature would be man's felicity, or any part of his true felicity, so it is to be hated, resisted, and crucified. If the world would know its own place, it might be esteemed and used in its place; but if it will needs pretend to be what it is not, and will promise to do what it cannot, and so would not only be used but enjoyed, we must take it for a deceiver, and rise up against it with the greatest detestation. For else it will be the certain damnation of our souls. For he that hath a wrong end, is wrong in all the means; and doth much worse than lose his labour in every step of his way. It is the greatest and most pernicious error in the world, to mistake in our very end, and about our chiefest good. When once the world would seem to be your home, and promiseth you content and satisfaction, and is indeed the condition that you would have; so that you do not heartily and desirously look any further, but would with all your heart take this for your portion, if you knew but how to keep it when you have it, and begin to say, It is good to be here, and with that stigmatized fool, Soul, take thy rest, then hath the world perniciously deceived you, and if you be not effectually recovered, will be your everlasting ruin. Whatever it be that presenteth itself to you (of this world) as your felicity, is to be hated, opposed, and crucified.

Yea, if it would but share in this office and honour, and would seem to be some part of your happiness, thus also must it die to you, or your souls must die. You can have but one ultimate principal end and happiness. If you take the world for it, you can expect no more. The covetousness of such is said to be idolatry, Col. iii. 5; and "their bellies to be their god," Phil. iii. 18, 19; and "their gain to be their godliness," 1 Tim. vi. 5; and "their portion is in this life," Psal. xvii. 14; and so they are called men of the world. Here they "lay up a treasure to themselves," and therefore here is their hearts, Matt. vi. 19—21; and "verily they have their reward," ver. 5.

2. As the creature is set in competition with God, or in the least degree of co-ordination with God, so it is to be hated, rejected, and crucified. It is God's prerogative to have sovereign interest in the soul; to be esteemed and loved as our chiefest good, and to be depended on as the principal cause of our well-being. The heart he made for himself, and the heart he will have; or else whoever hath it shall have it to its woe. He will be its rest, or it shall never have rest; and he will be its happiness, or it shall be miserable everlastingly. If now the presumptuous world will play the traitor, and seek to dispossess the sovereign of your souls, it is time to use it as a traitor should be used. If it will needs usurp the place of God, down with that idol and deal with it as it deserves. Oh with what indignation and scorn may the Lord of glory look down upon the dirty, worthless creature, when he seeth it in his throne! What! an earthen god! an airy god! Is gold, and honour, and fleshly pleasures, fit matter to become your god? And with what indignation and scorn should a gracious soul once hear the motion of entertaining such a god! It should be odious to us once to hear a comparison between the living God and the world! as if it would be to us what he would be, or could procure our safety and felicity in his stead. As the Jews would not endure to hear of Christ being their King, but cried out, "Away with him, crucify him, we have no king but Cæsar;" so must we think and speak of the world when it would be our king, Away with it, crucify it, we have no king but God in Christ. And as the rebellious world saith of Christ, (Luke xix. 27,) "We will not have this man to rule over us;" so must we say of the flesh and the world, we will not have them to rule over us. As the churlish Israelite asked Moses, (the prophet like Christ,) so must we do the flesh and world, "Who made thee a ruler over us?" We may value a very dunghill for the manuring of our land; but if any man will say, This dunghill is the sun, which giveth light to the world; the assertion would rather cause derision than belief. Or if you would persuade a man to put it in his bosom or his bed, he would cast it away with abhorrence and disdain, who would not have refused it if you had laid it in his field. The poorest beggar may be regarded in his place; but if he will proclaim himself king, you will either laugh at him as a fool, or abhor him as a traitor. Subjects do owe much honour and obedience to their princes; but if Caligula will needs be Jupiter, or if they must hear as the pope, *Dominus Deus noster Papa*, or if they will usurp God's prerogatives, and undertake his proper work, or will set themselves against his truth and interest, and grow jealous of his power on which they must depend, and of his gospel and spiritual administrations and discipline, lest it should eclipse their glory, or cross their wills, this is the ready way to make them become base, and lay both them and their glory in the dust. The Jews ought to reverence Herod their king, but if once they begin to say, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man, no wonder if he be smitten by the hand of divine vengeance, and he that would be a god, become the food of worms; and God shows them what a god they had magnified, that cannot keep the lice or worms from eating him alive. God useth to pour contempt upon princes, when they will not know and submit to the everlasting King. He taketh himself as engaged to break down all that would usurp his honour, and tumble down the idols of the world; therefore hath he always so abhorred the two grand abominations, pride and idolatry, above other sins. For he will not give his glory to another. He will not with patience hear it spoken of an idol, These are thy gods, O Israel, that brought thee out of Egypt. The first commandment is not merely a precept for some particular act of obedience, as are the rest; but it is the fundamental law of God, establishing the very relations of sovereign and subject. And as this is the first and great command, and that which virtually containeth all, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," or "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart." So he that breaketh this, is guilty of all. When the parent of the world would needs become as God, he made himself the slave of the devil.

You see then, I hope, sufficient reason why the world must be abhorred and crucified, when it is made an idol, and would become our god; and why this crucifixion of it is of absolute, indispensable necessity to salvation. If it had kept its place and distance, and would have been only a stream from the Infinite power, and wisdom, and goodness, and a messenger to bring us the report of his excellences, and a book in which we might read his name, and a glass in which we might see his face, then might we have esteemed and magnified it. But when the devil and the flesh will make it their bait to draw away our hearts from God, and to steal that love, desire, and care, which is due to him, and begin to tell us of rest, or satisfaction, or felicity here, it is time to cry out, Crucify it, crucify it. When it would insinuate itself into our bosom, and get next our hearts, and have our most delightful and frequent thoughts, and become so dear to us, that we cannot be without it; when it is the very thing that our minds are bent

upon, and that lifts us up when we have it, and casts us down when we want it, and thus disposeth of our affections and endeavours; it is time to lay such an idol in the dust, and to cast out such a traitor with the greatest detestation. As we ourselves shall be exalted if we humble ourselves, and brought low if we exalt ourselves; so must we cast down the world, when it would exalt itself in our esteem; and the right exaltation of it is by the lowest subjecting of it unto God. For whoever hath to deal with Infinite power, must think of no other way of exaltation.

3. The world must be abhorred and crucified by us, as it standeth at enmity to God and his holy ways. It is become, through man's corruption, the great seducer, and an impediment to our entertainment of heavenly doctrine, and a means of keeping the soul from God. Yea, it is become the interest of the flesh, and is set in fullest opposition to our spiritual interest. In what degree soever the world would turn your hearts from God, or stop your ears against his word, or take you off from the duty which he prescribeth you, in that measure you must seek to crucify it to yourselves. If father or mother would draw us away from Christ, though as parents they must be honoured still, yet as enemies to Christ they must be contemned. When your honours would hinder you from honouring God, and your credit doth contend against your conscience, and your worldly business contradicteth your heavenly business, and your gain is pleaded against your obedience; it is time then to use the world as an enemy, and to vilify those honours, and businesses, and commodities. A tender conscience that is acquainted with a course of universal obedience, will take notice when these worldly interpositions and avocations would interrupt his course: and a soul acquainted with a holy dependence upon God and communion with him, can feel when these enticing and deluding things would interrupt his communion, and turn his eye from the face of God; and therefore he can feel by the advantage of his holy experience, when the world becomes his enemy, and calleth him to the conflict.

4. The world is to be crucified, as it is the matter of our flesh-pleasing; or the food of our carnal affections, and the fuel of our concupiscence. The grand idol that is exalted against the Lord, is carnal self. This is the god of all the unregenerate. This hath their hearts, their care, their labours. The pleasings of this flesh is the end of the unsanctified, and therefore the summary capital sin, which virtually containeth all the rest. Even as the pleasing of God is the end of every saint, and therefore the summary capital duty, which virtually containeth all other duties. The world is an idol subservient to the flesh, as being the matter of its delight, and the means by which its end is attained; as in the contrary state, the Mediator is subservient to the Father, as being the matter of his delight, in whom he is well pleased, and the means by whom he obtaineth his ends, in making his people also well-pleasing in his eyes. The devil also is an idol of the ungodly; but that is in a subservieney to the world and to the flesh, as by the bait of worldly things he pleaseth the flesh; as in the contrary state the Holy Ghost is in office subordinate to the Son and to the Father, in that he bringeth us to Christ, by whom we must have access to the Father. In the carnal trinity then you may see, that as the flesh is the principal and ultimate end, and hath the first place, so the world is the nearest means to that end, and hath the second place; and as there is no coming to the Father or pleasing him but by the Son, so there is no way of pleasing the flesh but by the world. So that by this you may perceive in what relation we stand to the sensual, seducing world, and on what grounds, and how far it is necessary that we crucify it. The fixed determination of our Sovereign is, that if "we live after the flesh we shall die, but if by the Spirit we mortify the deeds of the body, we shall live," Rom. viii. 13. To live after the flesh, is by loving the world, and enjoying it as our felicity; and to mortify the deeds of it by the Spirit, is by withdrawing this fuel and food that doth maintain them, and by crucifying and killing the world as to such ends. Our work is to "put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof," Rom. xiii. 14. It is the world that is this provision for the fulfilling of our fleshly lusts. So far therefore as the flesh must be mortified, the world also must be mortified.

5. Moreover the world must be crucified to us, as far as it is presented to us as an independent or separated good, without its due relations unto God. It is God only who is the absolute, necessary, independent Being; and all creatures are but secondary, contingent, dependent beings (whether univocally or equivocally, or analogically so called with God, let the schools debate). To look on the creature as a separated or simple being or good, is to look upon it as God. And here came in the first idolatry of the world. When Adam had all his felicity in God, and had the creature only as a stream and means, and when all his affections should have been centred in God, and he should not have viewed one line in the volume of nature, without the joint observance of the centre where it was terminated; contrarily he withdraws his eye from God, and fixeth it on the creature, as a separated good; and desiring to know good in this separated sense, he made it an evil to him, and knew it to his sorrow. And so forsaking the true and all-sufficient good, he turned to a good which indeed, as conceived of by him, was no good; and knew it by a knowledge, which, as to the truth of it, was not knowing, but erring. And in this course which our first progenitors have led us into, the carnal world proceedeth to this day. The creature is near them, but God is far off. A little they know of the creature, but they are utter strangers to God. And therefore think on the creature as an independent, separated good. And you must carefully note, that the dependence of the creature on God, is not to be fully manifest by the dependence of any creature upon another. The line is locally distant from the centre; and the streams are locally distant from the spring, though they are contiguous, and have the dependency of an effect. But God is not local, and so not locally distant from us. The nearest similitude is that of the body's dependence on the soul (which yet doth fall exceeding short). In God both we and every creature do live, and move, and have our being. As no man of reason will talk to a corpse, nor dwell and converse with any man merely as corporeal, without respect to the soul that doth animate him, nor will he fall in love with a corpse; so no man that is spiritually wise (so far as he is so) will once look upon any creature, much less converse with it, or fall in love with it, barely as a creature, conceiving of it as a thing that is separated from God, or not positively conceiving of God as animating it, and as being its Alpha and Omega, its beginning and end, its principal efficient, and ultimate, final cause, at least. For this were to imagine the carcass of a creature, and to conceive of it as such a thing as is not in being. For out of the God of nature the creature is nothing, nor can do any thing; for there is no such thing; even as out of Christ, the Lord of spiritual life and grace, the new creature is nothing,

and we can do nothing: for there is no such new creature.

You have here the very difference between a carnal and a spiritual life. The carnal man doth see only the carcass of the world, and is blind to God, and seeth not him, when he seeth that which is animated by him. But the spiritual man seeth God in and by the creature, and the creature is nothing to him but in God. As an illiterate man doth look upon a book, and seeth only the letters, and taketh pleasure in their shape and order, and falls a playing with it as children do; but he seeth not, nor understands, the sense; and therefore if it contained the noblest mysteries or the greatest promises, even such as his life did depend upon, he loveth it not in any such respect; nor doth he for that delight in it: but let a learned man have the perusing of the same book, and though he may commend the clearness of the character, yet it is the sense that he principally observeth, and the sense that he loveth, and the sense that he delighteth in; and therefore as the sense is incomparably more excellent than the character simply considered, so it is a higher and more excellent kind of knowledge and delight which he hath in the book, than that which the illiterate hath. And indeed it is an imaginary annihilation of the book, and of every character of it, formally considered, to conceive of it as separated from the sense; for the very essence of it, is to be a sign of that sense; and therefore as the illiterate cannot see the sense for words and letters, the wood for trees, so the literate can see no such thing as words without sense, nor would regard the materials but for this signifying use.

I have expressed the similitude in more words than I use in such cases, because it much illustrateth our present matter. It was never the mind of God to make the great body of this world to stand as a separated thing, or to be an idol. He made all this for himself. The whole creation is one entire volume, and the sense of every line is God. His name is legible on every creature, and he that seeth not God in all understandeth not the sense of the creation. As it is eternal life to know God, so this God is the life of the creature which we know, and the knowing of him in it is the life of all our knowledge. The illiterate world doth gaze upon the creatures, and fall in love with the outside and materials, and play with it, but understandeth not a creature. By separating it in their apprehensions from God, the sense, they do annihilate the world to themselves, as to its principal use and signification.

There are two texts of Scripture, among many others, of which I have often thought, as notable descriptions of a carnal man's life; the one as to the privative part, and the other as to the positive. One is Ephes. ii. 12, which calleth them "atheists, or without God in the world." They see and know somewhat of the world, but God they neither see nor know. They converse with the world, but not with God. All their affections are let out upon the world, but God hath none of them. All their business is about the world; but they live as if they had nothing to do with God. As a scholar, if his master should stand in a corner of the school to watch what he will do, will behave himself while he seeth him not, as if he were not there; he will play with his fellows and talk to them, as if there were no master in the school: so do the ungodly live in the world, as if there were no God in the world; they think, and speak, and deal with the world, as if there were nothing but the world for them to converse with. As for God, they know him not, but carry themselves as if they had nothing to do with him; and ask in their hearts, as Pharaoh once did, "Who is the Lord that I should serve him?" And perhaps this made David say, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God," Psal. xiv. 1. Though he speak it not positively, yet there is a privative atheism, which is interpretatively to say, There is no God. For he seeth him not, nor taketh any great notice of him; but liveth as without him in the world. Not without him efficiently considered; for so nothing can subsist without him, but without him objectively considered. "For God is not in all his thoughts," Psal. x. 4, 5; and his judgments are far above, out of his sight. God looketh down upon the children of men, to see if there be any that will understand and seek after God; but they are gone aside, and are become filthy, and observe not him that observeth them, Psal. xiv. 2, 3. This is the case of poor worldlings, from the highest prince to the lowest beggar. A great deal of business they have in the world, some in seeking what they want, and others in holding and enjoying what they have; but they all live as without God in the world. "Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you," Psal. l. 22. "For the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God," Psal. ix. 17.

The other text that describeth the life of a mere natural man, is Psal. xxxix. 6, to which you may join Psal. lxxiii. 20. The former saith, "Surely every man walketh in a vain show; surely they are disquieted," or make a tumult and stir, "in vain." Though the brevity of life itself may be something here intended, yet that seemeth not to be all; but also the vanity of it, as it is a worldly life, and employed merely about transitory creatures. For even on earth our spiritual life of grace, and communion with God in Christ by the Spirit, is not vain. The word which we translate a vain show, signifieth the image, or shadow, or appearance, or figure of a thing; a thing that is nothing, or not the thing it seems to be, but the show of it; or as the prophet himself expoundeth it, a dream. Men do but seem to live, that live only on and to the creature; they do but seem to be rich, and have no other riches; and seem to have pleasure, that have no higher pleasures; and seem to be honourable, that have but the honour that comes from man. A great stir they make in the world, to little purpose. They thrust themselves into tumults, and quarrel, and fight, and some are conquered, and others conquerors, and some lament, and others rejoice; some walk dejectedly, and others domineer; and all is but a vain show, or thing of nought. It is but like children's games, where all is done in jest, and wise men account it not worthy their observance. It is but like the acting of a comedy, where great persons and actions are personated and counterfeited; and a pompous stir there is for a while, to please the foolish spectators, that themselves may be pleased by their applause, and then they come down, and the sport is ended, and they are as they were. The life of a worldling is but like a puppet-play, where there is great doings to little purpose. Or like the busy gadding of the laborious ants, to gather together a little sticks and straw, which the spurn of a man's foot will soon disperse. Thus do all worldly, sensual men walk in a vain show. By separating the creature from God, they make it nothing; and then they study it, and dispute of it, and seek, and run, and labour for it, when they have in a sort annihilated it. I speak still of their objective separation *in esse cognito et volito*: for a real separation is impossible, but as a real annihilation may be so called. When they have separated the characters of the great book of nature

from God, who is their sense, and made nothing of it, as to the form of a book, then do they fall a playing with it, who could not endure to learn on it. But when their Master comes to take an account of their learning, the play will be at an end, and the sorrow begins: and then they must remember and feel that their book was given them to another use.

And this seems to be the sense of that other text; "As a dream when one awaketh, so, O Lord, when thou awakest, (or in awaking,) thou shalt despise their image," Psal. lxxiii. 20. Though our translators apply it to God's awaking, that is, to judgment, yet many learned interpreters rather apply the word in awaking to the sinner's awaking at judgment, out of the foresaid dream of a sensual life. They do but labour, and care, and gather as in a dream; they fight, and conquer, and possess but as in a dream. They dream that they are rich, and honourable, and happy, and how proudly do they carry it out in this dream. One dreameth that he is a great man, and he is lifted up; another dreameth that he is poor and undone, and he is troubled; but when God awaketh the dreaming world, he will show them the vanity and despicableness of this image or show that here they walked in. They shall see that, as in a game at chess, though one was imaginarily a king, and another a queen, yet it was but imaginary; and when the tedious game is ended, they have laboured hard to do nothing, and are all alike; so will it be with them. The meaning is not only that God himself will despise this their show or imaginary employments and enjoyments; but that he will make them appear despicable to themselves and all the world.

Truly, brethren, all that we have to do with the world in a separated sense, as without God, is such a game, a dream, a show. When scholars are thus studying their physics or mathematics, or any thing of the creature, as separated from God, yea, or as not studying God in that creature, they are but playing the children and fools: they are like a printer that cannot read, (if there were such a man,) that studieth how to shape his letters, when he knoweth not what a letter meaneth. When they are disputing in the schools about God's works, in this separated sort, as without God, they are busily playing the idiots, and taking the name of God in vain, and making a learned stir about nothing.

And here, I pray you, mark the different successes of a sensual and of a sanctified study and knowledge. The first sinner, by seeking to know and enjoy the creature in a separated sort, did lose God who was his all, and made the creature his all; and thereby, as to its signification and principal use, did to himself annihilate it. And in this path do all his posterity walk, till faith recover them; and this is their vain show, and their living without God in the world. But when faith hath opened a man's eyes, and showed him God in every creature, who was hid from him before, then is the creature, who was before his all, annihilated to him in that separated sense, and God becomes his all again: and this annihilation of the creature is indeed its restoration objectively to its primitive nature and use; and it was not indeed known or respected as a creature till now. So that sensual men, by making the creature an imaginary god, or chiefest good, or all, do make it indeed objectively to become nothing; and so their all, their god, their felicity is nothing; and so all their life is a nothing. Whenas the faithful, by crucifying or annihilating the creature, as it would appear a felicity to us, or any good, as separated from God, do restore it to its true objective being and use, by returning to God, who is truly all, and in whom the creature is a derived, imperfect something, and out of whom it is indeed a nothing.

I will further illustrate it by one other similitude. God gave the ceremonial law by Moses to the Israelites, to be an obscure gospel, and to lead them unto Christ. The sacrifices, and other typical ceremonies, were the letters of the law, and Christ was the sense. The true believers thus understood and used them; but the carnal Jews looked only on the letter, and lost the sense: and thus separating the bare letter from the sense, that is, the legal works from Christ, they thought to be justified by those works, and by the law, in that separated sense. But the apostle Paul doth plead against this error, and tells them that Christ is the end of the law to all believers, and that he is the fulfilling of it; and that through him it is fulfilled in those that walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit; and that by the deeds of the law, in this separated sense, no flesh can be justified; and that the letter, separated from the sense of it, killeth; but Christ, by his Spirit, who is the sense of it, giveth life. If these Jews had taken and used the law as God intended it, and had taken the sense and spirit with the letter, and had understood that Christ was the very life, and end, and all of the law, Paul would never have cried down the law, nor justification by it, in this sense; that had been to cry down justification by Christ. But it was justification by the letter, or the law as separated from Christ, who was the meaning of it. So is it in our present case. The creature is the letter, and God the sense; and carnal men do understand only the letter of the creature, and fall in love with it: and thus God crieth down the world, and vilifieth and speaketh contemptuously of the world: whenas if it had not been for the separation, he would never have cried it down, nor spoken a hard word of it. As the law had never been so hardly spoken of, if the misunderstanding Jew had not separated it from Christ; so the world had never been so often called vanity, and a lie, and nothing, and a dream, and that which is not bread, and that which profiteth not, a shadow, a deceiver, with abundance of the like contemptuous terms, if carnal sinners had not in their minds and affections separated it from God.

And thus I have showed you in what respects the world must be crucified.

And let me add in the conclusion, as most necessary for your observation, that there is in the world an inseparable aptitude to tempt us dangerously to the foresaid abuse; and therefore when we have done all that we can in crucifying and sublimating it, we must never imagine that we can make it so wholesome or harmless a thing, as that we may feed upon it without great caution and suspicion, or ever return to friendship with it again, till fire have refined it, and grace hath perfectly refined us. And yet this is not long of the creature without us, but of us and the tempter. The world is in itself good, as being the work of God; and it cannot be the proper, efficient, culpable cause of our sin; for it hath no sin in itself, (I mean the world, as distinct from the men of the world,) and therefore cannot be the direct cause of sin. But yet there is that in it, which is apt to be the matter of our temptation; and so apt, as that all that perish do perish by the world. As there is no salvation but by the whole Trinity conjunct, who have each person his several office for our recovery; so there is no damnation but by the whole infernal trinity, the flesh, the world, and the devil: even to innocent Adam the world must be the bait, and Satan found somewhat in it that made it apt for such an office, though nothing but what was very good. But now that the flesh is

become the predominant part and power in us, as it is in all till the Spirit overcome it, the case is much worse, and the world is incomparably a more dangerous enemy than to Adam it could be. For though still the creature be good in itself, yet we are so bad, that the better the creature is, the worse it becomes to us: for we are naturally propense to it in its separated capacity, and all men till regeneration are fond of it as their felicity, and hug it as their dearest good, and sacrifice to it as their idol. So that an enemy it is, and an enemy it will be when we have done our best, as long as we are on earth. For while we have a flesh that would fain be pleased by that which God forbiddeth, and there is a devil to offer us the bait, and tempt us to this flesh-pleasing, the world, which is the bait, will still be the matter and occasion of our danger. The consideration of this may cut the throat of licentious principles, and hence we may answer the most of their vain, pretended reasons, who, under the cloak of christian liberty, would again indulge the flesh, and be reconciled to the world. But certainly it will never lay by its enmity till we lay by our flesh; and therefore there are no thoughts to be entertained of closing with it any more, but we must be killing it and dying to it to the last.

SECTION IV.

Having thus showed you in what respect the world must be crucified, and so resolved the question as to the object, I am next to resolve it as to the act, and show you wherein the crucifying it doth consist.

The apostle followeth on the allegory, which he took occasion of from the mention of the cross of Christ. From thence therefore we must also fetch the proper sense. As the world did use Christ, or would have used him, so we must use the world. Not actually murder the sons of death, as they did murder the Lord of life; but what Christ was on the cross in their eye, that must the world be esteemed in our eyes.

To take it in order. 1. The predictions of the prophets before Christ's coming, were not regarded by the unbelieving Jews, but the prophets themselves persecuted.

So those that would persuade us of the felicity of any worldly enjoyments, and by extolling sensual pleasures, or profits, or honours, would draw our hearts to them, should be despised and esteemed as deceivers by us. No man is more serviceable to the devil for our destruction, than they that applaud any sensual vanity, and would make us believe what great matters are to be expected from the world, and so would be the panders of it to entice to its unchaste embracements. Remember this, when any would persuade you what a fine thing it is to be rich and great, and somebody in the world; what a merry life it is to drink, and sport away your time: these are the prophets and apostles of the devil and the world, and let them be regarded by you accordingly.

2. As soon as Christ was born into the world, his best place of entertainment was a common inn; and there he could have room but in a stable and in a manger; the world would allow him no better accommodation; and this was the welcome that it first afforded him.

Here you have two notable directions for your usage of the world. 1. Begin to renounce it betimes, as it did Christ. As the world rejected Christ an infant, so we in our infancy must reject the world. This is to be solemnly performed in baptism; where, as we are engaged to the saving Trinity, and baptized into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, so must we solemnly renounce the damning trinity, even the flesh, the world, and the devil: for so the church hath ever done, and the nature of the thing doth manifestly require it; for the *motus* must have its *terminus a quo*, as well as *ad quem*. It is a sad thing that so many well-meaning men should deny our infant capacity of this engagement; but much sadder that they should do it with such church-dividing zeal, as if the kingdom of God lay in the exclusion of the seed of believers out of it. If it be true that all our infant seed are excluded from the church, I am sure it is so sad a truth, that methinks men should not so eagerly lay hold of it, before they have better evidence to evince it. It was once a mercy for infants to be in covenant with God, and members of his church; and I do not think that it is now a mercy to be out, or that the kingdom of the devil is the more desirable state (and all men are in one of these). Sure I am, they were once members of the church by God's appointment, and they that say they are cast out, must prove it, and better than any that yet have attempted it, if they would have judicious, considerate, impartial men believe them. Whoever cast them out, sure Christ would not, that did so much enlarge the church and better its state, and manifest more abundant mercy, and chide his disciples that kept such from him, and proclaimed that his kingdom was of such. I am not easily persuaded to believe that the Head and King of the church hath actually gathered a society of a false constitution so long, and that he that is so tender of his church, and hath bought it so dearly, and ruled it so faithfully, had never a true constituted, visible church, till about two hundred years ago, among a few such as I have no mind to describe; and that we must now have a new and true church-frame to begin, when the world is almost at an end: and that this glory, reserved for our last days, consisteth in casting out our infant seed, and leaving them in the visible kingdom of the devil, till they come to age. I am more out of doubt than ever I was, that God would have our infants renounce the world, and be dedicated unto him, as the world did renounce Christ an infant. If an infant Christ must be the Head of the church, I know not why an infant sinner may not be a member of it: and as the world without reason, through malice, rejected our infant Head; so God will find both reason and love to receive and entertain his infant members. And as long as we have God's express approbation in his word, for parents' entering their children into his covenant, and have the examples of all nations by the law of nature, allowing parents to enter their children into covenants which are apparently for their good, and to put their names into their leases with their own, we shall not think our infants uncapable of covenanting with God, nor of making this early abrenunciation of the world.

2. From hence also you may learn what room it is that the world should be allowed by you, even the stable and the manger, as it allowed Christ. This is a point of most necessary consideration. The soul of man hath its several faculties: as vegetative, it hath its natural parts, and spirits, and powers, and a natural appetite after the creature. This is the stable and the manger, where the creature, as a good, may be entertained. It hath also a sensitive, its power of sensation, and sensitive appetite. This also may entertain the creature; but not for itself, nor by its own conduct; but under the guidance of reason to a higher end. But the high

and noble faculty of reason, and the rational appetite, may not allow it the least entertainment in its separated capacity, as we are now discoursing of it. It belongeth not to the natural or sensitive powers to see and love God in the creature; and therefore it cannot be required of them; and therefore they may receive their objects, (moderate by reason,) upon lower terms. But it is the office of reason, as to moderate the senses, so to behold God in all the objects of sense: and no otherwise should it have to do with sensual objects, of which more anon.

3. It was not long that Christ had been in the world before Herod sought his life, and caused him to fly into Egypt. And as soon as we are capable of assaulting the world, we must actually fall upon it, and seek the extirpation of all its interest from our hearts, where Christ sets up his throne.

It was for fear of losing his crown, that Herod sought the death of Christ. It must be for fear lest Christ should be dethroned in our hearts, and lose his regal interest, and lest we should lose the crown of glory, that we must endeavour the crucifying of the world.

When angels and wise men did worship Christ, yet Herod did seek his death, and the more seek it, because of their acclamations, as being brought into jealousies of him by the titles which they gave him. So when the princes and great ones of the earth do extol the world, and magnify its glory, we must be raised hereby into the greater suspicion of it, and the more resolvedly set against it.

As Herod did put to death even the innocent children, lest Christ should escape, that so he might make sure work for his crown; so must we subdue our sensual desires, by denying them sometimes even in lawful things, lest we should be carried to that which is unlawful before we are aware; and we must avoid the very occasions and appearances of evil, and restrain ourselves in the liberty that we might take, and not go as near the brink of danger as we dare: for it concerneth us to make sure work where the reign of Christ and our own salvation is so much concerned, as in our victory over the world it is.

4. The whole life of Christ on earth was one continued conflict with the world. They believed not on him even when they saw his miracles. They hated him even while he did them good. They afforded him not a settled habitation. So, in the height of its glory, the world must not be trusted by us. Though it afford us sustenance for our outward man, yet must we hate it; and we must allow it no settled entertainment in our hearts.

Christ was in the world, and the world was made by him, and yet it knew him not, John i. 10. We converse in the world, and our outward man must live by it, as in it we received our life, and yet we must not know it in its separated capacity: the world could not hate them that were of the world; but Christ it hated, because he was not of it, John vii. 7; xv. 18, 19; xvii. 14. So must we hate the world, because it is not of that nature, nor for that interest, as the new creature is, though worldlings that are of it cannot hate it.

The nearer Christ was to the end of his life, the more cruelly and maliciously did the world use him. And the nearer we are to our parting with the world, the more must we contemn and hate it.

5. The world did arraign and condemn Christ as a malefactor: they charged him to be a deceiver, and one that did his mighty works by the power of Beelzebub. So must we justly charge the world to be a deceiver, and work its strange, stupendous delusions by the power of Satan the great deceiver, and as a malefactor must we attach, arraign, and condemn it. They came out against Christ as a thief with swords and staves, Matt. xxvi. 55. We must come out against the world as that great thief that would rob God of his honour and interest, Christ of his kingdom, and us of our salvation, and, by the sword of the Spirit, must disarm and conquer it.

The world judged Christ to be a blasphemer, and guilty of death, because he said that he was the Son of God, and should sit at his right hand. We must condemn the world of blasphemous usurpation, that would needs become our god, and usurp the divine prerogatives and honours.

They spit upon Christ in token of hatred and contempt. And we must as it were spit at the pleasures, and profits, and honours of the world, and manifest our defiance, and hatred, and contempt of them.

They buffeted Christ in manifestation of their malicious enmity. And the world and our flesh must not escape our hands; though our war be but defensive, yet must we offend that we may defend. "So fight I, (saith Paul, I Cor. ix. 26, 27,) not as one that beateth the air, (that maketh a show of enmity when there is none, as children in sport, or fencers that have no intent to kill,) but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." ὑπωπιάζω μου τὸ σῶμα καὶ δουλαγωγῶ. The first verb signifieth to buffet and beat black and blue, as we say, *Et validis ictibus subjicere reluctantem*, as Beza speaks; and the second verb signifieth to bring into servitude, or into the state of a servant, which is indeed the very work that we have to do with the flesh and the world.

They reproached Christ when they had smote him, and tauntingly bid him "prophesy who smote him." And the world and all the idols of it deserve no better of us, when they will usurp the place of God; and we may well scorn such a god, as Elias did Baal, and as God useth to do by the idols of the heathen. Fine gods indeed, that can neither save themselves nor us!

The world did strip Christ, and put on him a robe and a crown of thorns, and a reed into his hand, and again spit upon him and mocked him. And this contempt in our apprehensions must we cast upon the arrogant world; we must strip it of its vain show, and give it the honour of a reed for levity, and of thorns for unprofitableness and vexation; for as thorns it vexeth when it promiseth felicity, and as thorns it choketh that word of truth, and as a reed that is shaken with every wind.

No backwardness of the judge, and no intercession of his wife, could rescue Christ from the malice of the Jews; but the more is said for him, the more they cry, "Crucify him." And as resolvedly must we persecute the world. No intercession of our flesh, or backwardness of carnal reason, must take us off; but we must be content with nothing but its crucifying.

When Pilate drew back, they knocked all dead with this malicious voice, John xix. 12, "If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king, speaketh against Cæsar." So must we quicken and provoke our reason by arguments drawn from our fidelity to Christ, and say, If we favour this world, we are not the friends of Christ; for whatsoever would make itself our king, and our felicity, and would steal away our hearts, is not Christ's friend.

When Pilate saith, "Shall I crucify your king?" they cry out, "We have no king but Cæsar." And when the flesh or carnal reason saith, "Will you cast away your comforts, your peace, your happiness,

your lives?" we must say, "We have no comfort but Christ, no peace but Christ, no happiness, no life but what is in Christ."

The world crucified Christ between two thieves. And we must crucify the world between two thieves; viz. the flesh on the one hand, and the devil on the other, which would both have robbed God and us; though through the power of a crucified Christ, the one of these, even the flesh, may be so refined as to be admitted into paradise.

The world wrote over the head of Christ as the cause of his death, "King of the Jews." And we must write this over the crucified world, This is it that would have been our king, and god, and happiness: so let all thine enemies perish, O Lord. We must pierce the very sides of it, and let out its heart-blood. We must nail its hands and feet, the very instruments or means by which it executed its deceits. We must give it the gall and vinegar of penitent tears, and threatened judgments. The world thus "despised and rejected Christ, making him a man of sorrows and acquainted with our griefs; they hid their faces and esteemed him not. He had no form or comeliness in their eyes, and when they saw him, there was no beauty that they should desire him," Isa. liii. 2, 3. So must we despise and reject the world, and hide our faces from it, and not esteem it, disdaining even to look upon its pomp and vanity, and to observe its gaudy, alluring dress, or once to regard its enticing charms. We must think it all into a loathsome vanity, till there appear to us no form or comeliness in it, nor any beauty that we should desire it, and wonder what they can see in it that so far dote upon it, as to part with Christ and salvation to enjoy it.

The world did even triumph over a crucified Christ, and shake their heads at him, and say, "He saved others, but himself he cannot save." And we must triumph through Christ over the crucified world, and say, This is it that promised such great matters to its deceived followers; that men esteemed before God and glory; and now, as it cannot save them from the dust, or the wrath of God, so neither can it save itself from this contempt that Christ doth cast upon it. Cast down this idol out of your hearts, and say, If he be a god let him help himself.

Lastly, The world when they had crucified Christ did bury him, and roll a stone on his sepulchre, and seal it up, and watch it with soldiers to secure him from rising again, if they could. And we must even bury the crucified world, and be buried to the world, and lay upon it those weighty considerations and resolutions, and seal thereto with sacramental obligations, and follow all this with persevering watchfulness, that may never permit it to revive and rise again.

And thus must we learn from the cross of Christ, how the world is to be crucified; as it used Christ, we must use it. For it is the whole course of Christ's humiliation that is meant here by his cross, the rest being denominated from the most eminent part; and therefore from the whole must we fetch our pattern and instructions, by the direction of the allegory in my text.

SECTION V.

But it will not be unprofitable if we more particularly and orderly acquaint you with those acts, which the crucifying of the world to ourselves doth comprehend; overpassing those by which Christ did it for us on the cross, till anon in the due place.

1. The first act is, To esteem the world as an enemy to God and us, and so as a malefactor that deserveth to be crucified. And this must not be only by a speculative conception, but by a true, confirmed, practical judgment, which will set all the powers of the soul on work. It is the want of this that makes the world to live and reign in the hearts of so many, yea, even of thousands that think they have mortified it. A speculative book-knowledge, that will only make a man talk, is taken instead of a practical knowledge. Almost every man will say, The world is a great enemy to God and us; but did they soundly and heartily esteem it to be such, they would use it as such. Never tell me that that man takes the world for his deadly enemy, who useth it as his dearest friend; enmity, and deadly enmity, will be seen. Here is no room to plead the command of loving our enemies; at least, no man can think that he must love it with a love of friendship, and therefore with no love but what is consistent with the hatred of a deadly enemy. This serious, deep apprehension of enmity is the very spring and poise of all our opposition. We cannot heartily fight with our friend, or seek his death. There must be some anger and falling-out before we will make the first assault; and a settled enmity, before we will make a deadly war of it. This apprehension of enmity consisteth in an apprehension of the hurtfulness of the world to us, and of the opposition it maketh against God and our salvation, and of the danger that we are in continually by reason of this opposition. So far as men conceive of the world as good for them, so far they take it for their friend, and love it. For no man can choose but love that which he seriously conceiveth to be good for him. This complacency is clean contrary to the christian hostility. But when we conceive of it as that which we stand in continual danger of being everlastingly undone by, this will turn our hearts against it. It undoes men that they have not these apprehensions of the world, and that deeply fixed and habituated in their minds. For it is the apprehension or judgment of things that carrieth about the whole man, and setteth a-work all the other faculties.

Quest. But what should we do to be so habitually apprehensive that the world is our enemy?

Answ. 1. You must be sure that you lay up your treasure in heaven: that you are so convinced by faith of the glory to come, and of the true felicity that consisteth in the fruition of God, as that you take it for your portion, and make it your very end. And when once you have laid up your hopes in heaven, and see that there or no where you must be happy, this will presently teach you to judge of all things else, as they either help or hinder the attainment of that end. For it is the nature of the end to put a due estimate upon all things else: and it is the property of the chief good, to denominate all other things either good or evil, and that in a greater or lesser measure, according as they respect that chiefest good. For there can be no goodness in any thing else, but the goodness of a means; and the means is so far good, as it is apt and useful for the attainment of the end. If once therefore you unfeignedly take God and glory for your end and felicity, you will presently fall upon inquiry and observation, what it is that the world will do to help or hinder that felicity.

2. And then you need but one thing more to the discovery of the enmity; and that is, the constant experience of your souls. A real living christian doth live for God, and is upon the motion to his eternal home; there is his heart, and that way his affections daily work: when he findeth his soul down,

he windeth it up again, and straineth the spring of faith and love. And therefore his life and business being for heaven, he cannot but be sensible of the rubs that are in his way, and take notice of those things that would stop him in this course. Whereupon he must needs find by constant experience that the world is that great impediment, and so must be apprehensive of the enmity of the world. For as he that loveth God and waiteth for the sight of his face in glory, must needs take all that to be against him, and naught for him, that would keep him from God, and deprive him of that beatifical vision; so he that knoweth what it is to love God, must needs know by constant, sad experience, that the world is the great withdrawer or hinderer of that love. When he sets himself in any holy employment to mount his soul into a more heavenly frame, and to get a little nearer God, he feeleth himself too much entangled with inferior objects; these are the weight that presseth down, and the water that quencheth the sacred flames; and were it not for these, oh how much higher might our souls attain, and how much freer might we be for God! For it is a thing most certain to us by our constant experience, that the more of the world is upon our hearts, the less there is of God; and the more of God, the less of the world. So that these two means alone,—the sincere intending of God and glory as our end, and daily observation of our own hearts, will easily convince us that the world is our great enemy. And when we thoroughly apprehend it to be our enemy, we have begun to crucify it.

2. The next act by which the world is crucified, is, a deep, habituated apprehension of its unworthiness and insufficiency. As the opposing world must be taken for an enemy, so the promising, alluring world must be taken, as it is, for an empty thing. The life and reign of the world in the unsanctified, lieth first in their too high estimation of it. They think of it as good, and good to them, and as a matter of some considerable worth; and though they will say with their tongues that heaven is better, yet all things considered, they take the world to be more suitable to them, and therefore they desire it more. For heaven is out of sight, and beyond their apprehension and affection, and as they imagine, it is not so certain as the things which they see, and feel, and possess. And therefore they resolve to grasp as much of the creature as they can, and take that which they can get in hand, and then if there be a heaven, they hope they may have their part in it, as well as others. But saving illumination doth put men into another mind. It makes them see, that the invisible things are of greater certainty than the visible, and that a promise without possession, is better security, than possession without a promise; and that for the worth and goodness between eternal things and temporal, there can be no comparison. If the world would have been content to have kept its place, and to have borrowed all its honour and esteem from God and glory, as the end for which it must be used and regarded, it might then have had the honour of being serviceable to our salvation, and to our Master's work. But seeing it will needs be a competitor with heaven, it thereby disrobeth itself of its glory, and becometh a vile, contemptible thing: and so must it be esteemed by all the friends of God. A sound believer looks on the world, as the world looked on Christ when he hanged on the cross, not only as a malefactor, but as a contemptible thing. And as the world esteemeth the saints themselves to be hypocrites, deceivers, fools, weak, despised, a spectacle to the world, yea, as the filth of the world, and the offscouring of all things; so must the believer esteem the world, as seeming to be what it is not, as a weak and insufficient thing, as the περικαθάρματα καὶ πάντων περίψημα, 1 Cor. iv. 11—13, the very filth of the streets that is swept away, or cast upon the dunghill; or as a thing devoted to death for the averting of an imminent judgment. Paul's judgment is in a prevalent degree the judgment of every gracious soul; "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ: yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ," Phil. iii. 7, 8. Were the world but thus conceived of by a practical judgment, it were half crucified already. If men did verily think that the world is their loss, they would love it less, and less greedily seek after it, than now most do. Gehazi would not have run after Naaman for his money, if he had thought that it had been his loss. Achan would not have hidden the forbidden gold, as a treasure, if he had thought it had been his loss. Who would be at so much care and pains for their loss, as worldlings and sensualists are for their delights? And if the judgment did once esteem the world as dung, they would not be so greedy for it, nor put it into their bosoms. Who would fall in love with dung, or dote upon filth or dog's-meat? As the judgment doth esteem it, the affections will be towards it. And they that know not of a better condition, will value this as the best, though common reason will call it vanity. But they that by faith have found out the true felicity, have low and contemptuous thoughts of the world. Oh what a carcass, what a shadow is it in their eyes! What a poor, low thing is it which the sons of men do tire themselves in seeking after! What a dunghill do they wallow in, as if it were a bed of roses! What deformities do they dote upon, as if they were the most real beauties! A toad abhorreth not the company of a toad; but shall not a man abhor it? But we shall have occasion of saying more to this in the application.

3. The third act by which we crucify the world, is a kind of annihilation of it to ourselves; in our conceptions taking it as a very nothing, so far as it would be something separated from God, or co-ordinate with him. How oft doth the Scripture call it vanity, a dream, a vain show, a shadow, yea, nothing, yea, and less than nothing before God, and lighter than vanity itself, Isa. xl. 17; Psal. lxii. 9; Job vi. 21. The princes of the earth, who are something in the eyes of themselves and others, appear as nothing when God lets out his wrath upon them, Isa. xxxiv. 12; even as the straw when the fire hath consumed it, or the fairest buildings when it hath turned them to ashes. For though the world be really something, yet, 1. In regard of the effects which it promiseth to seduced worldlings, it may be called nothing. For that which can do nothing for us in our extremity, which hath no power to relieve or satisfy us, which leaveth the soul empty, and deceiveth them that trust it, may well be called nothing in effect: *In genere boni*, that which can do us no good, is nothing to us. Let a needy soul betake himself to the world for comfort under the burden of sin, for quiet and true peace to a wounded conscience, and you will find it can do nothing. Seek to it for grace or strength against corruptions and temptations, and you will find it can do nothing. Cry to it for succour in the depth of your affliction, and at the hour of death, and try whether it will present you acceptable unto God, and bring your departed souls with boldness to his presence, and you will find that it can do nothing! Whatever it promiseth, and what-

ever it seemeth to deluded sinners, when you look for any real good from it, you will find it can do nothing; and therefore you may well take it as a mere nothing to you. 2. And *in esse objectivo* we may make nothing of it, by excluding it from any room in our souls, as to those acts that do not belong to it. 3. And as a separated being, independent as to God, so it is indeed nothing, for there is no such thing: much less as it is a separated good or felicity to man. Annihilate then the world to yourselves. When it would appear to you to be what it is not, and would promise you to do what it cannot, let it be as nothing to you. Conceive of it as of a shadow, or a thing that seemeth to be and is not. Could you once make nothing of it, it would have no power over you, nor any unhappy effects upon you. You would not dote upon a known nothing, nor change your God and glory for nothing. As Job saith of the wicked, "He openeth his eyes, and he is not," Job xxvii. 19, so we may say of the world: when we open our eyes, we shall see that it is not: that which before seemed nothing to us, will appear to be all things; and the world, that seemed all things, will be nothing.

The sum of all that hath been said is this. The opposing world must be apprehended as an enemy to God and us, and so far hated: the glozing world appearing as our felicity, or a competitor with God, must be conceived of as worthless, and contemned: and the world as it would appear as a separated good, being any thing to us, or having any thing for us, out of God, must be annihilated in our conceptions, and taken as nothing.

SECTION VI.

We are next briefly to show you, how it is that we are crucified to the world; having showed you how the world is crucified to us. And in general the meaning is, that we are as dead or crucified men to it, in regard of those forementioned unjust respects, in which the tempter would present it to us. So that "crucified" here is put for the absence of that action and worldly disposition, which carnal men are guilty of. So that it is a moral, and not a natural death, that is here mentioned; and observably differeth from natural in these respects.

1. A natural death destroyeth the very powers or faculties of acting. But a moral death only destroyeth the disposition and action itself, but not any natural power.

2. A natural death is involuntary; and in itself is neither a virtue nor a vice; neither morally good or evil. But a moral death is principally in the will itself, and nothing is more voluntary, and so it is the principal virtue or vice. To be dead in sin and to God, is the sum of all evil. And to be dead to sin and the world, in Christ, is the sum of moral good.

3. Natural death hath no degree of life remaining (saving of the separated soul). But moral death may consist with much of the contrary life. For it is denominated from the predominant habits of the soul; which may stand with much of the contrary habit, though subdued. We cannot therefore gather that Paul was absolutely free from all sin, because he was dead to it, or crucified to the world. For this is a moral death consisting in a conquest of the enemy; who may be said to be dead, because he is overcome; and consisting in the prevalent habits of the soul, which yet may have too much of the remnants of their contraries.

More particularly, 1. If we are crucified to the world, our undue estimation of the world is crucified. We have no idolizing, overvaluing regard to it (in that measure as we are dead to it). As the world do not regard the works of the Lord, Psal. xxviii. 5; Isa. v. 12; so the saints do not regard the things of the world. The life of faith doth so elevate their spirits, that they are mounted up above the creature, and look not upon the world; or look upon it as a despicable thing. They are above that which is the delight and employment of others; and that which the sensual call felicity, they still call vanity. And as a man's stomach abhorreth that which a dog or swine will greedily devour, so the soul of a believer doth despise and abhor the delights of the ungodly. As pride makes the rich look contemptuously and disregardfully upon the poor, so the holy elevation of believing souls doth make them look contemptuously and disregardfully upon all the glory of the world. As faith doth bring them up to God, and make him their object and their all, so doth it make them somewhat like him, and minded as he is minded. And as God "regardeth not persons," (Deut. x. 17.) nor accepteth the persons of princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor, (Job xxxiv. 19,) but is pleased more in the least of his image on the humble, faithful soul, than with all the glittering glory of the world; so is it in their measure with his people. Where they see nothing of God, they feel no substance; but so far as God appeareth to them in any creature, or action, or any means or benefit which they possess, so far they perceive some substance in it. As "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, nor can know them, because they are spiritually discerned," 1 Cor. ii. 14; so the spiritual man hath shut up his senses to the world, and lost his perception of them, because they are carnally so discerned. The carnal man hath his senses quick in discerning and savouring the things of the flesh, but to the things of the Spirit he is dead and senseless. And contrarily the spiritual man is dead and senseless to the things of the flesh, and hath no savour in those things that are other men's delights, Rom. viii. 5, 6, 10. He tasteth no more sweetness in their pleasures than in a chip. He wonders what they can see or taste in the things of the world, that they so run after it. To be rich or poor, do but little differ in his eyes. To be high or low is all one to him, considering these things as accommodations of the flesh; though still he valueth any condition according to the respect it hath to God, and so that is the best condition to him that best accommodateth and advantageth him for God's service. He taketh the flesh's interest to be none of his interest; and therefore that which only concerneth the flesh, concerneth not him. And therefore he looketh in this regard upon a high estate or low, as nothing to him. Let God dispose of him as he please, that is God's work and not his. He hath "learned in whatever state he is, therewith to be content. He knows how to be abased, and he knows how to abound: every where and in all things he is instructed, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need," Phil. iv. 11, 12. If you applaud and honour him, he takes it but as if you breathed on him; at the best it is but a sweeter kind of breath. And if you vilify, and reproach, and unjustly condemn him, he takes it for no great hurt. For "with him it is a very small thing to be judged of man, and at man's bar; for he that judgeth him is the Lord," 1 Cor. iv. 3, 4. Nay, what if I said that if you imprison him, threaten him, torment him, yea, put him to death, he doth not much regard it, nor make any great matter of it, so far as he is crucified to the world. How joyfully could Paul

and Silas sing in the stocks, when their bodies were sore with scourging! Acts xvi. What a rapture of joyful praises did the apostles break forth into, when they were threatened by the priests and elders! chap. iv. 21, 24. I will add but two more instances, Dan. iii. The three Jews that were threatened with a furnace of fire, are accused for not regarding the king, ver. 12; and their own answer is, "We are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, the God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning, fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thy hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods," ver. 16, 17. And sure they that "would not accept of deliverance when they were tortured," Heb. xi. 35, did set little by it in comparison of that better resurrection which they hoped for. As Christ said of Satan, "The prince of this world hath nothing in me," John xiv. 30; so in our measure, so far as we are dead with Christ, the world hath nothing in us: no interest, no carnal life to work upon, and therefore is unable to do any thing with us. Our undue estimation of the world is crucified. This is the first part.

2. If we are crucified to the world, our inordinate cogitations of the world are crucified. We must not give it that room in our fancies, or power over them, as they have with other men. We should not indeed allow the creature one thought either for itself, and terminated finally in itself, nor as separated from God. Much less should we have so frequent and so pleasant or passionate thoughts of it as most have. But of this more in the application.

3. To be crucified to the world, is to have affections dead about worldly things. That which is vile in our estimation, will be uneffectual in our affections. I shall briefly instance in some particulars.

(1.) Our love to the world is crucified, if we be crucified to the world. As this is the great affection which God claimeth for himself, and which he maketh the seat of his most excellent grace; so is it that which he is most jealous of, and will least allow the creature to partake of; and the misemployment of it is the greatest sin, as the right employment of it is the greatest duty. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world," 1 John ii. 15. This is a plain and flat command. If the world be not apprehended by the understanding to be our good, it will not be embraced by the will, nor be loved. Perhaps you will say, Though it be not our chief good, yet it is good, and therefore may be loved, though not chiefly loved. To which I answer, that in the senses before disclaimed, it is none of our good at all. It hath no goodness to us in it, but the good of a means, which is respective to the end; and therefore we must have no love to it but that which is due to the means. God therefore being our end, we must love the world only for his sake, as it cometh from him, and leadeth to him. The least love to the world for itself, is idolatrous. As you may not allow another woman the least conjugal affection, though you allow your wife more, without some guilt of unchastity, so you may not in the least measure love the creature for itself, without some guilt of spiritual unchastity. If God must be loved with all the heart, and soul, and strength, then there is none left for any co-partner whatsoever. When we love any thing but as a means, it is more properly the end that we love in that very act, (and therefore some philosophical divines affirm that nothing but the ultimate end is properly loved,) so that the love which we give the world in a due subordination to God, is not so properly a love to the world as to God, and therefore it taketh not from God the least part of that which is due to him. But if we love it in the least measure for itself, or with any co-ordinate love, so much as we allow it, is robbed from God.

(2.) Hence followeth (when our love to the world is crucified) that our desires after it is crucified also. Before we thirsted after pleasures, or honours, or riches, but now this thirst is abated; for when we obey the call of Christ, (Isa. lv. 1,) and have freely drunk of the living waters, we thirst our former thirst no more, (according to the measure in which we partake of him,) but his Spirit will be a well of water in us, springing up to everlasting life, John iv. 13, 14. The distempered appetite of a carnal man is so eager after worldly things, that his heart is set upon them, which is called his "minding the things of the flesh," Rom. viii. 5. But the mortified christian, as such, hath no mind of them. His appetite to them is dead and gone. He cares not for them. Now he perceiveth that they are not good for him, his heart is turned against them.

(3.) When we are crucified to the world, our expectations of good from the world are crucified. Before we looked for much from it; we thought if we had this pleasure, or that honour, if we had such lands, buildings, friends, or provision, then we were well, or at least much better than now we are! Oh how good did we think that these were for us! And therefore we still lived in hope of more. But when we are crucified to the world, we give up these hopes. We see then that we are deceived. We did but hope for nourishment from a stone. The breasts are dry which we thought would have refreshed and satisfied us. When we see that the world is an empty thing, a cask, a picture, a dream, a shadow, we turn away from it, and look no more after it, but look for content in something else. As a child that seeth a painted apple may be eager of it till he try that it is savourless, and then he careth for it no more; or if a beautiful crab deceive him, when he hath set his teeth in it, he casteth it away; so when a christian findeth the folly of his former expectations, and tasteth the vexations of the creature which he was so greedy of, and withal is acquainted by a lively faith where he may be better, away go all his expectations from the world; and he promiseth himself no more content or satisfaction in it. This is a notable part of mortification. As it is the hopes of some good, that sets men to work in all endeavours; so take down their hopes, and all the wheels of the soul stand still. If it were not for hope, we say, the heart would break. And therefore when all our hopes from the world are dead, the very heart of the old man is broken, and all his worldly motions cease. Then he saith, It is as good sit still, as labour for nothing. I despair of ever having contentment in the creature. I see it will not pacify my conscience; it will not save me from the wrath to come; it will do nothing for me that is worthy my regard, and therefore let it go: I will follow it no further; it shall have my heart no more. Before he had many a promising, delightful thought of the creatures, which he could not reach. He thought with himself, If I were but thus placed and settled once; if I had but this or that which I want; if I were but here or there where I would be; if I had but the favour of such or such a one; how happy were I; how well should I be! I would then be content and seek no more. But when faith hath mortified us to the world, we see that all these were foolish dreams: we knew not what it was that we hoped for; and then we give up all such hopes for ever. Such pleasing thoughts of any worldly thing while you want it, or of any place or condition

which you are absent from, and such promises and hopes from any worldly state, or person, or thing, doth manifest that so far you are alive to the world, and is a folly of the same nature with theirs that idolize the world, when they do enjoy it. For one man to say, If I had this or that, I were well, and for another that hath it, to say, Now I am well; soul, take thy rest; do both show the same estimation and idolatrous love to the world in their hearts, though one of them have the thing which he loves, and the other hath it not. And to be so pleased with the very fancy and conceits of those worldly things which they never had, seems worse than to be pleased with it when they have it. I pray you, lay this well to heart that I say to you. Despair, utter despair of ever being contented or well in the world, or made happy by the world, in whole or in part, is the very life of christian mortification. It is the nature of a carnal heart, to keep up his worldly hopes as long as possibly he can. If you beat him out from one thing he runs to another; and if he despair of that, he looks after a third; and thus he will wander from creature to creature, till grace convert him, or judgment condemn him. If he find that one friend faileth him, he hopes another will prove more faithful; and if that prove a broken reed, he will rest upon a third. If he have been crossed in his hopes of worldly contentment once, or twice, or ten times, or a hundred times, yet he is in hope that some other way may hit, and some more comfort he may find at last. But when God hath opened a man's eyes to see that the whole world is vanity and vexation, and that if he had it all, it would do him no good at all; and that it is a mere deceitful, empty thing; and when a man is brought to a full and final desperation of ever finding in the world the good that he expected; then, and not till then, is he crucified to the world; and then he can let it go, and care not: and then he will betake himself in good earnest to look after that which will not deceive him.

When a worldling is in utmost poverty or in prison, he may part with all worldly contentment at the present: but this is not to be crucified to the world. For still he keeps up his former estimation of it, and love to it, and some hope perhaps that yet it may be better with him. Yet, if he should despair of ever being happy in the world, if this proceed not from his disesteem of it, and the change of his affections, but merely because he would have the world, but sees he cannot, this is far from the nature of true mortification.

(4.) If we are crucified to the world, our delight in it is crucified. It seemeth not to us a matter of such worth, as to be fit for our delight. Children are glad of toys, which a wise man hath no pleasure in. To have too sweet, contentful thoughts in the creature, and to apprehend it as our good, and to be rejoiced in it, is a sign that so far we are not crucified to it. It is not able to glad a mortified heart, so far as it is mortified; though the love of God that is manifested by it, may make him glad. And this is it that Paul disclaimeth in my text, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of Christ." If he were the lord of all the honours or wealth of the world, he would not glory in them. If he had all the pleasures that the flesh can desire, he would not glory in them. If he had the common applause of all men, and every one spoke well of him; if he had all things about him suited to a carnal heart's content, yet would he not glory in it. No more than a grave and learned man would glory that he had found a counter or a pin. "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, nor the mighty man glory in his might; let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord that exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness on the earth; for in these things I delight, saith the Lord," Jer. ix. 23. "The nations shall bless themselves in him, and in him shall they glory," chap. iv. 2. "Thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, and glory in the holy One of Israel," Isa. xli. 16. "In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory," chap. xlv. 25. The world is too low to be the joy of a believer. His higher hopes do cloud and disgrace such things.

And as these forementioned passions in the concupiscible, so also their contraries in the irascible, must be crucified: e. g. (1.) A man that is dead to the world, will not hate or be much displeased with those that hinder him from the riches, or honours, or pleasures of the world. He makes no great matter of it, and taketh it for no great hurt or loss. And therefore rather than study revenge, he can patiently bear it, when they have taken away his coat, if they take away his cloak also. He doth not swell with malice against them that stand in the way of his advancement, or hinder his rising or riches in the world. He will not envy the precedency of others, nor seek the disgrace or ruin of them that keep him low: no more than a wise man will hate or seek to be revenged of him that would hinder him from climbing up to the top of a steeple, or that will take a stone or a bush of thorns out of the way.

(2.) A man that is crucified to the world, will not avoid or fly from any duty, though the performance of it cross his worldly commodity, or hazard all his worldly interest. He seeth not reason enough in worldly losses to draw him to the committing of sin to avoid them. An unmortified man will be swayed by his worldly interest. That must be no duty to him, which casteth him upon sufferings; and that is no good to him, which would deprive him of his sensual good; and that shall be no sin to him, which seemeth to be a matter of necessity, for the securing of his hopes and happiness in the world. Whatever is a man's end, he puts a *must* upon the obtaining it, and upon all the means without which it will not be attained. I must have God and glory, saith the believer, whatever I want; and therefore I must have Christ, I must have faith, and love, and obedience, whatever I do. And so saith the sensualist, My life, and credit, and safety in the world must be secured, whatever I miss of; and therefore I must avoid all that would hazard or lose them, and I must do that which will preserve them, whatever I do. The worldling thinketh there is a necessity of his being sensually happy; or at least of preserving his life and hopes on earth. But the mortified christian seeth no necessity of living, much less of any of the sensual provisions, which to others seem such considerable things. And hence it is that the same argument from necessity, draweth one man to sin, and keepeth another most effectually from sin. He that hath carnal ends, doth plead a necessity of the sinful means, by which he may attain them. And he that hath the ends of a true believer, doth plead a necessity of avoiding the same sins, which the other thought he must needs commit. For heavenly ends are as much crossed by them as earthly ends are promoted by them. We find a rich man in Luke xviii. 23, that had a great mind to have been a christian. And if he had lived in our days, when the door is set a little wider open than Christ did set it, there are some that would not have denied him baptism, but would have let him in. But when he heareth that the world must be renounced, and Christ tells him of selling all and looking for a reward in another world, "he goes away

sorrowful, for he was very rich." The man would have had pardon and salvation, but he must needs be rich, or at least keep something. And they that are so set upon it, that they must and " will be rich, do fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition," 1 Tim. vi. 9. And " he that makes haste to be rich, shall not be innocent," Prov. xxviii. 20. But the crucified world is a dead and ineffectual thing. It cannot draw a man from Christ or duty. It cannot draw a man into any known sin (so far as it is crucified). It is as Samson, when his hair was cut: its power is gone. Thousands whose hearts were changed by grace, could sell all, and lay the price at the apostles' feet; and could forsake all, and take up their cross and follow a crucified Christ to the death; and could rejoice in tribulation, and glory that they were counted worthy to suffer: though he that was unmortified do go away sorrowful. Worldly interest doth command the religion and life of the unmortified man, because it is the predominant interest in his heart. But it is contrary with the mortified believer. His spiritual interest being predominant, doth rule him as to all the matters of this world.

(3.) If you are crucified to the world, your care for worldly things is crucified. It is not in vain that Christ expressly commandeth his disciples, " Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your body, what you shall put on," Matt. vi. 25, 31. And Phil. iv. 6, " Be careful for nothing." And 1 Pet. v. 7, " Casting all your care on him, for he careth for you." I know this is a hard saying to flesh and blood, and therefore they study evasions by perverting the plain text, and would null and evacuate the express commands of Christ, by squaring them to that carnal interest and reason which they are purposely given to destroy. But you will say, Must we indeed give over caring? I answer, 1. You must be in care about your own duty, both in matters of the first and second table, and how to manage your worldly affairs most innocently and spiritually, and to attain the ends propounded in them by God. But this is none of the care that is now in question, 1 Cor. vii. 32. There is a necessary " caring for the things that belong to the Lord, how to please the Lord," and that even in your worldly business. But, 2. You may not care for the creature for itself, nor for the mere pleasing of the flesh. As it may not be loved for itself, so neither may it be cared for for itself. And, 3. When you have used your utmost care or forecast to do your own duty, you may not be anxious or careful about the issue, which is God's part to determine of. As God himself appeareth in prosperity or adversity, you may and must have regard unto the issue. But for the thing itself you must not, when you have done your own duty, be any further careful about it. God knoweth best what is good for you, and how much of the creature you are fit to manage, and what condition of body is most suitable to the condition of your soul. And therefore to him must the whole business be committed. When you have committed your seed to the ground, and done your duty about it, you must have no further care at all, which intimateth fears, anxiety, or distrust: though as care is largely taken for regard, you may care and pray for the blessing of God on it, and for your daily bread.

(4.) So far as you are crucified to the world, your worldly sorrows also will be crucified. If you miss of it, you will not be grieved for that miss. For the displeasure of God which an affliction may manifest, you ought to be grieved; but not for the mere loss of the creature for itself. As God in the creature must be loved and delighted in, and not the creature for itself; so it is God's displeasure manifested in the creature that must be our grief. If a man's flesh be dead, you may cut it off, and he never feeleth you: you may cut it, or prick it, and he will not smart. And if you be dead to the world, you will not feel it as others do, when worldly things are taken from you. You will make no great matter of it.

Object. But grace doth not make men stocks or stupid, and therefore how can we choose but feel?

Answ. There is a feeling that is merely natural, and not subject to the command of reason and will; and there is a feeling which is under reason, and is voluntary. The latter only is that I speak of, which grace commandeth. The most gracious man may feel heat and cold, pain and weariness, hunger and thirst, as much as the worst. But the passions of his soul, so far as they are under the command of reason and will, do not feel them as evils to the soul (so far as he is sanctified). Still observe that I speak of worldly things, as separated from God, in whom only they are good, and in respect to him only the absence of them is evil to the soul. And there is somewhat of the passions that bodily sense can force, perhaps in an innocent Adam. But I speak only of that passion which reason should command. And so, it is not enough that our care and grief for worldly things be less than that for the things of God: though that much may prove our sincerity, (of which more anon,) yet that is not all that is our duty. But we should have no care or rational voluntary grief for any creature, but only as it is a means to God, and standeth in a due subordination to him: and so we may have both.

4. Having showed you what affections are crucified to the world, in the last place I add, that our inordinate labour for it must be crucified. Christ is as plain and peremptory in this, as in the former, not only commanding us to " seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness," Matt. vi. 33, but also, " Not to labour for the meat that perisheth, but for the meat that endureth to everlasting life, which the Son will give us," John vi. 27; which is not only to be understood that our labour for earth should be less than our labour for heaven, and so comparatively none at all; but further, that as we must have no love or desire to the creature for itself, but ultimately for God; so we should not at all seek or labour for the creature for itself, but ultimately for God; and therefore seek and labour for it no further than it is necessary to the pleasing of God, or to our fruition of him. This is the true and plain meaning of such texts.

A man that is truly dead to the world, doth labour for God and not for the world (according to the measure of his mortification) in all that he doth. If he be ploughing, or sowing, or reaping, or threshing, if he be working at his trade in his shop, it is God that he is seeking and labouring for. He doth not stop or take up in the creature. He seeks it still but as a means to God. But an unsanctified man doth never truly seek God for himself at all, no not in his worship, much less in his trade and calling in the world. For God is not his ultimate end; and therefore he cannot love him or seek him for himself. It is flesh-pleasing or carnal felicity that is his end, and therefore he seeketh God for the flesh. When he prayeth to him, when he loveth him, it is but as he is a means to this his carnal felicity, and not as he is himself his chiefest good. Thus you may see what it is to be crucified to the world, and wherein true mortification doth consist.

SECTION VII.

A FEW objections are here to be answered, that we may the more profitably proceed.

Object. 1. A man may have hunger and thirst in his very sleep, when he cannot refer the creature to God.

Answ. 1. We speak only of human, that is, moral acts, and such desires as are under the command of the will. 2. A man may habitually refer things to God, when he doth not actually.

Object. 2. How can a man seek God in ploughing, or working in his shop, when these actions are so heterogeneous?

Answ. God made no creature, nor appointed any employment for man, which may not fitly be a means to himself. As all came from God, so all have something of God upon them; and all tend to him from whom they came. There are some means that stand nearer the end, and some are further from it; and yet the most remote are truly means. A man that is but cutting down a tree, or hewing stones out of the quarry, doth as much intend them for the building of his house, as he that is erecting the frame, or placing them in the building. We cannot attain the end without the remotest means, as well as the nearest.

Object. We are taught to pray for our daily bread; therefore we may desire it, and labour for it.

Answ. No doubt of it. But we are taught to pray for it but as a means to the hallowing of God's name, the coming of his kingdom, and the doing of his will; and therefore only as a means must we desire it, and labour for it; and that for these, and no lower ultimate ends. And therefore the words are such as express only things necessary, "our daily bread;" that we may perceive it is but as a means to God that we desire it. If our being be not maintained, we are not capable of well-being, nor of serving God. And if the means of our being be not continued, our being will not be continued in God's appointed ordinary way. And therefore we pray for the means of our sustentation, that we may be kept in a capacity of the ends of our being.

Object. But a man cannot be always thinking on God, and therefore not always intending him as our end, and therefore cannot do all for him.

Answ. 1. If sin disable us, that is no excuse. 2. A man may habitually intend an end, which he doth not actually think of. Yea, he may have an actual intention, which yet he doth not observe, because of other more sensible thoughts that are upon his mind. And yet his foresaid intentions may be still effectual to cause him to use the means as means.

For example; a man that hath a journey to go, is not always thinking of the end of it, by an actual observed intention in every step of his way; but perhaps may be much of the way taken up with thoughts and discourse of other things; and yet he doth truly intend his journey's end in every step of his way, and use every step as a means to that end. And so is it with a true christian in the work of God, and the way to heaven.

Object. But may we not use the creatures for delight, as well as for necessity? and is it not so commonly resolved?

Answ. The word necessity is taken either strictly for that which we cannot be without; and so there is no doubt of it: or largely, for that which is useful to the end. And for delights, some of them are necessary, that is, useful means to our ultimate end; and these must not be opposed to things necessary; but may be used because necessary: as any thing which truly tendeth to recreate, revive, or cheer the spirits for the service of our Master. But no other delight is lawful. To esteem our fleshly delight for itself, and the creature for that delight, and so to use it, is mere sensuality, and the great sin which sanctification cureth in the soul. If delight itself be desired truly but as a means to God, then the creature, the more remote means, may be used for that delight, as its next end; but not else.

Object. But what man living is such as you here describe? Is there any that are thus crucified to the world, as to have no separated esteem of it, or thoughts or care of it; or love, or desire, or the rest of these affections?

Answ. It is one thing to inquire what we are, and another what we ought to be, and should be if we were perfect. We ought to be such as I have mentioned, but we are not such in perfection yet; but only in sincerity. And how that sincerity may be known, I have elsewhere explained. In a word, in a perfect soul there is no interest but God's. In a sincere soul God's interest is the highest and greatest. In a perfect man God hath the whole heart; and in an upright man he is nearer to the heart than any thing else. In a perfect man there is a perfect subjection to God; and in an upright man there is none hath dominion but God; he is the highest, and his rule prevaileth in the main, though some things that rebel are not perfectly subdued.

Object. But I find that the most of my passions are stirred more sensibly about earthly than heavenly things. How then can I say that I am crucified to the world?

Answ. In point of duty all that passion that is to be commanded by reason, should be mortified, as is above said. But when you go to the trial of your states, in the point of sincerity, it is hard trying by the passions; and you must rather do it by your estimation and your will, as I have discovered more fully in a "Treatise of Peace of Conscience."

SECTION VIII.

II. HAVING showed you what it is to have the world crucified to us, and to be crucified to the world, I am next to show you how this is done by the cross of Christ. And here I must distinctly show you, 1. What the cross, as suffered by Christ himself, hath done to the crucifying of the world to us. 2. What the same cross, as believed on and considered by us, doth towards it. 3. And what the cross of Christ which we ourselves bear in conformity to his sufferings, doth towards it. Of all which briefly.

1. It is not only his crucifixion, but the whole humiliation of Christ, which is in this and other Scriptures called his cross; the whole being denominated from the most eminent part, as was touched before. And there are five notable blows that the world hath received by the suffered cross of Christ.

1. One is, that Christ himself, in his own person, hath perfectly crucified and conquered the world, so that we have a victorious Head, and the world is now a conquered thing. It assaulted him from his birth to his death, and still he overcame. It assaulted him by fair means and by foul, by frowns and smiles, by alluring baits and persecuting storms, and still it was overcome. The threatenings and persecutions could never draw him to the committing of a sin. The enticing offers of it could never bring him to an inordinate esteem of it, nor abate the least of his love to God. In his great combat in the wilderness

he was assaulted both ways. Hunger could not make him tempt God, or distrust. The kingdoms and glory of the world were despised by him, when they were the matter of his temptation. He would not have so much as a settled habitation, nor any worldly pomp or splendour, that so he might show that he contemned it by his actions. If he had set by it, he could soon have mended his condition. When the people would have made him a king, he passed away from them; for he would not be a king of the people's making, nor have any power or dignity which they could give. He came not to receive honour of men, but to give salvation to men. When Peter would have persuaded him to favour himself, as savouring the things of man, and not of God, Christ calleth him Satan, and bids him get behind him. If he will do the work of Satan, he shall have the name of Satan, and the same words of rebuke that Satan had. Even in their hour, and the power of darkness, (Luke xxii. 53,) they could do nothing that might make the least breach in his perfection. And when they boasted of their power to crucify him or release him, (John xix. 10,) they could not boast of their power to draw him to the smallest sin. Yea, upon the cross did he consummate his conquest of the world, when it seemed to have conquered him; and he crucified the world, when it was crucifying him; and he gave it then the deadly wound. And there did he openly make a show of the principalities and powers which he had spoiled, and there did he triumph over them, while they mistakingly triumphed over him, Col. ii. 14, 15.

If you say, What is all this to us? I answer, When the world is once conquered, the heart of it is broken. And when our Head hath overcome it, there is a great preparation made for our victory. Else would he not have said to his disciples, "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world," John xvi. 33. For as the consequence is good, "Because I live, ye shall live also," (chap. xiv. 19,) so it would hold, Because I have overcome the world, ye shall overcome it also. Yea, as it is said of his works, "Greater works than these shall ye do," (ver. 12,) so is it said of our conquest, "In all these things we are supervictors, or more than conquerors, through him that hath loved us," Rom. viii. 37.

2. Another wound that the world hath received by the cross of Christ by him suffered, is this: By it, satisfaction is made to God for the sin that the world had enticed man to commit, and so, *quoad pretium*, the victory which the world had formerly obtained over us is nulled, and its captives rescued, and we are cured of the deadly wounds which it had given us. For "he healeth all our diseases," (Psal. ciii. 3,) and his stripes are the remedy by which we are healed, Isa. liii. 5. So that it is a vanquishing of the world, when Christ doth thus nullify its former victories. For thus he began to "lead captivity itself captive, which at his resurrection and ascension he did more fully accomplish," Psal. lxviii. 18; Eph. iv. 8.

3. Another most mortal wound which the world received by the cross of Christ, was this. By his cross did Christ purchase that glorious kingdom, which being revealed and propounded to the sons of men, doth abundantly disgrace the world as a competitor. If there had been no greater good revealed to us, or the revelation had been obscure and insufficient, or no assurance of it given us, then might the world have easily prevailed. For he that hath no hopes of greater, will take up with this. And he that looketh not for another life, will make as much of the present as he can. When the will of a man is the fort that is contended for, the assault must be made by allurement, and not by force. The competition therefore is between good and good; and that which appeareth the greater good to us, will carry it, and have admittance. If God had not set a greater good against the world, it would have been every man's wisdom and duty to have been worldlings. But when he revealeth to us another world of infinite value, yea, when he offereth us the fruition of himself, this turneth the scales with the wise men in a moment, and shameth all competitors whatsoever. Now it is the cross of Christ that opened the kingdom of heaven to all true believers, which sin had before shut up against all mankind. This mars the markets of the world: it is nothing worth to them that have tasted of the blessedness of this kingdom. Were it not for this, the temptations of the world and flesh might prevail. What should we say to them? or how should we repulse them? Reason would say, It is better have a small and unsatisfactory good than none. But now we have enough to say against any such temptation. One argument from the everlasting kingdom is sufficient (where grace causeth a right apprehension of it) to confound all the temptations by which the enemies of our happiness can assault us. What! shall we prefer a mole-hill before a kingdom? a shadow before the substance? an hour before eternity? nothing before all things? vanity and vexation before felicity? The world is now silenced; it hath nothing to say, which may take with right reason. It must now creep in at the back-door of sense, and bribe our brutish part to befriend it, and to entertain it first, and so to betray our reason, and lead it into the inner rooms. The cross of Christ hath set up such a sun as quite darkeneth the light of worldly glory. Who will now play so low a game, that hath an immortal crown propounded to him? Though earth were something, if there were no better to be had, yet it is nothing when heaven stands by. This therefore is the deadly blow by which the world is crucified by the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

4. Another mortal wound that the cross of Christ hath given it, is this. The cross hath purchased for us that Spirit of power, and all those ordinances and helps of grace, by which we ourselves in our own persons may actually conquer and crucify the world, as Christ did before us. His cross is the meritorious cause of his following grace. And as he hath there procured our justification, so also our sanctification, by which the world is renounced by us and contemned. There shall a virtue flow from the cross of Christ, that shall give strength to all his chosen ones, to go on and conquer, and tread the world, and all its glory, under their feet, and by the leaves of this tree, which seemeth dead to a carnal eye, the nations shall be healed. And thus by it the world is crucified.

5. Lastly, by the cross of Christ, a pattern is given us for our imitation, by which we may learn how to contemn and so crucify the world. "If when we do well and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps; who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously," 1 Pet. ii. 20—23. "Let this mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus—that made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant—and humbled himself, and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross," Phil. ii. 5—7. "Let us therefore lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so

easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us; looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God," Heb. xii. 1, 2. This leads us to the next.

2. Having showed you how the cross, as suffered by Christ, doth crucify the world; we are next to show you, how that same cross, as believed in and considered, doth crucify it to us.

They that look only to the merit of the cross, and overlook the objective use of it to the soul, do deceive themselves, and deprive themselves of the full efficacy of it; and deal like a foolish patient, that thinketh to be cured by commending the medicine, or by believing that it hath virtue to cure his disease, when in the mean time he lets it lie by him in the box, and never taketh it, or applieth it to himself. The believing meditation of the cross of Christ, doth give the world these deadly wounds:

1. It bringeth us under the actual promise of the Spirit. For though there be a work of the Spirit, which causeth us to believe, before our actual faith in nature, yet the further gift of the Spirit for mortification, is promised upon condition of our faith. And upon the performance of that condition, we have right to the thing promised. It is by faith that we fetch strength from Christ, for the conquest of this and all other enemies. If we could believe, these mountains would be cast into the sea; and all things are possible to us, if we could believe, Mark ix. 23.

2. The believing meditation of the cross of Christ, doth make us apprehensive of the vanity and enmity of the world, and so doth kill our esteem of it, and affection to it. For when we consider how little Christ did set by it, and how he made it his work professedly to contemn it, this will tell us how to think of it ourselves. For doubtless the judgment of Christ was true. He was able to discern between good and evil: if it had been valuable, he would have valued it. He would not have contemned it, if it had not been contemptible. He could have had better usage in the world, if he had desired it, and thought it meet. But he would show us by his example as well as by his doctrine, how to judge of it, and what to expect from it. If you saw the wisest man in the world tread a thing under feet in the dirt, or throw it away, you would think it were a thing of no great worth.

When you are tempted to set too much by your credit, and to sin against God for the esteem of men, remember that Christ "made himself of no reputation," Phil. ii. 7. And can your reputation be less than none? How did he value his honour with men, that gave his cheeks to be smitten, his face to be spit upon, his head to be crowned with thorns, and his body to be arrayed contemptuously like a fool, and at last to be hanged as a contemned thing among malefactors on the cross; to be reviled by those that passed by, and by him that suffered with him? Learn here of him that all must learn of, how far to set by your honour in the world.

Are you tempted to set by the riches and full provision or possessions of the world? Remember how Christ set by them; when he might have had all things, and refused to have a place whereon to lay his head. When "he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich," 2 Cor. viii. 9. And the best of his servants have followed him in this course, to whom he would have given more of the world, if he had seen it best for them. For when they had dishonour, they had honour with it and by it; when they had evil report, they had also good; when they were poor, they made many rich; and "having nothing, possessed all things," 2 Cor. vi. 8, 10.

When your flesh would have its pleasure, remember him that pleased not his flesh; but submitted it to hunger, and thirst, and weariness, to fasting, and watching, and praying whole nights; and at last to scourgings, and buffeting, and crucifying. When your appetites must needs be pleased in meats and drinks, remember him that had gall and vinegar given him to drink. When your bodies would be set out with such apparel as may make you seem comeliest in the eyes of others, remember him that wore a seamless coat, and was hanged naked on the cross for your sakes. When you are tender of every little hurt or suffering of your flesh, though in a way of duty, remember him that gave his hands and feet to be nailed, and his side to be pierced to death for you. When you are ashamed to be reviled for well-doing, remember him that "despised the shame," Heb. xii. 2. And thus as the sight of the brazen serpent did cure them that were stung in the wilderness, so the believing views of a crucified Christ may get out the poison of worldly delusions from your souls.

3. The believing thoughts of the cross of Christ will make us apprehensive also of our duty, in contemning the world in conformity to Christ. For though we are not bound to be crucified as Christ was, unless God specially put us upon it; nor bound to live without house or home in voluntary, chosen poverty, as Christ did (because there were some special reasons for his sufferings, that are not for ours) yet are we all bound to mortify the flesh; and contemn the world in imitation of him, and to submit to what suffering God shall impose on us. And in the example of Christ's cross, this duty must be observed.

3. The next thing to be declared is, How the cross which we ourselves do suffer in obedience and conformity to Christ, and for his sake, doth crucify the world to us and us to the world. That the bearing of this cross is necessary to all that will be Christ's disciples, yea, the daily bearing of it, is plain, Luke ix. 23; xiv. 27; Matt. x. 38. Two ways doth this tend to the crucifying of us to the world.

1. It doth more sensibly convince us of the vanity and enmity of the world, than any mere doctrine or distant examples and observations could have done. I confess we see so much of the world's deceit of others, that might satisfy a reasonable man that it is in vain. But the flesh doth draw us into a participation of its brutishness; and reason will not see the light. But the cross doth convince even the flesh itself, the grand deceiver. When the malice of wicked men lets fly at us, and the world do spit in our faces, as they did in Christ's; when we are made a common by-word and derision, and become as the filth of the world to them, and the offscouring of all things; when we have fears within and troubles without; and the sorrows of death lay hold upon us, and enemies compass us round about; oh how effectually will this convince us that the world is vain, and worse than vain! Who will look for happiness from a known enemy and tormenter? When we have Job's messengers of sad tidings, and troubles are multiplied; when pain and anguish seize upon our bodies, and grief hath taken up its dwelling in our very flesh and bones, who then will admire or dote upon the world? Who will not then cry out against it, as vanity and vexation? When friends abuse one another, they will fall out for the time, though they turn not enemies. And even the wicked,

when they suffer in the world, will speak hardly of it, though the friendship of it still dwell in their sensual dispositions. How much more will the enmity be increased in the saints, when the world doth use them as its enemies, and spit out the bitterest of their malice against them? If we have any thoughts of reconciliation with the world, God useth to suffer it to buffet and abuse us, that strokes and smart may maintain the enemy, if nothing else will serve to do it.

Believe it, christians, God doth not permit your sufferings in vain. He seeth how apt you are to dote upon the world, and how dangerous it will prove to you, if you be not delivered from the snares of this deceiver: and therefore he had rather that the world should make you smart awhile, than undo you for ever; and that it should buffet you, than befool you out of your felicity. The blows which the world giveth you, do light upon itself: as it crucified itself in crucifying Christ, so doth it in crucifying his people. It killeth itself by your calamities; and if it deprive you of your lives, you will then begin to live: but the death which it bringeth on itself, is such as hath no resurrection. If it kill you, you shall live again, yea, live by that death; but thereby it will so kill itself, as never to live again in you. The cross is a happy teacher of many excellent truths; but of nothing more effectually, than of the contemptibleness of the world. If it turn our breath into groans, we shall groan against it, and groan to be delivered, "desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven," 2 Cor. v. 2. We shall cry to heaven against this task-master, and our cries will come before God, and procure our deliverance. The world gets nothing by its hard usage of the saints; it maketh a cross for the crucifying of itself, and turneth their hearts more effectually against it.

2. And as it thus declareth itself contemptible, and crucifieth itself to us, so doth it exercise us in patience, and awaken us to deeper considerations of its own vanity, and drive us to look after better things: it forceth us also to seek out to God, and to see that all our dependence is on him, and draweth forth our holy desires and other graces; and thus it doth crucify us also to the world. It makes us go into the sanctuary, and consider of the end; how the wicked are set in slippery places, and that at last it will go well with the just. It teacheth us to consider, that while "the Lord is our portion, we have ground enough of hope, for he is good to them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him: it is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord: it is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth. He sitteth alone, and keepeth silence, because he hath borne it upon him: he putteth his mouth in the dust; if so be there may be hope: he giveth his cheek to him that smiteth him; he is filled full with reproach: for the Lord will not cast off for ever; but though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion, according to the multitude of his mercies," Lam. iii. 24—33. "And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed," Rom. v. 3—5. "For if we suffer with Christ, we shall also be glorified together: and the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." And "we ourselves do groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body," Rom. viii. 17, 18, 23. When Paul suffered for Christ the loss of all things, he accounted them dung that he might win Christ; that he might know the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, and be made conformable to his death, Phil. iii. 8, 10. He rejoiced in his sufferings, and filled up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in his flesh, for his body's sake, which is the church, Col. i. 24. And thus was he crucified with Christ and yet lived; yet not he, but Christ lived in him; and the life which he lived in the flesh, he lived by faith in the Son of God, who loved him and gave himself for him, Gal. ii. 20.

SECTION IX.

III. Having thus showed you how the cross of Christ doth crucify the world to us, and us to the world, I am next to give you the proofs of the point, that thus it is with true believers. But because the text itself is so plain, and it is so fully proved on the by in what is said already, and I have been somewhat long on the explication, I shall refer the rest of the Scripture proofs to the application, where we shall have further occasion to produce it; and I shall now only add the argument from experience. To the saints themselves I need not prove it; for they feel it in their own hearts: in their several measures they feel in themselves a low esteem of all things in this world, and a high esteem of God in Christ. They would count it a happy exchange to become more poor and afflicted in the world, and to have more of Christ and his Spirit, and of the hopes of a better world; to have more of God's favour, though more of man's displeasure. It is God that they secretly long for and groan after from day to day; it is God that they must have, or nothing will content them. They can spare you all things else, if they might have him.

And for those that never felt such a thing in themselves, they may yet perceive that it is in others.

1. You see that there are a people that seek more diligently after heaven than earth, that are hearing the word of God, which instructeth them in the matters of salvation, and are praying for the things of eternal life, when you are labouring for the world. You see that there are a people that seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and labour most for the food that perisheth not, and are about the one thing necessary, which showeth that they have chosen the better part.

2. And you see that there are a people that can let go the things of the world when God calls for them; that can be liberal according to their power to any pious or charitable uses; that will rather suffer in body or estate, even the loss of all, than they will wilfully sin against God, and hazard his favour.

You have read or heard of multitudes that have suffered martyrdom for Christ, undergoing many kinds of torments, and death itself, because they would not sin against him. All these examples, together with the frequent affirmations of the Scriptures, may assure you that thus it is with true christians. The world is crucified to them, and they to the world.

SECTION X.

IV. I am next to give you the reasons of the necessity of this crucifixion, the most of which also, for brevity sake, I shall reserve to the application, and at present lay down these two or three briefly.

1. The world is every carnal man's idol, and God

cannot endure idolatry; to see his creature set up in his stead, and rob him of his esteem and interest, and be loved, honoured, and served before him; and to see such contemptible things be taken as gods, while God himself stands by neglected, he will not, he cannot endure this. Either grace shall take down the idol, or judgment and hell shall plague the idolater; for he hath resolved that he will not give his glory to another, Isa. xlii. 8; xlviii. 11. All sin is hateful to God, and none but the cleansed, perfect soul shall stand before him in the presence of his glory; nor any in whom iniquity hath dominion, shall stand accepted in the presence of his grace; but yet no particular sin is so hateful to him as idolatry is. For this is not only a trespassing against his laws, but a disclaiming or rejecting his very sovereignty itself. To give a prince unreverent language, and to break his laws, is punishable; but to pull him out of his throne, and set up a scullion in it, and give him the honour and obedience of a king, this is another kind of matter, and much more intolerable. The first commandment is not like the rest, which require only obedience to particular laws in a particular action; but it establisheth the very relations of sovereign and subject, and requires a constant acknowledgment of these relations, and makes it high treason against the God of heaven in any that shall violate that command. Every crime is not treason: it is one thing to miscarry in a particular case, and another thing to have other gods before and besides the Lord, the only God. Now this is the sin of every worldling: he hath taken down God from the throne in his own soul, and set up the flesh and the world in his stead; these he valueth, and magnifieth, and delighteth in; these have his very heart, while God, that made it and redeemed him, is set light by. And do you think that this is a sin to be endured? It is a more horrid thing to wish that God were not God, than to wish that heaven and earth were destroyed or turned again to nothing. He that would kill a man deserveth death; what then deserveth he that would destroy all the world? that would pull the sun out of the firmament, or set all the world on fire, if it were in his power? Yet is not all this so bad as to wish that God should lose his Godhead: and what less doth that man do that would have his prerogative given to the creature, and so would have the creature to be god? If God be not the chief good, he is not God. And if he be not chiefly to be esteemed and loved, he is not the chief good. What then doth that man do, but deny God to be God, that denieth him his highest esteem and love? And certainly he that giveth it to any creature, denieth it to God; for there can be but one chief, and but one God. They take him down therefore as much as in them lieth, that set up another. So also, if God be not the sovereign Ruler of all, he is not God. And there can be but one sovereign. What less then do they do, that deny him his sovereignty, than deny him to be God? And he that maketh the flesh or world his sovereign, denieth God to be his sovereign; because there can be but one; especially seeing also that their commands are contrary. I beseech you therefore, sirs, be not so unwise as to think that this mortification or crucifying of the world is only the perfection or higher pitch of some believers, and not the common state of all. Do not imagine that yourselves, or any other, can be true christians without it. You may as well think that that man should be saved that is a flat atheist, and denieth God, and renounceth him, as that a worldling should be saved: and he that is not dead to the world is a worldling. If any one piece of reformation be essential to a true christian, it is this. It is as possible for a Turk, or an infidel, to be saved, as one that is not dead to the world; yea, the case of these is more desperate, if more can be; for they have not the like means of information (ordinarily) as our worldly professors have. What can any persecutor or idolater do more, than set against God, and set up his enemies? And so doth every worldling, while he denieth God his esteem and chiefest love, and giveth it to the pleasures and profits of this life. I beseech you be not so weak as to dream, that God is nothing but a bare name or title, or that you deny not God, if you refuse not to call him God; or that none are atheists that speak God fair, and give him all his titles; or that none are impious that give him good words. It is the thing and not the bare words, the description of God (such as we are capable of) and not bare names, that we must inquire of. If you will call your prince by all his royal titles, but will set another in the throne, and give him the rule over you, and obey him alone, which of these is it that you take indeed for your prince? "If I be a Father, (saith God,) where is mine honour? If I be a Master, where is my fear?" Mal. i. 16. Many "profess that they know God, that in works deny him, being abominable and disobedient," Tit. i. 16. God is not taken indeed for your God, if he be not taken for your chief good and happiness, and have not the chief of your desire and love; and if he be not taken for your absolute Sovereign, and have not the subjection and obedience of your souls. You may easily see then, that it is not meet, it is not possible, that an unmortified person, or a worldling, can be saved. For if they shall be saved that would have God to be no God, then no man should be damned; for there cannot be a worse man than these. Nay, if he be not God, how should he save them, or how should he make them happy, if he be not their chiefest good?

If God should cease to be God, the world and all things would cease to be. For if the first cause cease, the effects must all cease. And if the ultimate end cease, the means, and all use of means, must cease. And as the cessation of God as the first efficient, would destroy all natural being, so the cessation of God as the ultimate end, would destroy all moral good whatsoever. Other sins destroy some part or branch of moral good; but the sin of idolatry, the violation of the first commandment, the taking to ourselves some other god, this doth at once subvert all goodness, and destroy the very being of morality itself.

Sirs, I am afraid many, yea, most among us, have not well considered the nature of worldly-mindedness, or the greatness of the sin of valuing and loving the creature before God. If they did, it would not be a sin of so good repute among us, but would have contracted more odium before this time than it hath done. There are many sins far smaller than this, that men are shamed for, and that men are hanged for. But we must not judge by outward appearances, nor make the judgment of the sinner himself to be the rule by which to discern the greatness or smallness of the sin. A worldling, a fleshly-minded man, an unmortified man, that is not dead to the world; all these are terms that are proper to men in a state of damnation under the curse and wrath of God, and are equipollent terms with "a child of the devil." Oh how the devil hath deluded multitudes, by making them think that this mortification is some higher pitch of grace than ordinary, but not essential to the life of grace itself; and therefore that a man may be saved without it: when they may as well think to be saved, if they defy the God of heaven, if they despise the Lord that bought them, and if they

renounce salvation itself, for indeed so they do. It must needs be that God must look first and chiefly to his own interest, in all his works, even in the collation of his freest grace. And therefore he will be glorified in all his saints, and no man shall have salvation dividedly from his honour. He doth not bring men to heaven to hate and contemn him, but to love and praise him; and he will fit them for that work, before they come thither, and make them love and praise him initially on earth, before they come to do it in heaven. And therefore he will make them contemn all those things that stand in competition with him, and hate all that stands against him.

SECTION XI.

2. I HAVE showed you the necessity of crucifying the world, as from God's interest, which the world doth contradict; I shall next show it you from your own interest. And in these conjunct considerations it will appear, 1. The world is not your happiness. 2. The world is occasionally, through the corruption of our nature, a great enemy to your happiness. 3. God only is your happiness. 4. God is not fully to be enjoyed in this world. 5. It is by knowing, loving, and delighting in him as God that he is to be enjoyed to make us happy. 6. As therefore it is impossible to have two ultimate ends, two chief goods, and to enjoy them both; so it is impossible that God and the world should both have our chiefest estimation and affection. All this set together, doth demonstrate the necessity of being crucified to the world, unless we will renounce our own felicity.

1. For the first proposition, That the world is not your happiness; I think all your tongues will readily confess it, I would your hearts would do so too. Do you think that God doth envy you your happiness, or that he would take the world from you, because he esteemeth it too good for you? No, it is because he pitieth your self-deceit, when he seeth you take that for your happiness that is not; and because he hath far better things to bestow. If the world were as good for you as you take it to be, and had that in it to satisfy you as you may imagine it to have, you might keep it, and much good might it do you; for God would not go about to take it from you. He that made you to be happy, doth not grudge you that which should procure it. Doubtless if he did not see that it is vanity, and that you have made a wrong choice, and do mistake your mark, he would never trouble you in a worldly course, nor call you off. But it is because he seeth your folly and deceit, and wisheth you much better. Woe to you that ever you were born, if you have no better happiness than the world can afford you! Is it not necessary then that you discern your error, and be brought into your right way, and spend not your time and pains for nothing? If God should let you alone to catch at this shadow, and please yourselves with worldly toys, till the time of grace were passed; and then let you see that you were befooled, when it is too late; you would then be left to a fruitless repentance, and to the sense of that unhappiness which you chose to yourselves.

2. And that the world is an enemy to your happiness, may appear two ways. First, in that it deceitfully pretendeth to be your happiness, when it is not; and so would turn away your hearts from that which is. Secondly, in that by allurements or discouragements, it is always hindering you in the way to life, and is a snare to you continually in all that you do. And is it not necessary to your salvation that you be delivered from the enemies of your salvation? and freed from such perilous snares? Can you conquer while you are conquered? And if the world be not crucified to you, it doth conquer you; for its victory is upon your will and affections: and if it conquer you, it will condemn you. To be servants to the world, is to be servants to sin: and "the servants of sin are free from righteousness," Rom. vi. 20, and free from Christ, and free from salvation. A miserable freedom!

3. The following propositions I shall speak of together. That God only is our happiness and chief good, I need not prove to any that indeed believeth him to be God. That salvation consisteth in the fruition of this happiness, is past doubt. And as sure is it that God is not fully enjoyed in this world; much less in the creature, when it is loved for itself, and not esteemed as a means to him. All that believe a life after this, do sure believe that there is our felicity. And lastly, that the soul doth enjoy its own felicity, by knowing, and loving, and delighting in its object, is also past doubt. So that you may see that a worldly state of mind is in itself inconsistent with a state of salvation. To be saved is to have the blessed vision of God, and to love him and delight in him perfectly to everlasting. And can you do this, when you love and delight in the world above him, or in opposition to him? Would you have God to save you, and yet not to take off your affections from the world to himself? That were to save you, and not to save you; to feed you by that which is not food; to comfort you by that which cannot comfort. If a worldling would be saved, and not be mortified, either he speaks he knows not what, but plain nonsense or contradictions, or else he meaneth one of these two things: either that he would have a heaven of worldly riches, or honours, or fleshly pleasures (there is no such to be had); or else, that he would have the world as long as he can, and have heaven when he can keep the world no longer, and so would have the world crucified to him, when there is no such world, or when he is taken from it. But as, 1. No man can truly desire future grace and holiness, that doth not desire it at the present, this being rather an unwilling submission to it, as a tolerable evil, than a true desire of it, as a certain good. So, 2. God hath determined that this life only shall be the way, and that the end: here only must we use the means; and there must we partake of the success of our endeavours. You may better expect that God should give you a crop at harvest, who refused to plough and sow your land; or that your children should be men, before they are born; than that he should be your happiness in the life to come, if you finally reject him in this life, and choose to yourselves a secular happiness. Such as you now make choice of, such and no other shall you have. Heaven and earth were set before you. You knew that earthly happiness was short; if yet you would choose it, think not to have heaven too; for if you do, you will prove deceived at the last.

SECTION XII.

The Uses.

V. BELOVED hearers, I suppose you will give me leave to take it for granted, that you are all the rational creatures of God, made subject to him, and capable of enjoying him, and such as must be happy or miserable for ever; as also that you are all unwill-

ing to be miserable, and willing to be happy; and that this life is the time for the use of those means on which your everlasting life dependeth; and that judgment will turn the scales at last, as grace or sin shall turn them now. I hope also that I may suppose that you are agreed that christianity is the only way to happiness, and consequently that you are all professed christians. And one would think that where men are so far satisfied of the end, and of the way, we might conceive great hopes of their sincerity and salvation. But when we see that men's lives do nullify their professions, and that while they look towards God, they row towards the world; and while they hope for heaven, their daily travel is towards hell; and while they plead for Christ, they work against him; our hopes of them are turned to necessary lamentation. But how comes this to pass that reasonable men, yea men reputed wise and learned, yea many that seem religious to others and to themselves, should be so shamefully overseen, in a matter that so concerneth their everlasting state? As far as I am able to discover, the causes of this calamity are these two.

1. One part of the professed christians of the world understand not what christianity is, and so profess but the empty name, when indeed the thing itself which is in their conception, and which they mean in that profession, is nothing like to true christianity.

2. The other part of miscarrying professors, though they do conceive of the christian religion as it is, yet not with an apprehension intensively answerable to the thing they apprehend; though their conceptions of the christian verities have a moral truth in them, it being not false but true which they conceive; yet there is no firmness and solidity in the act, and so they do not effectually apprehend them. Nothing more easy, more common, and more dangerous, than to make a religion either of names and words, which he that useth doth not understand; or of mere speculations and superficial conceits, which never became practical, habituate, and predominant; nor were the serious, effectual apprehensions of the man. A right object, and a sincere and serious act, do essentially constitute the christian's faith. If either be wanting, it is not that faith, whatever it may pretend to be. Nothing but the gospel objects will suffice to a man's salvation, were it never so firmly apprehended. And nothing but a firm and serious belief of those objects, will make them effectual, or saving to the believer: were we able to cure the two forementioned defects, and to help you all to these two requisites, we should make no question but you would all be saved. We cannot expect that men should let go their sensual delights, till they hear of somewhat better to be had for them, and till they firmly and heartily give credit to the report.

And because the matter before us in my text, is fitted to both these needful works, and containeth those very truths which must rectify you in both these points, I shall draw them forth, and distinctly apply them hereunto.

Use 1. And in the first place, you are here informed that the cross of Christ is the crucifier of the world. Which containeth in it these two parts, which make up the point: 1. That this is the use of the cross, and one great end of the doctrine of christianity, to crucify the world to us, and us to the world. 2. That where the cross of Christ and his doctrine are effectual, this work is always actually done: in all true christians the world is thus crucified.

Oh that these truths were as plainly or truly transcribed upon your hearts, as they are plainly and truly contained in my text!

1. For the first, That this is the end of Christ crucified, and of his doctrine, I shall briefly show, 1. The necessity of this information. And, 2. The certain truth of it.

1. Both the commonness and the dangerousness of erring in this point, do show the necessity of this information. It is not only the contemners of religion, but also too many that go among us for very godly men, that know not where their happiness lieth, not what the christian religion is. Almost all the apprehensions which they have of happiness, are sensual; as if it were but a freedom from sensible punishments, and the possession of some delights of which they have merely sensual conceits. And so they think of Christ as one that came to free them from such punishments, and help them to such a happiness as this. And as for the true knowledge and fruition of God, in love and heavenly delights, they look upon these either as insignificant names or terms, or as certain appurtenances and fruits of religion, which we ought to have, but may possibly be without, though we be true believers. A confidence that Christ hath freed them from torments, and made them righteous by imputation of his obedience unto them, they take to be all that is essential to their christianity. And the rest they call by the name of good works: which, if it be not with them a term of as low importance as the name of works alone, or works of the law, is taken to be in Paul's epistles, yet at least they take it for that which doth not constitute their religion. So that true sanctification is either not understood, or taken to be of less necessity than it is. A man that makes a great deal of talk and stir about religion, and is zealous for his opinions and pious compliments, goes current with many for a true believer, though the interest of his flesh and of the world be as near and dear to him in this way of religiousness, as other men's is to them in a way of more open, professed sensuality.

And is it possible for a man to be a christian indeed, that so far mistaketh the very nature and ends of christianity itself? It is not possible. By what is said already, and will be by and by, it is evident that this is a damning error, for any man to feign a christianity to himself that excludeth mortification, or is separable from it, in a capable subject. When men look at a predominant fleshly interest, or worldly mind, as they do at some particular sin, consistent with true faith: I say this is an error about the very essence of christianity, and which hazards their salvation.

2. And that it is the end of the cross of Christ, and his doctrine, to crucify the world to us, and to sanctify us to God, I have already manifested in part, and shall now further manifest.

1. It is the end of Christ, and his cross and doctrine, to recover God's interest in the souls of men: but it is by mortification, as a part of true sanctification, that God's interest in men's souls is recovered. Therefore, &c. As God could have no lower ultimate end than himself in our creation, so neither in our redemption. Christ himself as Mediator, is but a means to God who is our end; he is the way to the Father, "and no man cometh to the Father but by him," John xiv. 6. He is the Truth that revealeth the Father; and the Sun of the world, "which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world," John i. 9; revealing to us both the end and means; that as there is no light in the earth, but what is communicated by the sun, which enlighteneth some by the moon at midnight, and some by its direct approaching light, at the break of day, before they see the sun itself, and others by its glorious rays when it is risen, and visible to them, and hath also in itself an objective sufficiency to enlighten those that shut

their eyes, or want eyesight by which they should receive it: even so is Christ the Sun of the redeemed world, which actually affordeth all that light to all which they do possess; even some (to all that have the use of reason) which hath a tendency to recovery; and he hath an objective sufficiency to the saving illumination of those that through their own fault are never so illuminated. The pure Godhead is the beatifical light to be enjoyed for felicity. The Mediator is the mediate light, to show us the way to God. And in these two consisteth life eternal; to know God the beginning and end, who himself hath no beginning or end; and to know Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, to recall us to himself, John xvii. 3. Whether he that is now to us *Mediator acquisitionis*, will also hereafter be *Mediator fruitionis*, and whether the glorified do only see the Godhead in the glass of the glorified body of Christ, and of the most glorious effects which then they shall partake of, or also shall immediately behold it in itself, and see God's essence face to face, I shall not presume to determine, while Scripture seems so silent, and learned conjectures are so much at odds. But as he is the redeeming, restoring Mediator, it is that we speak all this while of Christ: and so his office is to recover God's interest in the souls of men.

Now his interest lieth in our estimation, and our love; and these the world hath dispossessed him of. It is therefore the work of Christ to pull down this idol, and set up God in the throne of the soul. And therefore though faith be the principal, mediant, using grace: yet love is the most principal, final, enjoying grace; and more excellent than faith, as the end, or that act which is next the end, is more excellent than the means.

2. It is the end of Christ, his cross and doctrine, to heal us, and to save us; to heal us of our sin, and to save us from it, and its destroying fruits. But by sanctification, and so by mortification, doth Christ thus heal and save us. If health be worth nothing, the physician and all his physic is worth nothing. The health of the soul objectively is God, and formally is its holiness, or perfect disposedness, and devotedness to God; of which anon. These therefore doth Christ come to restore: and therefore he comes to call us off the creature, and bring our affections back to God.

3. It is the end of Christ, his cross and doctrine, to conquer Satan and destroy his works, and with him the rest of the enemies of God, and of our salvation; but the world is one of these enemies, and the means by which the devil doth prevail; therefore it is Christ's end to overcome the world, and cast it out of the hearts of men, Luke xi. 22; John xvi. 33; 1 John iii. 5, 8. "He was manifested to this end, to take away our sins, and destroy the works of the devil;" and therefore he causeth his followers to overcome him, 1 John ii. 13, 14. And herewithal observe, that it is essential to the relation, to respect the end; to the physician, that he be for the health of the patient; and to Christ the Redeemer, that he be the Saviour of his people from their sins, and the restorer of their souls to the love of God: so that Christ is denied and made no Christ, where mortification and sanctification are denied; he is not believed in as Christ, where he is not believed in for these ends. And therefore he that cometh not with this intent to Christ, that he may restore the image of God upon him, and bring him off from the creature unto God, that he may live to him, doth not come to Christ as Christ, and is not indeed a true christian.

The doctrine of Christ doth lead us from the world, in these several parts of it, and by these steps (how the cross doth it, I showed before). 1. It declareth to us what God is, and what man is; and so that God is our absolute Owner and Governor; and that he is the only primitive, simple, necessary being; and that man was made by him, and therefore for him, and disposed to him. 2. It declareth to us that the state of our integrity consisted in the closure of the soul with God. 3. It showeth us that our felicity consisteth in his love, and in the fruition of him by a mutual complacency. 4. It showeth us that our first sin was by turning from him to carnal self and the world. 5. And that this is our lost estate, wherein both sin and misery are conjunct, to adhere to self and creatures, and to depart from God. 6. It showeth us what Christ hath done and suffered, to reconcile God to us, and open us a way of admission into his presence, and how far God is reconciled to us; and thus revealeth him in the face of a Mediator as amiable to our souls, that so we might be capable of loving him, and closing with him again. For if he had remained in his wrath, he would have been the object of our hatred, or mere terror at least, and not of our love. And no man can love him that is not presented to him, and apprehended by him as lovely, that is, as good. For it is impossible that there should be an act without its proper object. Nothing but appearing good is loved. If a lost, condemned sinner have no hope given him of God's reconciliation, or his willingness to receive him to mercy, it is *(ex parte objecti)* an impossible thing that the mind of that sinner should be reconciled to God. And therefore the gospel publisheth God's reconciliation to sinners, (viz. his universal, conditional reconciliation,) before it beseech them to be reconciled to God, 2 Cor. v. 19, 20. And before they believe we cannot give any one man the least assurance that God is any more reconciled to him, than to others that are unconverted, or that he is any willinger to receive him than others.

This therefore is the great observable means whereby Christ by his gospel recovereth the heart of a sinner unto God, even by turning the frowning countenance of God, by which he deterred the guilty into a more lovely face, as being reconcilable, and conditionally reconciled to the world through Christ, and so become to all the sinful sons of Adam a fit object to attract their love, and draw off their hearts from the deceiving world, to which they were revolted; and as being actually reconciled to all true believers, and thereby become a yet more powerful attractive of their love. 7. It doth also more fully reveal the face of God, the object of our love, and the transcendent glory that in him we shall enjoy. 8. And it disgraceth the creatures which have diverted our affections, that we may be taken off our false estimation of them. 9. It earnestly persuadeth and soliciteth us to obey; and calls on us to turn from the world to God. 10. It backeth these persuasions with terrible threatenings, if we do not forsake the creature and return. 11. It prescribeth to us the standing ordinances and means by which this work may be further carried on. 12. And lastly, it directeth us to the right use of the creatures, instead of that carnal enjoying of them that would undo us. By all these means, (which time doth permit me but briefly to mention,) the gospel of Christ doth tend to crucify the world to us, and to recover our hearts to the chiefest good.

And besides all this which the cross and the doctrine of Christ do to this end, that you may yet fullier perceive how much it is the end of Christ's very office, and the execution thereof, let me add these two things: 1. That it is the end of Christ's providential dispensations. 2. And the work which

he sendeth the Holy Ghost to perform upon the souls of his elect.

1. As the mercies of God are purposely given us to lead up our hearts to him that gave them; so when we carnally abuse them, and adhere unto the creature, it is the speeial use of affliction to take us off. If the rod had a voice, it speaks this as plain as any thing whatsoever; and if it reprehend us for any sin, it is for our overvaluing and adhering to the creature. The wounds that Christ giveth us, are not to kill us, but to separate us from the world, that hath separated us from God.

2. And that this is the very office or undertaken work of the Holy Ghost, is past all controversy; his work is to sanctify us; and that is by taking us off the creature, to bring us to be heartily devoted unto God. Sanctification is nothing else but our separation from the creature to God, in resolution, affection, profession, and action. So that in what measure soever a man hath the Spirit, in that measure is he sanctified; and in what measure he is sanctified, in that same measure is he crucified to the world; for that is the one half of his sanctification, or it is his sanctification from the *terminus a quo*; as many texts of Scripture do manifest.

By this time I hope it is plain to you, that mortification is of the very being of christianity, and not any separable adjunct of it, and that if you profess not to be dead to the world, you do not so much as profess yourselves christians.

SECTION XIII.

1. And as you see that the christian doctrine teacheth this: so, 2. It is thence clear without any more ado, that wherever the cross and doctrine of Christ are effectual, the world is crucified to that man, and he to the world. There are some great duties which a man may possibly be saved, though he omit in some cases; but this is none such. It is a wonder to see the security of worldlings, how easily they bear up a confidence of their sincerity under this sin, which is as inconsistent with sincerity as infidelity itself is! If they see a man live in common drunkenness, or adultery, or swearing, they take him for a profane and miserable wretch; and good reason for it: when in the mean time they pass no such sentence on themselves, who may deserve it as much as the worst of these. It is one notable cheat among the papists, that occasions the ruin of many a soul, that they make a religious, mortified life to be a work of supererogation, and those that profess it (and some of their own inventions with it, which turn it into sin) they cloister up from the rest of the world, and these they call religious people, and some few even of these, that are either more devout or superstitious than the rest, they call saints. So rare a thing is the appearance of religiousness and sanctity among them, that it must be enclosed in societies, not only separated from the world, as the church is, but separated as it were out of the church itself. And yet the common people are kept in hope of salvation in their way. By which means they are commonly brought to imagine that it is not absolutely necessary to salvation to be a religious man, or a saint, or one that doth really renounce and crucify the world; but that these things belong to certain orders of monks and friars, and that it is enough for other men to honour these devout and mortified saints, and to crave their prayers, and do some lower and easier things. And indeed their vows of chastity, and separation, and unprofitableness, and other inventions of their own, they may well conceive unnecessary to others, being noxious to themselves. But they will one day find that none but religious men and saints shall be saved, and that every true member of Christ is dead to the world, and not only monks, or votaries, or such like. And a conceit too like to this of the papists, is in the minds of many of our auditors. They think, indeed, that those are the best men that are resolved contemners of all the riches, and honours, and pleasures of the world; but they think of them as the papists do of their votaries, as people of a higher pitch of sanctity than the rest, but think not that it is essential to sanctity, and to true christianity itself. They confess they should be all contemners of the world; but, God forbid, say they, that none but such should be saved! But, I tell you, God hath forbidden already by his laws, and God will forbid hereafter by his sentence and execution, that any other but such should be saved. Do you think in good sadness that any man can be saved that is not truly dead to the world, and doth not despise it in comparison of God, and the great things of everlasting life? Let me satisfy you of the contrary here once for all, and I pray you see that your flesh provoke you not to mutter forth such unreasonable self-delusions any more. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him," 1 John ii. 15. What can be spoken more plainly, or to a worldly-minded man more terribly. "For whosoever is born of God, overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith," chap. v. 4. "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is the enmity with God? Whoever therefore will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God," James iv. 4. Will not all this serve to convince you of this truth? "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh, but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally-minded is death, but to be spiritually-minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. For if ye live after the flesh ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live," Rom. viii. 5—7, 13. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit," John iii. 6. "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other," Gal. v. 16, 17; vi. 8. "He that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting," Col. iii. 1—3. "If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth," Matt. vi. 19—21, 24. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where your treasure is there will your heart be also. No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon," chap. x. 38, 39. "He that taketh not his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy

of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it," chap. xvi. 24. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me," Luke xiv. 26, 27. "If any man come to me, and hate not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple," ver. 33. "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple," Heb. xi. 13—15, and to the end. But I will cite no more. Here is enough to convince you, or condemn you. If any thing at all be plain in Scripture, this is plain, that every true christian is dead to the world, and looks on the world as a crucified thing; and that God and the life of glory which he hath promised, have the ruling and chiefest interest in their souls. Believe it, sirs, this is not a work of supererogation, nor such as only tendeth to the perfecting of a christian, but such as is of the essence of christianity, and without which there is not the least hope of salvation.

SECTION XIV.

Use 2. By all that hath been said, you may perceive what it is to be a christian indeed, and that true christianity doth set men at a further distance from the world, than carnal, self-deceiving professors do imagine. You see that God and the world are enemies; not God and the world as his creature, but as his competitor for your hearts, and as the seducer of your understandings, and the opposer of his interest, and the fuel and food of a fleshly mind, and that which would pretend to a being or goodness separated from God, or to be desirable for itself, having laid by the relation of a means to God. To be a friend to the world in any of these respects, is to be an enemy to God. And God will not save his enemies, while enemies. An enmity to God is an enmity to our salvation: for our salvation is in him alone. If then you have but awakened consciences, if the true love of yourselves be stirring in you, and if you have but the free use of common reason, I dare say you do by this time perceive, that it closely concerneth you presently to look about you, and to try whether you are crucified to the world or not. Seeing my present business is, for the securing of your everlasting peace, and the healing of your souls of that which would deprive you of it, let me entreat you all in the fear of God to give me your assistance, and to go along with me in the work; for what can a preacher do for you, if you will do nothing for yourselves? How can we convert, or heal, or save you, without you? I do foresee your appearance before the Lord, a jealous God, that will not endure that any creature should be sweeter and more amiable to you than himself. I do foresee the condemnation that all such must undergo, and the remediless, certain misery that they are near. I know there is no way that the wit of man or angels can devise, to prevent the damnation of such a soul, but by crucifying the flesh and world by the cross of Christ, and dethroning these idols, and submitting sincerely to God their happiness. This cannot be done while you are strangers to yourselves, and will not look into your own hearts, and see what abominable work is there, that you may be moved to return with shame and sorrow for that which hath been formerly your glory and your joy. Oh do not keep out the light of conviction, that you may keep up your idols in the dark; your sin is never the less because you wilfully keep it out of sight; and your danger is never the less for being unknown. If you will sin in darkness, you shall suffer in darkness: as you have a fire of fleshly and worldly lusts within you, which abhors the light of saving truth, so God hath a fire of perpetual torment for you, which is as far from the consolatory light of his countenance. As the fire of concupiscence is dark, so is the tormenting fire dark. If you hate the converting light, because your deeds are evil, and will not by this light be made manifest to yourselves, (John iii. 19—21,) this will be your condemnation, and by this will you deprive yourselves of the glorifying light. If you love darkness, who can you blame but yourselves, if you be cast into outer darkness? and if you hate light, you cannot reasonably expect to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, Col. i. 13.

What say you then, beloved hearers, are you willing to know your hearts, or not? whether you are dead to the world, and the world to you? Methinks you should be willing; when you see the question is as great, as whether you are christians indeed or not; and as great, as whether you are in a state of salvation or not. Methinks you that naturally love knowledge, and would be at some pains to know all that is about you in the world, should not be unwilling to know yourselves, and specially, so great a matter by yourselves, as whether you are the heirs of salvation or damnation; for in the issue it is no less. Especially when your disease is such as must be cured by the light, if ever it be cured. You cannot lament your worldliness and sensuality, you cannot lament your disaffectedness to God, and intolerable neglects of him, till you find them out. You cannot betake you to Christ for the pardon of this sin, till you have discovered it. A sin unseen will never humble you and break your hearts, nor fit them for Christ to bind them up. If you see not that the world is yet alive in you, you will not apply the cross for the crucifying of it, nor have recourse to a crucified Christ for that end. Moreover, it is the nature of all sin and worldly vanities to seem best in the dark, and basest in the light; as God and heavenly things seem best in the greatest light, and worst in the darkness. None do set light by God, and grace, and glory, but those that know them not. And none do set much by worldly, fleshly things, but those that know them not. As illumination brings in God into the soul, so doth it help to cast out Satan and the world. When men's eyes are opened, and they are turned from darkness to light, they are presently turned "from the power of Satan unto God," Acts xxvi. 18. These infernal, worldly spirits cannot endure the light: they walk not by day, but haunt them whom they captivate, in the night of ignorance; and if we do but come in upon them with light, they are gone. It is the same devil that is called, "the prince of this world, and the ruler of the darkness of this world," Eph. vi. 12: and this power is "a power of darkness," Luke xxii. 53: and therefore as light immediately expelleth darkness, so if you will admit the light of Christ, it will deliver you from the power of darkness, (Col. i. 13,) and cause you "to cast off the works of darkness," Rom. xiii. 12; that is, your worldly, fleshly works.

For my part, I have not access to your hearts, unless grace persuade you to open me the door. I cannot promise to illuminate you, and go with you into the inmost rooms; but I shall stand at the door and hold you the candle, by which you may see yourselves what is within, if you will but consent and take the pains of a thorough inquiry. I do therefore earnestly entreat you, to set up a judica-

ture in yourselves, and by the word which you have heard to try your states, and let conscience be judge, and do it speedily, faithfully, and effectually. By this means you may prevent a sharper trial. If you are afraid of conscience, how much more should you be afraid of God! Will not his judgment, think you, be more dreadful than your own? What madness is it to leave all to that terrible judgment, rather than to judge yourselves for the preventing of it! Believe it, you shall be condemned by yourselves or by God; yea, both by yourselves and by God, unless your self-condemnation be seconded by an effectual execution of the sin which you condemn. Willing or unwilling, you must to the bar either of conscience or of God, or both. Come on, then, beloved hearers; rouse up your sleepy souls, and remember that your salvation is the thing in question; and therefore put it not to a wilful hazard, and leave not loose a matter of such consequence: but if you are men of common reason, if you do not hate yourselves, and have not a resolved plot to damn yourselves, take time while you may have it, and accept the light and help that is offered you, and speedily and strictly examine your own hearts, whether they are crucified and dead to the world, or not. Is it so, or is it not, sirs? Cannot you tell? If you know but what this mortification is, and know but your own hearts, no doubt but you may tell. And if you are ignorant of either of these, it is because you are shamefully negligent, and have not much regarded the things which you should know.

For those that are willing to be acquainted with their state, I shall, besides the foregoing discoveries, here give you a few more signs, by which you may discern whether you are crucified to the world. And I beseech you do what you can in the trial, as we go, and make up the rest at the next opportunity, when you come home, and follow it on till you come to a resolution.

SECTION XV.

It is not a perfect work of mortification, that I shall now inquire after; for that no man on earth hath obtained; nor is it any high degree, which only the stronger and better sort of true christians do attain; for if I convince you that you want either of these, you will not much be humbled by the conviction. But it is the very least and lowest measure that is consistent with sincerity, and which is in all that are heirs of heaven. This is it that I shall now discover to you.

1. If you are sincerely crucified to the world, it is not carnal self that is your end, but your ultimate end is God and glory. Can you but tell me what is the main design of your life? whether it be for earth or for heaven? Know this, and you may resolve the ease. A worldling may speak contemptuously of the world; and speak most honourably of God and the life to come. But speculative knowledge and practical are frequently contradictory in the same man. Still it is this world that hath his chief intentions, and is the end of his designs and life; and the world to come is regarded but as a reserve, because of their unavoidable separation from this world. The main end of every upright christian, is to please and enjoy God; and the main end of all the rest of the world, is how to please their carnal minds in the enjoyment of some earthly things. If you could but discern which of these is your chiefest end, you might discern whether it be Christ or the world that liveth in you. For Christ liveth in you when he is your end, and the world liveth in you when it is your end.

But because some are such strangers to themselves, that they do not know their own ends, the rest of the signs shall be for the discovery of the former, that you may discern whether the world or God be your ultimate end.

1. That which is your principal end, is highliest esteemed by your practical judgment. Not only by the speculative, but by that which moveth and disposeth of the man. Is God or the world, heaven or earth, thus highliest esteemed by you? Let your practice show it.

2. It is your principal end, that hath the principal interest in you. That can do most with you, and prevail most in a contest. Can God or the world do more with you? Which of them doth prevail, when an opposition doth arise? I speak not of God in his efficiency; for so I know he can do what he lists; and will do it, whether you will or no; and will not ask your consent to do it. But it is God as your end, that I now speak of; as he worketh morally by your own consent, and upon your wills. Honours, and profits, and pleasures are before you, and these would draw you to something that he forbids. And God and glory are propounded to you to take you off, and turn your hearts another way; which of these can do more with you? which is it that can nullify the persuasions of the other?

3. It is your principal end, that hath the principal ruling and disposal of your whole life. You do purposely contrive the main part of your life in order to it. If you are indeed christians, and God be your end, the main drift of your life is a contrived means for the obtaining of that end; that is, to please God, and to enjoy him in everlasting glory. If you were such as you should be, you should have no other end at all, nor should you ever do one work, or receive or use one creature, or speak one word, or behold one object, but as a means to God, intending the pleasing and enjoying him in all; as a traveller should not go one step of his journey, but in order to his end. But while we are imperfect in our love, and other graces, this will not be. But yet the main bent and drift of our lives must needs be for God and the life to come; and thus it is with every true believer; and you are none, if it be not thus with you. I say it again, lest you should slightly pass it over, though you may through infirmity sometimes step out of the way, yet if God be your end and happiness, that is, if he be your God, and you be christians, the main scope, and bent, and drift of your lives is for to please God and enjoy him in glory. But if the main scope and drift of your life be for the flesh and the world, and God and religion come in but upon the by, you are then no better than unsanctified worldlings. Though you may do much in religion, and be zealous about it, and seem the devoutest and most resolved professors in all the country where you live; yet if all this be but in subordination to the flesh and the world, or if co-ordinate it have the smaller interest in your hearts, and when you have done or suffered most for Christ, you will do and suffer more for the flesh and the world, you are carnal wretches, and no christians. Oh that you would let conscience do its office, and judge you as we go along according to evidence! It is not by one or two actions that you can judge of your estate, but by the main scope, and bent, and drift of your life. What is your very heart set upon? What is your care, and your chief contrivances? Are they for heaven or earth? Speak out, and take the comfort of your sincerity if you are christians! and if you are not, know it while there is remedy, and do not wilfully deceive your-

selves. Have you been so far illuminated by the word and Spirit, as to see the amiableness of the Lord by faith; and have you so firm a belief of the everlasting glory, where we shall see his face immediately or more nearly, and praise him among his angels for ever? I say, have you so firm a belief of this, that you are unfeignedly resolved upon it as your happiness, that you take it for your portion, and there have laid up your hopes? Can you truly say, that God hath more of your heart than all the world, and heaven is dearer to your thoughts than earth? Can you say, that whatever you are tempted to on the by, that the main care, design, and bent of your life is for God and the glory to come; and that this is your daily work and business? If so, you are christians indeed; you have crucified the world by the cross of Christ. The world is dead and down, where God reigneth and is exalted, and no where else. But if all this be clean contrary with you; and if the flesh and the world have the prevalent interest, and these cut out your work, and form your thoughts, and choose your employments; if these choose the calling that you live upon, and the manner of managing it and your very religion; or set limits to it; if it be these that rule your tongue and hands, and they can make a cause seem good or bad to you, and that seemeth best which most conduceth to your fleshly, worldly interests; and that seemeth worst which destroyeth it or is against it; if God be loved and worshipped but as a necessary means to your carnal happiness; or if he have but the second place in your hearts, and the leavings of the flesh and world (be they never so much); and if your religion and endeavours for salvation, for pleasing God, and for the invisible glory, but on the by; and the flesh and the world hath the main scope, and bent, and drift of your life; flatter not yourselves then: most certainly you are but carnal wretches and drudges of the world, and slaves to him that is styled by Christ, the prince of this world. Methinks, sirs, you might be able by this time to be somewhat acquainted with your own condition, and either to condemn yourselves as worldlings and carnal men, or to see Christ by his Spirit and interest reigning in your souls, and give him the glory, and take to yourselves the joy of your sanctification. Can you tell me but what it is that you would have, if you had your wish? and what is it that is predominant in your heart? What! know you not your own minds, and thoughts, and desires? Can you tell me what it is that is your very business in the world? even the great business that you live for, and that you study, and care, and labour for? and what is the design that you are daily carrying on? Know but this, and the question is resolved. If you see any man at work, and ask him what he is doing, and why he doth it, it is like he is not so sottish but he can tell. If you meet a man upon the way, and ask him whither he is going, it is like he will not be so foolish but he can tell you. He that hath no end, hath no way, and therefore is never in his way nor out of it; nor will he care which way he goes, so he be going; and a circular motion is as good to him as a progressive. You are doing somewhat all; you are going somewhither every day: whither is it? and what is it for? Is it for heaven or earth? The texts which I before cited to you, fully give you the ground of the trial and judgment that I am urging you upon. "Where your treasure is, there will your hearts be also," Matt. vi. 21. "Seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you," chap. vi. 33. "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee," Psal. lxxiii. 25. "If any man come to me and hate not all, even his own life, he cannot be my disciple," Luke xiv. 26. So ver. 33, "He that forsaketh not all that he hath."—But let us proceed a little further in the trial.

4. As that which is a man's end (if satisfactory) will content him when he can attain it, so without it nothing will content him. No man will be content without that which is the principal end of his life, though he may without some inferior end. If God be your end, nothing else will content you. If you had all the honours and prosperity of the world, and this secured to you, it would not content you. These are not the things that you live for, or that the predominant inclinations of your souls are suited to, and therefore it is not these that will please you, and serve your turn. But if the world be your end, you could be content with it if you could get it. Let who will take the world to come; if the carnal wretch were but sure of this, he would think himself a happy man, and could spare the other. He would not change his worldly happiness for the hopes of that which he never saw, nor doth not firmly and heartily believe.

5. It is a man's end that puts the estimate upon all things else. All other things are counted good or evil, so far as they help to it, or hinder it. If heaven be your end, you will account of all things as they respect that end. Those will be the best companions to you, and that the best calling and condition of life, the best speech, the best actions, the best way of disposing what you have, which you think will most promote your heavenly end. Suffering will be better in your eye than prosperity, if it do but help you best to heaven. To give your money will seem better to you than to keep it, to lose it than to gain it, when it apparently conduceth more to the pleasing of God and your salvation. That will be the best ministry and means that tendeth most to this: and so you will estimate all things else; for it is most evident that it is the end that prizeth the means, according as they are suited to the attainment of that end.

But if flesh-pleasing and worldly prosperity be your end, that will seem the best calling to you, and that the best employment and course of life, which tends most to advance and please your flesh: that will be the best company to them, and those their most beloved friends, that further this prosperity: that will seem the best way of disposing of what they have, as to the main, whatever they may do on the by. Their practical judgment esteemeth this most eligible.

6. It is only a man's end, and the inseparable, necessary means thereto, that he can by no means spare. Other things he can spare, and be without, but not without this. If God be your end, your heart is so upon him that you cannot be without him: you can be without honour, or riches, or life itself, but not without God. But if the world be your end, then it is clean contrary; and that is the thing that you cannot be without. Hence it is that men plead necessity of that which is their end, and the necessary means. One thing seems necessary to the christian: he must have God in and by Christ. I must use his means, (saith he,) I must avoid the contrary. How shall I do this evil, and sin against God? But the carnal man's necessity is on the other side: I must raise my family if I can; at least I must keep my estate: I must not be undone: I must preserve my name, my life.

7. A man will hazard or part with any thing to secure or attain his principal end. Nothing can be too good or too dear to purchase it: nothing can stand in competition with it. If God and glory be your end, away goes all that is inconsistent with it.

You will part with a right hand or eye, as thinking it better to have heaven with one, than hell with both. You can part with house, and land, and country, because you seek for a city "that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God," Heb. xi. 9, 10. You can live as strangers and pilgrims on earth, and mind not to return to the world which you have renounced, "because you desire a better, even a heavenly country," ver. 11—16. You will rather "choose to suffer afflictions with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season, esteeming the very reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of the world, because you have respect to the recompence of the reward," ver. 24—26. The fear of man, even of the princes of the earth, will not prevail against your hope, "because you see him that is invisible," ver. 27. You can endure "to be made a gazing-stock, by reproaches and afflictions, and become the companions of them that are so used." You can not only part with your substance when God calls for it, but even "take joyfully the spoiling of your goods, as knowing that you have a better and more enduring substance in heaven," chap. x. 33, 34. You "will reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us," Rom. viii. 18. In a word, you can "deny yourselves, forsake all, and follow Christ, in expectation of a treasure in heaven," Luke xviii. 22. Never tell me that heaven is your end, if there be any thing which you cannot part with to obtain it. For that which is dearest to you is your end. Why else is it that labour and sufferings, yea, and the apparent hazard of their salvation, seems not to a worldling too dear a price for the purchasing of their present prosperity, but because they have laid up a treasure upon earth, and earthly things are their chiefest end.

8. Lastly, that is your ultimate end, which you think in your practical judgment you can never love or labour for too much. I know there is scarce a worldling to be found, which will not give it you under his hand as his settled judgment, that it is God and glory that cannot be loved too much, and he will confess that he loveth the world too much. But yet he doth it while he confesseth it; and he denieth his chiefest love to God, while he acknowledgeth it due to him. And therefore it is not his practical, effectual judgment that is for it, but only he hath an uneffectual notion or opinion of it. But it is otherwise with the unsanctified. Philosophers and divines use to say, that virtue is in the middle, between two extremes; but that is only to be interpreted of the subservient virtues, which are exercised about the means; but the chiefest good and ultimate end is such as cannot be loved too much. The measure here is, as Austin speaks, that it be without measure. It is our all that is due to that which we esteem and take for our all. God is our all objectively for fruition; and the all of our affections and endeavours should be his. With all our heart, with all our soul and might, is the due measure of our love to him. We can never seek our end too diligently, nor buy it too dearly, nor do too much for it, in God's way. And as the believer thinks he can never have too much of God, nor do too much for him; so the lives of worldlings tell us, that even while they speak disgracefully of the world, they think they can never have too much of it, nor would they think they could ever do too much for it, were it not that overdoing for one part of their worldly interest doth deprive them of another part.

I have now told you how you may discern whether it be God or the world that liveth in your hearts, and whether you are dead to God or to the world. What remaineth but that you take it home, and apply it yet closer than I can do, and try what God it is that you adore; and what felicity it is that you esteem and intend; and consequently what you are, and what will become of you if you persevere. I beseech you make this your serious work, and take some time for it purposely when you come home, to do it more effectually than now on the sudden hearing may be expected. What say you? will you take yourselves apart some time, and purposely search your hearts to the very quick, till you have found whether the world be crucified to you by the cross of Christ, and the hopes of glory? If you did but know the usefulness of the discovery, I am confident you would not need so much entreating.

SECTION XVI.

Truly, brethren, it is one of the mysteries of sin and self-deceit, that such a multitude of people, yea, seemingly religious, can think so well of themselves as they do, and bear it out with such audacious confidence, as if they were the real servants of Christ, when it is apparent even to the eyes of others, that they are not crucified to the world, but live to it, and serve it day by day. How anxiously are they contriving for it, while their care to please God is so exceeding slender, that it takes up but little of their time and thoughts. How sweet are their thoughts of a plentiful estate! To have the world at will, houses, and lands, and full provisions for themselves and theirs, that they may be clothed with the best, and fare of the best, and sit with the highest, and be honoured and reverenced of all, how fine a life doth this seem to them! If they have but a fair opportunity to rise, how little tender are they of the lawfulness of the means, at least where they are not so wicked as to dishonour them! They can believe that to be the truth which befriendeth their worldly interest; and that to be false and erroneous which is against it. The world chooseth many of their opinions for them, and much of their religion, and telleth them what party they should side with, and what not. It telleth them how far they shall tolerate other men's sin, and how far not; how far they shall make profession of their faith, and how far they shall conceal it from the knowledge of the world: and so as Paul saith, they account "gain to be godliness," 1 Tim. vi. 5; not only esteeming it better than downright godliness, but measuring out their godliness by their gain; making that to seem religious which fitteth their carnal ends, and easily believing that which is for their worldly interest. How weak and silly reasons will persuade them that the point is true, the cause is good, the means is lawful, which serveth their turns for worldly ends! And the clearest, unquestionable evidences are nothing to them, that are brought for the contrary. So potent a persuader is worldly interest, that any thing will serve where it takes part, and nothing prevail that it doth contradict: a powerful disputant, that most commonly hath the best, whatever side it takes, and the cause goes for it, be it right or wrong. Either they will not read such long and tedious discourses as are against them, or they find some passage presently to quarrel with, that is too displeasing, and makes them cast away the rest. Or if they read the whole, or hear you to the last, it is with a resisting spirit all the while. Before they know what you will say, they have confuted you. For they have resolved to believe that your reasons are insufficient, and their cause is good. They read and hear not

only with a prejudice answerable to the reasons that formerly resolved them, but with an opposing enmity and fixedness of will. Had we only their understandings to dispute with, it were the less; but our main dispute is with will and passion, which have no ears, nor eyes, nor brains, though sense enough. Their deceiving baits first catch the sensual part, and so come to bribe the intellect and the will; and their strongest root is still in the brutish part where it began, which will hear no reason. When Paul was told of the truth of that doctrine which he before had persecuted, and must himself be persecuted if he should entertain it, he sticks not at that, but immediately consulteth not with flesh and blood, but falls to work, Gal. i. 16. But these men will scarce do any thing but flesh and blood must be consulted with. The word was David's counsellor; and the world is theirs. The first question is, Is it for my honour or dishonour, my profit or disprofit, my pleasure or my trouble? and as it relisheth with their flesh, so is it esteemed of and concluded. And, which is more, their carnal interest so blinds their eyes, that they see not ofttimes their most palpable delusions. When their actions are such as unprejudiced standers-by do blush at, and the wisest and faithfullest of their friends lament, and the shame of them is open to the view of the world, yet flesh doth so befool them, that they see not their nakedness, but glory in their shame. Commodity cannot blush. The applause of flatterers justifieth their crimes against the accusations of God and all good men. Have these men crucified the world indeed?

A christian looketh so much to his rule, as well as his end, that he dare not say of heaven itself, that every means is lawful which seemeth to conduce to it. But these men think that any thing is lawful that brings them gain, or makes them great.

And as for the improvement of their talents for God, what is to be seen? What self-seeking and unprofitable servants are they! They will confess that they have all from God, and that all is due to him again; but it is but a self-condemning confession. How many charitable and pious uses do call aloud for much of their estates! but how little of it is so expended! Now and then two-pence or a groat to the poor is a great matter with them, and the wealthy can come off with the quantity of the widow's mite. Let God call, and ministers call, and the poor call and cry for it, all cannot extort their idol out of their purses. So fast do they hold their money, that scarce any thing but thieves, or soldiers, or death can wring it out of their hands. But so loose do they hold spiritual good, which they seem to mind, that if a seducer cannot easily entice them from it, or a derision shame them from it, yet at least a good bargain for the world can hire them from it, and the frowns of men in power, or the change of the times, can affright them from it. Long will it be before they will go from house to house through the parish, and see what poor want clothing, what children want means to set them to trades, and what families want Bibles and other books that may promote their salvation, and go as far as they are able in procuring them, and set their friends to work where their own ability is too short. Oh the disproportion that there is between the verbal service and the more costly service of worldly, hypocritical professors! How far do their formal duties exceed their charitable communications and distributions! Most commonly the world doth cut short even these their religious actions. They can scarce find time to be constant in worshipping God in their families, or in secret; in instructing and exhorting their children and servants: there is some business to be done, or some gain to be got; or while they seem to be deepest in their devotions, their thoughts run after their covetousness, and it is one God that hath their tongues, and another that hath their hearts. So that they pray as if they prayed not, and hear as if they heard not, and possess God's ordinances as not possessing them, and use them merely as abusing them, as apprehending no great benefit to come by them, but the fruit of them were nothing but mere conceits, or all God's ordinances were but (as the Scottish sacrilegious lord called their Book of Discipline) devout imaginations. But yet for all the shortness of their devotions, their real devotions and works of charity are much more short. And for pious contributions and communications, some of them scarce know what they mean. They will sooner learn to scorn such duties, and plead against them as no duties, than conscientiously to perform them. They say they are sanctified, and the people of God; and if they were so indeed, they would be devoted to him without reserve: and if themselves were devoted or sanctified to him, all that they have must needs be so too. But it is a holy name that they have received, and not a consecrated heart or purse. I doubt it will be long before the piety of this age will give as much to holy uses, as the seeming piety of it hath taken from them. And if there be more piety in taking from holy uses, than in giving to them, we may next be taught that it is a more pious work to destroy preachers than to preach, and to destroy praying than to pray, and to curse God than to praise him. I have oft wondered that so many that we take for godly persons do so overlook the many and exceeding urgent precepts to liberal distributions for God and his service, which Scripture doth contain; and how they can think to be saved without obeying these commands, any more than without obeying the commands for hearing, praying, or any other religious duty. Do they not read these passages as well as others, in their Bibles? How comes it to pass that conscience then stirs not, when they know that they neglect such important duties? They read that the christians of the primitive times sold all, and delivered the money to the apostles; to manifest practically the nature and power of the christian religion, which consisteth in renouncing all for Christ, and devoting ourselves and all that we have to God, upon his promise of a treasure in the heavens. They read that it was an appointed duty in the churches, to lay by in the church's stock every Lord's day for the relief of needy christians, according as God had prospered them the week before, 1 Cor. xvi. 1—3. They read that Christ so regardeth this duty, that the sentence at judgment is described by him as passing upon this account. And yet for all this, flesh and blood will be wiser than to trust God, and to obey so chargeable a command. They will venture on damnation to save their money; and let go heaven for fear of losing by it. And that they may be wise indeed, they can justify all, and labour to bring their duty into scorn. We are not capable, say they, of giving to God; because that all is his already. Self-condemning wretch! Is all his? Why then hath he not all? Give then to God the things that are his own. It is not a proper donation that we call you to. You cannot give him a propriety who hath it already; nor alienate it from yourselves, who never had it, in respect to God; but yet you may give it to him by tradition; you may deliver him his own in the way that he requires it, and lay out your Master's stock for his service. And if he will so far honour your fidelity, as to call this a giving or a lending to him, methinks this should encourage you to liberality, but

I see not how it can excuse your denying him his own.

Object. But it is to satisfy the covetousness of the priests, that we are called on to give to God, as if they were God, or God had that which they have.

Answ. Adding reproach to covetousness, will prove one day but a sad excuse for sin. If this age understood the fifth commandment, and the heinousness of ingratitude to God and man for the greatest mercies, and how it is that Christ teacheth and ruleth, and how he is obeyed or despised in the world, they would tremble to think of the scorn and contempt of a faithful ministry. "The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it," Prov. xxx. 17. "Whoso curseth his father or mother, his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness," Prov. xx. 20. "And he shall die the death," Exod. xxi. 17. And for your objection; the priests of the Lord under the law were not God; the apostles and gospel ministers were not God; nor any that serve at the altar, who yet must live upon the altar: the poor themselves be not God, and yet you shall understand one day, that "inasmuch as you did it not to one of these, you did it not to Christ;" and in despising them, you despised him, Matt. xxv.; Luke x. 16. The vanity of your fond pretence was sufficiently told you by Christ himself, Matt. xxv. 45, where he tells you how he will answer your companions that shall use it, "Inasmuch as you did it not to one of these, you did it not to me." And yet will you say, "Lord, when did we see thee hungry, naked," &c. when you have your answer beforehand. Worldly wretches! you would not part with your wealth, if you could help it, to Christ himself, if he should come and ask it of you. For you read in his word, that it is he that asketh it, and commandeth it from you now. But if you will not believe that it is Christ that requireth it, till he is come himself in person to demand it; and if you are such faithful stewards, that you will part with none of your Master's stock, till he ask you for it face to face, for fear of misemploying it; be patient awhile, and he will come and seek his own with advantage, but to the eternal woe of unprofitable servants. You can spare God the tithe of your words, in formal duties, when the devil and the world have had the rest; but not so much as the old legal proportion of your estates, much less the evangelical all. What makes you drop prayers so much thicker than alms or distributions? Do you think that God doth not as strictly require the one as the other? If speaking were not cheaper to you than giving, your prayers and religious talk would be so seldom and so short, as that it would be as your distributions are, next to none. If words cost money, your tongues would be as strait as your purses are, and the world should searce hear whether you were of any religion or none. Do these men glory only in the cross of Christ, and is the world by it crucified to them, and they to the world? We have their answer in their actions; what need we any more? They are dead in and by the world, but not to the world. They are its slaves, though they are called the servants of Christ.

SECTION XVII.

Honourable, worshipful, and all well-beloved, it is a weighty employment that occasioneth your meeting here to-day.[a] The estates and lives of men are in your hands. But it is another kind of judgment which you are all hasting towards; when judges and justices, the accusers and the accused, must all appear upon equal terms, for the final decision of a far greater cause. The case that is then and there to be determined, is not whether you shall have lands or no lands, life or no life; (in our natural sense;) but whether you shall have heaven or hell, salvation or damnation, an endless life of glory with God, and the Redeemer, and the angels of heaven, or an endless life of torment with devils and ungodly men. As sure as you now sit on those seats, you shall shortly all appear before the Judge of all the world, and there receive an irreversible sentence to an unchangeable state of happiness or misery. This is the great business that should presently call up your most serious thoughts, and set all the powers of your souls on work for the most effectual preparation; that if you are men, you may quit yourselves like men, for the preventing of that dreadful doom which unprepared souls must there expect. The greatest of your secular affairs are but dreams and toys to this: were you at every assize to determine causes of no lower value than the crowns and kingdoms of the monarchs of the earth, it were but as children's games to this. If any man of you believe not this, he is worse than the devil that tempteth him to unbelief: and let him know that unbelief is no prevention, nor will put off the day, or hinder his appearance; but ascertain his condemnation at that appearance. And if you all do believe this, you will sure be content that I speak to you of it as one that also do believe it. Faith is the evidence of things not seen: by it we may foresee the judgment set, the world appearing, and yourselves there waiting for your final doom. And because we clearly find beforehand, who then shall die, and who shall live, I shall desire of you that you would presently improve the discovery. Some think we cannot know in this life what will become of us in the next: but God hath not bid us try in vain, nor in vain delivered us so many signs by which it may be known, nor is the difference between the saved and the damned so small as to be undiscernible. Our own reason may tell us that the righteous God would not send some to glory with angels, and others to endless misery with devils, and make such difference between men hereafter, if there were not a considerable difference here. He that knows the law and the fact, may know before your assizes what will become of every prisoner, if the proceedings be all just, as in our case they will certainly be. Christ will judge according to his laws: know therefore whom the law condemneth or justifieth, and you may know whom Christ will condemn or justify. And seeing all this is so, doth it not concern us all to make a speedy trial of ourselves in preparation to this final trial? I shall for your own sakes, therefore, take the boldness, as the officer of Christ, to summon you to appear before yourselves, and keep an assize this day in your own souls, and answer at the bar of conscience to what shall be charged upon you. Fear not the trial; for it is not conclusive, final, nor a peremptory, irreversible sentence that must now pass. Yet slight it not; for it is a necessary preparative to that which is final and irreversible. Consequentially it may prove a justifying acquisation, an absolving condemnation, and, if you proceed to execution, a saving, quickening death, which I am now persuading you to undergo. The whole

[a] This was preached at an assize at Worcester, before the judges, and therefore here are these passages suited to that occasion.

world is divided into two sorts of men: one that love God above all, and live to him; and the other that love the flesh and the world above all, and live to them. One that lay up a treasure in earth, and have their heart there; the other that lay up a treasure in heaven, and have their heart there. One that seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; another that seek first the things of this life. One that mind and savour the things of the flesh and of man; the other that mind and savour most the things of the Spirit and of God. One that account all things dung and dross that they may win Christ; another that make light of Christ in comparison of their business, and riches, and pleasures in the world. One that live by sight and sense upon present things; another that live by faith upon things invisible. One that have their conversation in heaven, and live as strangers upon earth; another that mind earthly things, and are strangers to heaven. One that have in resolution forsaken all for Christ, and the hopes of a treasure in heaven; another that resolve to keep somewhat here, though they venture and forsake the heavenly reward, and will go away sorrowful that they cannot have both. One that being born of the flesh is but flesh; the other that being born of the Spirit is spirit. One that live as without God in the world; the other that live as without the seducing world in God, and in and by the subservient world to God. One that have ordinances and means of grace, as if they had none; the other that have houses, lands, wives, as if they had none. One that believe as if they believed not, and love God as if they loved him not, and pray as if they prayed not, as if the fruit of these were but a shadow; the other that weep as if they wept not, (for worldly things,) and rejoice as if they rejoiced not. One that have Christ as not possessing him, and use him and his name as but abusing them; the other that buy as if they possessed not, and use the world as not abusing it. One that draw near to God with their lips, when their hearts are far from him; the other that corporally converse with the world, when their hearts are far from it. One that serve God, who is a Spirit, with carnal service, and not in spirit and truth; the other that use the world itself spiritually, and not in a carnal, worldly manner. In a word, one sort are children of this world; and the other are the children of the world to come, and heirs of the heavenly kingdom. One sort have their portion in this life; and the other have God for their portion. One sort have their good things in this life-time, and their reward here; the other have their evil things in this life, and live in hope of the everlasting reward.

I suppose you know that all this is from the word of God, and therefore I need not cite the texts which do contain it. But lest any doubt, I will lay them all together, that you may peruse them at leisure: Matt. xxii. 37; x. 37; vi. 19—21, 33; John vi. 27; Isa. lv. 1—3; Rom. viii. 5—7, 13; Phil. iii. 9—11; Matt. xxii. 5; 2 Cor. iv. 18; Heb. xi. 1, throughout; Phil. iii. 19—21; Psal. cxix. 19; Heb. xi. 13; Luke xiv. 33; xviii. 22; John iii. 6; Eph. ii. 12; 1 Cor. x. 31; Psal. xvi. 8; Ezek. xxxiii. 31, 32; 1 Cor. vii. 29—31; John ii. 23, 24; Psal. lxxviii. 35—37; John xv. 2; i. 9—11; Matt. xv. 8; Psal. lxxiii. 23—25; 1 Thess. v. 17, 18; Matt. xv. 9; John iv. 22, 23; 1 Cor. x. 31; Luke x. 8; xx. 34; Rom. viii. 16, 17; Psal. xvii. 14; xvi. 5; lxxiii. 26; Luke xvi. 25; Matt. vi. 5; v. 12; Luke xviii. 22. In these texts is plainly contained all that I have here said to you.

Well then, beloved hearers, seeing you that sit here present are all of one of these two sorts, let conscience speak, which is it that you are of? These are the two sorts that shall stand on the right and left hand of Christ in judgment. They that gave Christ his own with advantage, and lived to him, and studiously devoted their riches and other talents to his use, as men that unfeignedly made God their end, these are they that are set on the right hand, and judged as blessed to the kingdom which they so esteemed. And those that hid their talents, by keeping or expending them to their private use, denying them to Christ, and living to themselves, these are they that are set on the left hand, and adjudged to the everlasting fire, with the devils whom they served. It is a desperate mistake of self-deceiving men, to think that a state of holiness consisteth only in external worship, or that a state of wickedness consisteth only in some gross sins. I tell you from the word of God, the difference is greater and lieth deeper than so. If you would know whether you are christians indeed, and shall be saved, the first and great question is, What is your end? What take you for your portion? And what is it that hath the prevalent stream of your desires and endeavours? As it is not every step that we set out of the way to heaven, that will prove us ungodly; so it is not any religiousness whatsoever that standeth in a subserviency to the world, that will prove you godly. Would you know then what you are? and whether you are in the way to heaven or hell? and what God will judge of you, if you so continue? Why then deal faithfully with yourselves, and answer this question without deceit! What is it that hath your hearts, your very hearts? What is it that is the matter of your dearest love? and what is the matter of your chiefest care? What is it that is the very bent and scope of your life? Is it for this world, or the world to come? What do you daily labour and live for? Is it for God, or your carnal selves? What interest is it that is predominant in you? Know but that, and know all.

And now I shall apply myself to those of you that are guilty; in whose souls the worldly interest is predominant, and in whom the world is not crucified by the cross of Christ, but rather Christ again crucified by the world. I have no mind to dishonour you, or exasperate you; but if faithfulness to Christ and you will do both, there is no remedy. I do here prefer an indictment against you in the court of your consciences, and before this congregation; the articles I shall distinctly read. And first, I require you, study not a defence; excuse not, extenuate not your crimes; but confess your sin freely, and condemn yourselves impartially, and return to God, and forsake them speedily, or you shall do worse. Self-condemnation may be saving and preventive; and the death of sin thereupon may be the life of your souls; but if this be neglected, and you hold on awhile till the great assize, you shall have another kind of charge than this, even such a one as shall appal that face that now can merrily smile at the accusation; and such a one as shall bring down the stoutest of your spirits, and make the hardest heart to feel, and the stubbornest of you all to stoop and tremble. Oh how easy is it to hear your sin and danger from such a worm as I! or to hear your state discovered, and yourselves condemned, by a minister of Christ in a pulpit! But how dreadful will it be to hear all this from the Lord of glory! and that when the case is past remedy, which now might have been remedied if you would, and if your obstinate hearts had not resisted.

The general charge that I put in against you is, That you are carnal flesh-pleasers, and have loved and lived to the world which you should have crucified, and have not lived as devoted unto God, nor

hath he been your end, or his interest predominant in your hearts and lives.

I speak only to the guilty; and for evidence of the fact, I need none but your consciences, seeing it is only to your consciences that I accuse you, which are acquainted, or should be, with the whole. But lest conscience itself should be bribed and corrupted, I shall, besides all that is before said, produce a little evidence more.

1. If indeed the world be crucified to you, what meaneth your eager pursuit after it? Are not your thoughts contriving for it, and your wit and interest all improved for it? Are not those taken for your chief friends, that further your advancement or worldly ends? and those for your chief enemies that hinder it most? Is it not in your mind in the night when you awake, and in the day when you are alone? Do you not rise earlier for your worldly business, than for prayer, or any holy exercise? Ask your family, whether you do not oftener call them up to work than to pray? and whether you drive them not on harder to your own service than to God's? and whether you examine them not strictlier about your business, than about the matters that their salvation doth depend upon? and whether you be not more deeply offended with them for crossing your commodity, than for sinning against God? Ask your neighbours whether you talk not with them many hours of worldly vanities, for one hour's serious discourse about the life to come? What a stir do poor men make to be rich, or to live in some content to the flesh! and what a stir do rich men make to be richer, or to keep that they have! and yet have they the face to pretend that they are crucified to the world?

2. If you are dead to the world, how comes it to pass that it hath so powerful an influence upon your judgment? and that you change your minds as your carnal interest doth change? and can set your sails to any wind that is like to drive you to the harbour (as you call it, but indeed upon the sands) of your worldly ends? What would you not give in troublesome times, to know certainly which will be the prevalent side, that you might resolve to what side to take yourselves; and perhaps what religion to be of, or to seem so to be! Among all the books that are written, if there were but one that taught the art of growing rich, or a directory for obtaining dignities and honours in the world, how eagerly would you buy it, and how diligently would you read it! more diligently than you read the Bible, or any book of that nature. If preachers did teach you the way of prosperity and advancement, and could tell you how to be all great and honourable in this world, oh how early would you come to the congregation! how attentively would you hear! how retentively would you remember! and how faithfully would you practise! Then how beautiful would the feet be of them that bring you the tidings of such good things! What honourable persons should ministers be! and how well worthy of your tithes, and more! Then you would not swell against their doctrine or application; nor cavil at them instead of understanding them, nor scorn them as men of a useless office, nor take them for your enemies, nor refuse to come to them and ask their advice. Wretched hypocrites! it is our office to help them to the everlasting kingdom; and the more diligent we are in this, the more they hate us. If we send for them to instruct them personally, or catechise them, or help them in the matters of salvation, they scorn to come, and ask us by what authority we send for them. But if we could teach them all to be princes, or lords, or gentlemen, yea, or but to get a few shillings more than they have, none would draw back. None of them would ask us, By what authority do you send for us? Had we but money enough to feed them all, oh what good men should we be! and how many friends should we have! and how easily might we persuade them! If one man had all the money in the land, and could secure it, and the disposal of it, from violence, what might not that man do? and who is it that would not be on his side, except those few that have crucified the world? The multitude would even follow that man that hath money, as a horse will follow him that hath provender; and yet they will hypocritically pretend to be crucified to the world. But if indeed they are so, how comes it to pass that conscience is so often stretched and racked, to make it own a gainful cause? and that many that have seemed godly, can break over all bounds of law and charity, friendship and religion, to attain the dignities or riches which they so desire? and will tread down the nearest friend, and Christ himself, as much as in them lieth, if he stand in the way of their affected exaltation. Yea, soul and all shall be ventured in this game. Rise they must, and rise they will, if they can procure it. Whatever become of heaven, they must have earth. Seeing it is their god, their end, *per fas aut nefas*, it must be had. As the commonwealth's man saith, *Salus populi suprema Lex esto;* and the christian saith, The pleasing of God is the supreme law; so the worldling's maxim is, that the interest of the flesh is the supreme law. And are these men crucified to the world?

3. If the world were a crucified thing in your eyes, you would not so much overvalue the rich, and vilify or neglect the poor, as you do. A humble, godly man that walks the streets in a threadbare coat, may pass by you without the least respect; but if a shining gallant be in the place, how observantly do you behave yourselves! If a poor man, though never so wise or pious, have any business with you, how cold is his entertainment! how strange is your deportment towards him! and how slightly do you shake him off! But if they be rich and honourable in the world, you are their servants, and no respect is too much for them, nor no entertainment too good. Wisdom and piety clothed in rags may pass by you unobserved; when a silken sot is bowed to like an idol. As reverently as you now speak of Peter and Paul, and Christ himself, now you hear them magnified, and see not their outward appearances as they did that conversed with them on earth, I make no doubt but if you had lived in those days, and seen them of so low a presence, and walk up and down in so mean a garb, attended or regarded by few but the poor, you would have set as light by them as others, and looked at them as poor contemptible fellows, if not as the filth and the offscouring of all things; and if you had not laid hands on them as too saucy reprovers of you, at least you would have given them one of Julian's jeers, or Hobbs's scorns. It was this worldly spirit that caused the Jews to be such obstinate unbelievers, and to persecute Christ and his servants. Men reverence not the face of the poor. And this is it that continueth them in their unbelief to this very day. We have many of their own writings and disputations against Christ published by themselves: and we find this the very sum of all their reasonings: "Show us a Messiah that fetcheth us from captivity, that gathereth the whole nation of the Jews to Judea, and restoreth them to their ancient possessions and dignities, with much more, and makes the nations stoop to them and serve them, and sets up again the temple and the law, and we will be-

lieve in him as the true Messiah; but in no other will we believe." For though they cannot deny but the prophesied time of the Messiah's coming is past, yet taking it for granted that this only is his true description, they say they must look more at the description than the time; and to solve the prophecies, they do believe that the Messiah did come about Christ's incarnation, but is somewhere hid with Enoch and Elias, and will appear when the Jews do mend their lives, and are worthy of him. Thus a worldly, carnal mind that blindly admireth worldly things, and savoureth not the things of the Spirit, nor discerneth the excellency of the heavenly riches, doth make them to be open infidels, and makes the Turks adore their Mahomet, and makes the nominal, bastard christian to set so light by the true riches of the gospel, and only to honour the name of Christ: for they cannot receive the things of God, because they are spiritually discerned, 1 Cor. ii. 14. Were not you worldlings you would discern more matter for your admiration, reverence, and love in the poorest heavenly-minded man, than in the greatest prince on earth that is ungodly. But you have the faith of Jesus Christ the Lord of glory with respect of persons. For if there come into your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment, you have respect to him that weyreth the gay clothing, and say to him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there; despising the poor, and committing sin by respect of persons, as if you believed not that God had chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him, James ii. 1—10.

Object. But must we not honour the gifts of God? Riches are his gifts.

Answ. Yes, according to their nature and use: riches are a gift which he giveth even to his enemies, and to those that must perish for ever; and few that have them come to heaven. But holiness is a gift which he giveth to none but his beloved, and is the beginning of eternal life. Which then should be most honoured?

Object. But would you draw men to despise dignities and authority?

Answ. Authority is one thing, and worldly riches is another. We reverence authority more than you do. We look on it as a beam from God, as partieipating of somewhat that is divine. I look on a magistrate as God's officer, and one that deriveth his authority from him, and I no more acknowledge any power which is not efficiently from God as the supreme Rector of the universe, than I acknowledge any natural being, which is not efficiently from God as the Author of nature and the first Being. I look at a magistrate as ultimately for God, as a man authorized to do his work, and none but what is ultimately his. So that as his office is so human, as to be also participatively divine, and he is so a human creature, as to be by participation divine, so the reverence and obedience which I owe to a magistrate is by participation divine; and therefore though I judge not peremptorily that those ancients were in the right that made the fifth commandment to be the last of the first table, yet I doubt not but our moderns are less likely to be in the right, that confine it only to the second table. And as I think it standeth so between the two as in several respects to belong to each, so I rather think that it more principally belongeth to the first. You see then the difference between a true christian's honouring of magistrates and yours. You honour them but for your worldly ends; and because they are able to do you good or hurt. But we honour them as God's officers, speaking and acting for him and from him by his commission, and we obey their power as participatively divine; but as they can do us good or hurt, we less regard them. And this honour and obedience we owe them, not for their wealth, but their authority; and if the meanest man have this authority, he shall be honoured and obeyed by us, as well as the richest.

4. If the world be crucified to you, how comes it to pass that you are so tenderly sensible of every loss or dishonour that doth befall you? If you are wronged in your estate, what a matter do you make of it! If a man should deprive you but of a few pounds, you can hardly put it up, but you must go to law for it, or you must seek revenge; or if you pass it by, you think you have done some great, meritorious act. If one slander you, or dishonour you, how sensible are you of it! How it sticks upon your stomachs, as if you had lost your treasure! Death is not sensible. If you were dead to the world, and the world to you, these things would all seem smaller in your eyes; and you would have more ado to remember them, than now you have to forget them. You could not be so sensible of a loss or an injury, if you were not too much alive to the world. And if you be poor, what an impatient, complaining life do you live! as if you wanted your treasure or your God; and if you grow rich, or gain, how glad are you! Were you dead to the world, and the world to you, you would be more indifferent to these matters, and poverty and riches would not seem so much to differ as now they do; but godliness with contentment, which is profitable to all things, would seem to you the great gain, 1 Tim. iv. 8; vi. 6.

Object. But may not a man go to law to recover his own, or to right his own reputation, if he be slandered?

Answ. Distinguish carefully in all your wrongs, between God's interest in them and your own. Your own you must forgive, but God's you cannot. If he have intrusted you with talents for his service, and any would fraudulently or violently deprive you of them, you must look after them as your Master's stock. If a wound in your name or state disable you from doing God service, you must use all lawful means to heal it, that you may be in a capacity of serving him again; and if your children, or others, have remotely a right in what you are defrauded of, you may look after their right. And you must not remit the crime, as oft as you remit the injury; for that God hath imposed penalty upon; and the rule is good, that the punishment of the notoriously vicious is a due to the commonwealth, because of the necessity of it to its good. In a word, therefore, if you would do these things, you might yourselves resolve when it is lawful to go to law, or seek your right, and when not. 1. If you can well distinguish between God's interest and your own. 2. And be sure you forgive all your own injuries. 3. And that you watch your hearts narrowly, lest they pretend God's cause, and intend your own. 4. And be able by the consideration of circumstances, to discern in probability, whether God's interest will be more promoted by going to law, or passing it by.

But alas, how rare a course is this! Of all the suits that are before you at this assize, I fear there are few that are commenced unfeignedly for the interest of God. If the Lord himself should ask both plaintiff and defendant, Do you follow this suit for me, or for yourselves? what answer think you they must make, if they speak the truth? But of this anon.

Having thus given in my general charge against

tne earnal worldling, and some evidenee of his guilt; I shall now give you the quality and aggravations of your crime in several artieles, as followeth:

1. You are guilty of idolatry, which is high treason against the God of heaven. That which hath your highest estimation, and dearest affeetion, and ehiefest service, is your god. But this the world hath; therefore it is your god. That whieh hath the most of your hearts is your god. But it is the world that hath the most of your hearts. You know that the main drift of your life is for the world. And that whieh hath the main bent of your life, hath your heart. If reason be no evidence, you eannot refuse Seripture: Mortify therefore your members upon earth," Col. iii. 5; and one is, "Covetousness, whieh is idolatry. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unelean person, nor eovetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritanee in the kingdom of Christ and of God," Eph. v. 5. The ease is plain in Scripture and in the effeets. The world hath that love that God should have, that care, and trust, and service which belongs to God; and therefore it is your god. I do therefore here on the behalf of God, indite every worldly, earnal sinner of you at the bar of your own conseienee, as a traitor against the Lord that made you, and against the Son of God that did redeem you! And what greater sin ean man be guilty of? (besides the blaspheming of the Holy Ghost.) He that would have another god, would have the Lord to be ungodded, and to lose his sovereign power and goodness! And is such a man fit to live in his sight? Why wretched traitor! if he be not thy God, thou eanst not expeet to live by him, or be sustained, preserved, and provided for by him. Thou eanst not live an hour without him! and yet wilt thou east him off? Wouldst thou pluek up thy own foundation? and eut off the bough on whieh thou standest? Wouldst thou fire the house thou dwellest in? and sink the ship that keepeth thyself and all that thou hast from sinking? Relations are mutual. If he shall be no God to thee, be it known to thee, thou shalt be none of his people! If he shall be no Father to thee, thou shalt be none of his child. And, wretched soul, what wilt thou do without him? It is he that keeps thy soul in thy body while thou art serving his enemy. Thou wouldst be in hell within this hour if his merey did not keep thee out. And is this thy requital of him? He hath but one trinity of enemies, the flesh, the world, and the devil; and wilt thou turn to these, and forsake him by whom thou livest? Why, I tell thee, the Lord must be thy God, or thou must have no God indeed. The world is like the heathen's idols; that hath eyes, but eannot see thy wants; ears, but eannot hear thy eries; hands, but eannot help thee in thy distress. All thy rieh es, dignities, and pleasures are silly things to make a god of. They may have the room of God in thy heart; and in that sense be thy god; but indeed they are no more God than a mawkin is a man; nor no more able to help and save thee. Wouldst thou then have a God or no God? If thou wouldst have no God, thou wouldst have no helper, no governor, no preserver, nor no happiness. And dost thou think that thou art suffieient for thyself? What! eanst thou live a day without God? Canst thou save thyself from danger without him? Canst thou relieve or shift for thyself at death without him? Darest thou tell him so to his faee, and stand to it? But if thou must have a god, what god wouldst thou have? Wouldst not thou have a God that ean preserve, and help, and save thee? The world eannot do it, man! I shall tell thee more of this anon, that the world cannot do it. If thou trust to it, it will deceive thee. But if thou say then, The Lord shall be thy God, away then with all thy idols. God will have no partner, mueh less a superior, that is exalted above himself in thy soul. As Joshua said to the Israelites, so I say to you, "Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the world, (whieh hath been your god,) and serve ye the Lord. And if it seem evil to you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord," Josh. xxiv. 14. And if you say as they, "God forbid that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods," I answer you as he, "Away then with the world, and all other idols;" or else, "ye eannot serve the Lord, for he is a holy and a jealous God, and will not forgive sueh transgressions and sins; but if ye forsake the Lord and serve the world, he will turn against you and eonsume you," ver. 19, 20. God will not stoop to be an underling in your hearts. He should have all, and will at last have all or none. But in the mean time he will have the best or none. I do witness here to every soul of you in his name, that if he have not the sovereignty, and be not nearer and dearer to your hearts than all the honours, and riches, and pleasures of the world, he is not, he will not be, he cannot be your God. And if he be not thy God, thou wilt be godless, as thou art ungodly; thou wilt be without his help, as he was without thy heart.

Well, this is the first artiele of my charge against every one of you that hath not crueified the world, you are idolaters and traitors against the God of heaven. And he that would have no God, deserves to be no man, and worse; and shall either by repentanee wish with groans that he had never been a worldling and a neglecter of God, or else in hell with groans shall wish that he had never been a man. As the first eommandment is the fundamental law, and informeth all the obligations of the particular preeepts following; so idolatry whieh is against that commandment, is the fundamental erime, and is the life of all the rest. He that would overthrow the Godhead, would overthrow all the world.

2. The next artiele of my eharge is this: You are guilty of most perfidious covenant-breaking with God. Did you not in your baptism, solemnly by your parents, renounee the world, the flesh, and the devil, and promise to fight against them to the end of your life under the banner of Christ? And have you performed that vow? No; you have turned treaeherously to the enemy that you renouneed, and fought for the world and the flesh, against the word and the Spirit of Christ. And if you renounee your baptismal eovenant, you renounce in effect the benefits of that eovenant. And if God deal with you as with perfidious covenant-breakers, thank yourselves.

3. Moreover, you are guilty of debasing your human nature, and so of wronging God that made it, and is the Owner of it. God made you not as brutes, that are eapable of no higher things than to eat, and drink, and play, and die, and there is an end of them. But he made you capable of an everlasting life of glory with himself. And as he suiteth all his works to their uses and ends, so did he suit the nature of man to his immortal state. As we were made by God, we were fitted and disposed to everlasting things. And you have turned your hearts to the vanities of the world, and set your mind on them as your happiness, as if you had no greater things to mind. Objeets do either ennoble or debase the faeulties aeeording as they are. That is the vilest ereature which is made for the vilest uses and ends, or employs himself in sueh. And that is the most exeellent ereature whieh is exercised about the most

excellent object. God made you for no less than his everlasting praises, before his face, among his angels; and you have so far debased your own nature, as to root like swine, in earth and dung, and to live like brutes that have not an immortal state to mind. How will you answer this dishonour done to the workmanship of God? that you should blot out his image, and employ your souls against his laws, and live as moles and worms in the earth. He put you on earth but as travellers towards heaven; and you have taken up your home in the way, and forgotten your end and resting-place.

4. The next part of your guilt is, that you have perverted the use of all the creatures, and turned the works and mercies of God against himself. He gave them all to you to lead you to himself, and to furnish you for his service. He made this world to be a glass in which you might see the Maker, and a book in which you might read his name and will. And will you overlook him, and forget the end and use of all? What shame and pity is it that men should live in the world, and not know the use of it! That they should see such a beauteous frame, and not understand its principal signification! That they should daily converse with so many creatures, which all proclaim the name of God, and with one accord declare his praise, and yet that this language should be so little understood! Like an illiterate man in a library, that seeth many thousand books, and knows not a word that is in any of them. Or like an ignorant man in an apothecary's shop, that seeth the drugs, but knoweth not what they are good for, nor how to use any of them, if he had the greatest need. The poorest cottage and smallest pittance of these earthly things might be a greater blessing to you, if you could understand their use and meaning, than all the world would be to him that understands it not. Your possessions in themselves, if you have not God in them, are but the very corpse or carcass of a blessing! The life of them is wanting! And without the life they will but trouble you. For you have the burden without the use. Your horse will carry you, while he hath life and health; but take away his life once, and you must carry him if you will have him any further. Verily, it is no wiser a trick to make a stir in the world, and seek the profits and pleasures of it without God, than it is to ride a dead horse, where you may spur long enough before you are one mile further on your way. While your friend is living, you may delightfully converse with him; but when he is dead, you will have little pleasure in his company; the corpse of the most learned man will actually teach you no more than a block. Were it the wife of your bosom, who through prudence and beauty were never so lovely to you, when her carcass is left without a soul, you will hasten to bury it out of your sight, and would be loth so much as to keep it in your house, much less in your bed and bosom as heretofore. He that knoweth not that God is the life and soul of all our blessings, doth neither know what God is, nor what a blessing is. They are but the empty casks and shells, and not the blessings themselves, without him. You have the burden, and not the benefit. You must carry them, but they can do nothing to the supporting of you. It is the absence of God, that denominateth them vanity and vexation; and it is he only that can make them strengthening and consolatory. That must have some life in it, that must be *pabulum vitæ*, and must sustain our lives. Souls cannot feed upon mere terrene, corporeal things, any more than the body upon mere spirituals. As we have both a soul and a body to be sustained, so have we a sustenance suitable to them both; even the creature animated by God, or God in and by the creature.

How great then is your sin, that destroy your blessings by depriving them of their life, and that in a sort destroy the world as to yourselves, by separating it from its soul! and so most heinously injure God, and rob yourselves of the comfort of all, and turn your blessings into burdens, and your helps into hinderances and snares to your souls. Have you lived so long in the school of the world, yea, and of the church too, where you have not only the library of nature, but supernatural revelations to teach you to understand it, and yet do you not know a word or letter? You do but lose and abuse the creatures of God, if you see him not in them; and if you be not in the use of them led up to himself. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handy work. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge: there is no speech or language where their voice is not heard; their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world," Psal. xix. 1—3; and yet poor carnal wretches will not understand them. "All the works of God do praise him; for he is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works," Psal. cxlv. 10, 17; and yet the wicked will not understand. Oh how many talents must the ungodly be accountable for, as having neglected them, and perverted them from the prescribed use! Every creature that you see is a teacher of divine things to you; and you shall answer for your not learning by them. Every creature is a herald sent from heaven to proclaim the will of your Maker, and your duty; and you gaze upon the messenger, and note his garb, and hear his voice, and never understand or regard his message. I would you did but consider what you lose by this your folly! and what life and sweetness there is in creatures which the heavenly believer draweth forth, and you have no taste of; and till the Spirit of sanctification have fitted you to such a work, you are never like effectually to taste it. For it is not every fly that can suck honey from the sweetest flower, though the bee can do it from that which we call a stinking weed. An ignorant countryman hath a meadow that aboundeth with variety of herbs; he can make no other use of them than to feed his cattle with them; or if he walk into his garden, he can only smell the sweetness of a flower; but a skilful physician that knows their use, can thence fetch a medicine that may be a means to save his life. But the believing soul can yet go further, and there find that which may further his salvation. If you have a lease of your lands, or a pardon for your life, that is written in an excellent character; there is a great deal of difference between another man's delight in viewing the character, and yours in considering of the security you have by it for estate or life. But the difference is much greater in our present case, between those that have only the superficial sweetness and beauty of the creature, to the pleasing of the flesh, and those that have God in it, to the spiritual refreshing of their souls. Believe it, sirs, it is not a small sin to pervert the whole creature (that is within our reach) to a use so contrary to that which it was appointed to, as foolish worldlings do; not only to lose that use and benefit of the creatures which we might have, but to turn all into poison and death to ourselves! Not only to rob God of that love, and honour, and service which they should procure him, but also to turn all this upon themselves; I tell you this will prove no venial sin.

5. And your guilt herein is further aggravated in

that you do hereby, as much as in you lieth, frustrate the works of creation and redemption. For God made all things for himself, and you use nothing for him. The Redeemer hath reprieved and restored the creature for its primitive use, that God might yet have the glory of his works, and yet you will not give it him; but when you pretend to know God, you glorify him not as God, but become vain in your imagination, your foolish hearts being darkened, as Paul tells them, Rom. i. 21. And what doth that man deserve that would, as to the use, destroy all the world, and frustrate all God's works both of creation and redemption?

6. Herein also you are guilty of enmity against God. For this is the greatest wrong that an enemy can do him, to rob him of the glory of his goodness and power, and to prefer his creatures, as if they were more amiable than himself. You cannot dethrone him from his glory; but you may possibly deny him the pre-eminence in your hearts. You may deny him the kingdom within you; but you cannot dispossess him of his eternal power or kingdom without you. The worst enemy that God hath, can do him no harm; but this is no thanks to you; he will not be beholden to you for it. You may as truly show your enmity by wronging, as by hurting. And what greater injury can you offer to the Almighty, than to set up the silly creature in his stead, and give it that love and service which is his due?

7. Moreover you are guilty of wilful self-murder; you choke yourselves with that which should be your food; you turn your daily blessings to your bane, by dropping your poison into the cup of mercies, which bountiful Providence putteth into your hands. There is not a surer way in the world to undo you, than by turning to the creature, and forsaking God. You cry for more of the world, and you are unsatisfied till you have it; and when you have it, you do but destroy your souls with it, by giving it your hearts, which must be given only unto God. What a stir do men make for temptation and destruction. What cost and pains are men at to purchase them an idol, and to make provision for the flesh, to satisfy its desires, when they confess it to be the greatest enemy of their souls. Like a man that would give all that he hath for a coal of fire to put into the thatch; even such is your desires after the world, and the use you make of it.

What abundance of precious time and labour do you lose, which might and should be better spent! Doth not this world take up the most of your care, and strength, and time? You are about it early and late; it is the first and last, and almost always in your thoughts. It findeth you so much to do, that you have scarce any time so much as to mind the God that made you, or to seek to escape the everlasting misery which is near at hand. It hath taken up so much of your hearts, that when God should have them in any holy duty, or service for his church, you are heartless. When you shall see your accounts cast up to your hands (as shortly you shall see it, though you will not now be persuaded to do it yourselves); and when you shall there see, how many thoughts the world had, in comparison of God; and how many hours were laid out upon the world, when God's service was cast by for want of time; and how near the creature was to your heart, while God as a stranger stood at the door; and in a word, how the world was your daily business, while the matters of God stepped in but now and then upon the by; you will then confess that you laboured in vain, and that your life and labour should have been better employed. Hath God given you but a short, uncertain life, and laid your everlasting life upon it; and will you cast all away upon these transitory delights? How short a time have you for so great a work! and shall the world have all? Oh that you did but know to how much greater advantage you might have spent this time and labour in seeking God and an endless glory! One thing is needful; make sure of that; and waste not the rest of your days in vanity. What wise man would spend so precious a thing as time is, upon that which he knows will leave him in repentings that ever it was so spent? the world doth rob poor sinners of their time; but when they see it is gone, and they would fain have a little of that time again, to make preparation for their everlasting state, it is not all the world then that can bring them back one hour of it again. Certainly such a loss of time and labour is no small aggravation of a worldling's sin.

9. You are also guilty of the high contempt of the kingdom of glory, while you prefer these transitory things before it. Your hearts and lives speak that which you are ashamed to speak with your tongues. You are ashamed to say that earth is better for you than heaven, or that your sin is better for you than the favour of God; but your lives speak it out. If you think not your present condition better for you than heaven, why do you choose and prefer it? and why do you more carefully and laboriously seek the things of earth, than the heavenly glory? If your child would sell his inheritance for a cup of ale, you would think he set light by it. And if he would part with father and mother for the company of a beggar or a thief, you would say he had no great love to you. And if you will venture your part in heaven for the pleasures of sin, and will part with God for the matters of this world, would you have him think that you set much by his kingdom or his love? Oh the unreasonableness of sin! the madness of worldly, fleshly men! Is it indeed more desirable to prosper in their shops, their fields, and their pleasures for a few days or years, than everlastingly to live in the presence of the Lord? Shall Christ purchase a kingdom at the price of his blood, and offer it us freely; and shall we prefer the life of a brute before it? Shall God offer to advance so mean a creature to a heavenly station among his angels; and shall we choose rather to wallow in the dung of our transgressions? Take heed, lest as you are guilty of Esau's folly, you also meet with Esau's misery! and the time should come, that you shall find no place for repentance, that is, for recovery by repentance, though you seek it with tears. Contempt of kindness is a provoking thing, for it is the height of ingratitude. And especially when it is the greatest kindness that is contemned. As it will be the everlasting employment of the saints, to enjoy that felicity, and to admire and praise that infinite love which caused them to enjoy it, so will it be the everlasting misery of the damned, to be deprived of that felicity, and to think of their folly in the unthankful contempt of it; and of the excellency of that kingdom which thus they did contemn. God sets before you earth and heaven. If you choose earth expect no more. And hereafter remember that you had your choice.

10. To make short of the rest of the aggravation of your sin, and sum it up in a word: Your love of the world is the sum of all iniquity. It virtually or actually containeth in it the breach of every command in the decalogue. The first commandment, which is the foundation of the law, and especially of the first table, is broken by it, while you make it your idol, and give it the esteem, and love, and service that is due to God. The second, third, and fourth commandments it disposeth you to break. While your hearts and ends are carnal and worldly, the manner of your service will be so, and you will suit your religion to the will of men, and your carnal

interest, and not to the will and word of God The name and holy nature of God is habitually contemned by you, while you set more by your worldly matters than by him. His holy days you ordinarily violate, and his ordinances you do hypocritically abuse, while your hearts are upon your covetousness or sensual delights; and are far from him while you draw near him with your lips. Worldliness will make you even break the bonds of natural obligations, and be unthankful to your own parents, disobedient to your superiors, unfaithful to your equals, and unmerciful to your inferiors. There is no trusting a worldling, he will sell his friend for money. He careth not to wrong your life, your chastity, estate, and name, for his lustful, ambitious, and covetous desires. For he directly breaketh the tenth commandment, which is the sum of the second table, requiring us to regard the welfare of our neighbour, and not to maintain a private, selfish interest against it. So true is that of Paul, 1 Tim. vi. 10, "The love of money is the root of all evil." As adhering to God is the sum of all duty and spiritual goodness, so adhering to the creature instead of God, is the sum of all wickedness and disobedience.

And seeing all this is so, I require you here in the name of God, to cast out this wickedness, and cherish it no longer. Bring forth that traitor that hath dethroned God in your hearts, and exalted itself, and let it die the death. It subverteth commonwealths, and all societies; it causeth perjury, perfidiousness, and sedition; it raiseth wars, and sets the world together by the ears; it overturneth all right order, and strikes at the heart of morality itself, and would make every man a wolf or tiger to his brother. It is a murderer of your own souls; and the cause of cruelty both to the souls and bodies of others. It is a liar that promiseth what it cannot perform. It is a cheater that would deceive you of your everlasting happiness; and entice you into hell, by pretences of furthering your profits and contents. It causeth parents to neglect the souls of their children, and children to wish the death of their parents, or be weary of them, or disregard them; and causeth lawsuits and contentions between brother and brother, and neighbour and neighbour; and fills the heart with rancour and malice; and turneth families and kingdoms into confusion. It maketh people hate their teachers, and too many ministers to neglect their flocks. It adulterously seeketh to vitiate the spouse of Christ, and take up the heart which was reserved for himself. It robbeth him of his honour, of our affections and obedience; and sacrilegiously defaceth the temple of the Holy Ghost. It will not allow God one free thought, nor full affection of your heart, nor one hour entirely improved for his honour.

This is the world; and thus it is used by sensual men. Judge now whether it deserve not to die the death, and to be cast out of your souls; and whether we have not reason to say, "Crucify it, crucify it?" Ask me no more what evil it hath done? You see it is such an enemy to the God of heaven, that if you cherish it, and let it live in your hearts, you are not friends to Christ or your salvation. Away with it then without any more ado; and use it as the world did use your Lord; and as it nailed him on the cross, so go to his cross for a nail to fasten it, and for strength to crucify it, that you may be victors and super-victors through him that loved you, and overcame the world for you. Choose not to be slaves, when you may be free-men and triumphers. Take warning by all that have gone before you. Serve not a master that casteth off all his servants in distress, and leaveth them all in fruitless complaints of its unprofitableness! Think not to speed well where never man sped well before you; nor to find content where none have found it. If all the world's followers complain of it at the parting, take warning by them, and foresee the end. Find out one man that ever was made happy by the world, (in a true and durable happiness,) before you venture your own hopes and happiness in such hands. Put not yourselves and all that you have in such a leaking vessel, that never yet brought man safe to shore. Will neither the experience of your own lives, nor the experience of all the world before you, delivered in the history of so many thousand years, be a sufficient warning to you to avoid the snare? What will you take then for a sufficient warning? Were not reason captivated, one would think that a walk into a churchyard might satisfy you. The sight of a grave or a dead body should kill and disgrace the world in your eyes. Do you see where you must lie, and what that flesh which you so regard must be turned to, and what is the most that can be expected from the world, and in how poor and despicable a case it will then leave you? and yet will you dote upon it, and neglect and lose the life everlasting for it? Will you be wilfully seduced by the vain-glory and ostentation of blinded worldlings, when you are certain beforehand that they will not be long of the mind themselves that now they are? Name me one man, if you can, that rejoiceth in his worldly prosperity now, and speaketh well of it, who rejoiced in it and spoke well of it two hundred years ago! It is a child indeed that would have a house builded by every fine flower that he seeth in his way, and forgetteth his home, his friends, and his inheritance! when it is two to one but the flower will be withered before his house be finished, and the pleasure will not answer the trouble and cost. Indeed, if the world were a better place, than that which we are going to, I could not then blame any to desire to keep it as long as they can. And yet if it were so, the certainty of our removal should make us less regard it, and look more to the place where we must evermore remain. Much more when our home doth exceed this world in worth, as much as in continuance. It is folly enough to set a man's heart upon the fairest inn that is in his way; but to prefer a swine-sty before a palace where his father dwells, and his inheritance doth lie, is somewhat worse than mere folly; and it is meet that such be used according to their choice. It is meet indeed that we be patient in our wilderness, and murmur not at God for the sufferings that it casteth us upon. But to love it better than the promised land, and to think or speak hardly of our happiness itself, and those that would lead us to it, this is unreasonable. The Israelites were never so foolish as to build cities in the wilderness, as desiring to make them their fixed habitations; but contented themselves with movable tents. What a curse were it if God should put you off with earth, and give you no other treasure and felicity but what it can afford! You might well then look on your inheritance as Hiram did on his twenty cities in Galilee, (1 Kings ix. 11, 12,) and disliking it, call it the Land of Cabul. It is the description of miserable wicked men to have their portion in this life, Psal. xvii. 14. Suppose you had the most that you can expect in the world, would you be contented with this as your portion? What is it that you would have, and which you make such a stir for? Would you have larger possessions, more delightful dwellings, repute with men, the satisfying of your lusts? &c. Dare you take all this for your portion, if you had it? Dare you quit your hopes of the life to come for such a portion? You dare not say so, nor do it expressly, though you do it impliedly

and in effect. Oh do not that which is so horrid, that your own hearts dare not own without trembling and astonishment!

I pray you tell me; do you think that a sufficient portion which the devil himself would give you, if he could, or is willing you should have? He is content that you enjoy your lusts and pleasures; he is willing to let you have the honours and fulness of the world, while you are on earth. He knows that he can this way best deal with your consciences, and please you in his service, and quiet you awhile, till he hath you where he would have you. He that told Christ of all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, would doubtless have given him them, if it had been in his power to have obtained his desire. Though you think it too dear to part with your wealth or pleasures for heaven, and to be at the labour of a holy life to obtain it; the devil would not think it too dear to give you all England, nor all the world, if it were in his power, that thereby he might keep you out of heaven; and he is willing night and day to go about such kind of work, that may but attain his ends in devouring you. If he were able, he would make you all kings, so that he could but keep you thereby from the heavenly kingdom. Alas, he that tempteth you to set light by heaven, and prefer this world before it, doth better know himself, to his sorrow, the worth of that everlasting glory which he would deprive you of, and the vanity of that which he thrusteth into your hands. As our merchants that trade with the silly Indians, when they have persuaded them to take glass, and pieces of broken iron, and brass, and knives, for gold or merchandise of great value, they do but laugh at their folly when they have deceived them, and say, "What silly fools be these to make such an exchange:" for the merchants know the worth of things, which the Indians do not. And so is it between the deceiver of souls, and the souls that he deceiveth. When he hath got you to exchange the love of God and the crown of glory, for a little earthly dung and lust; he knows that he hath made fools of you, and undone you by it for ever.

Do you not think yourselves, that it is abominable madness in those witches that make a covenant with the devil, and sell their souls to him for ever, on condition they may have their wills for a time? I know you will say it is abominable folly. And yet most in the world do in effect the very same. God hath assured them that they must forsake him or the world, and that they must not love the world if they would have his love; nor look for a portion in this life if they will have any part in the inheritance of the saints: he offers them their choice, to take the pleasures of earth or heaven; and Satan prevaileth with them to make choice of earth, though they are told by God himself, that they lose their salvation by it.

And here you may see what advantage Satan gets, by playing his game in the dark, and doing his work by other hands, and keeping out of sight himself, and deceiving men by plausible pretences. Should he but appear himself in his own likeness, and offer poor worldlings to make such a match with them, how much would the most of you tremble at it, and abhor it. And yet now he doth the same thing in the dark, you greedily embrace it. If you should but see or hear him desiring you to put your hands to such a covenant as this is, I do consent to part with the love of God, and all my hopes of salvation, so I may have my pleasures, and wealth, and honour till I die. Sure if you be not beside yourselves, you would not, you durst not put your hands to it. Why then will you now put both hand and heart to it; when he plays his game under-board, and implicitly by his temptations doth draw you to the same consent? What do the most of the world but prefer earth before heaven, through the course of their lives? They prefer it in their thoughts, and words, and deeds. It hath their sweetest and freest thoughts, and words, and their greatest care, and diligence, and delight. And what then do these men do, but sell their salvation for the vanities of the world? Believe it, sirs, if you understood the word of God, and understood Satan's temptations, and understood your own doings, you would see that you do no less than thus make sale of your precious souls. And it is not your false hopes, that for all this you shall be saved, when you can keep the world no longer, that will undo the bargain. If the law of the land do punish murder and theft with death, he that enticeth you to commit the crime, doth entice you to cast away your life; and it will not save you to say, I had hoped that I might have played the thief or murderer, and yet be saved.

O sirs, if you knew but half as well what you sell and cast away, as the devil doth that tempts you to it, sure you durst never make such a match, nor pass away such an inheritance, for a little earthly smoke and dust.

SECTION XVIII.

Use of Exhortation.

Men, fathers, and brethren, hearken to the word of exhortation which I have to deliver to you from the Lord. I know that this world is near you, and the world to come is out of sight. I know the flesh which imprisoneth those souls, is so much inclined to these sensual things, that it will be pleased with nothing else. But yet I am to tell you from the word of the Lord, that this world must be forsaken before it forsake you, and that you must vilify and set light by it, and your heart and hopes must be turned quite another way, and you must live as men of another world, or you will undo yourselves, and be lost for ever. If you have thought that you might serve God and mammon, and heaven and earth might both be your end and portion, and God and the world might both have your hearts, I must acquaint you that you are dangerously mistaken: unless you have two hearts, one for God, and one for the world; and two souls, one to save, and one to lose. But I doubt when one soul is condemned, you will not find another to be saved. I must plainly tell you, that the case of multitudes, not only of the sottish vulgar, but of persons of honour, and worshipful gentlemen, is so palpably miserable in the eyes of impartial discerning men, that we are obliged to lament it. We hear you speak as contemptibly of the world in an affected discourse, as any others; but we see you follow it with unwearied eagerness; you dote upon it; you contrive and project how you may enjoy it; you think you have got some great matter when you have obtained it; a filthy stir you make in the world, some of you, to the disquiet of all about you, that you may be richer or greater than you are. It takes up your heart, your time, your strength; and visibly it is the very work you live for, and the great game that you play, and the main trade that you drive on; and all your religious affairs come in but on the by, and God is put off with the leavings of the world; and if you are low in the world, or miss of your desires, and suffer in the flesh, you whine and repine, as if you had lost your God and your treasure. If you will deceive yourselves by denying this, that

bettereth not your case. Neither God, nor any wise man that seeth your worldly lives, and how much you set by worldly things, and how little good you do with your wealth, and how much the flesh and your posterity have as devoted unto them, and how little God hath devoted unto him; I say, no wise man that seeth this will believe that you are mortified, heavenly men. I do here proclaim to you this day, from the word of the Lord, that "this your way is your folly," Psal. xlix. 13; Luke xii. 20; and that you are at present in a damnable condition, that you are the "enemies of God, whoever of you are the friends to the world," and that if "you love the world, the love of the Father is not in you," 1 John ii. 15; and that you must, in affection and resolution, forsake all that you have in the world, and look for a portion in the world to come, or you are not christians indeed, nor can be saved, Luke xiv. 33. It would grieve the heart of a believing man, to see how desperately many civil, ingenious gentlemen, and others, delude and destroy themselves insensibly. You will, I hope, all cry shame upon a common swearer, drunkard, or whoremonger: you will hang a thief, murderer, or a traitor. But you seem not sensible of the misery of your own condition, that are perhaps in a more dangerous case than these. I beseech you consider! Is not that the most sinful and dangerous state, where God hath least of the heart, and the creature hath most? What know you, if you know not this? Why it is apparent, that there is less love to the world, in many a one of the forementioned wretches, than in many civil gentlemen, that live in good reputation in their country, and little suspect so much mischief by themselves. That is the most wicked man, that hath in his heart the strongest interest which is opposite unto God; and all that is not subordinate, is opposite. Sin hath not so deep and strong an interest in some murderers, that kill a man in a passion; in some swearers, that get nothing by it, but swear in a passion; or in some thieves, that steal in necessity; as it hath in many that seem sober and religious. I say again, the greater creature-interest, the more sinful is the estate. Alas, sirs, the abstaining from some of these crimes, and living like civil, religious men, if the world be not crucified to you, and you to it, doth but hide your sin and misery, and hinder your shame and repentance, but not prevent your damnation. Nay, the very interest of the flesh itself, may make you forbear disgraceful sins; and so that may be finally your greater vice, which you so much glory in, and which is materially your duty. All the privilege of your condition is, that you shall serve the devil in more golden fetters, than the poorer and contemned sort of sinners, and that you may be the children of wrath with less suspicion; and that you may go to hell in more credit than the rest; and by your self-deceit, you may keep off the knowledge of your misery, and the disquiet of soul that would follow thereupon; till death make you wiser when it is too late. And is this a benefit to rejoice in? Indeed you have your good things in this life; you may be clothed in the best, and fare deliciously, and when you are in hell torments, where you would be glad of a drop of water, your kindred on earth may nevertheless honour your name, and little suspect or believe your misery. And this is the privilege that you have above more disgraced offenders. You leave a better esteem of you on earth, when your souls are in hell; but alas, if a pope should saint you, and his followers pray to you and worship you, as it is possible they may do, this will not ease your torments. I confess I am sensible that this kind of discourse is not very like to please you; but it is not my errand to please, but to profit. For my part, I bear you as much respect, as you are magistrates, or otherwise qualified for the common good, as others do. But I must deal plainly with you, in hope of your recovery, or at least of the discharge of my soul. I confess to you I look upon a worldly prince, or judge, or justice, or gentleman, or freeholder, yea or minister, as men, as wicked before God, and in as damnable and dangerous a case to their own souls, as the thieves that you burn in the hand and hang. I am far from extenuating their sin and misery; but I am showing you your own. Your sin may be as deep-rooted, and the interest of the world may be more predominant in you than in them. Your lands, and houses, and hopeful posterity, and the other provisions that you have made for your flesh, may have more of your hearts, than the world hath of the heart of a poor prisoner that never had so much to idolize. Believe it, gentlemen, Christ was not in jest, when he so often and earnestly warneth men of your quality of everlasting peril; even more than ever he did adulterers or thieves. It is not for nothing that he tells us how "the cares of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, that it becometh unfruitful," Luke viii. 14; Matt. xvi. 22. "The Pharisees that were covetous derided Christ when others did believe," Luke xvi. 14. They cannot be true believers that "receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only," John v. 44; that is, who prefer the former. It is not for nothing that Christ assureth you, that "it is as hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God, as for a camel to go through a needle's eye." Which, though it be possible, doth plainly show some extraordinary difficulty, Matt. xix. 23, 24. Such use to go away sorrowful, when they hear of "forsaking all, because they are rich," Luke xviii. 23. "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, to be heirs of the kingdom, which he hath promised to them that love him?" James ii. 5. And the Holy Ghost saith not without a cause, that "not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called," 1 Cor. i. 26. "But God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things that are mighty; and base things of the world, and things that are despised, hath God chosen, and things that are not, to bring to nought things that are, that no flesh should glory in his presence," ver. 27—29. It is the common case of prospering worldlings, to play the fool after all God's warnings, and in their hearts to say, "Soul, take thy rest;" when they know not but "that night their souls may be called for," Luke xii. 20. Oh that you would be pleased but considerately to read those two parables, or histories, chap. xii. 16; xvi. 19, which you have so often read or heard inconsiderately. I beseech you think not we wrong such men, if we rank them with the most notorious sinners. The apostle reckoneth them with the most heinous sinners that should arise in the last days, 2 Tim. iii. 2, 4; "Covetous, and lovers of their own selves, and lovers of pleasures more than God," and bids us "turn away from such." And he reckoneth them among such as the church must excommunicate, and with whom a christian may not eat, 1 Cor. v. 10, 11. And with the notorious wicked men that "shall not enter into the kingdom of God," chap. vi. 10; Eph. v. 5. It is a sin "not to be once named among the saints," ver. 3. In a word, if you are worldly or covetous, you are certainly wicked, and abhorred by God, how highly soever you may be esteemed of men. "The wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth," Psal. x. 3. If yet

you think I use you unmannerly in speaking so hardly of you, hear the Holy Ghost a little further: "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered: and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days," James v. 1—3. And mentioning their oppression, he addeth, "Ye have lived in pleasure on earth, and been wanton. Ye have nourished your hearts as in a day of slaughter." In a word, if Christ called Peter himself a Satan, when he would have had him favour himself, and avoid suffering, because "he savoured not the things of God, but of men," Matt. xvi. 22; you may see that we call you not so bad as you are.

I shall now take the freedom to come a little nearer you, and close with you upon the main of my business. Poor worldling, I come not hither to beat the air, nor to waste an hour in empty words; but it is work that I come upon; an unpleasing work to flesh and blood; even to take away your profits, and pleasures, and honours from you! to take away the world from you, and all that you have therein! Not out of your hands, but out of your hearts! Not against your wills, (for that is impossible,) nor by unresistible force, (I would I could do that,) but by procuring your own consent, and persuading you to cast them away yourselves. I cannot expect the consent of your flesh, and therefore I will not treat with it; but if yet you have any free use of your reason in matters of this nature, look back upon the reasons that I have before laid down, and tell me whether you see not sufficient cause to forsake this world, and betake yourselves to another course of life, and look another way for your felicity? This then is the upshot of all that I have been saying to you, and this is the message that I have to you from God; to require you presently to renounce this world, and unfeignedly to despise it, and proclaim war against it, and to come over to him that is your rightful Lord, and will be your true and durable rest. What say you? Will you be divorced from the world and the flesh this day? and take up with a naked Christ alone, and the hopes of a heavenly felicity which he hath promised? Will you bring forth that traitor that hath had your hearts and lives so long, and let him die the death? Shall the world this day be crucified to you, and you to it? I am to let you know, that this is the thing that God expecteth, and nothing less will serve the turn, nor will any worldly kind of religiousness bring you to salvation. This world and flesh are enemies to God, and you have been guilty of high treason against his Majesty by harbouring them, and serving them so long. And I am moreover to let you know that God will have them down one time or other; either by his grace or by his judgment! Had you rather that death and hell should make the separation, than that saving grace should do it? Will you still hide it as sugar under your tongue? Will you obstinately cleave to it, when you know its vanity, and the mischief that such contempt of God will bring? If you do so, God will imbitter it to you in the end! And he will make it gall in your mouths, and torment to your hearts, and you shall spit it out, and be forced to confess, that it is no better than you were told. I do charge you therefore in the name of the Lord, that you renounce this world without delay, and presently and effectually crucify it to yourselves. You once did it by your parents in baptism, and you have proved false to that profession. Now do it by yourselves, and stand to what you do. If it had not been a part of christianity, you had not been called to do it then. And therefore you may understand, that it is but to be christians indeed that I persuade you. A christian worldling is as mere a fiction as a christian infidel. Enter now into your own heart with a reforming zeal. It should be the temple of the Holy Ghost. Down then with every idol that is there erected. Whip out the buyers and sellers, and overthrow the money tables, and suffer it not to be made a den of thieves. Down with your Dianas! Though the world worship her; God and his sanctified ones despise her. What the ungodly say of our Zion, we say of your Babel. Down with it, raze it, even to the foundation. It is a thing to be destroyed. Happy is he that dasheth the brats of worldly concupiscence against the stones, Psal. cxxxvii. 7—9. Mortify your members that are on earth. Crucify this your pretended king. Away with the world out of your hearts, it is not fit that it should there live.

Honourable, worshipful, and all well beloved, I beseech you hear me not as if I speak but words of course to you, or read you but a formal lecture. I mean as I speak, and I profess to the faces of you all, that either the world and flesh, or you, shall die. Kill it, or it will kill you; and Christ will destroy both it and you. Think not any more of a fleshly, earthly-minded man, that hath his affections on this world, as a tolerable sinner of the smallest size. I tell you, the devil may as soon be saved, as a man that liveth and dieth a sensualist. I mean not only the notorious misers, or the infamous drunkards, gamesters, or idle gallants; but all men, even the most civil or seemingly religious, in whose hearts a worldly, fleshly interest is predominant; if you are such, your honours and riches will not keep you from being firebrands of hell. Down therefore with the world, and set up God alone in your souls.

I cannot but understand, that I am like to be an unwelcome messenger to you, that come of such an ungrateful errand. If I came as the levellers or quakers, to cry down your pride and worldliness, with such mixtures of distraction as might make you laugh at me as a self-conceited, fantastical person, perhaps it would trouble you less to hear me; for you look upon them as histrionical actors. Quakers do but jest with you, or harden you by their vanity; but we are in good sadness, and God himself is in good sadness with you. We must have your worldly interest out of the very hearts of you; Christ will have your heart-blood for it, if he shall not have it.

And here you may see, that it is no wonder if the serious, faithful ministers of Christ, be men detested by most of the world, even of professed christians themselves. For, alas! what an errand is it that God doth send us on! If I should take the crown from the prince's head, and tread it in the dirt, what must I expect? If I came to take away your honours, or your estates, your houses, lands, or money, what must I expect? Do you not prosecute and hang thieves, for robbing you of some of these? Why, though I do less in some respects, it is more that I am sent to do in other respects. Though we take not the prince's crown from his head, we must take it from his heart. Though we take not the money out of your purses, nor your goods out of your houses, nor your houses out of your possessions, we must attempt to take them out of your hearts. No wonder then if we be hated of all such; for at the heart it is that the world is sweetest to you; there it is nearest and dearest to you; and there is your carnal interest deepest rooted. To be let blood in the very heart will be more grievous to you than in the hand.

And yet so it must be, that the heart-blood of worldly interest may be let out in the crucifying of it, as the world did let out the heart-blood of Christ. What are all your suits at this assize about, but against one man that robbed you of your money; against another that took your cattle; against another that would deprive you of your estate; and against another that hath wounded your honour and reputation; and another that somehow provoked you to revenge, by contradicting your will. What wonder then if you should all turn your spleen against me, that would take, not one of these, but all, and that from you all, and that from your very hearts! The flesh would be all, and have all; or else it were not the chiefest idol: no marvel then if it storm, when we would take all from it.

And yet let me tell you, to abate your indignation, that though we talk of casting down your temple, we add withal, that it shall be built again in three days; and the casting of it down will tend to its greater glory. The world will be more honourable and useful to you when it is crucified, and the flesh when it is subjected, than now they be; but of that more anon.

Object. O but, saith the carnal heart, have my honours and dignities cost me so dear; have I been so long in getting my riches, and shall I now part with all for your speeches? And do you think I am such a fool as to be worded out of them? Soft and fair; I came not by them so easily, nor will I so easily part with them, nor with the content and comfort that my heart hath in them.

Answ. Because that worldlings think themselves so wise, and put such a face of confidence on their dotage, I shall yet draw nearer you, and reason the case a little further with you; and to that end I shall propound these following questions, desiring your serious answer.

Quest. 1. Because you presume to call it folly, to part with all at Christ's command, tell me, whether is God or you the wiser, and whose judgment is fittest to determine which is the wisest way? Who are like to be the fools indeed? those that you call so, or that God calleth so? Sure you should easily be resolved of this; for if you be wiser than God, then you are gods, and God is no longer God. For he that is wisest and best, is God. And, methinks, as bad and as mad as you are, you should not be so mad yet as to say or think that you are gods, or that you are wiser than God. Well then, hold but there, and then let us consider, whether God and you be both of a mind about the matters of the world, Psal. xlix. 13. When he hath described the life of a prosperous worldling, he saith, "This their way is their folly: yet do their posterity approve their sayings." And in Luke xii. 20, we find Christ's censure on such a one as you, that said within himself, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry:" to whom God saith, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?" And that you may learn to make a due application of this, and not think it is nothing to you, Christ addeth, "So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God." Where you may note the exact description of a graceless worldling, such as throughout this discourse we mean: he is one that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God, as all the sanctified are. The difference lieth in the matter and end, or use of his riches. The worldling layeth up earthly treasure, the sanctified man layeth up a treasure in heaven with God. The worldling is rich for himself, and all that he parteth with for God's service or the poor, is but the leavings of the flesh, and that which it can spare when its own desires are satisfied (for so much an epicure may part with to good uses); but the sanctified doth employ his riches for God, as being rich to him, and not to his carnal self.

You see by this time, who they be that are the fools in God's account. And that though "the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light," Luke xvi. 8; yet "the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God, and the foolishness of God is wiser than men," 1 Cor. iii. 19; i. 20, 25.

And you know that it is Christ that requireth you to forsake all that you have for him; and dare you say that Christ commandeth you to be fools? Is not that the wisest way which he requireth?

Object. But Christ would not have us cast away that which he giveth us, but only rather to forsake it than to forsake him: and that I would do.

Answ. But if you forsake it not first in affection and resolution, you will never forsake it actually, when he calls you to it; though you may be confident you should, while you look not to be put to it. In your hearts all must be now forsaken, though you may keep some in your hands until God require it. 2. And even in prosperity you must devote your wealth to God, and use it more for him than for yourselves, if you will prove yourselves to be his servants.

Quest. 2. My second question to you is this; You that are so loth to part with the world, and be crucified to it, tell me, what hath it done for you, that you should be so fond of it, and that it should seem worthy of such estimation and affection? Hath it not put you to more care and sorrow than it is worth? It never gave you solid peace! It never made you acceptable to God! You are not a jot better when you are rich, than when you are poor, unless grace do that for you that riches cannot; nay, and grace must do it not only without, but against your riches. All that the world can do for you, is but to satisfy your sensual appetite, and by the superfluity to please a covetous mind. And is this matter of so great worth? A beast may have his sensual delight as well as you: and if man be better than a beast, do you think he is not capable of a better and higher delight than beasts? Will you call yourselves men and christians, and yet take up with the pleasures of a brute, and there place your happiness? If a drunkard have a hundred barrels of ale or wine more than he can drink, this doth not so much as please his appetite, but only his fancy: so if you have never so much riches more than your flesh itself hath use for, this only pleaseth a covetous fancy. All that you enjoy is but so much as may satisfy the lusts of your flesh. And I pray you tell me, whether you do not yourselves believe, that a sober, temperate, heavenly christian doth live as comfortable a life as you? And, whether they have not more peace in their minds without your sinful, sensual delights, than you have with them? Indeed it is but the distemper of your minds that makes that so pleasant to you, which another that is well in his wits would be weary of; as the swine takes pleasure to tumble in the mire, which a wise man would not do. Do you not sin against your own experience? Have you not found that the world is an unsatisfactory thing, and cannot help you in a day of trouble? And yet will you stick to it?

Quest. 3. My next question is, What hath the world done for any other, that should persuade you to set so much by it as you do? Did it ever save a soul; or heal a soul; or make a man truly happy at

the last? Look back in any credible records, to the beginning of the world, and down to this day, and tell me where is the man that is made happy by the world! And consider what it hath done for them all! He that had most of it, and made the best of it for the pleasing of his flesh, had but a short taste of sensual pleasures, which quickly left him worse than before; like cold drink to a man in the fit of an ague. And will you so far lay by your reason, as to go against the experience of all the world? Do they all cry out against it as vanity, and yet will you take no warning? Can you think to find that by it that no man ever found before you? What art have you to extract such comforts from the creature, that never man could do till now? It is the shame of them that spent so much cost, and time, and labour, in seeking that seed of gold which they call the philosopher's stone, because never any that sought it could find it, but have all lost their labour. So is it your far greater shame to run a hazard so much greater, for that which never man from the beginning of the world could find, till now. Solomon went as far as any in the pleasing of his flesh with the fulness of the world, and in the conclusion he passes this sentence on it, that "All is vanity and vexation of spirit."

Quest. 4. My next question to you is this, What is it that you do seriously expect from the world for the time to come, that should persuade you to stick so close to it as you do? Some great matter sure you do think it will do for you; or else you would never so esteem it. I pray you tell me what it is? Do you think verily, that it will make you truly happy? Do you expect that it should bring you to heaven? I suppose you do not. What then will it do for you? It will neither prevent a sickness, nor remove it: it cannot take away a toothache, nor a fit of the gout or stone: it will not save you from the jaws of death, nor keep your bodies from rotting in the grave, nor bribe the worms or corruption from devouring them. When your physician tells you that your disease is uncurable, and you see that there is no way but one with you, and you must be gone, there is no remedy; if then you cry to the world, it cannot help you: friends cannot save you; riches and honours, houses and lands, cannot preserve you; death will obey his will that sendeth it, and you must away. O who would love that, and love it at so dear a rate, which cannot help you in the time of your necessity? Who would serve such a master, such an idol god, as cannot relieve you in the day of your distress? When conscience is awakened, and begins to stir, and gripe you, and the wrath of God doth look you in the face, will your honours ease you? Will your friends deliver you, and give you a solid, lasting peace? You know they will not. You cannot with all the wealth in the world procure the pardon of the smallest sin. You may get the pope's pardon for money, but not God's. You must go to judgment, and if you be worldlings, must be damned for ever for all your wealth. Were you lords of all the world, it would not save your souls from hell; no, nor procure you a drop of water to cool your tongues. What is it then that you expect by this world? Sure you would never so much love it, and make such a stir for it, if you looked for nothing from it? Why, is it that your flesh may have some satisfaction in the mean time? And is that all? Yea, that is even all. I shall then proceed to the next question.

Quest. 5. How long can you say that you shall keep the riches and honours which you possess? Can you say that they shall be yours this time twelvemonth? or to-morrow? I know you cannot. You know not when you arise in the morning, whether ever you shall lie down again alive; nor when you lie down at night, whether you shall rise alive. And is a state of such uncertain tenure so valuable? You glory in your honours, and pleasures, and possessions, and for aught you know, within this week, or hour, they may be none of yours. However, you are certain to be deprived of them ere long. It is a dull understanding indeed, that cannot foresee the day when he must be stript of all, and take his final farewell of the world! You know as sure as you shall live, that you must die, and your corpse be laid in the common dust: and whose then shall all your pleasure be? When God calls you away, there is no resisting; or if he call for any of your earthly comforts, there is no withholding. Then keep them if you can. The bones and dust of your forefathers will not say, This house and land is mine! Nor do they retain any impress of their former earthly pleasure and felicity. Alexander could not know his father Philip's bones by the sight of them, nor find any print of the crown upon his skull. If you open the grave and coffin of your grandfathers, you shall find there no great signs of riches or of honour, or any delights. And should you not look on that which will be, even as if it were already? I cannot but take that which certainly will be, in a manner as if it were in being; and that which certainly will not be, as if it were not: for interposing time is such a nothing as makes the difference next to none. What if you might be the emperor of the world to-day, and must be as you are again to-morrow, were it desirable, or worthy to be regarded? It disgraceth the greatest felicity on earth, to say, that It will have an end; the time is near when it will not be; as it extenuateth the labours and sufferings of a believer into a kind of nothing, to say that they will shortly be at an end. That which will be nothing, is next to nothing.

Quest. 6. My next question to you is this, How do you think you shall value the world, when it is parting from you? or at the furthest, when you are newly parted from it? If a man come to you on your death-bed, when you see that there is no hope of life, and ask your opinion then of the world, will you magnify it as now you do? When your spirits are languishing, and your heart fainting, and your body even possessed with pain, if then one should ask you, Are the wealth and honours of the world such excellent things as once you deemed them? Do you now think it folly to renounce and forsake them all for Christ? What would you then say? I beseech you tell me, what think you that you shall then say? Do you think you shall then extol the world, and count them fools that will be persuaded to forsake it? Or rather will you not wish yourselves, Oh that I had forsaken it, before it did forsake me! Will you not cry out, O vain world! deceitful world! and wish you had more regarded the durable riches? I think you will.

Quest. 7. What is it that dying men do commonly think and say of the world? If you can observe what all others say of it, you may partly conjecture what mind you shall be of yourselves. You have sometimes, sure, been about dying men. (If you have not, you were best draw near them hereafter; for "the house of mourning is better than the house of mirth.") Do you not hear them all cry out of the world as a worthless thing? Do you not see how little good it can do them? And will no warning serve you? Surely the judgment of one of these men (much more of so many) is more to be valued, than of many that are in health and prosperity, that overvalue the world. You are but in the chace, and know not what it is which you do pursue; but they

have overtaken it, and find it but a feather. You are but in the trying of it, but they have tried it already, and have found how little or nothing it can do. You are entangled in the midst of its deceits; but they begin to see it barefaced. Your senses are more violent in withdrawing you, and perverting your judgments; but so are not theirs who are languishing unto death. If you come to one of them, that know they must die within a few days, and tell them that such a lordship is fallen to them, or such honour is bestowed on them, or such a friend hath given them great possessions; how will they regard it? Will they not say, Alas, what is this to me, that am presently to leave the world, and appear before the eternal Judge! If you then come to them, and offer them such baits as were wont to catch the glutton, or drunkard, or fornicator, do you think they will regard them? Would they not rather cry shame against him that would then entice them to any such thing? Why then should you so value that now, which all the world will vilify at the last.

Quest. 8. You that now say, you are not such fools as to be talked out of your estates, or honours, or delights, and that wilfully stick to them against all that we can say, I pray you tell me, Whether you will stand to this at the bar of God? Will you then own these resolutions and sayings, or will you not? Dare you look the Lord Jesus in the face, and tell him, I did well to set more by the world than by thee, and the glory which thou didst promise? I did well to take my pleasure for a time, and to venture my salvation? You dare not stand to this at judgment; I know you dare not: and will you now insist on that which you dare not stand to? and be of that mind which then you must condemn yourselves? Do you think that this is a reasonable course to be ventured on in so great a matter?

Quest. 9. My next question is this, Do you ever mean to repent of your fleshly and worldly-mindedness or not? If you do not, it seems you are far from a recovery. Many a one perisheth with bare, uneffectual purposes of repenting; but those that have not so much as such a purpose, are graceless indeed. But if you do purpose to repent, I would further ask you, Do you think that is a right mind, or a wise course, which must be repented of? If it be right and wise, what need you to repent of it? If it be not wise and right, why will you now retain it, yea and wilfully maintain it, against the persuasions of God and man? Doth not this proclaim that you are wilful sinners? and that you know you sin, and yet will do it, even against your own knowledge and conscience? That you know the world to be a deceitful vanity, and yet for all that you will stick to it as long as you can, with the neglect of God, and true felicity? And can you expect mercy and salvation, that wilfully and knowingly do set yourselves against it, and reject it?

Quest. 10. My next question which I desire you to answer is this, Do you in good sadness take the world for your enemy, or for a hinderance to you in the way to heaven? If you do not, why did you in your baptism renounce it, and promise to fight against it? And why have you professed since to stand to that covenant? And how then can you believe the word of God, which so often telleth you, what a hinderance riches and honours are to men's salvation? But if indeed you believe that the world is your enemy and hinderance, why then will you love it, and be impatient if you want it, and take such pleasure in it, and desire to have more of it? Do you love to have your salvation hindered or hazarded? and will you love and long for that which is an enemy to it? I think the way to heaven is hard enough to the best: they need not make it harder than it is, and be at so much labour all their lives to make themselves more enemies, and more work, and to block up the way, while they pretend to walk in it. Oh the hypocrisy of a carnal heart! How notoriously do men's lives contradict their tongues! when they will call the world their enemy, and vow to fight against it to the death, and at the same time will labour for it, and greedily desire it, as if they could never have enough! that they will make so much of it, as to neglect God himself, and their salvation for it, and make it the greatest care and business of their lives to get and keep it, and all the while profess that they take it for their enemy! This is dissembling beyond all bounds of shame. Remember this when you are impatient of your low estate; or contriving further accommodation to your flesh, or hunting after a full estate. Are these the signs of enmity to the world? Do you hate your salvation, that you so love the hinderers of it? Either live as you profess, or profess as you live.

Quest. 11. Yet further I demand, Whether indeed you do intend to renounce your christianity, and all your hopes of heaven, or not? If you do, you know whom to blame when you are deprived of it; and I could wish you would first find out some better way, or something that may be of valuable consideration, to repair your loss. But if you say, you have no such intent, I further ask, Why then do you do it? and do it after so much warning? Do you disclaim your christianity in the open light, and yet say that you intend no such thing? You cannot do it against your will. And that it is in effect a renouncing or denying your christianity, yea, and your salvation, is plain; for your christianity containeth a renouncing of the world; and therefore it is part of our baptismal covenant. If then you return to the world which you renounced, you forsake your christianity. Had you rather forsake the world, or Christ? One of them you must forsake; for he hath told you that "except you forsake all that you have, you cannot be his disciples," Luke xiv.; and that you cannot serve God and mammon. Had you rather renounce the world, or your salvation? One of them you must let go; for God hath said, that "the love of the world is enmity against God;" and that, "if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." If therefore you will still say, you hope you may keep both; what do you less than give God the lie? If you will still adhere to the world, and yet say that you do not renounce your christianity or salvation, you may as well say, that though you join in arms with open rebels, yet you do not forsake your loyalty to your prince! Or, though you live in adultery, yet you do not forsake your conjugal fidelity and chastity; and that you do not cast away your life, though you take poison, when you know it to be such, or though you commit those crimes which must be punished with death. I beseech you consider well, why you forsake Christ, and why you will destroy yourselves, before you do it past remedy.

Quest. 12. My last question which I desire your answer to is this; Do you indeed think that God is not better than the world, and that heaven is not more desirable than earth, and an endless glory than a transitory shadow? or is there any comparison to be made between them? Have you considered what a sad exchange you make? O unthankful souls! hath not God done more for you than ever the world did? He made you, and so did not the world! He redeemed you, when none else could do it! He preserveth you, and provideth for you, and all that you have is from his bounty. He can give health to your bodies, peace to your consciences,

salvation to your souls, when the world cannot do it. If the world be better than God in prosperity, what makes you call upon God in adversity? When any torment seizeth on your bodies, or death draws near and looks you in the face, then you do not cry, O riches, help us! O pleasures or honours, have mercy upon us! But, O God, have mercy upon us and help us. Can none else help you in your distress, and yet will you prefer the creature in your prosperity? Ah poor deluded souls! that follow the world, which will cast you off in your greatest need, and neglect Him that would be faithful to you for ever! The time is coming when you shall cry out, The world hath deceived me! I have laboured for nought! But if you had been as true to God as you were to it, he would never have deceived you. He would have received your departed souls, and made you like angels, and raised your bodies to glory at the last, and perpetuated that glory. Will your riches, or pleasures, or honours do this? He would have rescued you from the devouring flames which your inordinate love of the world will bring you to. O miserable change! to change God for the world; it is to change a crown of glory for a crown of thorns; the love of our only friend, for the smiles of deceitful enemies; life for death, and heaven for hell! Oh what thoughts will arise in your hearts, when you are past the deceit, and under the sad effects of it, and shall review your folly in another world! It will fill your consciences with everlasting horror, and make you your own accusers and tormenters, to think what you lost, and what you had for it; to think that you sold God, and your souls, and everlasting hopes for a thing of nought; more foolishly than Esau sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. If the sun, and moon, and stars were yours, would you exchange them for a lump of clay? Well, sinners! if God and glory seem no more worth to you, than to be slighted for a little fleshly pleasures, you cannot marvel if you have no part in them.

SECTION XIX.

If reason and Scripture evidence would serve turn, I dare say you would by this time be convinced of the necessity of being crucified to the world, and the world to you. But sensuality is unreasonable, and no saying will serve with it; like a child that will not let go his apple for a piece of gold. But yet I shall not cease my exhortation, till I have tried you a little further; and if you will not yield to forsake the world, you shall keep it to your greater cost, as you keep it against the clearer light that would convince you of your duty.

1. As you love God, or would be thought to love him, love not the world: for so far as you love it, you love not him, 1 John ii. 15. As ever you would be found the friends of God, see that you be enemies and not friends to the world. For the friendship of the world is enmity to him, James iv. 4. You are used to boast that you love God above all; if you do so you will not love the world above him: and then you will not labour and care more for it, than for him: your love will be seen in the bent of your lives: that which you love best, you will seek most, and be most careful and diligent to obtain. As they that love money are most careful to get it; so they that love heaven will be more careful to make sure of that. As they that love their drink and lust will be much in the ale-house, and among those that are the baits and fuel of their lust; so they that love the fruition of God will be much in seeking him and inquiring after him, and much among those that are acquainted with such love, and can further them any way in the accomplishment of their desires. If you love God, then, let it be seen in the holy endeavours of your lives, and set your affections on things above, and not on the things that are on earth: for that which you most look after, we must think that you most love. Can you for shame commit adultery with the world, and live with it in your bosoms, and yet say that you love God?

2. As you love your present peace and comfort, see that you love not, but crucify, the world. It doth but delude you first, and disquiet you afterwards; like wind in your bowels, which can tear and torment, but cannot nourish you. And if God do love you with a special love, he will be sure to wean you from the world, though to your sorrow. If you do provoke him to lay wormwood on the breasts, and to hedge up your forbidden way with thorns, when you find the smart and bitterness you may thank yourselves. It is the remnant of our folly and our backsliding nature, that is still looking back to the world which we have forsaken, that is the cause of those successive afflictions which we undergo. Did you love the creatures less, it would vex you less; but if you will needs set your minds upon them, and be pleasing your worldly, sensual desires, God will turn loose those very creatures upon you, and make them his scourges for the recovery of your wits, and the reducing of your misled, revolting souls. Are you taken up with the hopes of a more plentiful estate, and think you are got into a thriving way? How soon can God blast and break your expectations! by the death of your cattle, the decay of trading, the false dealing of those you trust, the breaking and impoverishing of them, by contentious neighbours vexing you with lawsuits; by corrupted witnesses, or lawyers that will sell you for a little gain; by ill servants, by unthrifty children; by thieves, or soldiers, or the raging flames; by restraining the dew of heaven, and causing your land to deny its increase, and make you complain that you have laboured in vain. How many ways hath he in a day or an hour to scatter all the heap of wealth that you have been gathering, and to show you that by sad experience, which you might have known before at easier rates! At the least, if he meddle not with any thing that you have, yet how quickly can he lay his hand upon yourselves, and lay you in sickness, to groan under your pain and sin together! and then what comfort will you have in the world! When headaches, and backaches, and nothing can ease you; when pain and languishing make you weary of day and night, and weary of every place, and weary of your best diet, your finest clothes, your merriest companions; where then is the sweetness and beauty of the world? Then if you look on house, or goods, or lands, how little pleasure find you in any of them! Especially when you know that your departure is at hand, and you must stay here no longer, but presently must away; oh then what a carcass will all the glory of the world appear! and how sensibly then will you read, or hear, or think of these things, that now in your prosperity are very little moved by the hearing of them!

Is it your children that you set your hearts upon, in inordinate love or care? Why, alas! how quickly can God call them from you by death! and then you will follow them to the churchyard, and lay them in the grave, with so much the sadder heart, by how much the more inordinately you loved them.

And perhaps God may leave them to be graceless and unnatural, and make that child, by rebellion or unkindness, to be the breaking of your heart, whom you most excessively affected. If it be a wife that you overlove, you know not but they may fall into that peevishness and frowardness, that jealousy or unkindness, that perverseness of tongue, or other distempers, that may make your lives a very burden to you. Do you look after the favour of great ones? Perhaps you shall feel their injustice and cruelties; and God will be so merciful to you, as to cure you by the means of their frowns, who would else have been infatuated and poisoned by their favours. Is it popular applause that you so much regard? and doth it tickle you to hear of your own commendations? Take heed lest you provoke God to give you such a bitter corrective for your pride, as may make you as vile in the eyes of men, as you desired to be honourable. He can quickly give you such a prick in the flesh, or suffer such a messenger of Satan to buffet you, as shall humble you to your sorrow. Perhaps he may let you fall into some disgraceful sin, which the world may ring of to your reproach; or, if you be never so innocent, the tongues of men may make you guilty. If you be as chaste as any man, it is easy for a slanderous tongue to make you incontinent, and to lay some odious blot upon your name, which shall never be wiped off, until the Judge of the world shall justify you. If you give to the poor and other charitable uses as far as you are able, it is not hard for slanderous tongues to make you seem uncharitable and covetous. If you be never so temperate in meat and drink, apparel and recreations, it is easy for a slanderer to make you seem a proud, or luxurious, scandalous man. The weathercock is not more unconstant, nor the waves more impetuous, than the giddy, raging vulgar are. And will you repose yourselves in the thoughts of such? They that applaud you in prosperity, and when you fit their turns, will despise you in adversity, and rage against you, as if you were unworthy to live, when once you cross their opinions and desires. If you are so puffed up that you love the praise of men, perhaps God may make you run the gantlet through town and country, and suffer every venomous tongue to speak swords to your heart, and have a lash at your reputation, until you have learned to stand to God's approbation, and to account it a small thing to be judged of man.

Yea, if it be reputation with godly men that you dote upon, it is possible that the tongues even of godly men may become your scourge. Sometimes their ears lie open to the slanders that worse men have raised, and they think it no great sin to report the reproaches which they have heard from others; and sometimes, through temptations, and the remnant of their corruptions, they are ready to be the principal authors themselves. If you differ from them in any opinion in which they expect reputation themselves, or if you contradict them, or stand in the way of their sinful designs and ends, or any way diminish their honour with men, you may possibly find that you had but a slippery standing in their esteem. Even godly men in passion may offer you as base indignities as others, and may tread down your desired reputation the more successfully, by how much their credit is stronger than other men's to carry on their reports. For, if one that is esteemed godly do accuse you, the most will think they are obliged to believe it; and to say, Such or such a godly person spoke it, doth seem to many enough to warrant the spreading of the falsest reports, to your disgrace.

Or if it be your honour in the eyes of ministers, and learned men, that you inordinately regard, perhaps you may find from some of them, that their learning doth but make them the more skilful in abusing you, and the keener instruments to prick you to the heart, and to cut in pieces that reputation which you overvalued. You shall be reproached more learnedly by them than by others, and slandered a great deal more cunningly, and so with more success. They may perhaps differ from you in some points of judgment; and so may think that they do God service by proclaiming you to be erroneous, or heretical; and their own errors may persuade them that it is their duty to defame you, and accuse you of the guilt, which is indeed their own; like a man that hath a stinking breath, and thinks it not his own, but his companion's, and therefore runs out of his company, and tells him he cannot abide his breath.

It is possible also that their interests and yours may clash, and they may be tempted to tread your reputation in the dirt, as a necessary means for the maintaining of their own; especially if in a faction they find you of a party which they are engaged against, whatever you are yourselves, you must bear the reproaches of your party; and it will be crime enough to be one of that side which they abhor. And it is likely they will not want engines to execute their wrathful zeal. Perhaps they will have some nick-name of reproach for you, and join you with this or that heresy, which they perceive to be odious with those they speak to; and so they will do more by reproachful names and titles, than they could do by plain argument, or any ingenious course. At least it is likely they will not be wanting in the bitterest censures behind your back: and the hearers will think, be it never so false, that sure there is some truth in it, or else such a learned, well-esteemed man would never have reported it. So that if Satan can get but one tongue or pen of a learned man in credit to slander you, it is ten to one but he will get many hundred ears and hearts to drink in the venom, and either to believe it, or entertain uncharitable suspicions of you; and as many tongues to divulge the report (though with pretended compassion and charity) to taint the minds of others with the same infection. It may be those very learned men whom you admire, and whose esteem you are sinfully ambitious of, may be given over to set themselves against you, with the most malicious, shameless calumnies, and lay to your charge the things that never entered into your thoughts, and the things that you never did nor spoke; for a better man than you was so served, Psal. xxxv. 11, 12, "They laid to my charge the things which I knew not, they rewarded me evil for good, to the spoiling of my soul." Thus did "false witnesses rise up against him, even such for whom he had humbled his soul, and mourned in their affliction, and behaved himself to them as his brethren and friends;" yet, saith he, ver. 15, 16, "In my adversity they rejoiced and gathered themselves together, yea, the abjects gathered themselves together against me, and I knew it not, they did tear me, and ceased not; with hypocritical mockers in feasts, they gnashed upon me with their teeth."

Object. But is it possible that godly men can be guilty of such things as these?

Answ. Through the remnant of their corruptions, and the power of temptations, even learned, godly men may be made the powerful instruments of Satan, to shatter and destroy your reputation for ever, (on earth,) and make even countries and kingdoms to believe that of you, from generation to generation, which never entered into your soul; and by their means, if you were persons of so much note, you

might be recorded in history to posterity, as guilty of the crimes of which you were most innocent, yea, much more innocent than the reporters themselves. So that it will be the work of Christ, at the day of judgment, to clear the names of many an innocent one, that hath gone under the repute of a heretic, a proud, malicious man, an adulterer, a deceiver, and a mere unconscionable and ungodly person, even from age to age, and that among the godly themselves, by receiving the slander at first from some one that had the advantage to procure a belief of it. It is like it was a seeming godly man that had been David's "own familiar friend, in whom he trusted, and which did eat of his bread," Psal. xli. 6, 7, 9. Yet was he used in this kind by such. And he saith, "It was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me, that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him: but it was thou, a man, mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked to the house of God in company," Psal. lv. 12—14.

Object. But (perhaps you may think) I will walk so carefully and innocently, that no man shall have any matter of such reproach.

Answ. 1. There is none of the imperfect saints on earth that can be free from giving all occasions of reproach. 2. And were you perfectly innocent, it would not free you. Nay, your innocence itself may be the occasion of those reports that proclaim you wicked. For it is not that which really is a fault, but that which they think so, that is the matter of such men's accusations. The apostles of Christ that walked in such eminent holiness and self-denial, and consumed themselves for the good of others, could not escape the tongues of slanderers, but were accounted as the very scum and offscouring of all things, and as a by-word, and even a gazing-stock to angels and men. And the blessed Son of God, who was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separated from sinners, was yet reputed one of the greatest sinners, and crucified as such. And he that could challenge them, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" was commonly defamed of what he was innocent of. If John came fasting, they say he hath a devil. If Christ eat and drink temperately with sinners, that he might take opportunity to feed their souls, they say, "Behold a man gluttonous and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners," Matt. xi. 18, 19. They that saw him eat and drink with sinners, had so fair a pretence to raise their reproach, that they might the easilier procure belief, though it was perfect innocence in itself which they reproached. The best men on earth have ever had experience, that there is no caution that can defend from a slanderous tongue. As Erasmus, once calumniated, saith, *Fatalis est morbus calumniandi omnia. Et clausis oculis carpunt, quod nec vident, nec intelligunt: tanta est morbi vis: atque interim sibi videntur ecclesiæ columnæ, quam nihil aliud quam traducant suam stoliditatem, pari malitia conjunctam*, &c. Leg. Eras. Epist. ad Alphons. Valet. de annuli sui sigillo. How oft was good Melancthon fain to complain, that there is no defence against a quarrelsome, slanderous tongue; and the too much sense of it did almost break his heart.

Object. But at least I can say as the philosopher; If they will reproach me and speak evil of me, I will so live that nobody shall believe them.

Answ. Wherever there be men to make the report, there will likely be enough to believe it. And if they that know you will not believe it, yet that is but a few to the most of them abroad that hear of you, and know you not.

You may see then by this time, if reputation with men be the thing you overvalue, what a vain, uncertain thing it is; and how easily God can make your sorrow arise, even from thence where you expected your vain applause.

And you will find by experience, if you do not prevent it, that while you overvalue this or any earthly thing, you are in the road to these afflictions. It is God's ordinary dealing with his children, and frequently with others, to punish them by their idols, and to make them sickest of that which they have most greedily surfeited of. Could you but crucify the world, and use it for God, it would have no power thus to vex and crucify your minds. It is you that sharpen it, and arm it against yourselves, and give it all the strength it hath, by your overvaluing and overloving it. It is like a spaniel, that will love those best that beat him; but if you cocker it, it will fly in your faces.

Object. But I may fall under all these afflictions whether I love the world or not.

Answ. 1. But your perverse affections do provoke God to multiply such afflictions. Had you not rather bear a smaller measure, and taste of a cup that hath less of the gall? 2. And if you were but crucified to the world, the same afflictions would be as nothing to your mind, which now seem so grievous to you, and cast you into such vexations and discontents. If it did as much to your flesh, it could not reach the heart; and if all be sound and well within, it is no great matter how it is without. The very same kind of afflictions, whether it be poverty, sickness, slanders, or other wrongs, are as nothing to a man that is dead to the world, which seem intolerable to unmortified men. For the heart and soul of the unmortified are the seat and subject of them; when the mortified christian hath a garrison within, and bolts the door, and keeps them from his heart. What great trouble will it be to any man to part with that which he doth not care for? especially while he keepeth that which hath his heart. It is no great trouble to a worldling to want the love of God, or communion with him, nor to be without the life of grace, nor to lie under the burden of the greatest sins, and to be the slave of the devil; because he is dead in sin, and dead to God, and the things of the Spirit, and therefore he perceiveth not the excellency of them, but is well content to live without them. And if spiritual death can make men so contented, without the great invaluable treasure, and can make men set light by God and glory; what wonder if they that are dead to the world do set as light by such inconsiderable vanities? And if the dead in sin can bear so easily the greatest misery that man on earth is ordinarily capable of, as the slavery of the devil, the guilt of sin, the curse of the law, the danger of damnation, &c.; what wonder then if they that are crucified to the world can bear a little poverty, or sickness, or reproach? which is to the other but as the prick of a pin, or the scratch of a thorn, to a deadly poison, or a stab at the very heart.

3. But yet this is not all. Your inordinate love of any thing in the world, will not only imbitter your lives, but it will be the horror of your souls at death and judgment. And therefore, as ever you would leave the world in peace, and as ever you would appear before the Lord your Judge with comfort, and as ever you desire that the creatures should not be your tormenters, take heed that you do not overlove them now, but see that they be crucified to you. You cannot possibly be sensible now, what a pang of horror it will cast you into at the last, when you shall see the world leaving you, and see what it was that you ventured your souls and their everlast-

ing welfare for. Oh with what grief and tearing of heart do earthly-minded persons part with the world! When you are dying, that one thing that had your heart, will more torment your hearts to remember it, than all things else will do. Nothing is such a terror to the thoughts of a dying, covetous man, as his money, and lands, and worldly wealth. Nothing so vexeth the ambitious, as to think on that shadow of honour which he did pursue. Nothing doth so torment the filthy fornicator, as the remembrance of that person with whom he committed the beastly sin. All other persons or things in the world will not then be so bitter to you, as those that stole your hearts from God. But at judgment and in hell, the remembrance of them will be a thousandfold more bitter. And who would now prepare such misery for themselves, and glut themselves with that which they can no better digest or bear? What wise man would not rather be without the drunkard's cups, than be fain to spew it up again, and part with it with so much sickness and disgrace? And why should you desire to be drunk with the profits or pleasures of the world, when you know beforehand, with how much shame and trouble of conscience you must cast it up again at last?

4. But yet this is not the worst; but if you will needs live to the world, you must take it for your portion, and look not for any more. And therefore as ever you would not be deprived of your hopes of eternal life, and be put off with the earthly portion of the wicked, see that the world be crucified to you, and you to the world. How poor a portion is it that worldlings do possess! Even like Nebuchadnezzar, that had his portion with the beasts, Dan. iv. 15. How soon will all their portion be spent! and then they will feed with swine, yea, and be denied these very husks. For "they are set in slippery places, and are brought to desolation in a moment," Psal. lxxiii. 18—20. Oh how much better a portion might you have had, if you had not refused or neglected it when you had your choice! Methinks in your greatest pleasures and abundance, it should astonish your souls to think, This is my portion, I shall have no more. When you are past this life, and entering into eternity, then where is your portion? Alas, saith conscience, I have had it already! I cannot spend it and have it too! You know what you have now; but what shall you have hereafter to all eternity? Your portion is almost spent already, and what will you do then? Oh then, to think that the eternal glory of the saints might have been yours, it was offered as freely to you as them, but you have lost it by preferring the world before it, and that after a thousand convictions of your folly. Oh what a cutting thought will this be! To remember that you chose your "good things in this life," will be a sad remembrance when all is gone, Luke xvi. 25. "The Lord is the portion of his saints' inheritance," Psal. xvi. 5; "even their portion for ever," Psal. lxxiii. 26; "their portion in the land of the living," Psal. cxlii. 5; and this was it that encouraged them to labour, patience, and hope, Psal. cxix. 52; Lam. iii. 24—26. But for the worldling, "The heaven shall reveal his iniquity, and the earth shall rise up against him, the increase of his house shall depart, and his goods shall flow away in the day of wrath. This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed to him by God," Job xx. 37—39.

If you can be content with such a portion, make much of the world, and take your fleshly pleasures while you may. But if you hope for the everlasting portion of believers, away with the world, and crucify it without any more ado, and set your hearts on the portion you hope for.

SECTION XX.

Having said as much as is suitable to the other parts of this discourse, to persuade you to be willing to crucify the world, I shall next give some directions to those that are persuaded, and tell you by what means the work may be done. And I beseech you mark them, and resolve to practise them.

Direct. 1. Observe and practise the direction intimated in the text. It is the cross of Christ that must crucify the world to you. It is thither therefore that you must repair for help. An infidel may fetch such weapons from reason and experience as shall wound the world, and diminish his esteem of it, and make it less delightful to him; but it is only the cross of Christ that can furnish us with those weapons that must pierce it to the very heart. Or if the unbeliever were deprived of all earthly delight, and brought into despair of ever receiving more comfort from the world, (as it is with many of them in some extremity, and with all at death,) yet he himself is not crucified to the world. Though his delight in it be gone, yet his love to it is not gone. Though he be out of hope of ever having content in it, yet his desires after it are the same. If he call it vanity and vexation, as the believer doth, it is because it denieth him his desires. Not because he takes it heartily for an enemy, but for an unkind lover, that dealeth hardly with him that hath given it his heart. If he look upon it as dead, and unable to help him, yet doth he behold it as the carcass of a friend, with grief and lamentation. It is his greatest trouble that the world cannot give that which he would have. And therefore he is trying what it will do for them as long as he hath any hope. As the poor infants in Ireland lay sucking at the breasts of the corpses of their mothers, when the Irish papists had slain them, so will these poor worldlings still hang upon the world, even when they find that it cannot help them; and when it will scarce afford them a miserable life, but with much labour and suffering they hardly get a little food and clothing. So that their affections are still alive to the world, even when to their sorrow they look on the world as dead or almost dead to them.

But the cross of Christ will teach you to crucify the world in another manner. As Christ did voluntarily contemn it, and show that he set so little by it, that he could be content to be the most despicable object upon earth in the eyes of men, so will he teach you also voluntarily to contemn it; and set up yourselves as the butt, which all the arrows of malice and despite shall be shot at. So that though you have naturally a desire of the preservation of your lives, and from that may say, "Father, if it be thy will, let this cup pass from me," yet shall you have a far greater desire of pleasing, enjoying, and glorifying God, which shall cause you from a comparative judgment to say, "Yet not as I will, but as thou wilt." Much more shall you be enabled to despise the unnecessary matters of the world, and to mortify your inordinate and distempered affections. The cross of Christ will show you reason, (though such as the worldly wise call foolishness,) even such reason as none but a teacher come from God could have revealed, for the leading up your affections from the world; and it will point you to the higher things that do deserve them. This cross is the truest ladder by which you may ascend from earth to heaven. When in this wilderness, and as without the gate, you are lifted up with Christ on the cross of worldly desertion and reproach, you are then in the highest road to glory, and if you faint not, shall be lifted up

with him into the throne. "For if you suffer with him, ye shall also reign with him," Rom. viii. 17. "And to him that overcometh he will grant to sit with him in his throne, even as he also overcame, and is set down with his Father in his throne," Rev. iii. 21.

And as the cross of Christ is teaching, so also is it strengthening. As the touch of his garment staid the poor woman's issue of blood, so will a touch of the cross by faith even dry up the stream of your inordinate affections, that have run out after the world so long. When a worldling mourneth over the dead world, as having lost his chiefest friend, the cross of Christ will cause you to rejoice over it as a conquered enemy, and to insult over the carcass of its vain glory and delights. For it is one thing to have an angry God by providence to kill the world to us, and another thing to have a gracious Father by his Spirit to crucify us to the world, and the world to us, by the changing of our estimation and affections.

Set therefore a crucified Christ continually before the eye of your souls. See what he suffered for your adhering to the creature; and what it cost you to loose you from it, and bring up your souls again to God. Can you still wait upon the world, and entangle your affections in its painted allurements, when you consider that this is the very sin that killed your Saviour, and which the blood of his heart was shed to cure? Look up to that cross, and see the fruits of worldly love. If you see a man that hath surfeited on unwholesome fruits, lie groaning, and gasping, and trembling in pain, and at last must die for it, you will take heed of such a surfeit yourselves. It was we that took a surfeit of the creature, and the Lord, that saw there was no other remedy to save our lives, did by a miracle of mercy and wisdom derive upon himself the pain and trouble, and groaned, and sweat, and bled, and died for our recovery. And will you feed and surfeit again upon the creature?

Look up to that cross of Christ, and see the enmity of the world unto your Head. And will you take it for your friend? See how it used him: and will you expect that it should deal contrarily with you? Did it hang him up among malefactors; and will it set you on a throne, or dandle you in its lap? Did it pierce his side; and will it heal your wounds? Did it reach him gall and vinegar; and will it reach you milk and honey? If it do, yet trust it not; for the milk is but to prepare you for that sleep, in which it may destroy you without resistance; for you must next expect the hammer and the nail, as Jael used Sisera, Judges iv. 19, 21.

There is not so clear a glass in all the world, in which you may see the world in its just complexion and proportion, as the cross of Christ. There you may see what it is worth, and how to be esteemed, by the estimate of one that never was deceived by it, but had a perfect knowledge of its use and value. When you have so long beheld that cross by faith, as that you can be contented to be hanged between heaven and earth, and become the most forlorn and despicable creature in the eyes of men, and to be stripped of all the comforts of life, and life itself, for the sake of Christ, and for the invisible kingdom, which by his cross was purchased for you; then are you thoroughly crucified to the world, and the world to you by the cross of Christ.

Direct. 2. Be sure that you receive not a false picture of the world into your minds; or if you have received such a one, see that you blot it out; and think of the creature truly as it is. The most are deceived and undone by misapprehensions. As if a man should dote on an ugly harlot because of a painted face, or because he seeth a beautiful picture, which is falsely pretended to be hers. The world in itself is vanity and insufficiency; as opposite to God, it is poison and enmity to us. But most men conceive of it as if it were the very seat of their felicity, and so are enamoured of they know not what. If men did not entertain false apprehensions of God, and his holy ways, as being against them, or hurtful to them, or needless and uncomfortable, they could not be so much against them as they are. And so if they did not entertain false apprehensions of the creature and the ways of sin, they could not be so much for them, nor embrace them with so much delight. For they draw in their fancies some odious picture of the blessed God, and his ways, and therefore they are averse to them. And so they draw in their fancies some alluring picture of the world, and make it seem to be what it is not; and therefore they admire it. So that the right way to rectify your affections, is first to rectify your conceptions. I would not have you think worse of the world than it deserves, but only persuade you to judge of it as it is. Do not dream of a palace in the air, and then be enamoured of the matter of your dreams. You think the world is some excellent thing, and will do some great matters for you, and that they are happy men that abound with its riches, and honours, and delights. I beseech you, sirs, return to your wits. I told you before, that those that have tried the world think otherwise of it. They that have seen the utmost that it can do, do shake the head at it, as the blind unbelievers did at Christ, when they saw him hanging on the cross. Why then should you be of so differing a mind? Come nearer, and consider what is it that you admire: is it not the great deceiver of the nations? the bait of the devil, by which he angles for souls? If you should fall in love with a post that were drest in the finest clothes, it were a disgrace to your understandings. And what course should we take to quiet and rectify the mind of such a lover, but even to undress the post, and take off all the bravery, and show it you naked? and when you see it is but a post, methinks you will not be fond of it any more. Do so then by the world, which you more foolishly admire. It is clothed with riches, and honours, and delights; it is adorned by its followers; there is such running after it and courting it, that you think, sure all this ado is not for nothing. But take off all these befooling gauds, and strip it of these ornaments, and then see how you like it. But perhaps you will say, How should I do that? Why, 1. Consider frequently of how little moment these things are to you. You have matters of everlasting life or death, salvation or damnation, to look after; and what are riches or vain pleasures to these? These are not the things that must denominate you happy or unhappy. You do not stand or fall by them. They are but by-matters, that are promised you as an overplus, so far as shall be fit; but your life or death consisteth not in them. Should a man that must be for ever in heaven or hell, and hath but a little time to determine which it must be, should such a man spend that little time about riches and pleasure? Can you have while at the door of eternity, to hunt after the delights of the flesh, and study after the prosperity of this world? Why do not dying men do so then? Why do they not bargain, and deceive, and contrive for their lusts and worldly accommodations? No, they have then no list to them, then they have other things to think of. And why not now as well as then? O remember how little matter it is, whether you go poor or rich to the grave. This is not your concernment; and therefore let it not take you up, unless you will wilfully neglect yourselves.

2. And then forget not the brevity of your worldly possessions. Remember whenever they are presented to you in their beauty, that all this will be but for a little while. The veriest beggar in the town, that is not a fool, had rather be as they are, than to have a house full of gold till to-morrow, and then to be stripped of it all again. Remember the pleasures of sin are but for a season: by that time the feast is done, you are as hungry as before: by that time you have done laughing, the matter of your mirth is turned into sorrow, and the jest is cold, and the game is at an end. The hour is almost come already, wherein you shall say of all your pleasure, it is past and gone. And will you trouble yourselves, and ruin your poor souls, for such a fleeting, transitory thing? Will you be at so much cost and labour to build a house, that before you have finished it, will be spurned down by death in a moment?

Oh that you would but still think of the world as it is, and take off the gloss, and wash away the painting which deceiveth you, and look on it naked, as shortly you shall do; and then it could not have that power to bewitch you, as now it hath: but you would see that your interest lieth not in it, and that you have greater matters that call for your regard: and this is the way to crucify you to the world.

Direct. 3. The crucifying of the world doth very much depend upon the crucifying of the flesh. For I have told you before, that the flesh is the master idol, and the world is but its provision, and the devil's bait. And therefore it is the life of carnality that is the life of the world in you. When men have an appetite that must needs be satisfied, and must have the meat and drink which it desires, and it is as much to them to deny their appetites, as if it were some great and weighty business: these beasts are far from crucifying the world. For they must needs look after provision for these appetites. He that must have the sweetest morsels, and the pleasantest drink, must needs look after provision to maintain it. And he that hath a proud, corrupted mind, that must needs be clothed with the best, and placed with the highest, and keep company with the greatest, or the idlest and merriest companions, this man doth think that he must needs have provision to maintain all this. No man doth admire the world, but he that judgeth by his fleshly interest, and is a slave to his sensuality. Set reason in the throne; let faith illuminate and advance it; subdue your inordinate sensual desires; and then the world will wither of itself. The servants will hide their heads, or comply, if the master be once conquered. Nay, you may then press the world upon a better service. Remember that your sensual appetite was made in order to the preservation of your natures, and to be ruled by reason; if therefore it would become the predominant faculty, and would take up with its own delights as your end, and would rebel against its guide and master, it is time then to use it as a rebel should be used, and with Paul to buffet it and bring it into subjection. And if you can do this, the work is done. It is a childish, if not a brutish thing, and below a man, to be captivated unto sense. It is the content of the higher faculties, that are the pleasures of a man: the pleasing the throat is common to us with the swine. It is the basest spirit, that makes the greatest matter of sensual things; and so must be drowned in unprofitable cares, what he shall eat or drink, or wherewith he shall be clothed. What matter is it to a wise man, whether his meat be sweet or bitter, or whether his drink be strong or small, or whether his clothes be fine or homely; or whether he be honoured, or derided, or past by; save only as these things may have relation to greater things; and as the body must be kept in a serviceable plight; and we must value that capacity most, in which we may best do our Master's work. Keep under the flesh, and you will easily overcome the world: otherwise you strive against the stream. While you have unmortified, raging appetites, and corrupted fancies, and sensual minds, you are biassed to the world; and if the rub of a sermon or sickness may turn you out of your way a while, the bias will prevail, and you will quickly be on it again. If you dam up the stream of these unmortified affections, they will rage the more: and if you stop them for a while by good company, or some restraint, yet they will shortly break over all, and be more violent than before. All your striving by ways of mere restraint, are to little purpose, till the flesh itself be subdued. It is but as if you should strive with a greedy dog for his bone, and with a hungry lion to bereave him of his prey: be sure they will not easily part with it. It is the case of many deluded people, that have some knowledge of Scripture, enough to convince them and tip their tongues, and strive to restrain them from their sensual ways, but not enough to mortify the flesh and change their souls. Oh what a combat is there in their lives! The flesh will have its prey, and pleased it must be. Their conscience tells them, It will cost thee dear. Their flesh like a hungry dog is ready to seize upon that which it desires; and conscience doth as it were stand over it with a staff, and saith, Meddle with it if thou dare. And sometimes the poor sinner is restrained; and sometimes again he ventureth upon the prey, and he that hath condemned himself for his sin, doth turn to his former vomit, and once more he must have his whore, or his cups; and then conscience takes him by the throat and terrifieth him, and makes him forbear a little while again. And thus the poor sinner is tossed up and down, and Satan leads him captive at his will; and because he findeth a combat within him, he thinks it is the combat between the flesh and the sanctifying Spirit; when alas, it is no more but the combat between the flesh and an enlightened conscience, assisted with the motions of common grace, which because they resist and trample under foot, their condemnation will be the greater. Would you then have the boiling of your corruptions abated? Put out the fire that causeth them to boil, or else you trouble yourself in vain. Mortify the flesh once, and get it under, and scorn to be a slave to a sensual appetite, but let it be all one to you to displease it as to please it; and leave such trifles as pleasant meats, and drinks, and dwellings, and fine clothes, to children and fools that have no greater things to mind; and use the flesh as a servant to the soul, supplying it with necessaries, but correcting it if it do but crave superfluities. Do this, and you will easily crucify the world. For the world is only the flesh. For saith John, "All that is in the world is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and pride of life, which are not of the Father, but of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever," 1 John ii. 16. Remember that he that saith in my text that he is crucified to the world, doth say also, Gal. v. 24, that "they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts." This is to kill the world at the root, (for it is rooted in the fleshly interest,) when otherwise you will lop off the branches, and they will quickly grow again.

Direct. 4. Be sure to keep your minds intent upon the greater matters of everlasting life, and all your affections employed thereupon. Diversion must be your cure; especially to so powerful and transcendent an object. Be once acquainted with heaven by

a life of faith, and it will so powerfully draw you to itself, that you will be ready to forget earth, and take it as a kind of nothing. Get up to God, and fix the eye of your soul on him; and his glory will darken all the world, and rescue you from the misleadings of that false fire that did delude you. Come near him daily, and taste how good he is; and the sweetness of his love will make you marvel at them that think the world so sweet; and marvel at yourselves that you were ever of such a mind. You cannot think that the world will be cast out of your love, but by the appearance of somewhat better than itself. You must go to heaven therefore for a writ of ejectment. You must fetch a beauty, a pleasure from above, that shall abase it, and silence it, and shame its competition. What is earth and all things in it, to him that hath had a believing, lively thought of heaven? Nothing below this will serve the turn. You may think long enough of the troubles of the world, and long enough confess its vanity, before you can crucify it, if you see not where you may have something that is better. The poorest life will seem better than none; and a little in hand will be preferred before uncertain hopes. Till faith have opened heaven to you, as being the evidence of the things invisible, and have showed you that they are not shadows but substances, which the promise revealeth, and believers do expect, you will be still holding fast that little which you have; and you will say with your hearts, as some do with their tongues, I know what I have in this world, but I know not what I shall have in another. But the knowledge of God will soon make you of another mind. Let in God into the soul, and he will fill it with himself, and leave no room for earth and flesh. Learn what it is to walk with him, and to have a conversation in heaven, and it will cure you of your earthly-mindedness, Phil. iii. 18, 19. There is no consistence between earth and heaven. All men are either earthly or heavenly-minded. None therefore but the truly heavenly believer hath crucified the world. But because I have said more of this elsewhere, I now forbear.

Direct. 5. Understand well the right use and end of creatures, and make it your business accordingly to improve them. I have told you before that they are all for God, and glasses wherein we may see his face, and books in which we may read his name and will. Look after God in them; and never come to a creature, without either an actual, or at least an habitual, intending of God as the end thereof. Judge that creature unprofitable wherein you receive not somewhat of God, or do not somewhat for him by it. Take not up with lower thoughts and uses of it. It is one of the commonest and greatest sins, (and, I doubt, with most professors of religion,) to use the creature for themselves, and to overlook God in his works and in their mercies, and so to profane them and turn them into sin. Do you understand what is meant by this, that "to the pure all things are pure;" and that "all things are sanctified to us?" All should be holy to holy men. To be holy is to be separated unto God from common, base, inferior uses. If you yourselves are separate to God, all creatures will be sanctified to you; they will be the messengers of God, the revealers of his will, and his remembrancers to your souls; and you will use them accordingly (in that measure as you are sanctified). As we call the temple and utensils of God's worship holy, because they are devoted to God for his special service; so may we call our meat, and drink, and land, and houses, our corn, and grass, and every plant and flower holy, (in their places,) when the sanctified soul doth read his Maker's name upon them, and admire, and fear, and love him in them, and study how to use them for himself. You will confess that he is a profaner of holy things indeed, that can read over the Scriptures and never observe the name of God in it, or else regard it but as a common word, and use that book but as a common book. Though I do not equal the creatures with the Scriptures, in clearness or fulness of discovering the will of God, yet seeing that it also is one of his books, (and that more legible and glorious than some unobservant wretches do believe,) I would entreat all that fear God to lay this more to heart; and to consider for the time to come, whether it be not profaneness, even flat profaneness, to use God's works as common and unclean, and to overlook him, who is the life, and sense, and glory of them? And whether it be not a sin that we are all too guilty of, to take up with selfish, carnal uses, of almost all the works of God, when we should still use them all to higher ends? I fear this great unholiness in our using of the world and all therein, is little bewailed in comparison of what it ought to be. Some christians are apt enough to hearken to their privileges and titles of honour given them by the Lord; but they consider not all these are for God, and therefore oblige us to answerable duty. Study well those highest titles that are given you in 1 Pet. ii. 5, 9, "You are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." And what is a spiritual house for, but the habitation of the Lord, and the performance of his service? And surely these holy priests must fetch their sacrifice from all the creatures that are fit for sacrifice. And verse 9, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that you should show forth the praise of him that hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." And must not a people so holy, and peculiar, adore and hallow the Lord in his works? Though you be not called to minister at his altar, you are called to see him, and sanctify him in his creatures, and in all that you have to do with. God's works are part of his name, and therefore see that you take not his name in vain. You are brought nearer him than the rest of the world; and therefore remember that he will be sanctified of all that draw near him. You have learned in point of receiving to rise with Peter, kill and eat; and not to call that common which God hath cleansed: see that you learn it also in point of duty, and in regard of the use of the creatures which you receive; and take them not as common things, for common, fleshly uses only, as common men do; but remember that they are cleansed, and that you profanely devour them, further than God is intended in them.

By this time you may perceive that the crucifying of the world is your truest exaltation and improvement, and that it is so far from being your loss, as that it will prove your greatest gain. I would commend it to you all that desire to live a life of holiness, that you would make it your daily care and study to sanctify your very trades and worldly labours, and all the mercies and matters of your lives. For it is not a bare contempt of the world that will serve. If you should sleep out your days, and never think of the world, or if as melancholy men you should be weary of your lives, because of the vexatious miseries of the world, all this is little to christian mortification. But if you can see and taste the goodness, and greatness, and wisdom of God, in every thing you have or do, this is the using the world aright.

Quest. But how should a man get his soul to that frame to carry on his calling in order to God, and to see him and intend him in all that we have or do?

Answ. To despatch it in a word, thus: 1. Be sure that God be habitually your end in the main. For if you take him not for your portion, and intend him not habitually in the drift of your lives, you cannot rightly intend him in particulars. 2. Make it your every day's prayer to God, before you go about the labours of your calling, that he would give you hearts to seek him in all, and would watch over you, and save you from insnaring temptations, and remember you of himself, and give him somewhat of himself by his creatures, and sanctify them all to you. 3. Keep up a godly jealousy of your hearts, lest they should abuse the creature, and seek it and use it more for your carnal selves than for God. If God be jealous, it is time for you to be jealous of yourselves. Especially when the sin is the most common, and radical and destroying sin. 4. Before you go about your callings, bethink yourselves how you may improve them for God. Find out his interest, and study how to promote it; and how to improve all that he gives to that end. And renew your particular intentions of God, in the midst of your work. 5. When you receive or use any creature, consider it both as a mercy and as an obligation unto duty; and as you will not run over the Bible by bare reading, without considering what is the meaning, but will endeavour to take the sense as you go; so do in your callings and about all the creatures; think with yourselves, Here is now a lesson in my hands, if I can but learn it. Here is somewhat that may show me both God himself and my duty, if I could but skilfully open it, and understand it. And so bethink yourselves, what it is that God would teach you or command you by that creature: and especially, to what use he requireth you to put it. And remember, that if you should think of God all the day long, and yet not intend him, and refer your labours and your riches to his service, and give them up to his use, this is not sanctifying God in the creature, but hypocritical abusing of him. For it is not all thinking of God that will serve the turn. 6. As you use to take account of your servants, how they do your work, so I would advise you every night, or as often as you can, to take an account of yourselves, as you are the servants of the God of heaven, and ask your consciences, What have I done this day for God; and how have I observed and sanctified him in his work? So much for the fifth direction.

Direct. 6. Remember always that the world is the enemy of your salvation, and that if you be damned, it is like to be through its enticement; and therefore labour to be always sensible that you go in continual danger of it. And this will make you use it as an enemy, and walk in a constant fear lest it should overreach you. And see also that you endeavour as clearly as you can, to find out wherein its enmity doth consist; and then you will perceive that it is especially in seeming more lovely than it is, as it is the fuel of concupiscence, and the provision of the flesh. And when you understand this, you will perceive, that your danger lieth in overloving it, and that it killeth by its embracements: and this will direct you which way to bend the course of your opposition, and what you must do to be saved from its snares. To call the world an enemy is easy and common; but so far as your very hearts apprehend it as an enemy, so far you are out of danger of it: an easy enemy, that is conquered by understanding that it is an enemy! and the way of its conquest is, by enticing men to take it for a friend.

And also remember, how great a part of your christian life consisteth in keeping up the combat with this enemy, and how certainly and miserably you will perish if you be overcome.

Direct. 7. To be much in the house of mourning, and see the end of all the living, will help us towards the crucifying of the world. Go among the sick, and hear what they say of the world. Stand by the dying, and see what it will do for them; and think now, whether God or the world be better. Look on the corpses of your deceased friends, and think now whether the soul be ever the better for all the riches and pleasures of the world. Take notice of the graves and bones of the dead, and think what a worthless thing is the world, and all the glory and delights that it affords, which will so turn us off, and leave our bodies in such a plight as that. Take notice of the frailties and diseases of your own flesh, that tell you how shortly it must lie down in the dust: and then compare this world and that to come, where your abode will be everlasting. It is a shame for a wise man to live as a stranger to so great a change, and to look so much after a world that he is leaving, and so little after the world that he shall abide in.

Direct. 8. It will much avail to the crucifying of the world to you, that you study the improvement of all your afflictions. Do not repine at them, and think them a greater evil than they are; but believe that they are a special advantage to your soul, for the mortifying of your inordinate affections to the world; and if you have but the wisdom and hearts to make use of them, they may do you more good than all the prosperity of your lives hath done. If you fall into poverty, or fall under slanders or reproach from men; if your friends prove false to you; if those that you have done good to prove unthankful; if the wickedness and frowardness of men do make you even weary of the world; remember now what an advantage you have for mortification. When you have experience itself to disgrace the creature to you, and your very flesh doth seem to be convinced; now see that you observe the teachings of this providence, and come off from the world, when you see it is so little worth; and set as light by it as it doth by you. Bethink you now that God doth this to lead you to himself; and thankfully accept his call, and close with him as your portion, and be content with him alone, and let them take the world that can get no better. You see that adversity will make even a worldling speak hardly of the world, as men will do of their friends when they fall out with them. How much more should it help the gracious soul to a fuller sense of its vanity and nothingness, and of the necessity and excellency of more certain things. It is a great sin and folly in us, that we strive more to have afflictions removed than sanctified, and so we lose the gain that we might have got. Though affliction alone will do little good, yet grace doth make such use of affliction, that thousands in heaven will have cause to bless God for them, that before they were afflicted went astray, and were deceived by the flatteries of the world as well as others. Abundance that have been convinced of the vanity of the world, have lingered long before they would forsake it, until affliction hath roused their sleepy souls, and by a louder voice hath called them away.

Direct. 9. Be very suspicious of a prosperous state, and be more afraid of the world when it smiles, than when it frowns. Some are much perplexed for fear lest they should not stand in adversity, that too little fear being insnared by prosperity. They are afraid what they shall do in a time of trial, and do not consider that prosperity is the great trial. Adversity doth but show that love of the world which was in men's hearts in time of prosperity. When men forsake Christ for fear of suffering, and

because they will not forsake the world, they do but show the effects of that disease, which they had catched long before. When the world pleased them, they fell so deep in love with it, that now they will venture their souls to keep it. It is prosperity that breeds the disease, though adversity show it. Love not the world, and you will easily part with it, and so will easily suffer for Christ; and prosperity is liker to entice your love to it than adversity. This is a great reason why worldly prosperity and true holiness do so seldom go together; and so few of the great ones of the world are saved. Oh how hard is it to have the world at will, and not to be insnared by it, and overlove it! How hard is it heartily and practically to contemn a prosperous condition! How hard to have serious, lively thoughts of the great things of eternity, and serious preparations for death and judgment, when we have health, and wealth, and all the accommodations which our flesh doth desire! Satan knows this well enough; and therefore he is willing that his servants shall have prosperity. He knows that it is not the way to get him servants, to beat them and use them hardly, but to please them by flatteries, and fulfil their lusts, that they may be enticed to imagine his service to be the best. It is the custom of harlots to set out themselves to the best, and to adorn themselves for the tempting of their lovers; and not to go in a homely dress, which no one will be taken with. No wonder then if Satan, the pander of the world, do adorn it with the best clothes, and present it to you in the most enticing garb he can. "If the lips of this harlot did not drop as a honeycomb, and her mouth were not smoother than oil," she could not lead such multitudes to "her end, which is bitter as wormwood, and sharp as a two-edged sword; her feet go down to death, her steps take hold of hell, lest men should ponder the path of life," Prov. v. 3—6. And it is no wonder that God, to save his people from this delusion, doth dress the world to them in a coarser attire; and when he seeth them in danger to be enamoured of it, as well as others, if he present it to them in the rags of poverty, and in the scabs of its corruption, confusion, and deformity, that they may see the difference between it and their home.

It is strange to see how highly prosperity is regarded by the most! how earnestly they desire it, pray for it, or contrive it! and how much they are troubled when they fall into adversity! when yet they know, or say they know, that the love of the world is the bane of the soul, and that it killeth men by deceiving them. Can you keep your affections as loose from the world, when you have houses and lands, and all things at your will, as you could if it were otherwise? Remember, I beseech you, that the poison of the world is covered by its sweetness, and that it killeth none but those that love it. Be suspicious therefore that there is danger where you find delight. If your estate be such as is pleasing to your flesh, believe it is not likely to be safe to your souls. If therefore your health, your wealth, your honours, be such as your flesh would have them; if your houses, your accommodations, your things be suited to your carnal desires; believe it, your souls are in no small hazard; and therefore look about you as you love your salvation, and fear the snare. The great enemy of your souls hath not baited his hook with so curious and costly a bait for nothing. The cautelous fish that is afraid to swallow, yea, or to taste, or to come near, till he knows what is under it, doth save his life, when that which boldly ventures, and fearlessly devoureth the bait, is destroyed. It is not for nothing that Solomon chargeth the man "that is given to his appetite, to put a knife to his throat at a feast, and not to be desirous of the dainties which are deceitful," Prov. xxiii. 1—3. "A prudent man foreseeth the evil," even when it is covered with the pleasantest bait, and "so he hideth himself," and escapeth, when the "simple passeth on and is punished," Prov. xxii. 3. It is part of the description of the sensual apostates, in Jude 12, that in "their feasts they feed themselves without fear." And it is as dangerous a thing to clothe yourselves without fear, to seek after wealth and honours without fear, to possess your houses and lands without fear, to see any thing that is carnally pleasing to you, or hear your own praises, without fear. When other men must needs have things to their will, do you study your duty, and let the will of God be your will; and if he give you a plentiful estate without seeking it, or give you reputation and the praise of men without your affecting it, receive them not without fear: think with yourselves, What a snare is here now for my soul! Though it be good in itself, and as it comes from God, yet what an advantage hath the deceiver here against me! How easily may such a carnal heart as mine be enticed to the inordinate love of these, and to be more remiss about higher and greater things, and to be forgetful or insensible about the matters of my endless state! How many men of worldly wisdom, yea, how many that seemed religious, have been thus deceived and perished before me! Yea, this is the common road to hell! And is it not time for me then to look about me? The old christians were so jealous of the world, and afraid of being mortally poisoned by its delights, that they sold what they had, and gave to the poor, and voluntarily thrust themselves into poverty, as thinking it better to go poor to heaven, than to say in hell that once they had riches. I commend not any extreme to you, for indeed I have ever thought that it is greater self-denial to devote and use our riches for God, than at once to cast them away or shut our hands of them; and that he is a better steward that improveth his master's stock, than he that rids his hands of it, out of an injurious fear of his master's austerity. But yet I must say that the other extreme is more common and more dangerous. And they that out of excess of fear, betook themselves to poverty and to wildernesses, were in a far better case than many that seem now to be zealous professors, and yet are looking after the pleasures, and riches, and glory of the world! I have many a time wondered at some eminent professors, that are as constant and seraphical in the outside of duty, even to admiration, as almost any I know, and yet as closely and busily grasping at the world, and labouring to be rich, as if they were the wretchedest worldlings on earth. I have oft wondered how they can quiet their consciences, and how they make shift so constantly to delude such knowing souls. The country sees them drowned in earth, and the generality of their godly friends lament them, as mere hypocritical earthworms; and yet because they can carry it on smoothly, and not be noted for any palpable oppression or deceit, they wipe their lips, they bless themselves, and with gracious words would cloak their covetousness, as if men did but uncharitably censure them, because they cannot prove them to be such deceivers; when yet the very bent and course of their lives proclaimeth them worldlings to almost all men but themselves, who by the just but heavy judgment of God, are given over to that blindness, as not to see that damnable sin in themselves, that the enemies of religion see with scorn, and their most impartial friends do see with lamentation; but seeing it, are not able to remedy: for worldliness is the com-

monest badge of a hypocrite; and where there is a false heart at the bottom, and but a hypocritical faith, and a hypocritical love to God and the life to come, there will be no effectual resistance of the world; but all exhortations do come upon so great disadvantage with such souls, that usually they are lost, and leave them as they find them. If any covetous, scraping earth-worm, whether he be gentleman, tradesman, or husbandman, do feel his conscience at the reading of this begin to stir, I beseech him (if there be any hope of such hypocrites) to hearken to it in time, and regard a little more the warnings of his friends, and not to be so stiffly confident of his innocency; nor yet to think himself free from heinous, gross, and scandalous sin, as long as he is a covetous worldling! If covetousness be idolatry, and the sin of those with whom we may not so much as eat; and if the covetous shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven, and be such as the Holy Ghost doth join with thieves and the vilest sinners; who then but an infidel can think it is not a scandalous sin, and such as will be the damnation of all that be not thoroughly cured of it? See Ephes. v. 5—7; 1 Cor. v. 10, 11; Psal. x. 3; 2 Tim. iii. 2; 2 Pet. ii. 14; Luke xvi. 14; Mark vii. 22; Jer. viii. 10; vi. 13. David prayeth God to "incline his heart to his testimonies, and not to covetousness," Psal. cxix. 36. And now men think they may be inclined to both, and that they have found out the terms of reconciling heaven with earth and hell. I marvel these men will not see their own faces, when the prophets and Christ himself do hold them so clear a glass! "They come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them; for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness," Ezek. xxxiii. 31. "He that received seed among the thorns, is he that heareth the word, and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful," Matt. xiii. 22. I know the men that I am now speaking of have many excellent gifts, and in other respects do seem the forwardest for godliness in the country; but the more is the pity, that men of such parts should be rotten-hearted hypocrites, and damned for worldliness, after so much pains in duties; for a heathen may as soon be saved as a worldling. When they have prayed, and preached, and cried down profaneness, let them hear what the Lord saith to them, Luke xviii. 22—24, and there see again their faces in that glass: "Yet lackest thou one thing," even such a one as none can be saved without, even a love to God and heaven above earth. "Sell all that thou hast and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come follow me. And when he heard this he was very sorrowful, for he was very rich. And when Jesus saw that he was sorrowful, he said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!"

Set not then so high a value on a full estate. "Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have;" and trust yourselves on the security of his promise, who hath said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee," Heb. xiii. 5. It is not for nothing that Christ himself hath given you so many and so terrible warnings to take heed of this sin. As Luke xii. 15, "Take heed and beware of covetousness; for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things that he possesseth." As if he should say, While you think you are securing your well-being, you do not secure your being itself. When you have done all to provide for the delights of your life, you are never the surer of life itself. Read the following passages in the text, and let them warn you or condemn you. If such admonitions as these will not take, from the mouth of him whom you call your Lord, and from whom you profess to expect your judgment, what have we then further to say to you, or how should our warnings expect entertainment with you? Yet I shall do that which is my duty, and leave the success to God. I do therefore again in the name of God, advise and warn you to take heed of having too pleasant thoughts on a prosperous state. Long not after fulness and plenty in the world. Be not too eager for accommodations to your flesh. A coffin of two yards long will shortly hold it, and be room enough for it. And will nothing but well-built houses, adorned rooms, the neatest clothings, and plentiful possessions, serve you now? How sad a mark is this of a soul that never had a saving taste of the everlasting riches! Away, foolish children, and stand not building houses with sticks and sand! Home with you to God, and remember where you must dwell for ever! When you have feathered your nests, and made them as you would have them, you must leave them before you are well settled and warm in them. And if it comfort you to think that you leave them to your children, remember that you leave them the fruit of your sins, and bequeath to them the snares that undid your souls, that so they may become the heirs of your wickedness, and be deceived and destroyed by the world, as you have been. This is your great care for them; and this is your kindness to them. I have told you once already from God, that "this your way is your folly, though your posterity be like to approve your sayings," because you do so much to make them of your mind, Psal. xlix. 13. For though "your inward thoughts be that your house shall continue," and you hope to leave a name behind you, yet "man being in honour abideth not, but is like the beasts that perish. When he dieth he shall carry nothing away, his glory shall not descend after him; though while he lived he blessed his soul, and men praise them that (thus) do well to themselves; yet shall they go to the generation of their fathers, and shall never see light. Man that is in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish," ver. 11, 12, 17—20. Though "the ungodly prosper in the world and increase in riches," yet he that "goeth (believingly) into the sanctuary, may see their end. Surely they are set in slippery places, and cast down into destruction. How are they brought to desolation as in a moment, and consumed with terrors!" Psal. lxxiii. 12, 17—19. "And in that very day do all his thoughts perish," Psal. cxlvi. 4. "Then shall they eat the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices; for the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them," Prov. i. 31, 32.

See then that you be not eager for prosperity; and if God cast it on you, use it with fear. And if ever you feel the creature begin to grow too sweet and delightful to you, then spit it out as the poison of the soul, and presently take a mortifying antidote before you are past remedy. As you feel the working of poison by its burning or griping, or other effects agreeable to its nature, by which it seeketh the extinguishing of life; so you may feel when the world is poison to your souls, by its creeping into your affections, and insinuating into your hearts with present delight, or future hopes; by seeming more lovely and more necessary than it is. As soon as ever you feel it thus creep into your hearts, it is time to rise up against it with holy fear, and to cast it out, if you love your souls.

And that which I would advise you at present,

when the world hath got too deep into your hearts before you are aware, is this: Do something extraordinary in such a necessity, for its crucifixion and your recovery. Though a careful diet may serve to preserve health while you have it; yet if you have lost it, and sickness be upon you, you must have recourse to physic for your cure. If honour, or preferment, or house, or land, or friends, or gain, or recreations begin to seem too sweet and dear to you, and your hearts begin to hug them with delight, or make out after them with keen desires, you must now have recourse to extraordinary helps; and in particular, try these following: 1. Withdraw yourselves to some more frequent and serious meditation of the brevity and vanity of the world, than you have been used to: steep your thoughts longer in mortifying considerations, until the bent of your hearts begin to change. 2. Be ofter with God in secret and public prayer, and give up a larger portion of your time to holy things, than ordinarily you have done; that acquaintance with heaven may wean your mind from earth; and the love of God may drown your worldly love. When you have taken any extraordinary cold, you will get nearer the fire than ordinary, and be longer at it, and drive it out by heating things. And when the world hath insinuated into your affections, and chilled and cooled them to God and heaven, it is time to draw nearer God than before, and to be longer with him; and to strive harder in every duty than you did, until spiritual life do work more vigorously, and expel that earthly distemper which had possessed you. 3. And at such a season let prayer be furthered by fasting and extraordinary humiliation; which may help down the flesh which causeth you so much to overvalue the world. Even an Ahab found some ease by a common humiliation, when he had taken a mortal surfeit of Naboth's vineyard and his blood. Much more may a true christian find much help by special humiliation, when he hath surfeited on any creature whatsoever. 4. And I think it would be a very good course at such a time as that, to be at some more cost for God than you were before. When you feel your love to the world increase, give somewhat extraordinary then to the poor, or to pious uses, according to your ability. Yea, what if it were so far as might a little pinch yourselves? This were a real opposition to the world, and you might turn a very temptation to a gain, and get much good by occasion of a sin. It might do much to dishearten and repel the tempter, when he seeth that you overshoot him in his own bow, and make such use as this of his temptations, as to do the more good, and use your wealth the more for God, and deny yourselves more than you did before. If you would but faithfully practise these few directions, you would find it the surest way of recovery when you begin to be infected with this earthly disease.

Direct. 10. The last direction that I shall give you for the crucifying of the world, is this, Be sure to keep off the means of its livelihood, and keep it still under the mortifying means. Lay siege to it, and stop up all the passages, by which the world's provision would come in; and keep it still under the strokes of enmity, and the influence of that which is contrary to it. Some particulars I will but briefly mention.

1. Keep a constant guard upon your senses; for this way the world creeps into your hearts. It is by gazing on alluring objects, or hearing, or tasting, or the like, that the flames of concupiscence are kindled in the heart. By gazing upon beauty or comeliness of person, the heart of the wanton is infected with lust, and so incited to the damnable practices of uncleanness. The sight of the cup doth set an edge on the desires of the drunkard; and the sight of enticing meats doth awaken and enrage the appetite of the gluttonous: and by the presence of the bait their disease is set to work, as worms in the body are by some kind of food. Clemens Alexandr. saith of these men, that their disease is called λαιμαργία, that is, madness about the throat. And γαστριμαργία, that is, a madness in the belly. And saith of them that are given to fulness or fineness of diet, for the displeasing of their bellies, that they are ruled by a belly-devil, which, saith he, is the worst and most pernicious of all devils. Cl. Alex. Pædag. l. 2. c. 1. (The whole book is worth the reading by such.) Lay siege then to this belly-devil, and starve him out. It is by the side of gaudy fashions, and curious apparel, that the minds of vain, effeminate persons are provoked to desire the like. And the sight of pomp and honours doth kindle the fire of ambition; and the sight of buildings, money, and lands, doth help to provoke the desire of the covetous. See therefore that you always keep a watch upon your eyes. Let them not run up and down like a masterless dog, nor roll as the eyes of the lascivious, that are hunting after the prey of lust. If you have cause to pray as David, Psal. cxix. 37, "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity," you must practise according to your prayers, and endeavour yourselves to turn them away. Have not the best of us as much reason as Job to "make a covenant with our eyes?" Job xxxi. 1. What wonder if the garrison surrender not where the besieged have free passage and continual supplies? And what wonder if the house be robbed, where the doors stand always open, and all is common to every passenger? Be sure then to keep a constant guard upon your eyes, your appetites, and every sense, or else the world will not be crucified. Let not your eye move but by the conduct of your reason. At least let it not fix upon any object, until reason give it leave. Taste not a bit of meat or a cup of drink, until you have advised with right-informed reason, and be able to justify what you do. Take an account of all that entereth at the door of any of your senses. For he that must give an account to the living God, had need to keep account himself.

2. Keep also a constant guard upon your thoughts as well as upon your senses. As the thoughts will tell you what is in your hearts, so they will let in whatsoever bribeth them to consent. The fancies of men are the garden of the devil, where he soweth and watereth the plants of impiety. Yea, they are a principal room in which he doth inhabit. It is certain that the devil hath readier access to the fancy than to the heart; and that it is his shop in which he forgeth most vices, and doth a very great part of his work. An unclean spirit possesseth the fancies of the unclean, so that their thoughts are running upon lustful objects. And they are guilty of the filthiest cogitations within, when they seem to be of the chastest behaviour without; and do frequently commit fornication in the heart, when fear or shame doth restrain the outward practice, and cover their iniquity. The malicious person is possessed by a spirit of maliciousness that dwelleth in his fancy, and sets him on contrivances of cruelty and revenge, and filleth his mind with thoughts of hatred and disdain. The same spirit reigneth in the fancies of the proud, and setteth them upon contrivances for the advancing of their names, and causeth them to thirst after the reputation of the world, and filleth them with the troubled, malicious thoughts of Haman, when they miss of their expectations. The earthly spirit possesseth

the fancies of the covetous, and setteth them on contrivances for increase of their estates. Do you not feel by sad experience, how many of Satan's assaults are made upon your cogitations, and how much of his interest lieth there, and how much of his work is there done? As ever you would be crucified to the world, then, set a watch upon your thoughts, and keep a daily and hourly account of them, and see that they be always under the government of faith and reason. Your thoughts should be kept chaste as the entrance into your hearts, and not be as common harlots entertaining every comer. If you feel your thoughts stepping out upon lust or malice, look after them betimes, and call them in, and check them sharply, and lay a charge on them hereafter to be more pure. If you find that they are running with Gehazi after the prize, and are making out after the provisions for the flesh, recall them and correct them, and bewail this evil before the Lord, and let your watch be stricter for the time to come. Believe it, your hearts will be such as are your thoughts. The flies that lie upon sores, or dung, or carrion, and the worms that are bred in them, will be of the nature of that corruption themselves. If you would have your hearts clean, and humble, and heavenly, let your thoughts be clean, and humble, and heavenly. If you will let your thoughts run on the objects of lust, you will be lustful: and if you will think on the enticements of pride, you will be proud: and if you will let out your thoughts on the profits of the world, no wonder if it steal away your hearts. Saith the Lord to the covetous and unmerciful, Deut. xv. 7—9, "If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates, thou shalt not harden thy heart, nor shut thy hand from thy poor brother; but thou shalt open thy hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need in that which he wanteth. Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand, and thy eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought, and he cry unto the Lord against thee, and it be sin unto thee. Thou shalt surely give him, and thy heart shall not be grieved, when thou givest to him; because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto. For the poor shall never cease out of the land; therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thy hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy in the land." Besides the main drift of the text, mark how we are commanded to beware that a thought of unmercifulness enter not into our hearts. And when Christ doth so vehemently dissuade his followers from this damning sin, he doth it by setting a law upon their thoughts: "Why take ye thought?" &c. Matt. vi. 25, 27, 28, 31, 34. "Take no thought," &c Luke xii. 22, 26. "If the unrighteous man forsake not his thoughts," he will not forsake the "evil of his way," Isa. lv. 7. As you love your souls, then, look to your thoughts, and keep them under the government of the Lord. Would you be free from a vain and sensual mind? "How long then shall your vain thoughts lodge within you?" Jer. iv. 14.

3. And see also that you make not worldly-minded men your companions. While they savour nothing but earth and flesh, they will have no savoury discourse of any thing else; and their discourse is like to be infectious to your minds. As a stews is not the best place to preserve you from uncleanness; nor an ale-house the best place to preserve you from drunkenness; so the company of worldlings is not the best place to preserve you from worldliness; where you shall see or hear little but earthly things, and heavenly matters can find no room. It is not the safest place to fight against the devil in the midst of his own army, but in the army of Christ.

On the other side, be sure that you keep under mortifying means. Attend to the lively preaching of the word, which will disgrace the world to you, and be still drawing your hearts another way. Be much with God in secret prayer, and be much above in heavenly meditation; and dwell upon those thoughts which lay the world naked to you, and show it you in its own complexion. If death and judgment be seriously in your minds, it will waken you from these fleshly dreams, and prick the bladder of your airy minds, and let out that wind which puffed you up, and kept out the things of God and glory. Converse also as much as you can with the most heavenly people, whose discourse, and prayers, and daily examples will help to draw up your minds to God, and to affect them with things that nearlier concern you, than all the profits or pleasures of the world.

I have now told you how you should crucify the world, and be crucified to it; but which of you will be so happy as to practise these directions I cannot tell. I have brought you the armour and weapons by which this mortal enemy must be conquered; but it is not in my power to give you courageous hearts to use them. I can certainly tell you what a safe and comfortable life you might live, if you had but this enemy under your feet; and what an easy and happy death you might die, if you were first dead to the world: but to make you so happy is not in my power. I can foresee the certain damnation of all unconverted sensualists and worldlings, and how sad a farewell they must shortly take of all their felicity; but to prevent it is not in my power. For I cannot make you willing to prevent it. It is a greater work than bare information that is here to be done. If it were but to give the world a few contemptuous words, and to call it vanity and a worthless thing, I should make no doubt of prevailing with the most; but to kill it in your hearts is a harder work; and with some kind of men it prospers most when it is hardliest spoken of. It is easy to tell a man why and how he should lay down his life for Christ if he be called to it; but there is more to be done before it will be practised. Until a heavenly light possess your minds, and show you the better things to come, and assure you of more to be had in Christ, than the world can afford you, I cannot look you should lose your hold, nor that a hundred sermons should make you willing to seek the death of that which hath your heart. Sense is tenacious and unreasonable; when you have knocked it off a hundred times, yet still it will be sense, and will be eager after its delights again. Some will be still thinking that mortification and heavenly-mindedness is so rare a thing, that God will be more merciful than to condemn all that are without them; and some will be inconsiderate and senseless, when the clearest reason is set before them; and will venture their salvation rather than become dead to all their worldly lusts and hopes. So that with sorrow I must say, that now I have said all, and delivered my message, I fear the most will still be the same, and reject the counsel of God to their perdition. For this is a grace that accompanieth salvation, and therefore will be the portion only of the heirs of salvation. Though our heart's desire, and prayer, and endeavour must be that the professed Israelites may be saved; yet we must take up our comfort shorter, that the elect shall obtain it, though the rest are hardened. For it is God's will, and not ours, that must be done. If

Christ be satisfied in the salvation of his little flock, as seeing in them the travail of his soul; even so must we; and though as Samuel did over Saul, so we may mourn over the rest that God hath forsaken, yet that sorrow must know its reason and its measure. For my part, I must needs say to you, that though it may seem a high, extraordinary thing to some of you, for a man to be crucified to the world, I have no more hope of the salvation of any of you except it shall be thus with you, than I have of the salvation of Cain or Judas. And as great and wonderful a work as this is, if ever God mean to save your souls, it will be done on you. I shall therefore, according to my duty, beseech you to review and practise the directions which are given you, and to use the world as the heirs of heaven, that have laid up their hope and treasure there. But if you will not hear and take warning, it is because the Lord will destroy you, and because you are not the sheep of Christ, 2 Chron. xxv. 16; 1 Sam. ii. 25; John x. 26, 27.

SECTION XXI.

Use last.

I HAVE been all this while persuading and directing you to be crucified to the world, and the world to you. I doubt not but God hath done this work already upon the souls of many of you, even upon all that truly believe in a crucified Christ. To such therefore I shall next address my speech; and in general, this is my earnest request to you, That you would use the world as a crucified thing, and as men that are crucified to it should do. I will not lengthen this discourse in using many motives to you. One would think that which way ever you look, you should have forcible motives before your eyes. If you look downward on earth, you may see enough to wean you from it; and if seeing will not serve, your most wise and gracious Father will make you feel, and put the case beyond dispute. If you look upwards, you may perceive a better and more enduring substance, and an inheritance so much the more glorious and enduring, as should suffice to take your minds from earth. If you look within you, what footsteps of the Spirit may you there trace, what graces in act and habit may you find, which are all at mortal enmity with the world! You may read there a law engraven upon your hearts which condemneth the world to subjection and contempt; and many an obligation you may there find, wherein you are deeply bound against it. For I hope you have not cancelled them all, and forgot all the promises which you made to God. All your professions, and all your blessed privileges and hopes, do engage you to another world, and to the hearty renouncing and forsaking of this. You say you are crucified and risen with Christ. If you be, then seek the things that are above; set your affections on the things that are above, and not on the things that are on earth. For you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life shall appear, then shall you also appear with him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are on earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness which is idolatry; for which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience, Col. iii. 1—7. It doth not beseem the members of a crucified Christ to be earthly-minded; nor the members of a glorified Christ to set their minds on things so low. It ill beseems the heirs of an incorruptible crown of glory to make too great a matter of these trifles. It is the enemies of the cross of Christ, and not those that are crucified with him, whose God "is their belly, and who glory in their shame, and who mind earthly things;" but the saint's conversation must be in heaven, from whence it is that he expecteth his Saviour to change his vile, earthly body, and make it like to his glorious body, Phil. iii. 17—21. If indeed you have laid up your treasure in heaven, where rust and moth corrupt not, and where thieves do not break through and steal, let it then appear by the effects. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be; and where your heart is, that way the labours of your lives will tend. I shall reduce my exhortation to some particulars.

1. If you are crucified to the world, be sure that you seek it not, nor any thing in it, for its own sake; but only as a means to higher things. The sincerity of your hearts doth lie much in this, and the life of your souls depends much upon it. Labour in your lawful callings and spare not, so you exclude not your spiritual work: it is not your labour that we find fault with: but if the creature be the end of any labour, you may better sit still, and spare your pains, or rather speedily change your intentions. If you overtake the hastiest traveller in his journey, and ask him why he takes all that pains; he will not say it is for love of the way that he travelleth in, but for love of the place to which he is going, or the persons or things which he there expects: so must it be with you, if you are the heirs of heaven. I blame you not to be glad of a fair way, and to love it rather than a foul one: but it is not for the love of the way that you must travel. He that runs in a race, doth not bestow all that pains for the love of the path which he runs in, but for love of the prize which he expecteth at the end. And he that plougheth and soweth, doth it more for the love of the crop which he hopeth for, than for love of his labour. He that saileth through the dangerous seas, performeth not his voyage for love of the sea, or of his ship, but for love of the merchandise and gain which he seeketh. The carrier that goeth weekly to London with your wares, doth not take all that pains for love of the carriage, or of the way, but of the gain which he deserveth. So must it be with you, in all your worldly business. When you seek for credit, or pleasure, or maintenance in the world, it must not be finally for the love of these, but for the end which they are given for, and which your hearts and lives and all must be devoted to. Your hearts will as soon deceive you in this as in any thing, if you do not watch them with jealousy and diligence. How quickly will the heart begin to love the creature for itself, that seemed once to love it but for God! Look in what measure you love your wealth, your houses, your recreations, your friends, for themselves, and because they accommodate the flesh; so far you wrong God, and abuse them to idolatry.

And if your love do begin in greater purity, if you be not watchful it will quickly degenerate to a carnal love. Many a scholar that at first desired learning to fit him for the service of God, and his church, doth by suffering carnality to insinuate and prevail, lose much of the purity of his first affections, and in time grow more cold and regardless of his first ends, and loveth common learning merely for itself, and for the delight of knowing, or (which is worse) to get him a name among men.

It is common with them that need recreation for their health, when they set upon it, as they think, but to fit them for their duty, to fall in love with it afterwards, to the perverting of their hearts, the wounding of their consciences, the wasting of their

time, and the neglect of that work of God for which it should be used.

We should take our meat, and drink, and clothes, but to strengthen and fit us for the service of our Master: but how quickly do we turn them to the gratifying of our flesh, and to the service of another master!

It is too frequent for young persons of different sexes to love each other at first as christians only, with a chaste and necessary love; but when they have been tempted awhile to an imprudent familiarity, their love doth degenerate, and that which was spiritual becometh carnal, and the serpent deceiveth them to the corrupting of their minds, and it is well if it proceed not to actual wickedness, and the undoing of each other.

Many a poor man thinks with himself, If I were but out of debt, or could but live so as to serve the Lord without distractions, and had such and such necessities supplied, I would not desire any more, or care any further for the world. But if their desires be granted them, they find themselves entangled, and their hearts deceived, and they thirst more after fulness, than before they did after necessaries. And many a one thinks, I care not for riches or honours, but only to do good with, and if I had them I would so use them. But when they have their desires, the case is altered: the flesh then hath need of it, and can spare for God as little as other men, because it loves it better than before, and pretendeth to have more use for it than formerly it had.

Watch therefore over your deceitful hearts, and be sure to keep up the love of God, and actually intend him in all that you have or do; and be not withdrawn to carnal affections.

2. If you are crucified to the world, be not too eager for it. As God hath promised it you but as an appendix to your felicity, and as an overplus to the great blessings of the covenant, so must you desire it but as such. And as God hath promised it you but with certain limitations, so far as he shall see it good for you, and agreeable to his greater end; so you must desire it with such limitations. I observe many to have so much reason as to put up their prayers for outward blessings with these limitations, and will not for shame express themselves in absolute, peremptory language; when yet there is apparent cause to fear, that they limit not their desires as they do their words, nor do they submit so freely to the disposal of God in their hearts, as they seem to do in their expressions: and so make their words modest whilst their desires are inordinate; their language to be chaste, while their hearts are committing adultery with the world; their expressions are pious, while their affections are idolatrous; and so their prayers are made monstrous, while the soul of them is so disagreeable to the body. Be ashamed and afraid to desire that which you are ashamed and afraid to ask. You dare not say to God in your prayers, Lord, I must needs have a fuller estate: I would fain be rich and be somebody in the world: I cannot live contentedly in poverty: food and raiment will not serve turn, unless I fare deliciously, and be clothed neatly, and be set by in the world, and unless I may leave prosperity to my children when I am dead and gone. If you dare not say thus, do not dare to desire or think thus. Mr. Robert Bolton, that holy, learned divine, doth use among the heinous, damning sins, to reckon this, a desire to be rich. And if we hearken to the Scripture, we shall find that it is not without good cause. Prov. xxiii. 4. the command is, "Labour not to be rich." And Prov. xxviii. 20, "He that maketh haste to be rich, shall not be innocent." The Syriac renders the word "malignant," and the Arabic, "the wicked," which we here translate "he that hasteth to be rich." And they must needs be the same men when the apostle saith, "The love of money is the root of all evil," 1 Tim. vi. 10. Therefore saith Paul, "They that will be rich, fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition," 1 Tim. vi. 9. By this word, "they that will," or "are willing to be rich," is meant, they whose wills are set upon it, and are in love with it, and fain would be rich. Is it fitter for God or you to determine how many talents you shall be intrusted with? Do you long to have more duty, and danger, and a double account? It is true, you may desire the success of your labours; but not for the love of riches, nor with an unmannerly, peremptory desire. It is true, also, that you must be thankful for prosperity if God give it you: but as it must be with a holy jealousy, so it is as true that you must be thankful also for adversity, when God sends it; though not for itself, yet for the good that it may conduce to; and therefore saith James, i. 9, 10, "Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted, but the rich in that he is made low." And Job could say, "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord," Job i. 21.

3. If you are crucified to the world, then let it not have power to crucify you, by putting you upon inordinate cares or sorrows. Will you vex your brains with contriving for the world, and weary your mind with tearing cares, and walk in sorrow because you have not your desires? and yet say that you are crucified to the world? Are the dead so solicitous? or is a carcass to be so much valued? Your passions and endeavours will proclaim your excessive estimation of the world, when you have never so long in words professed your contempt of it. Alas! how many that seem to know better, do almost distract their minds with cares, and entangle themselves in a life of so much misery, as a wise man would not like for all the world! If they want any thing, what trouble are their minds in till their wants be supplied! If they be afflicted with losses, or wrongs, or contempt, they are troubled as if they had lost some great or necessary thing. A crucified world could not make such a stir in your minds; but doubtless it is so far alive as it thus affecteth you. The Lord Jesus hath himself made so full and moving a sermon to his disciples, against the cares of the world, Matt. vi.; Luke xii. that it is a double sin to christians to be still so careful and earthly-minded; and I know not what to hope for from that man that will not be moved with such words as these from the Lord himself. And yet how many professors have I known that have tormented themselves with cares and sorrows, yea, and cast their bodies into diseases by it, and many of them have died of it, and some it hath brought beside their wits: so observable is that of the apostle, 2 Cor. vii. 10, "The sorrow of the world worketh death," even temporal and eternal, unless we be delivered by undeserved grace. Bear all conditions then with an equal mind, and let your passions show that you are crucified to the world.

4. If you are crucified to the world, then let it not thrust out the service of God, and be made an excuse for a negligence in religion. How rare are holy meditations in the minds of many that think themselves religious! And it is worldly thoughts that thrust them out, and worldly businesses that are the common excuse. How formal are many in the instructing of their families! How seldom and how coldly do they exhort their children or servants

to make ready for death, and make sure of their salvation! How coldly and cursorily are family prayers and other duties slubbered over! And all is because they have other things to mind. The world will give them leave to do no more. The decay of zeal and diligence in family duties is the common symptom, and cause too, of the destruction of knowledge and godliness in the land. And all is because the world is master, and must be served before God. The business of the world doth seem to them the principal business, and must first be done; and all thoughts and talk of heaven must stand by, till the world will give them leave to enter. Men cannot have time to call upon God and instruct their families, because they have their worldly works to do. Go into the families of most noblemen, knights, or gentlemen in England, and see there whether God or the world be most regarded and looked after. Perhaps they may civilly yield an ear while a chaplain makes a short prayer among them: but if you look after heavenly-mindedness, and seriousness in religion, and zeal against sin, and diligence to help to save the souls that are under their charge, how little shall you find! Do they earnestly persuade their servants to study holy things? And do they examine them about their everlasting state, and call them to account of what they learn from the public ministry? Do they show a vehement hatred for sin, and go before their families in a heavenly conversation? Alas! how thin are such families as these! No, no; they are so taken up with entertaining their friends, and pampering their flesh, and in compliments, and in worldly affairs, that they have little time for heavenly work. And if they do for fashion sake get a godly young man to be their chaplain, he is so wearied with the sensual courses of some, and the scorns of others, and the vanity, and worldliness, and negligence of the rest, that his life is a burden to him, and he can no more enjoy himself in such families, than in a fair, or popular tumult. On the other side, poor men are in so much want, that they think themselves sufficiently excused for the neglecting of almost all the means of their salvation. They think necessity lieth upon them, and therefore that God will not require it of them, to understand the Scriptures, nor to labour after eternal things. Christ telleth them that "One thing is needful," and would have them choose the better part, which shall not be taken from them. But they believe not Christ, but hearken to their flesh; and it telleth them that it is another thing that is needful, and persuadeth them to choose the worser part, which will shortly be taken from them. Christ biddeth them "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth to everlasting life," John vi. 27. But *venter non habet aures:* the flesh understandeth not such exhortations: a greedy appetite is the reason that it judgeth by. A hungry belly is not filled nor quieted with arguments. They must have their present wants supplied, let what will become of their immortal souls. And thus the rich have so much to look after, that they cannot have while to be diligent for their souls; and the poor have so much to seek after, that they cannot have while; and so the world abuseth them that have it, and that want it: as if two men that had forfeited their lives, were travelling to London for a pardon; and the one goeth so fair a way, that he forgets his business and sitteth down picking flowers in the way; and the other meets with so foul a way, that he thinks he is excused, because he must take heed of being wet or dirtied.

O sirs, if the world be crucified to you, how can it have such power over you, as to cause you to neglect your greatest Lord and your immortal souls? If indeed you are dead to it, and alive to Christ, let it be seen in your families, and be seen in all your duties and conversation. Let the greatest persons that enter into your families, attend the worship of him that is greater, or let them not be attended. Neglect them that will neglect the service of God. Remember that the fourth commandment requireth you to see that the sabbath be sanctified, even by the stranger that is within your gates, as well as by yourselves and the servants that are in your houses. If you have carnal gentlemen at your table, or are at theirs, do not be yourselves so carnal as to be ashamed of holy discourse in their presence, or to suppress any speech that may tend to edification, and to the honour of your Lord. Let them all know that you have greater matters to do, than to attend and honour them, and that you have a Master that must be pleased whoever be displeased.

Take heed also that the world do not cause you to neglect the opportunities which are before you for your own advantage. Miss not a sermon which may be profitable to you without neeessity. Miss not the help of private instructions and conference, and other edifying sacred duties, without neeessity. Omit not any of your secret addresses to God, without necessity. And take nothing for a neeessity, but that which is at that time a greater duty than that which you do omit. I know that works of necessity and mercy may be done even on the Lord's day, and acts of worship may be delayed on such occasions; for God will then have mercy and not sacrifice. But mercy on our own and others' souls, in seeking their relief, must not be neglected for lower things.

And look not only to the matter, but the manner of your duties, that worldliness do not destroy the life and vigour of them. Turn out all thoughts of earthly things when you approach the Lord in holy worship. Provoke not his jealousy by presenting before him a distracted mind, or lifeless careass. Oh what sleepy, frozen duties do many professors offer to the Lord, even from week to week, because their hearts are so distracted by the world, that they are to seek when God should have them!

5. If you are crucified to the world, take heed that you use no unlawful means for the procurement of worldly things. Stretch not your consciences for the compassing of such ends. Lay still before you the rule of equity; Do as you would be done by. Put your brother with whom you deal in your own case, and yourselves in his; and so drive on your bargains in that mind. If you did thus, you would not sell too dear, nor buy too cheap; you would not make so many words to get his goods for less than the worth, nor to sell your own for more than the worth. Nay, you would not take more than the worth, if by ignorance or neeessity your brother should offer it you; nor give less than the worth, though through ignorance or neeessity he would take it. The love of money hath so blinded many, that in selling they think it to be no sin to take as much for a commodity as they can get; and in buying they think it not sin to get the commodity as cheap as they can have it; never once asking their own hearts, How would I desire to be dealt with myself, if it were my own case? Nay, covetousness is the common cause that maketh most of the world cry out against covetousness. When men are like ravenous, greedy beasts, that grudge at every bit that goes beside their own mouths, they will reproach all that cross their covetous desires. If they cannot by words persuade a tradesman to sell his ware at such rates as he cannot live by, they will defame him as

a covetous, griping man; and all because he fitteth not their covetous desires: and all that will escape their censure of being covetous, must shut up their shops ere long, to the defrauding of their creditors. If a physician that hath been a means to save their lives, do demand but half his due, it being the calling which he liveth on, they will defame him as covetous, because he contradicteth their covetous desires, and would have any thing from them which is so near to their hearts. Let a minister but demand his own, which was never theirs, but is his by the law of the land, and they will reproach him, like quakers, as a covetous hireling; and if he will not suffer every worldly miser to rob him, they will defame him, as if he were sick of their disease. So far are they from the primitive practice of selling all, and laying down at the feet of the apostles, that they would steal from the church those tenths which neither they nor their fathers before them had any propriety in, any more than in the lands of any of their neighbours, as in the case of improprietors they are forced to confess. Let a man give all that he hath to the poor, and he shall be defamed as covetous, because he will not give more than all. For if he give to nineteen, and have not wherewith to satisfy the twentieth, he that hath nothing, or less than he expected, is as much unsatisfied, and as forward to speak evil of him, as if he had given to none at all. And usually so unreasonable are these covetous expectations, that you may sooner displease ten of them, than satisfy one.

Whence also comes the thievery, the lying for the sake of commodity, the overwitting and overreaching of each other, but from this sin? Whence is it that most ale-sellers and vintners will make a trade of poisoning souls, and will nourish that odious vice, which is the ruin of men's bodies, and impoverishing of their families, the dishonour of God, and the shame and danger of the towns and commonwealths in which they are committed, but only for the love of a sordid gain? And were it not more for fear of men than God, the most of them by far would make the Lord's day their chief market-day; for they care not to rob even God himself, for this unprofitable gain. And it is well if butchers, and many other tradesmen, would not do the like, if the laws of the land and the severity of magistrates did not restrain them. This is the love they have to God and eternal glory. Thus you may see whether they are dead to the world, or rather to Christ. Gehazi thought himself wiser than his master, when he went after Naaman for his prize: and Achan thought himself wiser than all Israel when he hid the gold: and Saul thought it wisdom to spare Agag and the best things from destruction. But the leprosy taught one, and the stones taught another, and God's rejection taught the third, to know that by experience which they would not learn by the warnings of the Lord. The like may be said of contentious lawsuits, the common effects of covetousness and revenge; and so of all other unlawful gain.

If indeed you are dead to the world, do not so much as tell a lie to get all the riches of the world. Remember also the commands of God: "Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him; the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night," Levit. xix. 13. And, "That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter, because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified," 1 Thess. iv. 6. And, "Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? Why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded? Nay, you do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren. Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?" 1 Cor. vi. 7—9. These lessons would be better learned, if covetousness did not stop men's ears: but it is a befooling, stupifying vice; it makes men lose themselves for gain. For as Austin saith, *Avarus antequam lucretur, seipsum perdit; et antequam aliquid capiat, capitur.* And all this for the pleasing of their fancy, that they may have more than they need. For, *Avarus est cæcus; credendo enim dives est, non videndo. Amas pecuniam O cæce, quam nunquam videbis, cæcus possides, cæcus moriturus es,* &c. Idem. And when they pretend necessity, it is but the voice of covetousness: for saith the same Austin, *Non est in carendo difficultas, nisi cum fuerit in possidendo cupiditas. Et alibi, Pauperiorem se judicat abundans; quia sibi deesse arbitratur, quicquid ab aliis possidetur: toto mundo eget, cujus non capit mundus cupiditatem.*

6. If you are crucified to the world, let us see it by your improving all for God, and not employing it to the pleasing of your flesh.

Use all that you have as men that must be accountable for them. Remember that you receive them from your master for his use. Resolve therefore so to expend and employ them, as may most further his service. Look about you, and see what good is to be done, and then consider, how far you are furnished and enabled to do it; and accordingly lay out the talents which you are intrusted with. Seek after such work; and do not stay till it be brought to your hand. If you love Christ indeed, methinks you should not stay for an invitation to do him service, nor should you need that men come a begging to you to awaken your charity, when you know before that it is a charitable and necessary work that is before you.

Two sorts of persons I would especially direct this advice to: First, To the rich and powerful in the world. Secondly, To all that are professors of religion.

For the first sort, let them consider, that their riches are snares to them, and will prove a certain means of their damnation if they devote them not to God. Tithes, and oblations, and first-fruits were devoted to God under the law; but all is expressly devoted to him under the gospel: which was expressed by the primitive christians selling all, and laying down at the apostles' feet: for as immortality is brought to light more abundantly in the gospel; so also is the means of obtaining it, and the duty which we owe to him that giveth it. And as grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, and the greatest mercies are revealed by the gospel; so the greatest holiness comes by Christ, and the greatest obligations are laid on us in the gospel; especially to self-denial, and a hearty devoting ourselves and all we have to God. I beseech you observe the distinction which Christ useth, Luke xii. 21, between laying up riches to yourselves, and being rich to God, and how dreadful the application is. If almost all your riches be expended on yourselves and yours, or laid up in store as for provision for your flesh, it is plain then that you "lay up riches for yourselves," and so are concluded by the sentence of Christ among the miserable fools that are there described. But if you are rich to God, you will study to improve your riches for God, and often bethink yourselves which way they may be employed to his greatest service. He that cannot spare his wealth for the service of his Redeemer, and the good of his brother, and the furthering of his own salvation, is very far from being crucified to the world.

2. And it is not only the great ones that have need

of this advice, but all in their places that are intrusted with God's mercies. Think not yourselves excused from the works of charity, because you have but one talent; for one talent must be proportionably improved as well as ten, or else you will be condemned as unprofitable servants. People of the lower rank do commonly think that God requireth nothing of them, but to receive what others give them, and to labour for themselves; and when they have reviled sufficiently at rich men for worldliness, they often show themselves as worldly, by denying their mites, and by unmercifulness to those that are poorer than themselves, as the richer do by denying their larger proportions.

The scarcity and defectiveness of charitable works with all sorts of men, from the highest to the lowest, even those that seem more forward in verbal devotions, do show us too evidently how common hypocrisy is, and how few are entirely devoted to God, and what a bewitching and blinding thing the world is. They that think a man utterly ungodly that doth not in the length and life of his duties go much beyond the common sort of men, do never judge themselves ungodly for not exceeding them in works of charity. In acts of piety and worship, they (justly) think, that they should not only set apart one day in seven to be wholly employed herein, but also a considerable part of every day in the week, besides their holy meditations which they mix with their common works. But how few are they that will allow God such a proportion of their estates, as besides their daily works of charity upon ordinary occasions, to devote also a seventh part entirely to his service! Though all cannot do this, yet many shall see when their eyes are opened, that they should have done more. For aught I see, the charitable works of the richest, and of too many professors of the greatest piety, are too like the pious actions of the ungodly; even seldom, and by the halves, and lifeless, and to little purpose. As the ungodly will drop, morning and night, a formal, seeming, heartless prayer, upon the by, while their minds are another way; and if you urge them to any higher and costlier devotion, instead of obeying they will cavil against it, and put it off with vain excuses, and say, God doth not require this of us, because we are not learned, and because we have our necessary labours to look after. Even so many rich men, and seemingly religious, will drop now and then a penny or an alms to the poor, and give upon the by some inconsiderable pittance, which costeth them but little, and doth no great good; but if you urge them to any greater works, you will have excuses enough, and reasonings against their duty, but little of performance. Then they have families to provide for, and their estates are but small, and God doth not require this at their hands. I wonder when God will speak so plain, for abounding in good works, as that hypocrites and worldlings will be able to understand him. This voluntary deafness is not remedied by speaking loud; nor will the common eye-salve cure him that is wilfully blind: he is always an unprofitable scholar that hateth his book. If God had spoken but the hundredth part as much in favour of their worldliness and tenacity, as he hath done against it, they could soon have heard, and easily understood it. If Paul do but tell some covetous persons, that cast their poor widows on the church for maintenance, that were of their near kindred, that "they are worse than infidels, if they will not provide for their own families, or kindred," 1 Tim. v. 8; these worldlings can find an excuse for their tenacity from such a text as this, which was meant to rebuke it: and when they have driven on a trade of worldliness, and scraped for themselves and children all their lives, and never done any considerable works of charity, they can quiet their consciences by the misapplication and abuse of such a text. They that have money to feed their pride, and revenge, and lusts, have little for God, in any good work: they will sooner spend sixpence in an ale-house than give a groat to the poor. They that have ten, or twenty, or a hundred pounds to spend in a lawsuit for revenge or covetousness, have not half so much to give to charitable uses. They will see all supposed conveniences provided for themselves, before they will supply the necessities of others. And what thanks is it to them to show their poor brethren the charity of a swine, that will leave that to others which he cannot eat himself. And yet there are multitudes that will not use this bestial charity, because their own flesh and their posterity are an insatiable gulf, that swallow up all. And what they cannot use, they will lay up for provision, lest their lust should be extinguished for want of fuel; and when their flesh hath had its fill, they may leave the rest behind them, that their children may live in golden fetters, and be gulled of their salvation, and enticed from God as well as they. Is not that man's belly his god, that will bestow a more costly sacrifice on his belly than he will do on God? If God command, and his ministers request, they are most frequently denied. If Christ require it, and his members need, and perhaps crave it, they are denied; but if the back and the belly crave, they are seldom denied. God saith, "To do good and to communicate forget not; for with such sacrifices I am well pleased," Heb. xiii. 16; and he cannot be heard, nor will they please him at such rates. The flesh saith, To pamper and provide for me forget not; for with such sacrifices I am well pleased; and it is quickly heard, and no cost and labour seems too dear. We may see where men's hopes and hearts are, by their adventures. Surely you take that for the chiefest pearl, which you are willing to give the most for! When you can lay out so little upon heaven, and so much upon your flesh, it appears which it is that indeed you most esteem. A pack of belly-gods there be in the world, that will spend more in one year in excess upon themselves, even in gluttony and drunkenness, than they will give in two years to the relief of them that need. Yea, some that would be loth to give in a twelvemonth so much to the poor, as they will spend at one feast in the entertainment of their like; or so much as they will venture on one horse-race, or one game at dice, or cards, or bowls. But these are not they that I have now to deal with; and therefore I shall speak to them in the preface more fully. It is those that confess they have all from God, and that have verbally devoted all to him again, and profess themselves entirely his servants, that I have now in hand. And with such, one would think a few words might serve, to persuade them to lay down all at his feet, and to give to God the things that are God's. I do not urge you to pine your flesh, nor to starve your children, nor to deal unmercifully with either. But consider impartially in the fear of God, whether you make an equal distribution; and when you have cast up what your flesh hath by the year, and what is laid up for the like uses for the future for yourselves and yours, and then what God hath in pious and charitable works, bethink yourselves whether you deal wisely or honestly with him; and whether this which you allow, be all that he this way requireth or expecteth.

But I suppose some ungodly, malicious hearts will make an ill use of all that I say, and will think with themselves, This toucheth the professors of

religion. They are as covetous as any, and under pretence of long prayers do devour widows' houses: after all their preaching and praying, there are none that are more cruel and close-handed, or ready to overreach and deceive, than they; nor any that are more greedy for the things of the world.

In answer to this objection, I shall first say somewhat to the professors of religion, and then shall speak to the objectors themselves.

1. You that profess the fear of God, take notice I beseech you of this accusation, and though it may show you cause to pity malicious slanderers, yet let it provoke you to search your hearts and lives, and see that you give not cause for this reproach. As for those worldly, time-serving hypocrites, whieh in all places creep in among the saints, and do but serve themselves of Christ, let them know that God will one day require an account at their hands, of all these scandals which they have caused in the church, and the ruin of poor ungodly souls that are dashed in pieces, and cast themselves into hell, by stumbling at this stone which their worldly practices have laid before them. If you would needs be worldlings, you were better have kept in the world among worldlings, than to have crept into the church of Christ, and brought thither your scandalous, worldly lives, to the dishonour of that religion which condemneth your practices and you. Did not Christ warn you to count your costs, and never to dream of being his disciples, unless you could forsake all and follow him under the cross, in expectation of a promised treasure in heaven? Is there any thing that Christ did more peremptorily require of you, than to renounce the world and deny yourselves, if you would be his disciples? And yet will you come without the wedding garment, and bring your base and earthly minds among his servants, and cause his truth, and his house and followers, to bear the reproach of your worldly baseness? I tell you, it is like to cost you dear, that you have cast this dishonour on the name of God, and caused the damnation of the impious reproachers. The wrong you have done to God and men, you shall certainly pay for in everlasting misery, unless a thorough repentance do prevent it. (And I fear it is but a few of these worldly hypocrites that ever truly do repent.) "But woe to them by whom offence cometh! It were good for that man that he had never been born."

2. And as for you that truly fear God, I beseech you let the slanders of wicked men awake you to a holy jealousy of yourselves. You see what their eye is upon. Take heed then how you walk. You hear what it is that offendeth them. As far as is possible avoid all occasions of such offence. Take heed in your bargaining, buying or selling, how you carry yourselves towards them, and what you say. If all the actions of your lives were right save one, they will reproach you for that one. If you speak but one rash or unhandsome word, they will forget all the rest, and remember that one, and traduce you, as if all were like that one. See therefore that you walk and speak by line and rule. And remember, that it is not an ordinary measure of charity and good works that is expected from you, (according to your abilities,) by God and man. "If you love those that love you, what reward have you? Do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do you more than others? Do not even the publicans so?" "But (saith Christ) I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust," Matt. v. 44—47. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven," chap. vi. 15. Your actions and words are observed and scanned more than any other men's. For malice is quick-sighted, and of a strong memory. And you "are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid," chap. v. 14. Take heed therefore that you be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life. This will not only stop the mouth of the enemies, but it will also rejoice your teachers in the day of Christ, that they have not run or laboured in vain. Yea, if they were offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, they would rejoice with you all, Phil. ii. 15—17. And for yourselves also it is necessary that you excel others in good works. "For except your righteousness exceed the righteousness even of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven," Matt. v. 20. Remember that you live among the blind. And if you stumble and fall, you know not how many will fall upon you; and if you break your shins, they that fall upon you may break their necks; and if you rise again, you are not sure that they will rise. "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, (in this world,) abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; having your conversation honest among the gentiles (the unbelievers and profane): that whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they behold, glorify God in the day of visitation," 1 Pet. ii. 11, 12. "For so is the will of God, that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men," ver. 15. "Finally, brethren, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous; not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing; but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing," chap. iii. 8, 9. And so walk, that if any obey not the word, they may yet be won by your exemplary conversation, ver. 1. As you hear more than others, so do more than others, that it may appear you build upon a rock, Matt. vii. 24, 25. And as the book of God is much in your hands and mouth, so remember that "whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. For pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep yourselves unspotted from the world," James i. 25, 27.

2. Having said this much to the godly by way of caution; I shall now make answer to the objectors themselves. You that say, There are none so cruel and so covetous as these that profess themselves so religious; if you have any moderation left, will you soberly answer me these questions following?

Quest. 1. Is it the hearts or the outward actions of these professors that you perceive this covetousness by? If it be the heart, you are slanderers, and self-idolizers. For the heart is open to none but God; and will you make yourselves gods, and that when you are playing the part of the devil? This hath been the trick of Satan's instruments in all ages. When they are not able to say of the godly, that they are swearers, or drunkards, or adulterers, or stealers, or liars, or slanderers, as they themselves are, they presently go to their hearts, which are out of sight, and say, They are covetous, and proud,

and the like. For there they know that none but God is able to justify them. But common reason might also have taught them, that none but God is there able to accuse them. For how know you men's hearts but by their professions or by their lives?

But if you say it is the life you judge by, I demand what is it in the lives of such men that proves their covetousness? If it be oppressing, deceiving, injustice, or unmercifulness, I would demand of you in the second place?

Quest. 2. Is it all or some of them that you thus accuse? If you know some few to be such, what is that to the rest? But this hath been always the trick of the malignant. If they see one professor fall, or prove a hypocrite, they cry out, They are all alike. If you could but see their hearts, they are all such. Chrysostom and others of the fathers tell us, that this was the use in their days, and no wonder if it be so still. What if there be one Cain in Adam's family? it follows not that Abel or Seth were like him. What if there were one Ham in Noah's ark? will it follow that they were all alike, or that his family was no better than the rest of the world which was drowned? What if there was an Absalom in David's family? What if there was one Judas among the disciples of Christ? Will you say therefore that all the rest were such, or that Christ's disciples were as bad as others, or his family no better than the rest of the world? But I would further ask you,

Quest. 3. Is it the course of their lives that you judge by? or is it some one particular action? He that is not blind may see, that the course and drift of their lives is less earthly, and more heavenly, than other men's. And God judgeth of a man by the scope of his life, and not by one single action; and so must we. The very bent and drift of your lives is worldly. If a man come into your family, what shall he see but worldliness? If one fall into your company, what shall he hear from you but about this? If one observe what you do from year to year, he may see that you lay out yourselves for the world. You cannot refrain upon the Lord's own day, but you are minding it, and talking of it. You savour not any other discourse. The very talk and labour that is laid out about another world is troublesome to you, and it is this that makes you dislike the godly. You cannot say so of the course of their lives. If once any of them have fallen by temptation into a miscarriage, will you judge of all their lives by that? Do they not lament and bewail it as long as they live after, and avoid it more carefully for the time to come? What if Noah were once drunk in his life, will you judge of his whole life by it, or say that he is as bad as the rest of the world? What if Lot be given over to a temptation? What if Abraham did once tell a lie, or equivocate, and Isaac do the like in a fear? What if Moses did once provoke God? What if David did once commit a heinous sin? or Peter did deny his Master in his fear? Will you either judge of all other godly people by them? or will you judge of the course of their lives by one action, which they bewail and lament as long as they live? And can you see no difference between a worldly action and a worldly life?

Quest. 4. I would further know of you, Whether you have gone to them in love, and admonished them of their sin, when you judged them to be guilty, and heard them speak for themselves? If not, either you are incompetent judges, or else you draw the guilt upon yourselves, and make the sin your own, as the express commands of God will tell you, in Lev. xix. 17; Matt. xviii. 15. If you have admonished them and they repent not, why do you not tell the pastors of the church, that they may admonish them, and seek their reformation? This is Christ's order. But you will not, you dare not do this; lest for want of proof, you be proved slanderers, and the shame of your accusations fall upon yourselves. You think that you may whisper behind men's backs, or accuse them in general, without naming any particular fact, and not be proved liars. But this will not hold long.

Quest. 5. Moreover I would know of you, when you accuse men for not being more bountiful in your eyes, Do you know of all their works of charity? Are you acquainted with their bestowings? Sure you are not. For God hath commanded them, Matt. vi. 1—4, "Take heed that you do not your alms before men, to be seen of them; otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. Therefore when thou doest thy alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do, &c. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth; that thy alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth thee in secret, himself shall reward thee openly." This command they make conscience of; and how then can you be meet judges of their alms?

Quest. 6. Also I would know, Are you certainly acquainted with their particular estates? and do you know how able they are to give? If you do not, you are no competent judges. How oft have I known men reproached for unmercifulness, and for not being more liberal, when they were not able to maintain their families, or to pay every man his own? And yet they that knew not this, did backbite them as covetous.

Quest. 7. Furthermore I would know, Are you sure it is not Satan within you that prompteth you to these accusations? Hear my evidence and judge. He is called in Scripture "the accuser of the brethren," Rev. xii. 10; and he is described to be a lying, malicious spirit. If therefore it be a lying, malignant, malicious spirit, then certainly it is the spirit of Satan.

And we have cause to believe that it is a lying spirit by these evidences following.

1. We find the word of God assuring us that the godly overcome the world, and are such as have laid up their treasure in heaven. And by the rest of their lives, we find the characters of the godly to agree more with them, than with the negligent multitude.

2. We know that their religion condemneth worldliness, and they hear, and read, and speak against it.

3. They only under God do know their own hearts; and they profess themselves contemners of the world, and heirs of a better world. And we find them at least as true of their words in other things, as any other men; and therefore having not forfeited their credit, we are bound to believe them.

4. Especially when we know that you that accuse them are unacquainted with their hearts.

5. And when we read in the Scripture and church history, that the malignant enemies of Christ and his church have in all ages used the same reproaches against his people from mere prejudice, and the words of others, and the malice of their hearts.

6. And we ourselves do live among them as well as you, and as near them as you. And we see not by them any such thing for which you accuse them. As far as we can judge, it is you that are the worldlings, and their conversation is in heaven, Phil. iii. 20, 21: excepting some hypocrites that creep in among them, as they ever have done, and will do, into the church, till Christ at judgment shut them out. Moreover we see in the course of their lives, that their speeches are more heavenly than yours,

and less of the world. They can spare time from the world to worship God in their families, and instruct those that are under their charge, which you cannot do. We see they take pains for another world through the course of their lives, which you will not do.

8. To conclude, we see by daily experience, that where you give a penny to any good use, we have many from them. I have oft wondered at the impudence of blind, malignant persons in this place. I must needs myself bear witness that in divers collections for charitable uses, we have had from those that profess religion, ten shillings and twenty shillings a man, when we have had from men that are commonly supposed richer, a shilling, or sixpence, or a groat, or not a penny. And I can witness that among them there are frequent collections for persons in distress at home and abroad, when we never mention them to the rest of the people, as knowing them so worldly that it is in vain; and we should get a scorn from them sooner than a groat, when the persons whom they reproach as covetous, will give many shillings, and that frequently time after time. And for collections at fasts and sacraments, all men may see the difference. I would not have mentioned any of these matters, but that the impudency of calumniators doth in a sort constrain me. For when of my own knowledge we have had this many years more pounds from some of them, than we could have pence from others, for the relief of the poor in voluntary contributions, yet do I frequently hear these worldlings cry out of the covetousness of the professors; as if they had brazed their foreheads, as well as wilfully shut their eyes.

Quest. 8. But yet I would further be informed of you, To what end is it that you make this objection? Is it not with a desire to have a life of holy diligence despised in the world, or thought evil of, or judged needless? Ask your own hearts, and deal sincerely. And if it be so, is not this the very work of the devil, which he hath been doing in all ages against the church, and by which he enticeth souls to hell?

Quest. 9. And I would desire you to tell me, if covetousness be among them, Whether you are able to charge it upon their religion or profession? Do they not witness against it as much as any people in the world? Doth not the Bible which they read cry it down, and threaten damnation to it? Do not the books which they read do so too? Do not the sermons which they hear and repeat, cry it down? Did you ever hear us preach for covetousness? Say so if you can or dare. There is not a greater enemy to covetousness and all other vices in the world, than Christ, and the gospel, and religion which these men profess. If then there should be covetous ones among them, what is this to religion, which teacheth them to abhor it? Will you blame the best physician and remedies that men are sick, when there is no cure but those remedies? Will you blame clothing or fire that men are cold? or eating and drinking, because men do consume by some disease? I tell you, all men naturally are worldlings; and no man can be cured of that deadly disease but only those that are cured by the religion which these men profess.

Quest. 10. And I pray you tell me, Do you think that the works in which they differ from you are good or bad? Is it good or bad to hear sermons, and repeat them for the help of memory; to pray and praise God together, and to live in the communion of saints, which in your creed you profess to believe? If you have the face to say, This is evil or needless, you accuse God himself that hath so often commanded it. If it be evil, it is long of God that so urgently requireth it, and not of them. But if you dare not say so, but confess it is good, why then do you not imitate them? What! will you forbear good, because others do evil? Will you sin against God in one kind, if they do so in another? We desire you not to join with them in evil. If they deceive, or lie, or oppress, do not you do so. But will you therefore refuse your duty to God, and therefore destroy your own souls? It is to God and not to them that your duty is necessary. It is God that commandeth it, and God you owe it to. And will you abuse God and rob him, because you have hard conceits of men? Will you abuse him, because you think they do? And who is it that will have the loss of this but yourselves? The Lord hath witnessed that without holiness none shall see God, Heb. xii. 14. And will you neglect a holy life, and shut yourselves out of heaven, and damn your own souls, because you think professors are bad! A wise course indeed! Starve yourselves because professors wear clothes, and famish yourselves because they use to eat! This is a wiser trick of the two, than to neglect or refuse a holy, diligent life, because they use it.

Quest. 11. And if worldliness be so great a sin, I would fain know of you, Whether in reason you can think that their course or yours is the way to overcome it? Dare you say that sitting in an ale-house, or talking of the world, even on the Lord's day, is a better course to overcome the world, than hearing and reading the directions of the word of God, and praying to God for assistance against the sins that they are guilty of? I see them take pains to learn those instructions that should cure them of worldliness, and are glad to fasten them in their memory; and I hear them warn each other to avoid it; and begging of God that he would destroy all the remnants of it in their souls; and I see others follow the world, and live a careless life, and use none of these means. Which of these shall I think in reason doth take the course to conquer the world?

Quest. 12. Moreover, if these men are as bad as you make them, then sure they are none of the people of God, but a pack of hypocrites; then they are not saints indeed. And then the thing that I would know of you is, Which be the saints of God if these be not; and where shall we find them? I hope you know that God hath his saints on earth, yea, that none but saints shall be saved. For it is express in Scripture over and over; Heb. xii. 14, and in many other places. As I said, the communion of the saints is an article of your creed. Tell us then where they are, if these be not they. Will you go to the quakers, or to the papists, monks, and nuns for them? or whither will you go? Or will you say, that such as you are the saints, that reproach holiness, and refuse to live a holy life? Is idle, worldly discourse a better sign of a saint, than keeping holy the Lord's day and labouring for salvation? Is ignorance of the Scripture, or neglecting it, a greater sign of a saint, than meditating in it day and night? Read the first Psalm, yea, all the Scripture, and then judge.

Quest. 13. Do you think if any of them miscarry, it is because they are too much religious; or rather because they are too little? Surely it is the latter. For, as I said, their religion severely condemneth covetousness; and therefore if they were more religious, they would be less covetous. And he that is most godly, is least worldly. And ordinarily he that is most ungodly, is most worldly.

Quest. 14. Is it not then evident, that other men's sins should move you to be the more religious and careful of yourselves, and not the less? If you see them stumble, you should look the better to your feet, and not cast yourselves headlong from the rock that you should be built upon. You should think

with yourselves, if such men are so faulty for all the pains they take, how much more pains must I take to escape such faults! If they that run so hard shall many of them miss of the prize by coming short, it is a mad conceit of you to think to win it by sitting still, or doing less than they that lost it.

Quest. 15. Lastly, I would advise you to consider, Whether God, that justifieth his servants, will suffer you to condemn them? And how you can answer the challenge, Rom. viii. 32, 33. And when Christ has shed his blood to absolve them, whether it is likely that he will take it well at them that vilify them? Be it known to the faces of all their enemies, that "The Lord taketh pleasure in his people; he will beautify the meek with salvation," Psal. cxlix. 4. "The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy," Psal. cxlvii. 11. "He is nigh to all them that call upon him, to them that call upon him in truth," Psal. cxlv. 18. "The Lord preserveth them that love him; but all the wicked will he destroy. He suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, he reproved kings for their sakes; saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm," Psal. cv. 14, 15. "He that toucheth them toucheth the apple of his eye," Zech. ii. 8. For all their infirmities, it is dangerous vilifying a people so dear to the God of heaven. They shall shortly hear that joyful voice, "Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night," Rev. xii. 10. And they that joined with the accuser in his work, shall be joined with him in the reward, Matt. xxv. 41, 45. The very coming of the Lord to judgment, will be "to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe," 2 Thess. i. 10. And what then will be the doom of those that vilified them whom Christ will be glorified and admired in, you may read and tremble, in ver. 6—9.

But again, I charge you that fear God, that you learn by the accusations of malicious men; and take heed as you love God, yourselves, or others, of giving them ground of such reports. And though I know that the wicked are absurd and unreasonable, (2 Thess. iii. 2,) and that you will never be able to stop the mouth of all such men, till grace or judgment stop them; yet see that you walk circumspectly in the evil days, and give no offence to the Jews or gentiles, or the church of God. If you are christians indeed, you cannot take the riches or honours of the world to be matters of so much worth or weight, as to be preferred before the honour of your Lord, and the good of souls. It will grieve you more to hear the reproaches of the ungodly, against the ways and servants of God, than all your wealth will do you good. Doth it not go to your heart to hear poor blinded sinners on all occasions reproaching your holy profession, and saying, There are none more proud, and covetous, and unmerciful, than these professors of so much strictness and holiness. Though for the general, it be a malignant, satanical slander; yet take heed, as you love the honour of God, and of his holy truth and ways, and the souls of men, that you give not occasion of such reproach.

SECTION XXII.

Use: For consolation and further persuasion.

Having said this much to you for the crucifying the world, and the using of it as a crucified thing; I shall here briefly enumerate some of the great benefits which follow to yourselves where this is done. And this I shall do in order to these two ends conjunctly. 1. That those to whom the world is crucified may lay to heart the greatness of the mercy, and be thankful to God that hath done so much for them. There is the greater need of encouragement and comfort to the soul, in our crucifixion to the world, because it is a state of so much suffering to the body, and a work that requireth so much self-denial and patience. Who will be persuaded to cast all overboard, and forsake all the pleasures and profits of this world, but he that knows of somewhat to be got by it that will make him a gainer or a saver in the end? No man will incur so great a loss, and cast himself upon a life of troubles, without some considerable benefit to encourage him. And in the conflict the heart will be ready to fail, if we have not a cordial at hand for its refreshment. As Christ himself must have an angel in his agony to comfort him, and when consolation is withdrawn by God, doth feel himself as one forsaken; so all his members in their crucifixion have need of these reviving messengers of God, that seeing the ends and benefits of their sufferings, they may be able to resign their natural wills in a full submission to the will of God, and so to persevere and conquer in their sufferings. They have need of a believing consideration of the benefits, that they may be daily and hourly furnished against temptations, and may bear those losses and abuses from men, even to laying down of life, and all things in this world, which flesh and blood are so exceedingly against. He that believeth the faithfulness of the promiser, will "hold fast the profession of his faith without wavering," Heb. x. 23. And he that believeth the recompence of reward will not cast away his confidence, Heb. x. 35. He that knoweth in himself that he hath in heaven a better and more enduring substance, will endure the greatest fight of afflictions, becoming a gazing-stock by reproaches and afflictions, and becoming a companion of them that are so used; and will take joyfully the spoiling of his worldly goods, Heb. x. 32—34. He that can "look to Jesus, the author and finisher of his faith," and with him "to the joy that is set before him, will endure the cross, and despise the shame, and run with patience the race that is set before him," Heb. xii. 1, 2. He that by faith foreseeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness, will bear the chastisement which for the present seemeth not joyous, but grievous, Heb. xii. 11. All the cloud of witnesses and army of martyrs (Heb. xi.) do testify this to us; that it is faith's beholding the benefits and promised blessings, that must enable us to contemn the world, and suffer the loss of all for Christ. Having therefore need of patience, that after we have done the will of God, we may receive the promise, we have need also of these encouraging helps which must support our patience, that in this patience we may possess our souls, when impatient men, to save the world, do lose their souls, Heb. x. 36; Luke xxi. 19; Matt. xvi. 25, 26. These considerations are necessary to us in so hard an undertaking, "lest we be wearied and faint in our minds," Heb. xii. 3. Though we may manfully bear some few assaults, yet when we feel the vinegar and the gall, and the cruelty of the world even piercing not only our hands and our feet, but our very heart, and see them shrink from us that were most obliged to adhere to us, we shall then judge ourselves forsaken of God, if we have not the lively sense of these benefits. As the very thought of forsaking all doth strike a carnal heart with sorrow, and the work doth overmatch all the power of flesh and blood, (Luke xviii. 22—24,

27—29,) so also the believer hath need to keep his faith waking and in exercise, that he "may lift up the hands that else will hang down, and the knees that else will be feeble, and may make straight paths for his feet, that the lame may not be turned out of the way, but may be healed," Heb. xii. 11—14. For if we hear Job's messengers, and have not Job's faith and patience, we shall not be able heartily to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord," Job i. 21.

2. My second end in the mentioning these benefits is, that if yet all that is said before have not persuaded you to be crucified to the world, at least you may be persuaded by the consideration of the benefits, and of the happy conditions, of those that are thus mortified; even when they seem in the eyes of unbelievers to be most miserable. To these two ends I shall mention the benefits.

Benefit 1. Your crucifixion to the world by the cross of Christ will be one of the clearest and surest evidences of your sincerity; and so may afford you abundant help for the conquering of your doubts, and the ascertaining your salvation. When on the contrary, an unmortified, worldly mind, is the certain and common mark of a miserable hypocrite. I know a melancholy man may be so weary of the world, as to be impatient of his life; but to prefer the Lord and everlasting life before it, in our practical estimation, and resolution, and endeavours, is the very point of saving sincerity, and the specifical nature of true sanctification: and all other marks must be reduced unto this. There is no man so spiritual and heavenly, but while he is here hath a mixture of earthliness and carnality; and many a thousand that are earthly and carnal, have some esteem of God and glory, and some purposes for them, and some endeavours after them; but it is that which is predominant that giveth the denomination. According to that it is, that we must be called either spiritual and heavenly, or carnal and earthly men.

More particularly, 1. If you look to the understanding, this crucifixion to the world is a very great part of the wisdom of the soul. For wherein doth wisdom more consist, than in judging of things as indeed they are, and especially in matters of greatest moment? He therefore that is crucified to the world, must needs be wise; and whatever his knowledge or reputation may be, he that wants this must needs be a fool. Is that a wise man that knoweth the times and seasons, and how to do this and that in the world, and knoweth not how to escape damnation, nor where his safety and happiness must be sought? And is not he a wiser man that can see the snares that are laid for his soul, and so escape the burning lake; than he that will sell his Saviour and his soul for a little pleasure to his flesh for a moment? I make no doubt, but the weakest man or woman that practically knows the vanity of this world, and the desirable excellency of God and glory, is a thousandfold wiser than the most famous princes or learned men that want this knowledge. I will never take that man for a fool, that can hit the way to heaven; nor that for a wise man, that cannot hit it. It is the greatest matters that try men's wisdom, though childish wit may appear in trifles.

2. To be crucified to the world is the certain effect of a living, effectual faith. The dead faith that James speaketh of, may move you to so much compassion as to say to the poor, "Go in peace; be warmed and filled," James ii. 16. But it will not so far loose you from the world, as to persuade you to part with it to supply his wants: at least you will never be persuaded to part with all and follow Christ, till the belief of a treasure in heaven do persuade you to it, Luke xviii. 21, 22. Can you say from your hearts, Let all go, rather than the love of God. And in a case of trial, do you certainly find that there is nothing so dear to you, which you cannot part with for God and the hopes of everlasting life? This is a sign of an effectual faith; for neither nature nor common grace did ever bring a soul so high.

3. It is also a certain evidence of unfeigned love. For wherein is love so clearly manifested, as in the highest adventures for the person whom we love, and in the costliest expressions of our love when we are called to it? Then it will appear that you love God indeed, when there is nothing else that you prefer before him, and nothing but what you lay down at his feet; when the greatest professors that love the world, do show that the love of the Father is not in them, (1 John ii. 15,) so far as it is loved.

4. To be crucified to the world and alive to God, is the very honesty, and chastity, and justice of the soul. This is your fidelity to God, in keeping the holy covenant that you have made with him in Christ. This is your keeping yourselves unspotted from the world, and undefiled by it; when the friends of it live in its adulterous embracements, James iv. 4. Thus do you give the Lord his own, even both the creature and your hearts; when worldlings do unjustly rob him of both. This is the great command and request of God, "My son, give me thy heart," Prov. xxiii. 26. Give him but this, and he will take it as if you gave him all; for indeed the rest will follow this. But if you give the world your hearts, God will take all the rest as nothing.

Benefit 2. The second benefit is this: If you are truly crucified to the world, your minds will be free for God and his service; when the minds of worldlings are like imprisoned, hampered things. What a toilsome thing it is for a man to travel in fetters, or to run a race with a burden on his back! But knock off his fetters, and how easily will he go; and take off his burden, and how lightly will he run! Do you not feel yourselves that the world is the clog of your souls? And this is it that hindereth you in duty, and keepeth you from the attainment of a heavenly conversation. When you should cheerfully go to God in secret, or in your families, the world is ready to pull you back: either it calleth you away by putting some other business into your hands; or else it dulleth and diverteth your affections, so that you have no heart to duty, or no life in it; or else it creepeth into your thoughts in duty, and taketh them off from the work in hand, and makes you do that which you seem not to be doing: and if you shake off these thoughts, and drive them out of your way, they are presently again before you, and meet you at the next turn. But in that measure as you have crucified the world, you are freed from these disturbances. The apostle Peter describeth the miserable estate of apostates, (2 Pet. ii. 20,) to be like a bird or beast that had escaped out of the snare that he was taken in, and after is taken in the same again; having escaped the pollution of the world, &c. πάλιν ἐμπλακέντες ἡττῶνται, they are again entangled therein; as a beast in a snare, that cannot escape or help himself: so 2 Tim. ii. 4, it is said, no man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, οὐδεὶς στρατευόμενος ἐμπλέκεται, &c. So that you see that the world is a snare that entangleth men's souls, and holdeth them as in captivity. The table of the wicked becometh a snare to them, and so do all the bodily mercies which they possess.

But the mortified christian may look back on all

these dangers, and say, "Blessed be the Lord that hath not given us a prey to their teeth: our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers; the snare is broken, and we are escaped," Psal. cxxiv. 6, 7. Oh! with what ease and freedom of mind may you converse with God in holy ordinances, when you are once disentangled from this snare! Now that which formerly drew off your hearts, and clogged your affections, is crucified and dead: that enemy that kept your souls from God, and was still casting baits or troubles in your way, is dead. As the apostle saith of sin, "He that is dead is freed from sin," Rom. vi. 7; so I may say of the world, He that is dead to the world, in that measure as he is dead to it, is freed from the world. "Let us therefore lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us; and then we may run with patience the race that is set before us," Heb. xii. 1.

This makes a poor christian sometimes to live in more content and comfort in the depth of adversity, than he did before in the midst of his prosperity; because, though his flesh hath lost, his soul hath gained; though he want the fleshly accommodations which he had, yet the world is now more dead to him than before; and so his mind is freer for God, and consequently more with him. How blessed a life is it to converse with God with little disturbances and interruptions! A runner in a race is willing to be rid of his very clothes that should cover him and keep him warm, because they are a burden and hinderance to him in his race; but the lookers-on would be loth to be so stripped. Take away prosperity from an unmortified man, and you take away the comfort of his life; when if the same things be taken from the mortified believer, he loseth but his burden. How readily will that man obey that is dead to the world, when he is commanded to do good, to relieve the poor according to his power, to suffer wrongs, to let go his right, to forgive and requite evil with good, to forsake all and follow Christ! When to another man these duties are a kind of impossibilities; and you may as well persuade a lion to become a lamb, or a beast to die willingly by the hand of the butcher, as persuade an unmortified worldling to these things. They think when they hear them, These are hard sayings, who can bear them? or at least, they are duties for a Peter or a Paul, and not for such as we. There is a very great part of christian obedience, that will be easy to you when you are dead to the world, which no man else is able to endure, nor will be persuaded to submit to.

Benefit 3. Another benefit of this crucifixion is this: The tempter is hereby disarmed, and he is disabled from doing that against you, which with others he can do. The living world is the life of temptations. As a bear, for all his strength and fierceness, may be led up and down by the nose, when by a ring the cord is fastened to his flesh; so the tempter leadeth men captive at his will, by fastening together the world and their flesh. He finds it no hard matter to entice a sensual, worldly mind, to almost any thing that is evil. Bid him lie or steal, and if it be not for shame, or fear of men, he will do it. Bid him neglect God and his worship, and he will do it? Bid him hate those that hinder his commodity, or speak evil of them that cross his desires, or seek revenge of those that he thinks do wrong him herein; and how quickly will he do it! The devil may do almost what he list to those that are not crucified to the world. They will follow him up and down the world, from sin to sin, if he have but a golden bait to entice them. But when the world is crucified to you, what hath he to entice you with? The cord is broken by which he was wont to bind and lead you. Can you entice a wise man by pins and counters, as you may do a child? If he would draw you from God, he hath nothing to do it with; for the world, by which he should do it, is now dead. If he would entice you to pride, or ambition, or covetousness, or to sinful means for worldly ends, he hath nothing to do it with; because the world is dead. The devil hath nothing but a little money, or sensual pleasures, or honours, to hire you with to betray and cast away your souls; and what cares a mortified man for these? Will he part with Christ and heaven for money, who looks on money as other men do on chips or stones? It is the frame of men's hearts that is the strength of a temptation. To a man that is in love with money, oh what a strong temptation is it, to see an opportunity of getting it by sin! But what will this move him, that looketh on it as on the dirt of the streets. To a proud man that is tender of his reputation in the world, what a troublesome temptation is it to be reproached, or slighted, or slandered! and what a dangerous temptation is it to him to be applauded! But what are these to him that takes the approbation and applauses of the world but as a blast of wind? as Christ saith of himself, John xiv. 30, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." That is, He cometh to make his last and strongest assault; but he shall find no carnal, sinful matter in me to work upon: and he cometh by his instruments to persecute me to the death; but he shall find no guilt in me, which might make it a glory to him, or a dishonour to me. So in their measure the mortified members of Christ may say, When Satan cometh by temptations, the world is dead by which he would tempt them, and he shall find little of that earthly matter in them, to work upon, and to entertain his seed. And therefore when he afterward cometh by persecution, will find the less of that guilt which would be the oil to enlarge and feed these flames. Your innocency and safety lieth much in this mortification.

Benefit 4. Another benefit that followeth our crucifixion of the world is this: It will prevent abundance of needless, unprofitable cost and labour, that other men are at. You will not be drawn to run and toil for a thing of nought. When other men are riding, and going, and caring, and labouring for a little smoke, or a flying shadow, you will sit, as it were, over them, and discern, and pity, and lament their folly. To see one man rejoice that hath got his prize; and another lament because he cannot get it; and a third in the eager pursuit of it; as if it were for their lives; while they live as if they had forgotten the eternal life which is at hand; will cause you to lift up your soul to his praises, that hath saved you from this dotage. The world worketh on the sensual part first, and thereby corrupteth, and as it were brutifieth, our very reason; and the whole course of worldly designs and affairs, even from the glorious actions of kings and commanders, to the daily business of the ploughman and the beggar, are all but the actions of frantic men, or mad-men. I say, so far as the affairs of the world are managed by this sensual, unmortified principle, a sanctified believer can look upon them all as on the running or tumult of children or idiots, or on a game at chess, where wit is laid out to little purpose. Mortification will help you to turn your thoughts, and cares, and labours into a more profitable course; so that when the end comes, you will have somewhat to show that you have gained; when others must complain that they have lost their labour, and worse than lost it. What abundance of precious time do other men lose, in dreaming pursuits of an empty, deceiving,

transitory world, when God hath taken off the poise from you of such unprofitable motion, and taught you better to employ your time. Many a hundred hours which others cast away upon worldly thoughts, or discourse, or practices, are redeemed by the wise for their everlasting benefit.

Benefit 5. Moreover, this mortification will help you to prevent a great deal of sharp repentance, which must tell unmortified worldlings of their folly. When they have run themselves out of breath, and abused Christ, and neglected grace, and either lost or hazarded their souls, they must sit down in the end and befool themselves for losing their time and lives for nothing. When God hath given a man but a short life, and laid his everlasting life upon it, and put such works into his hand as call for his utmost wisdom and diligence, what a sad perplexing thought must it be, to consider that all or most of this time hath been cast away upon worldly vanities! If a man shall run away from his own father, and serve a master that at last will turn him off with nothing but shame and blows, will he not wish that he had never seen his face? Such a master all worldlings and sensualists do serve. And he that got most by the world among them, shall wish at last that he had never served it; when the mortified christian that slighted the world, and laid out his care and labour for a better, may so far escape the bitterness of such repentings, and be glad that he hath chosen the better part. That is not the best that is sweetest in the eating, when afterwards it must be vomited up with pain because it cannot be digested. The spare diet of mortified men, will prevent such after-pains and troubles.

Benefit 6. Moreover, where the world is crucified, a great deal of self-tormenting care and trouble of mind will be prevented. You will not live such a perplexed, miserable life as worldlings do. Even in your outward troubles you will have less inward trouble of soul, than they have in their abundance. They are like a man that is hanged up in chains alive, that gnaws upon his own flesh awhile, and then must famish. What else do worldlings but tear and devour themselves with cares and sorrows, and scourge themselves with vexatious thoughts and troubles? If others did the hundredth part as much to them, against their wills, as they wilfully do against themselves, they would account them the cruelest persons in the world. Paul saith of men that are in love with money, that "while they covet after it, they do (not only) err from the faith," but also ἑαυτοὺς περιέπειραν, "they pierced themselves through and through," and stabbed their own hearts "with many sorrows." A worldly mind and a melancholy are some kin. The daily work of both is self-vexation, and they are wilfully set upon the stabbing and destroying themselves. But it is not thus with the believer, so far as he is mortified. Will he vex himself for nothing? Will he be troubled for the loss of that which he disregardeth? The dead world hath not power thus to disquiet his mind, and to toss it up and down in trouble. When it hath power on his body, it cannot reach his soul. As the soul of a dead man feeleth no pain, when the corpse is cut in pieces, or rotteth in the grave; so in lower measure, the soul of a believer being in a sort as it were separated from the body by faith, and gone before to the heavenly inheritance, is freed from the sense of the calamities of the flesh. So far as we are dead, we are insensible of sufferings.

Benefit 7. Another benefit that followeth upon the former is this: We shall be far better able to suffer for Christ, because that sufferings will be much more easy to us, when once we are truly crucified to the world. What is it that makes men so tender of suffering, and startle at the noise of it, and therefore conform themselves to the times they live in, and venture their souls to save their flesh, but only their overvaluing fleshly things, and not knowing the worth and weight of things everlasting? They have no soul within them but what is become carnal, by a base subjection to the flesh; and therefore they savour nothing but the things of the flesh. All life desireth a suitable food for its sustentation. A carnal life within, hath a carnal appetite, and is most sensible of the miss of carnal commodities; but a spiritual life hath a spiritual appetite. And as carnal minds can easily let go spiritual things; so a spiritual mind, so far as it is such, can easily let go carnal things, when God requireth it. When you are dead to the world, you will easily part with it; for all things below will seem but small matters to you, in comparison of the things which they are put in competition with. If you are scorned, or accounted the offscouring of the town, you can bear it; because with you it is a very small matter to be judged of man, 1 Cor. iv. 3. If you must endure abuses or persecutions for Christ, you can bear it; because you reckon that the sufferings of this life are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed, Rom. viii. 18. You can let go your gain, and account it loss for Christ; yea, and account all things loss for the knowledge of him; and suffer the loss of all things for him, accounting them but as dung, that you may win him, Phil. iii. 7, 8. If you knew that bonds and afflictions did abide you, yet none of these things would move you, so that you may finish your course with joy, Acts xx. 23, 24. So far as you are dead to the world, and alive to God, it will be thus with you; when they that are alive to the world are so far from being able to die for God, that every cross doth seem a death to them. I have many a time heard such lamentable complaints from people that are fallen into poverty, or disgrace, or some other worldly suffering, that hath given me more cause to lament the misery of their souls than of their bodies. When they take on as if they were quite undone, and had lost their God and hope of heaven, doth it not too plainly show, that they made the world their God and their heaven?

Benefit 8. Moreover, if indeed you are crucified to the world, your hearts will be still open to the motions of the Spirit, and the motions of further grace; and so you will have abundant advantage, both for the exercise and increase of the graces which you have received. The earthly-minded have their hearts locked up against all that can be said of them; never can the Spirit or his ministers make a motion to them for their good, but some worldly interest or other doth contradict it, and rise up against it. But what have you to stop your ears when the world is dead? The word then will have free access into your hearts. When the Scripture comes, your thoughts are ready, your affections are at hand; and all are in a posture to entertain him and attend him: and so the work goes on and prospers. But when he comes to the worldly mind, the thoughts are all from home, the affections are abroad and out of the way, and there is nothing for his entertainment, but all in a posture to resist him and gainsay him. Oh what work would the preaching of the gospel make in the world, if there were not a worldly principle within to strive against it! But we speak against men's idols, against their jewels and their treasures, and therefore against their hearts and natures. And then no wonder if we leave them in the jaws of Satan, where we found them, till irresistible, merciful violence shall rescue them. But so far as you are

mortified, the enemy is dead; contradictions are all silenced; opposition is ceased; the Spirit findeth that within, that will befriend its motions, and own its cause; the soul lieth before the word, and gladly hears the voice of Christ: and thus the work goes smoothly on.

Benefit 9. Moreover, when once you are crucified to the world, you are capable of the true spiritual use of it, which it was made for. Then you may see God in it; and then you may savour the blood of Christ in it; then you may perceive a great deal of love in it; and that which before was venomous, and did endanger your souls, will now become a help to you, and may be safely handled when the sting is thus taken out. Before it was the road to hell; and now there is some taste of heaven in it. The stones and earth are useful for you to tread upon, though they are unfit for you to feed on, or too hard to rest upon. So though the world be unfit to rest or feed your souls, it may be a convenient way for you to travel in. It is unmeet to be loved, but it is meet to be used, when you have learned so to use it as not abusing it. When self is thoroughly down and denied, and God is exalted, and your souls brought over so clearly to him, that you are nothing but in him, and would have nothing but in and with him, and do nothing but for him; then you shall be able to see that glory and amiableness in the creature, that now you cannot see; for you shall see the Creator himself in the creature.

Benefit 10. When once you are truly crucified to the world, you will have the honour and the comfort of a heavenly life. Your thoughts will be daily steeped in the celestial delights, when other men's are steeped in gall and vinegar. You will be above with God, when your carnal neighbours converse only with the world. Your thoughts will be higher than their thoughts, and your ways than their ways, as the heaven, where your converse is, is higher than the earth. When you take flight from earth in holy devotions, they may look at you, and wonder at you, but cannot follow you; for whither you go they cannot come, till they are such as you. You leave them grovelling here on earth, and feeding on the dust, and striving like children, or rather like swine or dogs, about their meat; when you are above in the Spirit, on the wings of faith and love, beholding that face that perfecteth all that perfectly behold it; and tasting that joy, which fully reconcileth all that fully do enjoy it; which we must here contend for, but none do there contend about it. What a noble employment have you, in comparison of the highest servants of the world! How sweet are your delights in comparison of the epicure's! O happy souls, that can see so much of your eternal happiness, and reach so near it! Were I but more in your condition, I would not envy princes their glory, nor any sensualists and worldlings their contents, nor desire to be their partner. I could spare them their troublesome dignities and their burdensome riches, and the unwholesome pleasures which they so often surfeit on, and the wind of popular applause which so swelleth them. Yea, what could I not spare them, if I might be more with you? O happy poverty, sickness, or imprisonment, or whatever is called misery by the world, if it be nearer heaven than a sensual life! and if it will but advantage my soul for those contemplations which are the employment of mortified, heavenly men! yea, if it do but remove the impediments of so sweet a life! I know (by some little, too little experience, I know) that one hour's time of that blessed life, will easily pay for all the cost; and one believing view of God will easily blast the beauty of the world, and shame all those thoughts as the issue of my dotage, that ever gave it a lovely name, or turned mine eye upon it with desire, or caused me once with complacency to behold it, or ever brought it nearer my heart. O sirs, what a noble life may you live, and how much more excellent work might you be employed in, if the world were but dead to you, and the stream of your souls were turned upon God! Had you but one draught of the heavenly consolations, you would thirst no more for the pleasures of the world. Yea, did you but taste of it, as Jonathan the honey from the end of his rod, (1 Sam. xiv. 27,) your eyes would be enlightened, and your hearts revived, and your hands would be strengthened in your spiritual warfare, that your enemies would quickly perceive it, in your more resolute, prevailing opposition of their assaults. And experience will tell you, that you will no further reach this heavenly life than you are crucified to earth and flesh. God useth to show himself to the celestial inhabitants, and not to the terrestrial; and therefore you will see no more of God than you get above and converse in heaven. And if faith had not this elevating power, and could not see further than sense can do, we might talk long enough of God before we had any saving knowledge of him, or relish of his goodness. And doubtless, if we must get by faith into heaven, if we will have the reviving sight of God, then we must needs away from earth; for our hearts cannot at once converse in both. Believe it, sirs, God useth to give his heavenly cordials upon an empty stomach, and not to drown them in the mud and dirt of sensuality. When you are emptiest of creature delights and love, you are most capable of God. And fasting from the world, doth best prepare you for this heavenly feast. Let abstinence and temperance be imposed upon your senses, but command a total fast to your affections; and try then whether your souls be not fitter to ascend, and whether God will not reveal himself more clearly than before. It may seem a paradox that the valleys should be nearer heaven than the hills, but doubtless Stephen saw more of it than the high priest; and Lazarus had a fairer prospect thither, from among the dogs at the rich man's gate, than the master of the house had at his plentiful table. And who would not rather have Lazarus's sore with a foresight of heaven, than the rich man's fulness without it; yea, with the fears of after-misery? A heavenly life is proper to the mortified.

Benefit 11. Moreover, those that are crucified to the world, are most fruitful unto others, and blessings to all within their reach. They can part with any thing to do good with. They are rich to God and their brethren, if they be rich, and not to themselves. If a mortified man have hundreds or thousands by the year, he hath no more of it for himself than if he had a meaner estate. He takes but necessary food and raiment; he shunneth intemperance and excess. Nay, he often pincheth his body, if needful, that he may tame it, and bring it into subjection to the Spirit; and the rest he lays out for the service of God, so far as he is acquainted with his will. Yea, his necessary food and raiment which he receiveth himself, is ultimately not for himself, but for God. Even that he may be sustained by his daily bread for his daily duty, and fitted to please his Master that maintaineth him. If they have much, they give plenteously. If they have but little, they are faithful in that little. And if they have not silver and gold, they will give such as they have, where God requireth it.

But the unmortified worldling is like some spreading trees, that by drawing all the nutriment to themselves, and by dropping on the rest, will let no other

prosper under them. They draw as much as they can to themselves. For themselves is their care and daily labour, Psal. xlix. 18. They all mind their own things; but not the things of Christ or their brethren. Getting, and having, and keeping is their business; and, as swine, are seldom profitable until they die.

Benefit 12. The last benefit that I shall mention is this: If you are now dead to the world, and the world to you, your natural death will be the less grievous to you, when it comes. It will be little or no trouble to you to leave your houses, or lands, or goods; to leave your eating, and drinking, and recreations; to leave your employments and company in the world; for you were dead to all that is worldly before. Surely so far as the heart is upon God, and taken off these transitory things, it can be no grief to us to leave them and go to God! It is only the remnants of the unmortified flesh, together with the natural evil of death, that maketh death to seem grievous to believers; but so far as they are believers, and dead to the world, the case is otherwise. Death is not near so dreadful to them as it is to others; except as the quality of some disease, or some extraordinary desertion, may change the case; or as some desperate wicked ones may be insensible of their misery. How bitter is the sight of approaching death to them that lay up their treasure on earth, and place their happiness in the prosperity of the flesh! to such a fool as Christ describeth, Luke xii. that saith to himself, "Soul, take thy ease, eat, drink, and be merry, thou hast enough laid up for many years!" How sad must the tidings of death needs be to him that set his heart on earth, and spent his days in providing for the flesh, and never laid up a treasure in heaven, nor made him friends with the mammon of unrighteousness, nor gave diligence in the time of his life to make his calling and election sure! To a worldly man, that sets not his heart and hopes above, the face of death is unspeakably dreadful. But if we could kill the world before us, and be dead to it now, and alive to God, and, with Paul, die daily, it would be a powerful means to abate the terrors, and a certain way to take out the sting, that death might be a sanctified passage into life. So much of the benefits of mortification.

And now what remains, but that you that are mortified believers, receive your consolation, and consider what the Lord hath done for your souls, and give him the praise of so great a mercy. Believe it, it is a thousandfold better to be crucified to the world, than to be advanced to prosperity in it; and to have a heart that is above the world, than to be made the possessor of the world.

And for you that yet are strangers to this mercy, oh that the Lord would open your hearts to consider where you are, and what you are doing, and whither you are going, and how the world will use you, and how you are like to come off at last, before you go any further, that you may not make so mad a bargain, as to gain the world and lose your souls. Oh that you did but thoroughly believe, that it is the only wise and gainful choice to deny your carnal selves, and forsake all and follow Christ, in hope of the heavenly treasure which he hath promised. And let me tell you again, as the way to this, That though melancholy may make you weary of the world, and stoical precepts may restrain your lusts; yet it is only the power of the Holy Ghost, the cross of Christ, the belief of the promise, the love of God, and the hopes of the everlasting invisible glory, that will effectually and savingly crucify you to the world, and the world to you. It is a lesson that never was well taught by any other master but Christ, and you must learn it from him, by his words, ministers, and Spirit, in his school, or you will never learn or practise it aright.

THE SECOND PART:

OF THE CHRISTIAN'S GLORYING.

SECTION XXIII.

HAVING thus despatched the first part of my subject, concerning a Christian's Crucifixion to the World, by Christ and his Cross, I come to the second part, concerning the Glorying of a Christian. The judaizing teachers did glory carnally, even in a carnal worship, and carnal privileges, and in the carnal effects of their doctrine on their proselytes; but Paul, that had more to glory in than they, doth disclaim and renounce all such glorying as theirs, and owneth and professeth a contrary glorying, even in the cross of Christ and his mortification. The observation to be handled is, that

True christians must with abhorrency renounce all carnal glorying, and must glory only in the cross of Christ, by whom the world is crucified to them, and they unto the world.

In handling this, I shall briefly show you, I. What is included, or what we may glory in. II. What is excluded, or what we may not glory in. For the former, here are two things expressed in the text, in which a christian may and must glory. 1. The cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2. Our crucifixion to the world hereby. So that the positive part of the doctrine containeth these two branches, which I shall handle distinctly, before I speak to the negative part.

1. True christians that are crucified to the world and the world to them, by the cross of Christ, may and must glory therein.

2. Yet so, as that their glorying must be principally in Christ, and their own mortification must be gloried in but as the fruit of his cross.

For the first part, it must be understood with these necessary limitations.

1. As glorying signifieth a self-ascribing and proud conceit of our own mortification, and is contrary to christian self-denial and humility, and glorying in God, so we must take heed of it and abhor it.

2. As glorying signifieth any outward expression of this inward pride, either by words or deeds, we must also avoid it with abhorrence.

3. So must we also do by all unseasonable, offensive ostentation, which may seem to others to savour of pride, though indeed it proceed from a better cause.

4. But as glorying signifieth the apprehension of the good of the thing, and our benefit by it, and the due affections of content and joy, and exultation of mind, that follow thereupon, thus must a christian glory in his mortification by the cross of Christ. We commonly call this act a blessing of ourselves in the apprehension of our case. As the carnal, ungodly world do bless themselves in their possessing carnal things, so may a christian bless himself that he is crucified to them. That is, he may rejoice in it as a great blessing of God, that tendeth to further blessedness.

5. And when we are called to it, we may express

to others our glorying herein. But so as that we give the glory to God, and not to our own corrupted wills.

6. And when we are called hereto, we must do it very cautiously, as Paul doth, 1 Cor. iv. 4, "I know nothing by myself, yet am I not hereby justified." Signifying that we do it with holy intentions for the good of the hearers, and the honour of God, as he doth, ver. 1, 2, 6, 8, to the end; and 2 Cor. ii. 5, 6, &c.; 1 Cor. ix. throughout; 2 Cor. iii. 1, 2, &c. And we must so do it as to confess it is like to folly, it being the custom of proud fools to be boasters of themselves. And so Paul, when he is called to mention his privileges, calls it his folly in this sense, 2 Cor. xi. 1, 17, 19, 23, lest others should be encouraged to sinful boasting by his example, if he did not brand it by the way with the note of folly; though it was materially so in him (being the matter that folly is by others expressed in) but formally in the proud.

2. Having told you how we may glory in our own mortification, I shall next give you the proof of the point, that we may so do.

And first it is proved by the example of Paul himself, both here in my text, and in many other places; 2 Cor. v. 11—13; xi. throughout; xii. throughout. Ver. 5, 6, "Of such an one will I glory; yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities." That is, not in any thing that seemeth to advance me in the eyes of the world, lest it should seem a carnal glorying, or men should be drawn thereby to overvalue me; but in such things as men rather pity or vilify for, even my worldly meanness, and contemptibleness, and sufferings for Christ, though before God these are honourable; and therefore I will not glory in them openly, but secretly, as I may do in all other graces. So it followeth: "For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth. But now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me." And so ver. 9—11, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (that is, that my glorying may magnify that power of Christ that is manifest in sustaining me, and not myself). "Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake; for when I am weak (that is, in the flesh, and the eye of the world) then am I strong (that is, in the Spirit and the work of Christ). I am become a fool (that is, like a fool) in glorying: ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you; for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing." Yea, 1 Cor. ix. 15, he saith, he "had rather die, than any should make his glorying void," concerning his self-denial for the advantage of the gospel.

2. I also prove it thus. We may and must glory in the blessed effects of the blood of Christ; or else we shall not give him his honour. But our own mortification is one of the blessed effects of the blood or cross of Christ; therefore we may and must glory in it.

3. We may and must glory in the certain tokens of the love of God. But our mortification is one of the certain tokens of the love of God; therefore we may and must glory in it.

4. We may and must glory in Christ dwelling in us; and the effects of his indwelling. For if we may glory in Christ crucified, then also in Christ as our Head, to whom we are united, and from whom we receive continual influence and communication of graces. But our own mortification is the certain fruit of Christ dwelling in us; therefore we may glory in it.

5. We may glory in the image of God upon our souls. For as it is our glory, so it is the liveliest representation of God himself. But our mortification is part of God's image upon us; therefore we may glory in it.

6. We may glory that we are the temples of the Holy Ghost, and that the Spirit of Christ is in us; and we may glory in his fruits and works. But our mortification is a principal fruit of the Spirit, which showeth that he dwelleth in us; therefore we may glory in it.

7. There is no doubt but christians may glory in the cessation of their sin against God, and that as to the dominion of sin, they do not dishonour him by breaking his laws, abusing his Son, his Spirit, and his mercies, as formerly they did. But all this is contained in our mortification; therefore we may glory in it.

8. No doubt but we may glory in the honour of God, when his wisdom, and goodness, and power are demonstrated, to the confusion of his foes, and the encouragement of his people; but this is done in the mortification of his saints; in them he conquereth, and in him that loveth them they are supervictors, Rom. viii. 37. If we must glorify the workman, as such, then must we also glorify the work. If Moses and all Israel must sing such a song of praise to God for overthrowing Pharaoh and his host in the Red sea, much more must we sing his praise that conquereth Satan and all our corruptions. And the work itself must be magnified in order to the conqueror's praise. If Deborah must sing God's praises for the conquests of weak men, much more must we for the conquest of the world by faith, and for subduing the powers of darkness to us. There is more of God's love and power seen in the spiritual victories of a poor mortified christian, that is taken no notice of, or despised in the world, than in the bodily conquests of the famous princes in the world, who most of them perish everlastingly after all, because they are conquered by the world and their own flesh.

Though it be the design of the devil, and the slanderous world, to obscure or vilify the work of grace on the souls of the sanctified, yet must it be the care of believers to counterwork them, and maintain and manifest the lustre of that grace, to the glory of the author. He that magnifieth the cure doth honour the physician; but he that slighteth or disregardeth it, doth dishonour him. To debase the work of creation is a reproach to the Creator; yea, to overlook it and not admire and magnify it, is an injury to him; to vilify the work of the Redeemer is horrible infidelity and ingratitude; and to slight it, and not to magnify it, is damnable. And must it not be so then to vilify or not to magnify the works of the Sanctifier? Why should it not be our duty to magnify the work of sanctification, as well as the work of creation and redemption? Especially when it is the end which the other do tend to, and that without which we are uncapable of sincere magnifying either creation or redemption.

9. It is certain we may glory in the healing of our diseases, and recovery of our depraved, miserable souls. He that must be sensible of his sin, must needs be sensible of the mercy of the deliverer. It cannot be that we should be obliged to mourn for sin, and yet may not glory in our deliverance from it. Nature itself constraineth us to lament the known unhappiness of our souls, as well as the wounds and calamities of our bodies. And therefore the same nature must needs teach us to rejoice and glory in our spiritual recovery.

10. If we may glory in our remission or justification, then by proportion or parity of reason, we may also glory in our mortification. For both are ours by gift, and neither are deserved by us. But it is past doubt that we may glory in our pardon or justification; therefore we may also glory in our mortification.

11. Undoubtedly we may glory in the ruin of the enemies of Christ and us. How can a soldier be obliged to fight, and not to glory in the victory or good success? But our mortification is the ruin of Christ's enemies and ours; therefore we may glory in it.

12. We may glory in that which tendeth apparently to the good of our brethren, yea, to the common good of church and commonwealth. For he that is bound to love his brother, and the commonwealth, is bound to rejoice and glory in their benefits. But certainly the mortification of every individual member doth tend to the good of each part and of the whole. Oh how profitably should we converse together, if it were not for this sin! How peaceable, and edifying, and comfortable would our conversation be to all about us! We should not then tempt them to sin by our example, nor disturb the peace of families or neighbours, by the distempers of our souls and lives; nor draw God's judgments on the places where we live. No wonder if all about them be the worse for one unmortified man; and if the ship be in sudden danger, till Jonah be cast overboard; or if Israel be dismayed for Achan's sin. And all that are about them may fare the better for a mortified believer. In this respect therefore we must glory in our mortification.

13. It is certainly lawful to glory in that which is the earnest of our heavenly, everlasting glory, or a note or evidence of our title to it. For it cannot be, that felicity can be desired as felicity, which is with our highest affections and endeavours, but we must needs glory in that which assureth us that we shall attain it. But our mortification is a certain sign of our title to it, and an earnest of it; and therefore we may justly glory in our mortification.

14. Lastly, it is undoubtedly meet that we glory in that which is pleasing to God our Father. For the pleasing of him is our ultimate end; and the doing of his will is the whole work of our lives. And therefore if we may not glory in that, we may glory in nothing at all. Even Christ's own sacrifice, and merits, and holy life, are therefore to be extolled, because they were fully pleasing unto God; and the full commendation which the Father giveth him was, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," Matt. iii. 17. Now it is certain that God is pleased also with the mortified souls and lives of his people, and that through Christ they are amiable and acceptable to him, 1 Cor. vii. 32; 1 Thess. iv. 1; 2 Tim. ii. 4; Heb. xiii. 16. They that walk with God by faith, have this testimony, as Enoch had, "that they please God," Heb. xi. 5. "Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God; and whatsoever we ask we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight," 1 John iii. 21, 22. To this end is all our wisdom and knowledge, that we may walk worthy of the Lord, in all well pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, Col. i. 9, 10. He is not a christian that rejoiceth not in that which is pleasing to the Lord. "The righteous Lord loveth righteousness," Psal. xi. 7. "And he loveth a cheerful giver," 2 Cor. ix. 7. And shall we not glory in that which is beloved of God? You see then the truth of the point is most evident.

SECTION XXIV.

Use 1. The first use that we shall make of this part of the observation (before we proceed to the explication of the other parts) is, To inform us of the mistake and injurious dealing of some misguided ones, commonly called antinomians, who tell us that we must look at nothing in ourselves, nor fetch comfort from it; and earnestly exclaim against the preachers of the gospel for teaching men to look at any thing in themselves, and to take comfort from the evidence of their graces, and tell us that we must look to Christ alone; and call all those legal preachers or professors that be not of their mind in this. But you may see by what is said before, that they speak against the clearest, fullest evidence; and that the whole stream of Scripture beareth down their opinion. And therefore it is sad, that when they go against the light of the sun, they should be so confident as to accuse their brethren of darkness, and so rash as to censure them as legalists and ignorant of the righteousness of Christ.

Let us a little distinguish, and all the mists of their accusations will vanish, and the case will be clear. 1. We must distinguish between carnal self which we are called in Scripture to deny, and self as it signifieth our personal being. And this we are commanded in Scripture to love and cherish. For we must love our neighbours but as ourselves, and a man must cherish and love his wife but as his own body, and love her but as himself, for no man ever yet hated his own flesh, Eph. v. 28, 29, 33. And self in the third sense, as taken for renewed self, that certainly none is bound to hate.

Now in the first sense it is true that we must look at nothing in ourselves for comfort; that is, at nothing in our carnal selves. But of self in the other two senses, we must further inquire.

2. We must distinguish between that which is both in ourselves and of ourselves originally, and that which is in ourselves, but not of ourselves, but of God by Christ, or only of ourselves in subordination to Christ. The former sort we have small reason to glory in, for it is our sin and shame. But the latter we may glory in; for the glory redoundeth to the author.

3. We must distinguish between looking at something in ourselves with a mistaking eye, as judging it meritorious, or to be more our own than it is; and looking at it with a right judgment, and saying of it no more than what is true. In the latter sense we may look at it and glory in it, but not in the former.

4. And we must distinguish between a glorying that is terminated ultimately in ourselves, or is accompanied with an undue ascribing to ourselves; this is no doubt unlawful: and a glorying which tendeth to God and is terminated in him, and giveth no honour to any creature but what God giveth them, and what is in a due appointed order to God's honour; and this glorying is a duty, and by all christians to be carefully performed.

If any that peruse these lines be tainted with this weak mistake, let them consider, besides what is said before,

1. Is it just or pious that Christ should lose the honour of his mercies, merely because he hath bestowed them on us? Doth that make them no mercies? or rather make them the greater mercies? Shall his grace be vilified, because he makes thy soul the subject of it? Why then it seems you would have thanked him more to have kept his mercy to himself.

2. Is Christ ever the less Christ, because he dwells in the hearts of believers? Eph. iii. 17. And will you pretend to honour Christ without you, and deny his honour within you, even because he is within you? yea, and will pretend that it is for the honour of Christ thus to dishonour him? and tell men that they deny or overlook it, because they admire him within them, as well as without them? If Paul say, "I have laboured more abundantly than they all," and add when he hath done, "yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me; and by the grace of God I am what I am; and his grace which was bestowed on me was not in vain," 1 Cor. xv. 10; Will you tell him that he exalteth himself against grace? No; but he exalteth grace in himself. Paul travailed in birth of the Galatians until Christ was formed in them, Gal. iv. 19; and must not he and they observe and honour Christ in them after all this travail? If we glory that we "are crucified with Christ, and that we live," we always add or understand, "yet not we, but Christ liveth in us; and the life which we now live in the flesh, we live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us, and gave himself for us," Gal. ii. 20. And is it a dishonour to Christ, to acknowledge him in us, and to say that we live by him?

3. Was it not the very end of Christ's death to save his people from their sins? Matt. i. 21; and to bring them "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God?" Acts xxvi. 18. And did he not "give himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and sanctify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works?" Tit. ii. 14. Did he not therefore "die for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them, and rose again?" 2 Cor. v. 15. "When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men;" to what end? "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, until we all come in the unity of the faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, that henceforth we be no more children," &c. "Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify it, and cleanse it by the washing of water, by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish." Abundance of such passages in Scripture do assure us that the holiness of the saints was the end that Christ intended in his death. If therefore you teach men that they must not look at the end, in effect you teach them that they must not look at the means. If they must not rejoice in the fruits of Christ's death, they must not rejoice in his death itself; for in itself considered, his death was not matter of joy, but of sorrow; but it is for the sake of the effects that we must rejoice in it. It is a dishonour to the sufferings and merits of Christ, to obscure or make light of the ends and effects of them. And they that will glorify the blood of Christ, must glorify its effects on the souls of men. Who is it honoureth the physician? he that magnifieth the cure, or he that vilifieth it, or makes nothing of it, as was aforesaid?

4. Doubtless we must observe and glory in that which all the world must observe and glorify God for; and that which will be the matter of our Redeemer's honour at the last day; yea, the magnifying of himself therein is the end of his coming. But such is the holiness of the saints. They that "see their good works, must glorify our Father which is in heaven," Matt. v. 16. "And Christ shall come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe, even because they believed the gospel," 2 Thess. i. 10; read also ver. 11, 12.

5. The holiness of the saints is called their participation of the divine nature (as 2 Pet. i. 4 is commonly expounded, and it seems more agreeable to that which followeth, than to expound it of a relative participation of the divine nature in Christ without us). This is given to them that "escape the corruption that is in the world through lust," 2 Pet. i. 4. And will you overlook the divine nature and refuse to honour it, and this on pretence that it is a wrong to Christ? Take heed lest by your doctrine you make Christ an enemy to God and holiness, who came into the world to do his Father's will, and to recover sinners by sanctification from the world to God.

6. It is the great sin of the devil and wicked men to wrong and dishonour Christ in his saints; and when he himself is out of their reach, they persecute him in his members; and those that love not and relieve not these, shall be judged as not loving and relieving Christ. It is certainly our duty then to do contrary to them, and to love and admire God's graces in the saints, and to observe and honour Christ within them.

7. What comfortable use can we make of the promises, if we must not look at those evidences in ourselves that prove our interest in them? God hath promised, that "if we confess with the mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in the heart that God raised him from the dead, we shall be saved," Rom. x. "And that he that believeth shall not perish, but have everlasting life," John iii. 16. If you say with the papists, that no man can tell whether he be a true believer or not, then you make the promise vain; for what good will it do any man to know that heaven is promised to believers, if it cannot be known whether we are believers or not? But if you confess that it may be known, why should we so despise the comfort of the promise, as not to search after and observe the qualification, which must evidence that it is ours? Will you apply this promise to all, or to some, or to none? If to none, then it is made in vain: if to all, you will deceive the most. I mean if you absolutely promise them the benefit: for it is not all that are believers, nor all that shall have everlasting life. You dare not absolutely tell all the men in the world, that they shall not perish. It must needs therefore be the proper benefit of some; and how will you know, but by the text, who those are? There is no way of applying it, that the text or common reason will allow of, but by discerning that we are believers, to conclude thereupon that we shall not perish. If you say that all are bound to believe that they shall not perish, I answer, then most should be bound to believe a falsehood, which cannot be. They are only bound to believe the truth of the gospel, and accept of Christ as offered therein, and then discerning this faith in themselves, to conclude that they shall be glorified.

8. Should we not observe the lower mercies that we possess, it were great unthankfulness; much more to overlook the special mercies that accompany salvation. We must bless God for the very health and strength of body that is within us; for our understandings and memories; how much more for the graces that are within us!

9. Our mortification is part of our salvation; and our holiness is a beginning of our happiness; and when we come to heaven we shall be perfected herein. If, therefore, we may not take comfort in this, we may not take comfort in heaven itself, which is the perfection of it.

10. Lastly, consider, that sanctification is that

mercy that makes us capable of glorifying God for the rest of his mercies, and receiving the comfort of them. An unsanctified man cannot give any honour sincerely to Christ. And may we not observe and glory in that mercy that enableth us to give God the glory of all mercies? Can it be a wrong to Christ, to rejoice in that, without which we can do nothing to wrong him? and to take comfort in that, without which we are uncapable of true comfort?

By this time I hope it is evident to you, that it is an injurious dealing against Christ and his saints, for any to reproach them for glorying in God's graces, even that they are crucified to the world and the world to them.

SECTION XXV.

Use 2. From hence also many disconsolate christians may see their error, who cannot glory in a mortified state. They can see matter of comfort in a state of exaltation, when they perceive themselves prosper in all that they undertake, and find a present answer of their prayers, and enjoy the sense of the love of God; but to be crucified to the world, and the world to them, doth seem to them but an uncomfortable state, and they cannot see the greatness of the mercy. It is easy to perceive the excellency of those mercies that participate of the ultimate end, and are known by proper fruition, and have nothing in them but pure sweetness and delight; and therefore a state of joy declareth itself; but as for those mercies that have the nature of a means, whose excellence is in order to their end, and those that have some wholesome bitterness mixed, because they are less grateful to sense, and valued only by faith, therefore we are too prone to overlook their worth, and to neglect the comforts which the consideration of them might afford us, and so to deny God the thanks that are his due. Every sensual man can rejoice in the having and enjoying of outward prosperity; and every christian can rejoice in the fruition of God, whether in foretaste here, or in fulness hereafter; but to rejoice in the absence of worldly prosperity, in that we are dead to it, and have learned to set light by it; and to rejoice in the absence of God, in that we have hearts that are set upon him, and cannot be satisfied without him, and are desiring after him, and in progress towards him, and hope ere long that we shall be with him; this is the joy that must be expected by believers here on earth.

Though an enjoying foretaste may now and then afford them a feast, yet it is this believing, desiring, seeking joy that must be their ordinary sustentation; and if in this world they have no other, they have cause to be abundantly thankful for this.

To rejoice in the fruition of God, (especially when it is full,) is the part of the glorified saints in heaven. To rejoice in the creature, as accommodating their flesh, is the joy of the carnal, unsanctified here on earth (a remnant of which is in the imperfect saints). To rejoice in mere outward ordinances, and the false conceits of special grace, is the joy of hypocrites and common professors. To be without joy, is the part of some of the ungodly under the terrors of their consciences, and of true christians that know not their own sincerity, or are under some great desertions of God. To be out of all hope and possibility of joy, is the part of the devil and damned men. But to rejoice in the true mortification of the flesh, and in the holy contempt of worldly things, and in the desires and hopes of the glory to come, this is the part of the saints on the earth, and the present joy that cometh by believing. And this kind of joy is most suitable to our present condition; as fruition is suitable to our heavenly end. The comforts of travellers are not of the same kind with those of a man that is at home. He that is at home would have his wealth about him; but you would not carry your houses with you in your journey, nor would you divide your cattle with you, or carry all your goods and riches with you. A traveller would have as fair a way as he can get, and as good a guide, and necessaries for his journey, and no more, but all the rest he would have at home, that he may find it when he comes thither. It is his benefit in the way to want no more, and to have no more; for the more he needeth, and hath, the more he must be burdened and troubled. Mark the descriptions of our present blessedness that you find in the Scriptures, and you may see that they consist in our present mortification to things below, and desires and hopes of things to come, rather than in a state of enjoyment here, whether it be of the world or of God. Though still the reason of our blessedness in a mortified estate, is the tendency that it hath to a glorified estate; because it is the way to that; "Blessed are the poor in spirit," Matt. v. 3. It is not, Blessed are the worldly rich; nor, Blessed are the glorified only. But the reason is, "for theirs is the kingdom of heaven," that is, in title, but not in possession. Ver. 4. "Blessed are they that mourn:" and why are mourners blessed? "for they shall be comforted." "Woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation. Woe unto you that are full! for you shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now! for you shall mourn and weep. Woe unto you when all men speak well of you!" &c. that is, woe to you that place your comfort and felicity in riches, and fulness, and mirth, and the applause of men! yea, though you possess the things you desire, yet woe to you, because you shall miss of the true and durable felicity. Thus also run all the rest of the blessings in Matt. v. "Blessed are the meek. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after rightcousness. Blessed are the merciful. Blessed are the pure in heart. Blessed are the peacemakers. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake:" that is, when you are so firm in the faith, and so far in love with me, and the heavenly reward, that you can bear all these revilings, and slanders, and persecutions, you are blessed, even when the troubles are upon you. So that you see here, that our present blessedness consisteth in mortification to present things, and hope of future: and from the future the reason of our present blessedness is fetched. "They that hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled: The merciful shall obtain mercy: The pure in heart shall see God: The peacemakers shall be called the children of God: The persecuted shall have the kingdom of heaven." Indeed to the meek it is promised in present, that "they shall inherit the earth," as Psal. xxxvii. 11, had before said; that is, it shall afford them accommodations for a traveller, which is all that is desirable in it, or can be expected from it; for "godliness hath the promise of this life, and of that to come," 1 Tim. iv. 8. Yea, moreover there is a special promise to the meek, above those godly persons that are most wanting herein: for their passage through this world to heaven shall ordinarily be more peaceable and quiet to them than other men's: they do not so molest their own minds, and vex themselves; nor make themselves troubles, nor provoke others against them, as the passionate do; and commonly they

are either loved, or pitied, or easilier dealt with by all.

So that you may see throughout the gospel, that our present blessedness is in mortification and hope, as the way to our future blessedness, which consisteth in fruition. And therefore it is a very great error in believers, when they overlook the blessedness of a mortified state, and can see little in any thing but sensible fruition and rejoicings. When you are low in afflictions, and grieved for your corruptions, and fill the ears of God and men with your complaints, though you have not then the joyful sense of God, yet methinks you might easily perceive your mortification. And will that afford you no refreshment? Do you not feel that you are crucified to the world, and your desires after it are languid and lifeless? Can you not truly say that the world is crucified to you, and that you look on it but as a carcass; as an empty, lifeless, and unsatisfactory thing? Would you not gladly part with it for more of Christ? Could you not let go credit, and wealth, and friends, so that the kingdom of God might be more advanced within you, and you might live more in the Spirit by a life of faith? Could you not be content to be poor in the world, so that you might but be rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which God hath promised to them that love him? Why do you not then consider what a blessed condition you are in, and that your mortification is a blessed mercy that leadeth to salvation, and as sure a token of the love of God as your most sensible joys? Did you ever mark and conscionably practise that command of Christ, Matt. v. 12, to the persecuted, reviled, slandered believers, "Rejoice and be exceeding glad, (mark what a frame your Saviour would have you live in,) for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." So when you are poor and afflicted, and have hearts that set light by earthly things, in comparison of God and glory, you have cause to rejoice and be exceeding glad, though you live under sufferings; for thus it hath been with the true believers that have gone before you.

SECTION XXVI.

2. I COME now to the second branch of the observation; which is, that, When believers glory in their own mortification, it must be as it is the fruit of the cross of Christ, that so all their glorying may be principally and ultimately in Christ, and not in themselves.

They must take heed of ascribing the honour to themselves, or of resting in themselves; but all their observation of the graces that are in them must be in pure respect to him that is the fountain and the end, that we may thankfully acknowledge our receivings, and admire the eternal love which did bestow them, and the compassions and merits of our crucified Redeemer, and the powerful operations of his Spirit in our souls, and so may be carried out to love and duty, in the sense of our receivings; and may live to the praises of him that hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light.

And that you may see how great reason there is for this, and so may be kept from glorying in yourselves, I shall open the cause to you as it lieth both on Christ's part and on ours; what he is to us, and what we are to ourselves.

Consider, 1. It was Christ and not we that wrought our deliverance, by the wonderful work of our redemption. Long enough might we have lain in prison before we could have paid the utmost farthing, and long might we have borne the wrath which we deserved, before we could have done any thing to merit or any way procure our deliverance. Had we wept out our eyes, and prayed our hearts out, and never committed sin again, this would not have made satisfaction to God for the sin that was past. Long enough might we have lain in our blood, if this compassionate Redeemer had not taken us up, and undertaken the cure. Had he turned us off to any creature, we had been left helpless. Had we looked on the right hand for some to deliver us, or on the left, we should have found none. "Besides him there is no Saviour," Isaiah xliii. 11; Acts iv. 12.

And moreover, the way he hath taken is wonderful. There are unsearchable wonders of love, and wonders of justice, wonders of wisdom, and wonders of power. It is the admiration of angels, the study of all saints, to know the height, and breadth, and length, and depth; and when they have done all, they find that the love of Christ surpasseth knowledge. As all other knowledge of arts, creatures, and languages is nothing in comparison of the knowledge of a crucified Christ, so our knowledge is too narrow to comprehend the greatness, and too dull to reach to the bottom, of the mystery of this design of the heavenly love, Eph. iii. 17—19. When Christ hath posed men and angels with wonders in our redemption, and when we have done nothing in it ourselves, it is easy to perceive in whom we should glory.

2. Consider also that it is Christ that God hath advanced to this glory, and it is the magnifying of him that is designed by God, and not of such as you. It is true, that he intendeth to glorify us with Christ, and that in some participation of his glory. But that is not by ascribing merit, and power, and wisdom to us, nor by praising us for that which indeed we have not; but it is by communicating some of the Spirit of Christ unto us, and letting us see the glory of our Head. Though we may see the brightness of the sun, and have the comfort of its rays, yet that doth not make us suns ourselves. So though we shall be where Christ is, and behold his glory, (John xvii. 24,) and exercise ourselves in his eternal praise, yet all this is but a derived dignity, communicated to us by the aspect of our Lord; and therefore it will not be our work to praise ourselves, but him, Rev. v. 9. "Him hath God advanced to be a Prince and a Saviour," (Acts v. 31,) "and made him head over all things to the church," (Eph. i. 22,) and "delivered all things into his hand," (1 John xiii.) and "given him all power in heaven and earth," (Matt. xxviii. 18,) and "a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow," Phil. ii. 9, 10; and "to this end he died, rose, and revived, that he might be Lord of the dead and of the living," Rom. xiv. 9. So that the exalting of the Redeemer is a more principal end in the work of redemption than our exaltation; and in ours we are passive, receiving the dignity which from him is communicated to us; but Christ with his Father is the Fountain and End of his own glory.

3. Consider also, your debasement in condemnation and humiliation is the designed way to the glory of your Redeemer, and in it your own glory. This is his honour, that when the law had condemned you, he absolved you by his ransom; and when you were dead in trespasses and sins, he quickened you through the riches of mercy and the great love wherewith he loved you, Eph. ii. 4, 5. You must be sick before he can have the honour of curing you. He will lay you at the feet of God in shame, crying out, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and

am no more worthy to be called thy son, make me one of thy hired servants." You shall call yourselves "foolish, disobedient, even mad, and the greatest of sinners," Tit. iii. 3; Acts xxvi. 11; 1 Tim. i. 15. If therefore you begin to glory in yourselves, you contradict the glory of Christ, and consequently hinder the glory you should receive from him. You have but the benefit of receiving his alms, and therefore must stand in the posture of beggars, but it is he and not you that must have the honour of giving it. You must be nothing, that he may be all, or else you will be nothing indeed. You must not live, but Christ in you, or else you will not live indeed, Gal. ii. 20. You must be found "in him, not having your own righteousness, which is of the law, or works, but the righteousness which is of Christ by faith," or else you will lose yourselves, and your righteousness, Phil. iii. 9. And thus the just being dead in themselves, must live by faith; but if any be lifted up, his soul is not upright in him, Hab. ii. 4. Christianity therefore teaches you to glory in Christ, and not in yourselves.

4. Consider, it is Christ, and not you, that revived your souls when you were dead in sin, and crucified you to the world, to which you were alive. You might have rotted and stunk in the grave of sin, if he had not called you out. You saw the spectacles of mortality before your eyes, and you could say, The world is vain, before; but yet it lived in your hearts, until power came from Christ to kill it. Words were but wind; you would never have let go your bone of present worldly pleasure, if Christ had not taken it out of your jaws by showing you the hopes of greater things. Long might you have heard sermons, and yet have been carnal still, if his Spirit had not entered into your hearts. Seeing then it is he that hath done the cure, so far as it is done, it is in him that you must glory, and not in yourselves.

5. Consider, if yet he should deal with you according to your deservings, the remnant of your sin would bring you to damnation. If yet he did not hide your nakedness, and by his intercession procure you a daily pardon, you would every day be your own destroyers; nay, you would not be an hour longer out of hell. If he did not bring you before his Father, you could have no access to him in any of your addresses. Your sacrifices would be cast back into your faces as dung, if the merit of his sacrifice made them not accepted. So that by this you may see in whom you must still glory.

6. Now you have a little grace, you cannot keep it of yourselves. Now you are made alive, you cannot keep yourselves alive. If you be not preserved by him that did revive you, and kept by his mighty power to salvation, and if he be not the finisher of your faith, who was the author of it; how speedily, how certainly would you prove apostates, and undo all that hath been so long a doing! If then you stand not on your own legs, but are carried in his arms, you may see in whom it is you should glory.

7. Nay more, if you were left to yourselves but to resist one temptation, it would bear you down. You now think of many sins with a holy scorn; but the filthiest of those sins would become your pleasure, if you were forsaken by Christ. You now look on whoredom, and gluttony, and drunkenness, and ambition, as dirt and dung; but if Christ should forsake you, this dung would you feed upon, and as dogs you would eat up the filthiest vomit that ever you did disgorge yourselves of, and as swine you would choose that mire for your bed, and rest in it till hell awakened you. By this then you may perceive in whom you should glory.

8. Moreover, without Christ you cannot make use of the grace that he hath given you. The life and comfort of your grace is in the exercise. To draw forth your faith, and love, and joy into an exercise, is the way to increase them, and to show you experimentally their nature, truth, and worth, and to attain their ends. And without Christ, you will never do this. You may lie as if you were dead, and dry, and withered, if he do but withdraw his quickening influences; for without him you can do nothing. Judge then by this in whom you should glory.

9. Yea, further, as you cannot do these of yourselves, so neither can you go to Christ yourselves, for strength to do them. You will not so much as move a hand, or lift up your voice to cry for help. For the nature of sin is to make the sinner willing of it, and unwilling to be delivered from it. You would rather God would let you alone, and thus you would continue.

10. Yea, more, without Christ you would not so much as understand and be sensible of all this misery and disability in yourselves. You will think yourselves well when you are next the worst, and give no one thanks that would pity or help you. So that lay all this together, and judge in whom it is that you should glory.

11. And indeed, the very nature of all your graces, if you have any, will lead you from a glorying in yourselves to a glorying in Christ. Repentance will lay you low and make you vile in your own eyes, and loathe yourselves for all your abominations, Ezek. xxxvi. 31. Self-denial is a great part of the new creature. Faith leads you out of yourselves to Christ. Love will carry you quite above yourselves to God. And so it is with other graces. To live in Christ, and upon Christ, and to Christ, is the state of all his living members. So far then as you are new creatures, this law is written in your hearts, and I have the less need to teach you this lesson, and persuade you to the practice of it, because you are really taught of God, to glory in Christ and not in yourselves.

12. To conclude, even nature and common reason may teach you that you have little cause to glory in yourselves: for it may easily tell you that you have nothing of yourselves, and therefore nothing that is originally your own. Who knows not that we have our being, and all the means of our well-being, and every thing that is worth the having, from God alone? As nothing could not make itself to be something, so neither can that dependent something uphold itself, or carry on itself unto its end. "What hast thou which thou hast not received? And if thou hast received it, why shouldst thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?" 1 Cor. iv. 7. To such poor, empty, unworthy worms as we are, one would think it should be an easy thing to know that we have nothing but what we have of God; for whence should we have it? "In him we live, and move, and have our being; and of him, and by him, and for him, are all things, and therefore to him must be the praise for ever," Rom. xi. 36. Not therefore to ourselves, but unto him must we give the glory, Psal. cxv. 1. Though nature cannot lead us to Christ, it may tell us that we are creatures, and have nothing but from the bountiful hand of our Creator. It is therefore against this nature and reason to glory in ourselves.

Use. See then that you abhor all self-advancing thoughts. And receive no doctrine that gives the glory of Christ unto yourselves. They are miserable that are made irreligious by their pride. But they are more miserable, because more incurable, that make themselves a religion by their

pride; and frame to themselves both doctrines and devotions, whose tendency and use is to keep alive this devilish sin. You do not believe well, nor repent well, nor pray well, nor do any christian duty well, if you be not more humble in and after it, than you were before. It is a sad case for a man to preach himself and pray himself into hell, and to strengthen the bonds of sin and Satan by his devotions. And yet proud devotions are as ready a way to this as you can devise. If you read, or confer, or preach, or pray, with a mind that is lifted up, and glorieth in itself, you do but serve the devil, with the name of God and his holy ordinances. And therefore we have seen by sad experience, in a multitude of sects, and horrible delusions of late in this land, that none run to such dreadful outrages in sin, nor go so far against the Lord, as proud, self-conceited professors do. As you love your souls, take heed of being conceited of your own understanding or worth, and of being proud of your supposed holiness or abilities. What fearful ends have we seen of such! If indeed thou art a christian, thou must become as a little child, and learn of Christ to be meek and lowly, and be a servant to all; and lay thyself still at the feet of Christ, as sensible that all the sin is thine, but the good is his, from whom thou didst receive it. Thou canst destroy thyself, but in him is thy help. Thou hast the skill and ability to set thy house on fire, but it is he that must quench it or repair it. Thou art wise to do evil, but thou hast no knowledge to do good, but what he giveth thee. Thou hast the art of stabbing thyself, but not of curing thyself. He must do that for thee, or else it must be undone. You can snarl and ravel the state of your own souls, but it is he that must untie the knots which thy folly and earelessness have tied. Thou canst with Jonas raise the storm and cast thyself overboard; but it is he that must provide the whale to receive thee, and bring thee to the land. Remember therefore that though thou be a vessel of merey, it is the fountain that filleth thee, and not thyself. Thou canst scarce more dishonour thy qualifications, and actions, and consequently thyself, than to say they are thine own, and originally from thyself. For sure all that is thine, and from thee, will be like thee; and therefore must be weak and bad as thou art. Whenever therefore thou gloriest in thy graces, do it but as the beggar glorieth in his alms, that ascribes all to the giver; or as the patient gloricth in his cure, that ascribeth all to God and the physician; or as a condemned rebel doth glory in a pardon, which he ascribeth to the mercy of his prince. I durst not have told you as I did before, of the duty of glorying in your crucifixion to the world, without adding this caution, to tell you whither all must be referred, and how little you are beholden for it to yourselves. Meet every thought of self-exalting with abhorrence, and give it no other entertainment in your souls than you would give the devil himself, who is the father of it. For casting down Christ, will prove the casting down of yourselves, and he that exalteth himself shall be abased.

SECTION XXVII.

3. I come now to the third and last branch of the observation; viz. that To glory in any thing save the cross of Christ and our crucifixion thereby, is a thing that the soul of a christian should abhor.

Here I shall show you what it is that is not exeluded from our glorying in these words; and then what it is that is excluded; and conclude with some application.

1. It is none of the apostle's meaning in these words, that we may not glory in God the Father. For his love to the world was the cause of their redemption. And his pleasure and glory is the end of redemption; and was intended by Christ, and must be intended by us. As Justin Martyr saith, he would not have believed in Christ himself, if he had led them to any but the true God; so I may say, Christ had not done the work of Christ, if he had intended any end but God, and had not brought up all to God.

2. When it is said that we must glory only in the cross of Christ, the meaning is not that we must not also glory in his incarnation, and holy life, and resurrection, and intercession, and every part of his mediatorship; for the cross is not here put as contradistinct from these; but all these are implied in his cross, as having their share, as well as it, in the work of our salvation.

3. Nor is it the meaning of the apostle, to forbid us to glory in the promise that Christ has made us, and in the glad tidings of the gospel. For this brings the blessed news to our ears; this is the joyful sound; the voice of love; the charter of our inheritance; and therefore sweet to all the sons of life.

4. Nor is it any of the apostle's sense, that we may not glory in the Spirit of Christ, as magnifying him for the work of illumination and sanctification. As it was a high sin in Ananias and Sapphira, to lie to the Holy Ghost; and as it is the unpardonable sin to blaspheme the Holy Ghost; so it must needs be a great duty to honour and magnify the Holy Ghost. And therefore it should make us tremble to hear some profane men abuse the Holy Ghost in deriding his works, saying, These are the holy brethren; these are the saints; these have the Spirit.

5. Nor yet are we forbidden to glory in the effects of the cross of Christ upon us; for these you find are included in the text, even our crucifixion to the world thereby. And the other effects of it, even our justification, adoption, and the rest, may be gloried in, as well as this that is here named, as the apostle doth, Rom. viii. 30—33, to the end, yet still referring all to God in Christ.

6. Nor are we forbidden to glory in the helps of our salvation, the ordinances of God, and means of grace, so we give no more to them than their due, and look at them but as the appointed means of God, that can do nothing but by him.

7. No, nor is it unlawful so far to glory in our teachers, as God hath sent them and qualified them for our good, and as they are the messengers of God, and instruments of the Spirit. So did Cornelius glory in Peter, Acts x. And when the apostles brought the gospel to Samaria, there "was great joy in that city," chap. viii. 8. And the apostle commandeth the churches "to know them that are over them in the Lord, and submit themselves, and esteem them highly in love for their work's sake," 1 Thess. v. 12.

8. Nay, we may glory even in honour, and riches, and other outward things, as they are the effects of the love of God, and the blood of Christ; and as they reveal God to us, or furnish us for his service, and the relief of his people, and any way further the ends of our holy faith. In a word, we may glory in any thing that is good, as it stands in its due subordination to Christ, ascribing to it no more than belongs to it in the relation, and not separating it in our thoughts or affections from Christ, but carrying

all the glory ultimately to God, and making the creature but the means thereto. And thus may we not only praise the physician, but the medicine, the apothecary, the handsome administration, the glass that it is brought in, the silver spoon in which we take it; and all this without any wrong to the physician, or danger of displeasing him, if we respect every thing but as it stands in its own place. So much to show you what is not excluded.

But what is it then that we may not glory in? As I told you in the beginning, not in ourselves, or any creature, as opposite to Christ, or separate from him, or any way pretending to be what it is not, or do what it cannot. But let us enter into some particulars.

1. Have you dignities, and honours, and high places in the world? Do others bow to you, and have you power to crush them or exalt them at your pleasure? Glory not in it as any part of your felicity. A horse is stronger than a man. The great Mogul, and the Turkish emperor, and many another infidel prince, is a thousandfold beyond the greatest of you in power and earthly dignity; and yet what are they but miserable wretches! Your power will not conquer death, nor keep off sickness, nor keep the stoutest of your carcasses from corruption. When a man shall see you gasping for breath, and yielding yourselves prisoners to irresistible death, and closing those eyes that look so haughtily, that who can discern the glory of your greatness; who then will fear you, or honour, or regard you, further than your deserts or their interests lead them? Your flatterers will then forsake you, and seek them a new master. When they are winding your carcass, and laying it up for rottenness in the dust, what signs of your power will then appear? Will your corpse have any reverend aspect? How many have been spurned when they were dead, that were bowed to while they were alive? There are many in hell, and there will be for ever, that were greater men than you on earth. The higher you climb, the lower you have to fall. If the breath of a thousand applaud you now, perhaps a million may reproach you when you are dead. However, it is not the applause of men that will carry you to heaven, or abate the least of your pain in hell. Glory not then in worldly honours or greatness. But rather rejoice that you have enough without all this, in God. How well, thinks the christian, can I spare all these tedious, troublesome employments, these compliments, these applauses, this sumptuous provision and retinue, and all this stir that they make in the world! How easily can I spare their titles and obeisances! When I look up at them as on the pinnacle of a steeple, I bless myself that I am below them on safer ground. I have more leisure to converse with God in my solitude, than they have in a crowd. Rejoice that you neither need nor desire such a state, but find Christ enough for you in a lower condition, and nothing without him enough in the highest; that you are above these empty, childish honours, when those that possess them may be enslaved under them; that you have the dignity of a son of God, a member of Christ, and an heir of heaven, and have a heart that can contentedly let other men take the dignities of the earth. It is more to have the world, and the kingdoms and glory of it, under your feet, by the spiritual advancement of your souls, than to be the monarch of the world.

2. Have you abundance of earthly riches, and provision for your flesh, so that you want nothing, but have the world at will? Glory not in it, as the least part of your felicity. This will not keep your souls in your bodies, nor take away their guilt, nor open to you the gates of heaven. You may want a drop of water in hell, for all your riches on earth. If you escape that danger, no thanks to your riches. If ever you get to heaven, you must be beholden to Christ to save you from your riches. And when all is done, you will have a harder journey, and a greater load to burden you, than others, and will be saved with very much ado. Glory not then in these; but rather glory that you have a taste of higher and sweeter things, which take off your minds, and make you look on these as chips. To have a heart that cares not for wealth or honours, but can rejoice in poverty, and daily reproaches, is a thousand times greater mercy than to have all the wealth and honour of the world.

3. Have you convenient habitations for buildings, and rooms, and walks, and lands, and neighbourhood? Glory not in them as any of your felicity. They are baits to entice your hearts from God. But rather rejoice that you have a building not made with hands eternal in the heavens, and that you can be contented till you come thither with any thing in the way, and make shift with inconveniences for a little while. Heaven wants no furniture, nor hath any encumbrances nor inconveniences. If a winding-sheet and coffin be room enough when we are dead, we can endure sure to be somewhat straitened while we are alive, seeing we are dead to the world while we live in it. Oh what is the most sumptuous palace to the meanest room in our Father's house? The green and flourishing earth in summer, covered with the more glorious spangled firmament, is a goodly structure; but far short of that which the poorest saint shall have with God.

4. Have you comeliness of body? have you beauty or strength? Glory not in it. It is but warm, well-coloured earth. The pox or other sickness can quickly turn your beauty to deformity. If age do not wrinkle it, death will dissolve it. The comeliest and strongest body will shortly be as homely and loathsome a thing as the dirt in the streets, and as the carrion in a ditch. The stoutest youth and the neatest dame must come to this; there is no remedy. And is such a body a thing to be gloried in? No: but glory rather in your assurance of a resurrection; when your mortal bodies shall put on immortality, and your corruptible incorruption, and death shall be swallowed up in victory; and when you shall shine as stars in the firmament of your Father, and be subject to heat and cold, hunger, thirst, and weariness no more: and that in the mean time you can tame this flesh, and use it as a servant, and instead of caring for its inordinate provision, can lay out your care for a more during substance.

5. Have you comely apparel for the adorning of your bodies? Glory not in it. This is so childish that it is below a man, and therefore so sinful as to be unbeseeming a christian. The emptiest person may have the best attire. It is not your outside that shows your worth. The philosopher asks the question, Why women are more addicted to look after neat attire than men? and he answereth, Because nature is conscious of their want of inward worth, it seeks to make it up with somewhat that is borrowed. It may make a man suspect that somewhat is amiss within, when there needs all this ado without. They are not always the best horses that have the neatest trappings. A fool may be as bravely drest as a wise man: and few but fools and children do admire you, or think you ever the better; but many a one will envy you, and many take you to be worse. A graceless soul will be but sorrily covered with neat attire. And whatever you hang without, we all

know that there is dung and filth within. Paul's shop hath comelier ornaments than these. "Let women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but, which becometh women professing godliness, with good works; learning in silence with all subjection," 1 Tim. ii. 9. Glory in the whole raiment of the saints, even the righteousness of Christ, lest when you go naked out of the world as you came naked in, your souls should be found naked before a holy, jealous God.

6. Have you health of body, and feel no sickness? Glory not in it. It will last you but a while. Your oil will be spent ere long, and your candle will go out: you must know what pains and death are as well as others. A little cold, or heat, or a thousand accidents, may quickly change the case with you. Many that were young and lusty go to their graves, when some that were more likely to have gone before them are left behind: but first or last we must all away. Rather glory in a healthful frame of soul, that Christ hath cured you of your worldliness and pride, of your self-seeking, and passion, and fleshly lusts; for this will be a more durable health than the other.

7. Have you nobility of birth? Are you descended of worshipful or honourable ancestors? Glory not in it. We are all made of one common earth. There is as good blood in the veins of a beggar as of a lord. This is but a remnant of your ancestors' honour. Perhaps the favour of some great men might bestow it on them at first without desert; or it might be the consequent of a little riches, though ill got. However, the merit descendeth not to you; and therefore it is little honour that comes that way. That is your chief honour which is most your own, and least borrowed from others. The deserving son of a beggar is more truly honourable than the undeserving son of a lord. Glory rather that you are born again, not of the flesh, but of the Spirit; not of corruptible seed, but incorruptible, the word of God that endureth for ever. Your first birth, how noble soever, makes you but children of wrath, and slaves of Satan. But your new birth is the truly honourable birth, which makes you partakers of the Divine nature, the sons of God, the heirs of heaven, and co-heirs with the Lord Jesus, 1 Pet. i. 23; John iii. 6; i. 12; Rom. viii. 17.

8. Have you friends that love you, and are able to countenance you, and are daily tender of you, and helpful to you? Bless God for them; but glory not in man: for "Cursed is he that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and withdraweth his heart from the Lord," Jer. xvii. 5. "Cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of?" Isa. ii. 22. Your best friends are uncertain, and quickly lost, and may turn so unkind as to break your hearts. Or if their minds prove constant, their lives are uncertain; and the dearer they were to you, with the greater grief you will lay them in the grave. Or if you fall yourselves into sickness, they will prove but silly comforts to you: they can but look on you, and be sorry for you; but that will not ease your pain, nor succour you. Oh how much more cause have you to glory in such a friend as Christ, that will save you from sin, and wrath, and hell! In such a friend as God Almighty, that can rebuke your diseases by a word, or make them tend to the cure of your souls; and that will stick to you when others leave you; with whom you must dwell in heaven for ever!

9. Have you the pleasantest meats or drinks that your appetite desires? the easiest lodgings? the easiest lives? the pleasantest recreations or companions? Glory not in them. These are the most desperate bait of the devil, and the common ruin of the world. To take your fill, and please your flesh, and fit your lives to its desires, is the very way to hell, and the property of the slaves of Satan. Your sweet meat will have sour sauce. "If you live after the flesh, you shall die; but if by the Spirit you mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live," Rom. viii. 13. You know what became of him, Luke xvi. that "was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared deliciously every day." It is a heavy case to have your portion and all your good things in this life. Rejoice rather that you have conquered the desires of your flesh, and have brought it into subjection; that you are masters of your appetites, and can eat and drink to the glory of God; and that you can deny your ease, and endure hardness as a soldier of Christ; that you have pleasanter recreations in the ways of life, and sweeter comforts than the flesh can have any; and that you have delights that are more durable, and meat to eat that others know not of. Rejoice that you have conquered the flesh, your greatest enemy, and so have escaped the greatest danger. "For there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, that walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," Rom. viii. 1.

10. Have you the love of your neighbours, and do all men speak well of you? Glory not in it as any of your felicity; for it will be woe to many that are as well spoken of as you. The world is not so wise, nor so good, that a man should much rejoice in its good word.

Are they learned men that extol you? Yet do not glory in it. They may boast you into pride and hell, but they cannot add a cubit to the stature of your worth. They see not the state of your soul; and therefore you may be miserable when they have said their best.

Are they godly men that admire you and speak well of you? Yet glory not in it as any certain evidence of your felicity. They speak as they think, and may easily be deceived. They are not your judges. As their hard thoughts cannot condemn you, so their good thoughts or words cannot justify you with God. Oh glory rather in God's approbation, who knows the heart; to whose judgment it is that you stand or fall, who judgeth not by outward appearance, but in righteousness. If he say, "Well done, good and faithful servant," his words will be life to you; but a thousand others may say so, and do you no good at all, but hurt.

11. Are you famous for learning? and have you great parts in knowledge and utterance? Glory not in it as any of your felicity, or evidence thereof. There are learneder men than you in hell. The greatest knowledge of common things hath much sorrow, and showeth you so much of your ignorance, and what is yet beyond your reach, that it disquiets you the more. Much more may you glory that you know Christ crucified, and that you know your interest in the love of God, and can love him whom you know, without which all your knowledge would make you as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. Of all these together, I may say, "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord, which exerciseth loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness," Jer. ix. 23, 24.

12. Have you spiritual mercies as well as corpo-

ral? Take heed in what respect you glory in them. For example,

(1.) Have you abundant and excellent means of grace? Have you ministers, and holy ordinances, and christian communion in the purest order? Glory in them as God's mercies and helps to higher things: but not as your felicity, or a certain evidence of it. For many are first in these respects, that will be last in respect of life eternal. The greatest fall is from the highest mercies: and many that had the chiefest place in the church, will have the sorest place in hell. Abominable Sodom will escape better than many hearers of the gospel. But glory in this, that you have the Spirit of the gospel, and that Christ within you that is preached in the gospel.

(2.) Have you much understanding in the doctrine of the gospel? and are you eminent teachers of it to others? Glory in it as an opportunity of serving the Lord, and doing and getting good; but not as a certain evidence of a good estate. For many shall say, "Lord, have we not preached in thy name?" whom Christ will not own, because they were "workers of iniquity," Matt. vii. 22. And "he that knoweth his Master's will, and doth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes," Luke xii. 47. But if your love and obedience be answerable to your knowledge, glory rather in that.

(3.) Have you done many works of mercy to others? Have you given all you have to the poor? Have you converted many souls? Are you public mercies to the place where you live? Give God the glory of so great a mercy. But take heed of giving the glory to yourselves. And take not the outward works alone so much as for certain evidences of your happiness.

(4.) Have you extraordinary experiences of mercy, and extraordinary feelings of comfort in yourselves? Rejoice in them as God's mercy; and give him the glory. But remember that these are no certain evidences of your safe condition. Many have been wonderfully saved from death, that will not be saved from hell. And many large comforts have ended in eternal sorrows.

(5.) Have you a living faith, and a soul abounding in the love of God, and emptied of self in christian humility, and exercised in holy walkings, and conflicts for Christ, and looking with hope to the joy that is set before you? What then shall I say to you? Glory in this blessed work of grace; this image of Christ; this heavenly nature and conversation; and this foretaste and earnest of everlasting life. But sure I need not bid you give not your very graces the glory due to Christ. For this were to prohibit you a contradiction. It is the nature of them all to carry you to Christ, and to cause you to deny yourselves. You cannot exercise these graces, but you must do it. Do I need to desire you that you make not your own faith the matter of that righteousness which must answer the law, when faith itself is a receiving of another for our righteousness? Or need I advise you that you trust not in your love and evangelical obedience, as a satisfaction to God's justice, or the matter of that righteousness which must answer the law; when that love and obedience is nothing else but a love to him and an obedience of him that hath satisfied for us, and is become our righteousness? Do I need to persuade the humble so far as they are humble, not to be proud of their own graces or works? or the self-denying not to glory in themselves? The nature of the new creature, and the anointing that is in you, doth effectually teach you all these things; and you have already learned them. Yet because you are sanctified but in part, you have still need of warning; and therefore I require you, that you objectively abuse not these graces of Christ (for actively you cannot; seeing grace is that, as Austin defineth it, *qua nemo male utitur*). Should you think you merit by denying merit; or should you think you have something to glory in with God, because you have denied yourselves and your own worthiness; or should you trust in those acts as the matter of your justification against that law, whose nature is to distrust in all that is your own, and thus to trust in Christ alone; you would be guilty of the most sacrilegious robbing of Christ, and of an impious abuse of the most precious graces, contrary to their nature and ends; and of the most absurd and senseless abuse of your very reason, by palpable contradiction.

To conclude, I now beseech you all, take heed of your glorying, internally and externally. Let the blinded worldling glory that he hath the world; but do you glory that you need it not, and can be without it, and are heirs of a better world. Let sensual wretches glory in their pleasing of their flesh; but do you glory that you are able to deny it its desires, and to please your Lord. Let the deluded, ambitious ones glory in their honours; but learn you to pity them in the height of their prosperity, and glory in the durable prerogatives of the saints. Let natural men glory in their health and natural life; but glory you in a readiness to die, and be with Christ, and in the believing expectations of the life everlasting. Let hypocrites glory in their evading of sufferings; but do you glory in tribulations and infirmities, and that you are accounted worthy to suffer for Christ. Let Pharisees glory in their superstitions, and ceremonies, and self-righteousness; but glory you in gospel simplicity, and in the righteousness of Christ. "Surely shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength; even to him shall men come," &c. "In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified and shall glory," Isa. xlv. 24, 25. "The nations shall bless themselves in him, and in him shall they glory," Jer. iv. 2. Let the pomp and fulness of a flattering world be the glory of the worldling; but let the despised humility and hopes of true believers, in the lowest ebb of worldly accommodations, be our greater glory. For "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty; and base things of the world, and things that are despised, hath God chosen, and things that are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord," 1 Cor. i. 27—31. And believe this; as carnal glorying is childish, against our own reason and daily experience, and will shortly make all that used it ashamed; so the spiritual glorying of the mortified believer is also rational and manly, and will never make him ashamed, but end in the perfect, endless glory. Fix then your resolutions with this mortified apostle: "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified to me, and I unto the world."

THE

LIFE OF FAITH.

IN THREE PARTS.

PART I.

BEING A SERMON FORMERLY PREACHED BEFORE HIS MAJESTY, AND PUBLISHED BY HIS COMMAND: WITH ANOTHER ADDED FOR THE FULLER APPLICATION.

TO THE WORSHIPFUL, MY MUCH HONOURED FRIEND,

RICHARD HAMPDEN OF HAMPDEN, ESQ. AND THE LADY LETITIA HIS WIFE,

GRACE AND PEACE BE MULTIPLIED.

Sir,

Your name stands here in the front of this Treatise, on a double account. First, that (the custom of writers having given me such an advantage) I may tell the present and future ages, how much I love and honour your piety, sobriety, integrity, and moderation, in an age when such virtues grow into contempt, or into lifeless images and names: and how much I am myself your debtor, for the manifold expressions of your love; and that in an age when love directed by the superior faculties is out of fashion; and towards such as I, is grown a crime. Sincerity and love are things that shall be honourable, when hypocrisy and malice have done their worst; but they are most conspicuous and refulgent in times of rarity, and when the shame of their contraries set them off.

Secondly, to signify my love and gratitude by the best return which I can make; which is, by tendering to you and to your family the surest directions, for the most noble, manly life on earth, in order to a blessed life in heaven. Though you have proceeded well, you are not yet past need of help: so great a work doth call for skilful counsel, and studious learning, and industrious and unwearied practice. And your hopeful children may be the readier to learn this excellent life from these directions, for the love of your prefixed names. And how happy will they be, if they converse with God, when others are wallowing in the filth of sensuality! When the dead-hearted sinner thinketh not of another world, with the wisdom of a foreseeing man, till he is going out of this, *securus quo pes ferat, atque ex tempore vivit*, (*ut* Per.) *et quibus in solo vivendi causa palato est*, (*ut* Juv.); when such sensual souls must be dragged out of their pampered, corruptible flesh, to divine revenge, and go with the beginnings of endless horror to the world where they might have found everlasting rest; what joy will then be the portion of mortified and patient believers, whose treasures, and hearts, and conversations in heaven, are now the foretaste of their possession, as the Spirit of Christ which causeth this, is the seal of God, and the pledge and earnest of their inheritance. If a flesh-pleasing life in a dark, distracted, brutish world, were better than a life with God and angels, methinks yet they that know they cannot have what they would, should make sure of what they may have; and they that cannot keep what they love, should learn to love what they may keep. Wonderful stupidity! that they who see that carrying dead bodies to the grave, is as common a work as the midwives' taking children into the world, and that this life is but the road to another, and that all men are posting on to their journey's end, should think no more considerately whither so many souls do go, that daily shoot the gulf of death, and return no more to the world which once they called their home! That men will have no house or home, but the ship which carrieth them so swiftly to eternity! and spend their time in furnishing a dwelling on such a tempestuous sea, where winds and tide are hastening them to the shore! and even to the end are contriving to live where they are daily dying; and care for no habitation but on horseback! that almost all men die much wiser than they lived; and yet the certain foreknowledge of death will not serve to make them more seasonably and more safely wise! Wonderful! that it should be possible for a man awake, to believe that he must shortly be gone from earth, and enter into an unchangeable, endless life, and yet not bend the thoughts of his soul, and the labours of his life, to secure his true and durable felicity! But Adam hath

given sin the antecedency to grace, and madness the priority to wisdom; and our wisdom, health, and safety, must now come after, by the way of recovery and cure. The firstborn of lapsed man was a malignant, persecuting Cain. The firstborn of believing Abraham, was a persecutor of him that was "born after the Spirit," 1 John iii. 12; Gal. iv. 29. And the firstborn of this Isaac himself, was a "profane Esau, that for one morsel sold his birthright," Heb. xii. 16. And naturally we are all the offspring of this profaneness, and have not acquaintance enough with God, and with healthful holiness, and with the everlasting, heavenly glory, to make us cordially prefer it before a forbidden cup or morsel, or a game at foolery, or a filthy lust; or before the wind of a gilded fool's acclamation and applause; or the cap and counterfeit subjection of the multitude. But the *Fortunæ, non tua turba,* (*ut* Ov.) *et quos sportula fecit amici,* (*ut* Juv.) who will serve men's lusts, and be their servants, and humble attendants to damnation, are regarded more than the God, the Saviour, the Sanctifier, to whom these perfidious rebels were once devoted. That you and yours may live that more wise and delightful life, which consisteth in the daily sight of heaven, by a living faith, which worketh by love, in constant obedience, is the principal end of this public appellation: that what is here written for the use of all, may be first and specially useful to you and yours, whom I am so much bound to love and honour; even to your safe and comfortable life and death, and to your future joy and glory, is the great desire of

Your obliged Servant,

Feb. 4, 1669. RICHARD BAXTER.

THE PREFACE.

Reader,

1. If it offend thee, that the parts of this Treatise are so unlike, understand, 1. That they are for various uses. The first part to make men willing, by awakening persuasions; and the rest, to direct them in the exercises of faith, who are first made willing. 2. That I write not to win thy praise of an artificial, comely structure; but to help souls to holiness and heaven; and to these ends I labour to suit the means. 3. That the first sermon was published long ago; and the bookseller desiring me to give him some additions to it, I thought meet first to make up the exciting part in the same style, and then to add a directory for the practice of judicious believers.

2. And if it offend thee that the second part containeth but such matter as I have already published, in my "Reasons of the Christian Religion," understand, 1. That I perceived that treatise was neglected by the more unlearned sort of christians, as not descending enough to their capacities; and that it would be useful to the confirmation of their faith, to draw forth some of the most obvious arguments, in as plain a manner and as briefly as I could, that length or obscurity might not deprive them of the benefit, who are too slothful or too dull to make use of more copious and accurate discourses. 2. And I knew not how to write a Treatise of the Uses of Faith, which should wholly leave out the Confirmations of Faith, without much reluctancy of my reason. 3. And again, I say I can bear the dispraise of repetition, if I may but further men's faith and salvation.

3. And if it offend thee that I am so dull in all the directive part, I cannot well do both works at once, awaken the affections, and accurately direct the mind for practice. Or at least if I had spoken all those directions in a copious, applicatory, sermon style, it would have swelled the book to a very tedious, costly volume; and affection must not too much interpose, when the judgment is about its proper work. And being done in the beginning, it may be the better spared afterwards.

4. If it offend you that I open the "Life of Faith" in somewhat an unusual manner, I answer for myself, that if it be methodical, true and apt for use, I do that which I intend. And on a subject so frequently and fully handled, it were but an injury to the church, to say but the same which is said already. Mr. John Ball, Mr. Ezekiel Culverwell, and Mr. Samuel Ward, in a narrower room have done exceeding well upon this subject. If you would have nothing more than they have said, read their books only and let this alone.

5. If it offend you that the directions are many of them difficult, and the style requireth a slow, considerate reader; I answer, the nature of the subject requireth it; and without voluminous tediousness, it cannot be avoided. Blame therefore your unprepared, ignorant minds; and while you are yet dull of hearing, and so make things hard to be uttered to your understanding, because you have still need of milk, and cannot digest strong meat; but must again be taught the principles of the oracles of God, Heb. v. 11—14. Think not to get knowledge without hard study, and patient learning, by hearing nothing but what you know already, or can understand by one hasty reading over; lest you discover a conjunction of slothfulness with an ignorant and unhumbled mind. Or at least, if you must learn at so cheap a rate, or else stick still in your milk and your beginnings, be not offended if others outgo you, and think knowledge worthy of much greater diligence; and if leaving the principles we go on towards perfection, as long as we take them along with us, and make them the life of all that followeth, while we seem to leave them: and this we will do, if God permit, Heb. vi. 1. 3.

R. B.

Feb. 3, 1669.

HEBREWS XI. 1.

NOW FAITH IS THE SUBSTANCE OF THINGS HOPED FOR, THE EVIDENCE OF THINGS NOT SEEN.

CHAPTER I.

THOUGH the wicked are distinguished into hypocrites and unbelievers, yet hypocrites themselves are unbelievers too. They have no faith which they can justify, by its prevailing efficacy and works; and therefore have no faith by which they can be justified. Because their discovery is needful to their recovery, and all our salvation depends on the sincerity of our faith. I have chosen this text, which is a description of Faith, that the opening of it may help us for the opening of our hearts, and resolving the great question, on which our endless life depends.

To be a christian, and to be a believer in Christ, are words in Scripture of the same signification. If you have not faith, you are not christians. This faith hath various offices and objects. By if we are justified, sanctified, and saved, we are justified, not by believing that we are justified, but by believing that we may be justified; not by receiving justification immediately, but by receiving Christ for our justification; not by mere accepting the pardon in itself, but by first receiving him that procureth and bestoweth it, on his terms; not by mere accepting health, but by receiving the Physician and his remedies, for health.

Faith is the practical believing in God as promising, and Christ as procuring, justification and salvation; or, the practical belief and acceptance of life, as procured by Christ, and promised by God in the gospel.

The everlasting fruition of God in heaven, is the ultimate object. No man believeth in Christ as Christ, that believeth not in him for eternal life. As faith looks at Christ as the necessary means, and at the divine benignity as the fountain, and at his veracity as the foundation or formal object, and at the promise as the true signification of his will; so doth it ultimately look at our salvation (begun on earth, and perfected in heaven) as the end, for which it looketh at the rest.

No wonder therefore if the Holy Ghost here speaking of the dignity and power of faith, do principally insist on that part of its description which is taken from this final object.

As Christ himself in his humiliation was rejected by the gentiles, and a stumbling-stone to the Jews, despised and not esteemed, Isa. liii. 2, 3; having "made himself of no reputation," Phil. ii. 7; so faith in Christ as incarnate and crucified, is despised and counted foolishness by the world. But as Christ in his glory, and the glory of believers, shall force them to an awful admiration; so faith itself as exercised on that glory, is more glorious in the eyes of all. Believers are never so reverenced by the world, as when they converse in heaven, and "the Spirit of glory resteth on them," 1 Pet. iv. 14.

How faith, by beholding this glorious end, doth move all the faculties of the soul, and subdue the inclinations and interests of the flesh, and make the greatest sufferings tolerable, is the work of the Holy Ghost in this chapter to demonstrate, which beginning with the description, proceeds to the proof by a cloud of witnesses. There are two sorts of persons (and employments) in the world, for whom there are two contrary ends hereafter. One sort subjects their reason to their sensual or carnal interest. The other subjects their senses to their reason, cleared, conducted, and elevated by faith. Things present or possessed, are the riches of the sensual, and the bias of their hearts and lives: things absent, but hoped for, are the riches of believers, which actuate their chief endeavours.

This is the sense of the text which I have read to you; which setting things hoped for in opposition to things present, and things unseen to those that sense doth apprehend, assureth us that faith (which fixeth on the first) doth give to its object a subsistence, presence, and evidence, that is, it seeth that which supplieth the want of presence and visibility. The ὑπόστασις, is that which *quoad effectum* is equal to a present subsistence. And the ἔλεγχος, the evidence, is somewhat which *quoad effectum* is equal to visibility. As if he had said, Though the glory promised to believers, and expected by them, be yet to come, and only hoped for, and be yet unseen and only believed, yet is the sound believer as truly affected with it, and acted by its attractive force, as if it were present and before his eyes, as a man is by an inheritance or estate in reversion, or out of sight, if well secured, and not only by that which is present to his view. The Syriac interpreter, instead of a translation, gives us a true exposition of the words, viz. Faith is a certainty of those things that are in hope, as if they did already actually exist, and the revelation of those things that are not seen.

Or you may take the sense of this proposition, which I am next to open further, and apply, viz. That the nature and use of faith is to be as it were instead of presence, possession, and sight; or to make the things that will be, as if they were already in existence; and the things unseen which God revealeth, as if our bodily eyes beheld them.

1. Not that faith doth really change its object.

2. Nor doth it give the same degree of apprehensions and affections, as the sight of present things would do. But, 1. Things invisible are the objects of our faith. 2. And faith is effectual instead of sight to all these uses: 1. The apprehension is as infallible, because of the objective certainty, (though not so satisfactory to our imperfect souls,) as if the things themselves were seen. 2. The will is determined by it in its necessary consent and choice. 3. The affections are moved in the necessary degree. 4. It ruleth in our lives, and bringeth us through duty and suffering, for the sake of the happiness which we believe.

3. This faith is a grounded, wise, and justifiable act: an infallible knowledge; and often called so in Scripture; John vi. 69; 1 Cor. xv. 58; Rom. viii. 28, &c. And the constitutive and efficient causes will justify the name.

We know and are infallibly sure of the truth of God which we believe: as it is said, "We believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God," John vi. 69. "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," 2 Cor. v. 1. "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God," Rom. viii. 28. "You know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord," 1 Cor. xv. 58. "We know God spake to Moses," &c. John ix. 29. "We know God heareth not sinners," ver. 31. "We know thou art a teacher come from God," John iii. 2. So 1 John iii. 5, 15, and 1 Pet.

iii. 17, and many other scriptures, tell you, that believing God is a certain, infallible sort of knowledge.

I shall in justification of the work of faith, acquaint you briefly with, 1. That in the nature of it, 2. And that in the causing of it, which advanceth it to be an infallible knowledge.

1. The believer knows (as sure as he knows there is a God) that God is true, and his word is true, it being "impossible for God to lie," Heb. vi. 18. "God that cannot lie hath promised," Tit. i. 2.

2. He knows that the holy Scripture is the word of God; by his image which it beareth, and the many evidences of divinity which it containeth, and the many miracles (certainly proved) which Christ, and his Spirit in his servants, wrought to confirm the truth. 3. And therefore he knoweth assuredly the conclusion, that all this word of God is true.

And for the surer effecting of this knowledge, God doth not only set before us the ascertaining evidence of his own veracity, and the Scripture's divinity; but moreover, 1. He giveth us to believe, Phil. i. 29; 2 Pet. i. 3. For it is "not of ourselves, but it is the gift of God," Eph. ii. 8. Faith is one of the "fruits of the Spirit," Gal. v. 22. By the drawing of the Father, we come to the Son. And he that hath knowledge given from heaven, will certainly know; and he that hath faith given him from heaven will certainly believe. The heavenly light will dissipate our darkness, and infallibly illuminate. Whilst God sets before us the glass of the gospel in which the things invisible are revealed, and also gives us eye-sight to behold them, believers must needs be a heavenly people, as walking in that light which proceedeth from and leadeth to the celestial, everlasting light.

2. And that faith may be so powerful as to serve instead of sight and presence, believers have the Spirit of Christ within them, to excite and actuate it, and help them against all temptations to unbelief, and to work in them all other graces that concur to promote the works of faith; and to mortify those sins that hinder our believing, and are contrary to a heavenly life. So that as the exercise of our sight, and taste, and hearing, and feeling, is caused by our natural life; so the exercise of faith, and hope, and love, upon things unseen, is caused by the Holy Spirit, which is the principle of our new life: "We have received the Spirit, that we might know the things that are given us of God," 1 Cor. ii. 12. This Spirit of God acquainteth us with God, with his veracity and his word: "We know him that hath said, I will never fail thee nor forsake thee," Heb. x. 30. This Spirit of Christ acquainteth us with Christ, and with his grace and will, 1 Cor. ii. 10—12. This heavenly Spirit acquainteth us with heaven, so that "we know that when Christ appeareth, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is," 1 John iii. 2. And "we know that he was manifested to take away sin," 1 John iii. 5; and will perfect his work, and present us spotless to his Father, Eph. v. 26, 27. This heavenly Spirit possesseth the saints with such heavenly dispositions and desires, as much facilitate the work of faith. It bringeth us to a heavenly conversation; and maketh us live as "fellow-citizens of the saints," and "in the household of God," Eph. ii. 19; Phil. iii. 20. It is within us a Spirit of supplication, breathing heavenward, with sighs and groans which cannot be expressed; and as God knoweth the meaning of the Spirit, so the Spirit knows the mind of God, Rom. viii. 37; 1 Cor. ii. 11.

3. And the work of faith is much promoted by the spiritual experiences of believers. When they find a considerable part of the holy Scriptures verified on themselves, it much confirmeth their faith as to the whole. They are really possessed of that heavenly disposition, called The divine nature, and have felt the power of the word upon their hearts, renewing them to the image of God, mortifying their most dear and strong corruptions, showing them a greater beauty and desirableness in the objects of faith, than is to be found in sensible things: they have found many of the promises made good upon themselves, in the answers of prayers, and in great deliverances, which strongly persuadeth them to believe the rest that are yet to be accomplished. And experience is a very powerful and satisfying way of conviction. He that feeleth, as it were, the first-fruits, the earnest, and the beginnings of heaven already in his soul, will more easily and assuredly believe that there is a heaven hereafter. "We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life," 1 John v. 20. "He that believeth on the Son hath the witness in himself," ver. 10. There is so great a likeness of the holy and heavenly nature in the saints, to the heavenly life that God hath promised, that makes it the more easily believed.

4. And it exceedingly helpeth our belief of the life that is yet unseen, to find that nature affordeth us undeniable arguments to prove a future happiness and misery, reward and punishment, in the general; yea, and in special, that the love and fruition of God is this reward; and that the effects of his displeasure are this punishment: nothing more clear and certain than that there is a God, (he must be a fool indeed that dare deny it,) Psal. xiv. 1. As also that this God is the Creator of the rational nature, and hath the absolute right of sovereign government; and therefore that the rational creature oweth him the most full and absolute obedience, and deserveth punishment if he disobey. And it is most clear that infinite goodness should be loved above all finite and imperfect created good: and it is clear that the rational nature is so formed, that without the hopes and fears of another life, the world neither is, nor ever was, nor (by ordinary visible means) can be well governed (supposing God to work on man according to his nature). And it is most certain that it consisteth not with Infinite wisdom, power, and goodness, to be put to rule the world in all ages by fraud and falsehood. And it is certain that heathens do for the most part through the world, by the light of nature, acknowledge a life of joy or misery to come; and the most hardened atheists or infidels must confess, that for aught they know there may be such a life; it being impossible they should know or prove the contrary. And it is most certain that the mere probability or possibility of a heaven and hell, (being matters of such unspeakable concernment,) should in reason command our utmost diligence to the hazard or loss of the transitory vanities below; and consequently that a holy, diligent preparation for another life, is naturally the duty of the reasonable creature. And it is as sure that God hath not made our nature in vain; nor set us on a life of vain employments, nor made it our business in the world to seek after that which can never be attained.

These things, and much more, do show that nature affordeth us so full a testimony of the life to come that is yet invisible, that it exceedingly helpeth us in believing the supernatural revelation of it, which is more full.

5. And though we have not seen the objects of our faith, yet those that have given us their infalli-

ble testimony by infallible means, have seen what they testified. Though "no man hath seen God at any time, yet the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, hath declared him," John i. 18. "Verily, verily, (saith our Lord,) we speak that we know, and testify that we have seen," John iii. 11. "He that cometh from heaven is above all; and what he hath seen and heard that he testifieth," ver. 31, 32. Christ that hath told us, saw the things that we have not seen: and you will believe honest men that speak to you of what they were eye-witnesses of. And the disciples saw the person, the transfiguration, and the miracles of Christ. Insomuch that John thus beginneth his epistle: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you," 1 John i. 1—3. So Paul, 1 Cor. ix. 1, "Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?" He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain unto this present," 1 Cor. xv. 5—7. "This great salvation at first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will," Heb. ii. 3, 4. "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven, we heard when we were with him in the holy mount," 2 Pet. i. 16—18. And therefore when the apostles were commanded by their persecutors not "to speak at all, or teach in the name of Jesus," they answered, "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard," Acts iv. 18, 20. So that much of the objects of our faith to us invisible, have yet been seen by those that have instrumentally revealed them; and the glory of heaven itself is seen by many millions of souls that are now possessing it. And the tradition of the testimony of the apostles unto us, is more full and satisfactory, than the tradition of any laws of the land, or history of the most unquestionable affairs that have been done among the people of the earth (as I have manifested elsewhere). So that faith hath the infallible testimony of God, and of them that have seen, and therefore is to us instead of sight.

6. Lastly, even the enemy of faith himself doth against his will confirm our faith, by the violence and rage of malice that he stirreth up in the ungodly against the life of faith and holiness; and by the importunity of his oppositions and temptations, discovering that it is not for nothing that he is so maliciously solicitous, industrious, and violent.

And thus you see how much faith hath, that should fully satisfy a rational man, instead of presence, possession, and sight.

If any shall here say, But why would not God let us have a sight of heaven or hell, when he could not but know that it would more generally and certainly have prevailed for the conversion and salvation of the world. Doth he envy us the most effectual means?

I answer, 1. "Who art thou, O man, that disputest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" Must God come down to the bar of man, to render an account of the reason of his works? Why do ye not also ask him a reason of the nature, situation, magnitude, order, influences, &c. of all the stars, and superior orbs, and call him to an account for all his works? When yet there are so many things in your own bodies, of which you little understand the reason. Is it not intolerable impudency, for such worms as we, so low, so dark, to question the eternal God, concerning the reason of his laws and dispensations? Do we not shamefully forget our ignorance and our distance?

2. But if you must have a reason, let this suffice you. It is fit that the government of God be suited to the nature of the reasonable subject. And reason is made to apprehend more than we see, and by reaching beyond sense, to carry us to seek things higher and better than sense can reach. If you would have a man understand no more than he sees, you would almost equalize a wise man and a fool, and make a man too like a beast. Even in worldly matters, you will venture upon the greatest cost and pains for the things that you see not, nor ever saw. He that hath a journey to go to a place that he never saw, will not think that a sufficient reason to stay at home. The merchant will sail a thousand miles to a land, and for a commodity, that he never saw. Must the husbandman see the harvest before he plough his land and sow his seed? Must the sick man feel that he hath health before he use the means to get it? Must the soldier see that he hath the victory before he fight? You would take such conceits in worldly matters to be the symptoms of distraction. And will you cherish them where they are most pernicious? Hath God made man for any end, or for none? If none, he is made in vain: if for any, no reason can expect that he should see his end, before he use the means, and see his home before he begin to travel towards it. When children first go to school, they do not see or enjoy the learning and wisdom which by time and labour they must attain. You will provide for the children which you are like to have before you see them. To look that sight, which is our fruition itself, should go before a holy life, is to expect the end before we will use the necessary means. You see here in the government of the world, that it is things unseen that are the instruments of rule, and motives of obedience. Shall no man be restrained from felony or murders, but he that seeth the assizes or the gallows? It is enough that he foreseeth them, as being made known by the laws.

It would be no discrimination of the good and bad, the wise and foolish, if the reward and punishment must be seen. What thief so mad as to steal at the gallows, or before the judge? The basest habits would be restrained from acting, if the reward and punishment were in sight. The most beastly drunkard would not be drunk; the filthy fornicator would forbear his lust; the malicious enemy of godliness would forbear their calumnies and persecutions, if heaven and hell were open to their sight. No man will play the adulterer in the face of the assembly: the chaste and unchaste seem there alike: and so they would do if they saw the face of the most dreadful God. No thanks to any of you all to be godly if heaven were to be presently seen; or to forbear your sin, if you saw hell-fire: God will have a meeter way of trial. You shall believe his promises, if ever you will have the benefit; and believe his threatenings, if ever you will escape the threatened evil.

CHAPTER II.

SOME USES.

Use 1. This being the nature and use of faith, to apprehend things absent as if they were present, and things unseen as if they were visible before our eyes; you may hence understand the nature of christianity, and what it is to be a true believer. Verily it is another matter than the dreaming, self-deceiving world imagineth. Hypocrites think that they are christians indeed, because they have entertained a superficial opinion that there is a Christ, an immortality of souls, a resurrection, a heaven and a hell; though their lives bear witness, that this is not a living and effectual faith; but it is their sensitive faculties and interest that are predominant, and are the bias of their hearts. Alas! a little observation may tell them, that notwithstanding their most confident pretensions to christianity, they are utterly unacquainted with the christian life. Would they live as they do, in worldly cares, and pampering of the flesh, and neglect of God and the life to come, if they saw the things which they say they do believe? Could they be sensual, ungodly, and secure, if they had a faith that served instead of sight?

Would you know who it is that is the christian indeed? 1. He is one that liveth (in some measure) as if he saw the Lord; believing in that God that dwelleth in the inaccessible light, that cannot be seen by mortal eyes, he liveth as before his face. He speaks, he prays, he thinks, he deals with men, as if he saw the Lord stand by. No wonder therefore if he do it with revcrence and holy fear. No wonder if he make lighter of the smiles or frowns of mortal man, than others do that see none higher; and if he observe not the lustre of worldly dignity, or fleshly beauty, wisdom, or vain-glory, before the transcendent, incomprehensible Light, to which the sun itself is darkness. When "he awaketh he is still with God," Psal. cxxxix. 18. "He sets the Lord always before him; because he is at his right hand, he is not moved," Psal. xvi. 8. And therefore the life of believers is oft called a walking with God, and a walking before God, as Gen. v. 22, 24; vi. 9; xvii. 1; in the case of Enoch, Noah, and Abraham. "All the day doth he wait on God," Psal. xxv. 5. Imagine yourselves what manner of person he must be that sees the Lord; and conclude that such (in his measure) is the true believer. For by "faith he seeth him that is invisible," (to the eye of sense,) and therefore can forsake the glory and pleasures of the world, and feareth not the wrath of princes, as it is said of Moses, Heb. xi. 27.

2. The believer is one that liveth on a Christ whom he never saw, and trusteth in him, adhereth to him, acknowledgeth his benefits, loveth him, and rejoiceth in him, as if he had seen him with his eyes. This is the faith which Peter calls "more precious than perishing gold;" that maketh us "love him whom we have not seen, and in whom though now we see him not, yet believing we rejoice, with unspeakable and glorious joy," 1 Pet. i. 8. "Christ dwelleth in his heart by faith;" not only by his Spirit, but objectively, as our dearest absent friend doth dwell in our estimation and affection, Eph. iii. 17. Oh that the miserable infidels of the world had the eyes, the hearts, the experiences of the true believer! Then they that with Thomas tell those that have seen him, "Except I may see and feel, I will not believe," will be forced to cry out, "My Lord and my God," John xx. 25, &c.

3. A believer is one that judgeth of the man by his invisible inside, and not by outward appearances with a fleshly, worldly judgment. He seeth by faith a greater ugliness in sin, than in any the most deformed monster. When the unbeliever saith, what harm is it to please my flesh in ease, or pride, or meat and drink, or lustful wantonness? the believer takes it as the question of a fool, that should ask, What harm is it to take a drachm of mercury or arsenic? He seeth the vicious evil, and foreseeth the consequent penal evil by the eye of faith. And therefore it is that he pitieth the ungodly, when they pity not themselves, and speaks to them oft with a tender heart in compassion of their misery, and perhaps weeps over them, (as Paul, Phil. iii. 18, 19,) when he cannot prevail; when they weep not for themselves, but hate his love, and scorn his pity, and bid him keep his lamentations for himself; because they see not what he sees.

He seeth also the inward beauty of the saints, (as it shineth forth in the holiness of their lives,) and through all their sordid poverty and contempt beholdeth the image of God upon them. For he judgeth not of sin or holiness as they now appear to the distracted world; but as they will be judged of at the day which he foreseeth, when sin will be the shame, and holiness the honoured and desired state.

He can see Christ in his poor, despised members, and love God in those that are made as the scorn and offscouring of all things by the malignant, unbelieving world. He admireth the excellency and happiness of those that are made the laughing-stock of the ungodly; and accounteth the saints the most excellent on earth, Psal. xvi. 2; and had rather be one of their communion in rags, than sit with princes that are naked within, and void of the true and durable glory. He judgeth of men as he perceiveth them to have more or less of Christ. The worth of a man is not obvious to the sense. You see his stature, complexion, and his clothes; but as you see not his learning or skill in any art whatsoever, so you see not his grace and heavenly mind. As the soul itself, so the sinful deformity, and the holy beauty of it, are to us invisible, and perceived only by their fruits, and by the eye of faith, which seeth things as God reveals them: and therefore in the eyes of a true believer, "a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth those that fear the Lord," Psal. xv. 4.

4. A true believer doth seek a happiness which he never saw, and that with greater estimation and resolution, than he seeks the most excellent things that he hath seen. In all his prayers, his labours, and his sufferings, it is an unseen glory that he seeks. He seeth not the glory of God, nor the glorified Redeemer, nor the world of angels and perfected spirits of the just; but he knoweth by faith, that such a God, such a glory, such a world as this there is, as certain as if his eyes had seen it; and therefore he provides, he lives, he hopes, he waits for this unseen state of spiritual bliss, contemning all the wealth and glory that sight can reach in comparison thereof. He believes what he shall see; and therefore strives that he may see it. It is something above the sun, and all that mortal eyes can see, which is the end, the hope, the portion of a believer, without which all is nothing to him, and for which he trades and travels here, as worldlings do for worldly things, Matt. vi. 20, 21; Col. iii. 1; Phil. iii. 20.

5. A true believer doth all his life prepare for a day that is yet to come, and for an account of all the passages of his life, though he hath nothing but the word of God to assure him of it; and therefore

he lives as one that is hastening to the presenee of his Judge; and he contriveth his affairs, and disposeth of his worldly riches, as one that looks to hear of it again, and as one that remembereth the "Judge is at the door," James v. 9. He rather asketh, What life, what words, what actions, what way of using my estate and interest, will be sweetest to me in the review, and will be best at last, when I must accordingly receive my doom? than, What is most pleasant to my flesh, and what will ingratiate me most with men? and what will accommodate me best at present, and set me highest in the world? And therefore it is that he pitieth the ungodly even in the height of their prosperity; and is so earnest (though it offend them) to procure their recovery, as knowing that how secure soever they are now, they "must give an account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead," 1 Pet. iv. 5; and that then the case will be altered with the presumptuous world.

6. Lastly, a true believer is careful to prevent a threatened misery which he never felt; and is awakened by holy fear to fly from the wrath to come, and is industrious to escape that place of torment which he never saw, as if he had seen it with his eyes. When he heareth but the "sound of the trumpet, he takes warning that he may save his soul," Ezek. xxxiii. 4. The evils that are here felt and seen, are not so dreadful to him as those that he never saw or felt. He is not so careful and resolute to avoid the ruin of his estate or name, or to avoid the plague, or sword, or famine, or the scorching flames, or death, or torments, as he is to avoid the endless torments which are threatened by the righteous God. It is a greater misery in his esteem, to be really undone for ever, than seemingly only for a time; and to be cast off by God, than by all the world; and to lie in hell, than to suffer any temporal calamity. And therefore he fears it more, and doth more to avoid it; and is more cast down by the fears of God's displeasure, than by the feelings of these present sufferings. As Noah did for his preservation from the threatened deluge, so doth the true believer for his preservation from everlasting wrath. "By faith Noah being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark, to the saving of his house, by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith," Heb. xi. 7. God first giveth warning of the flood: Noah believeth it; not with a lifeless, but a working faith, that first moved in him a self-preserving fear. This fear moved Noah to obey the Lord in the use of means, and to prepare the ark; and all this was to save himself and his house from a flood, that was as yet unseen, and of which in nature there was no appearance. Thus doth God warn the sinful world of the day of judgment and the fire that is unquenchable; and true believers take his warning, and believing that which they cannot see, by fear they are moved to fly to Christ, and use his means to escape the threatened calamity. By this they become the "heirs of that righteousness which is by faith," and condemn the unbelieving, careless world, that take not the warning and use not the remedy.

By this time you may see that the life of faith is quite another thing, than the lifeless opinion of multitudes that call themselves believers. To say, I believe there is a God, a Christ, a heaven, a hell, is as easy as it is common; but the faith of the ungodly is but an uneffectual dream. To dream that you are fighting, wins no victories. To dream that you are eating, gets no strength. To dream that you are running, rids no ground. To dream that you are ploughing, or sowing, or reaping, procureth but a fruitless harvest. And to dream that you are princes, may consist with beggary. If you do any more than dream of heaven and hell, how is it that you stir not, and make it not appear by the diligence of your lives, and the fervour of your duties, and the seriousness of your endeavours, that such wonderful, inexpressible, overpowering things, are indeed the matters of your belief? As you love your souls, take heed lest you take an image of faith to be the thing itself. Faith sets on work the powers of the soul, for the obtaining of that joy, and the escaping of that misery, which you believe. But the image of faith in self-deceivers, neither warms nor works; it conquereth not difficulties; it stirs not up to faithful duty. It is blind, and therefore seeth not God; and how then should he be feared and loved? It seeth not hell, and therefore the senseless soul goes on as fearlessly and merrily to the unquenchable fire, as if he were in the safest way. This image of faith annihilateth the most potent objects, as to any due impression on the soul. God is as no God, and heaven as no heaven, to these imaginary christians. If a prince be in the room, an image reverenceth him not. If music and feasting be there, an image finds no pleasure in them. If fire and sword be there, an image fears them not. You may perceive by the senseless, neglectful carriage of ungodly men, that they see not by faith the God that they should love and fear, the heaven that they should seek and wait for, or the hell that they should with all possible care avoid. He is indeed the true believer that (allowing the difference of degrees) doth pray as if he saw the Lord; and speak and live as always in his presence; and redeem his time as if he were to die to-morrow, or as one that seeth death approach, and ready to lay hands upon him; that begs and cries to God in prayer, as one that foreseeth the day of judgment, and the endless joy or misery that followeth; that bestirreth him for everlasting life, as one that seeth heaven and hell by the eye of faith. Faith is a serious apprehension, and causeth a serious conversation; for it is instead of sight and presence.

From all this you may easily and certainly infer, 1. That true faith is a jewel, rare and precious; and not so common as nominal, careless christians think. What say they, Are we not all believers? Will you make infidels of all that are not saints? Are none christians but those that live so strictly? *Answ.* I know they are not infidels by profession; but what they are indeed, and what God will take them for, you may soon perceive, by comparing the description of faith, with the inscription legible on their lives. It is common to say, I do believe; but is it common to find men pray and live as those that do believe indeed? It is both in works of charity and of piety, that a living faith will show itself. I will not therefore contend about the name. If you are ungodly, unjust, or uncharitable, and yet will call yourselves believers, you may keep the name and see whether it will save you. Have you forgotten how this case is determined by the Holy Ghost himself; "What doth it profit, my brethren, if a man say he hath faith, and hath not works? Can faith save him? Faith if it hath not works is dead, being alone. Thou believest that there is one God: thou dost well: the devils also believe and tremble," James ii. 14, &c. If such a belief be it that thou gloriest in, it is not denied thee; "But wilt thou know, O vain man! that faith without works is dead?" &c. Is there life where there is no motion? Had you that faith that is instead of sight, it would make you more solicitous for the things unseen, than you are for the visible trifles of this world.

2. And hence you may observe that most true believers are weak in faith. Alas! how far do we all fall short of the love, and zeal, and care, and diligence, which we should have if we had but once beheld the things which we do believe! Alas! how dead are our affections! how flat are our duties! how cold and how slow are our endeavours! how unprofitable are our lives, in comparison of what one hour's sight of heaven and hell would make them be! Oh what a comfortable converse would it be, if I might but join in prayer, praise, and holy conference one day or hour, with a person that had seen the Lord, and been in heaven, and borne a part in the angelic praises! Were our congregations composed of such persons, what manner of worship would they perform to God! How unlike would their heavenly, ravishing expressions be, to these our sleepy, heartless duties! Were heaven open to the view of all this congregation while I am speaking to you, or when we are speaking in prayer and praise to God, imagine yourselves what a change it would make upon the best of us in our services! What apprehensions, what affections, what resolutions it would raise; and what a posture it would cast us all into! And do we not all profess to believe these things, as revealed from heaven by the infallible God? Do we not say, that such a divine revelation is as sure as if the things were in themselves laid open to our sight? Why then are we no more affected with them? Why are we no more transported by them? Why do they no more command our souls, and stir up our faculties to the most vigorous and lively exercise? and call them off from things that are not to us considerable, nor fit to have one glance of the eye of our observation, nor a regardful thought, nor the least affection, unless as they subserve these greater things? When you observe how much, in yourselves and others, the frame of your souls in holy duty, and the tenor of your lives towards God and man, do differ from what they would be, if you had seen the things that you believe, let it mind you of the great imperfection of faith, and humble us all in the sense of our imbecility. For though I know that the most perfect faith is not apt to raise such high affections in degree as shall be raised by the beatifical vision in the glorified, and as present intuition now would raise if we could attain it; yet seeing faith hath as sure an object and revelation as sight itself, though the manner of apprehension be less affecting, it should do much more with us than it doth, and bring us nearer to such affections and resolutions as sight would cause.

Use 2. If faith be given us to make things to come as if they were at hand, and things unseen as if we saw them, you may see from hence, 1. The reason of that holy seriousness of believers, which the ungodly want. 2. And the reason why the ungodly want it. 3. And why they wonder at, and distaste, and deride this serious diligence of the saints.

1. Would you make it any matter of wonder, for men to be more careful of their souls, more fervent in their requests to God, more fearful of offending him, and more laborious in all holy preparation for eternal life, than the holiest and precisest person that you know in all the world, if so be that heaven and hell were seen to them? Would you not rather wonder at the dulness, and coldness, and negligence of the best, and that they are not far more holy and diligent than they are, if you and they did see these things? Why then do you not cease your wondering at their diligence? Do you not know that they are men that have seen the Lord whom they daily serve; and seen the glory which they daily seek; and seen the place of torments which they fly from? By faith in the glass of divine revelation they have seen them.

2. And the reason why the careless world are not as diligent and holy as believers, is, because they have not this eye of faith, and never saw those powerful objects, that believers see. Had you their eyes, you would have their hearts and lives. Oh that the Lord would but illuminate you, and give you such a sight of the things unseen, as every true believer hath! What a happy change would it make upon you! Then instead of your deriding or opposing it, we should have your company in the holy path. You would then be such yourselves, as you now deride. If you saw what they see, you would do as they do. When the heavenly light had appeared unto Saul, he ceaseth persecuting, and inquires what Christ would have him to do, that he might be such a one as he had persecuted. And when the scales fell from his eyes, he falls to prayer, and gets among the believers whom he had persecuted, and laboureth and suffereth more than they.

3. But till this light appear to your darkened souls, you cannot see the reasons of a holy, heavenly life. And therefore you will think it hypocrisy, or pride, or fancy, and imagination, or the foolishness of crack-brained, self-conceited men. If you see a man do reverence to a prince, and the prince himself were invisible to you, would you not take him for a mad-man; and say that he cringed to the stools or chairs, or bowed to a post, or complimented with his shadow? If you saw a man's action in eating and drinking, and see not the meat and drink itself, would you not think him mad? If you heard men laugh, and hear not so much as the voice of him that gives the jest, would you not imagine them to be brain-sick? If you see men dance and hear not the music; if you see a labourer threshing, or reaping, or mowing, and see no corn or grass before him; if you see a soldier fighting for his life, and see no enemy that he spends his strokes upon; will you not take all these for men distracted? Why this is the case between you and the true believers. You see them reverently worship God, but you see not the majesty which they worship, as they do. You see them as busy for the saving of their souls, as if a hundred lives lay on it; but you see not the hell from which they flee nor the heaven they seek; and therefore you marvel why they make so much ado about the matters of their salvation; and why they cannot do as others, and make as light of Christ and heaven as they that desire to be excused, and think they have more needful things to mind. But did you see with the eyes of a true believer, and were the amazing things that God hath revealed to us but open to your sight, how quickly would you be satisfied, and sooner mock at the diligence of a drowning man that is striving for his life, or at the labour of the city when they are busily quenching the flames in their habitations, than mock at them that are striving for the everlasting life, and praying and labouring against the everburning flames.

How soon would you turn your admiration against the stupidity of the careless world, and wonder more that ever men that hear the Scriptures, and see with their eyes the works of God, can make so light of matters of such unspeakable, eternal consequence! Did you but see heaven and hell, it would amaze you to think that ever many, yea, so many, and so seeming wise, should wilfully run into everlasting fire, and sell their souls at so low a rate, as if it were as easy to be in hell as in an ale-house, and heaven were no better than a beastly lust! Oh then with what astonishment would you think, Is this the fire that sinners do so little fear? Is this the glory that

is so neglected? You would then see that the madness of the ungodly is the wonder.

Use 3. By this time I should think that some of your own consciences have prevented me, in the use of examination, which I am next to call you to. I hope while I have been holding you the glass, you have not turned away your faces, nor shut your eyes; but that you have been judging yourselves by the light which hath been set up before you. Have not some of your consciences said by this time, If this be the nature and use of faith, to make things unseen as if we saw them, what a desolate case then is my soul in! How void of faith! How full of infidelity! How far from the truth and power of christianity! How dangerously have I long deceived myself in calling myself a true christian, and pretending to be a true believer; when I never knew the life of faith, but took a dead opinion, bred only by education, and the custom of the country, instead of it; little did I think that I had been an infidel at the heart, while I so confidently laid claim to the name of a believer! Alas! how far have I been from living as one that seeth the things that he professeth to believe! If some of your consciences be not thus convinced, and perceive not yet your want of faith, I fear it is because they are seared or asleep.

But if yet conscience have not begun to plead this cause against you, let me begin to plead it with your consciences. Are you believers? Do you live the life of faith, or not? Do you live upon things that are unseen, or upon the present visible baits of sensuality? That you may not turn away your ears, or hear me with a sluggish, senseless mind, let me tell you first, how nearly it concerneth you to get this question soundly answered; and then, that you may not be deceived, let me help you towards the true resolution.

1. And for the first, you may perceive by what is said, that saving faith is not so common, as those that know not the nature of it do imagine. "All men have not faith," 2 Thess. iii. 2. Oh what abundance do deceive themselves with names, and shows, and a dead opinion, and customary religion, and take these for the life of faith!

2. Till you have this faith, you have no special interest in Christ. It is only believers that are united to him, and are his living members. And it is by faith that he dwelleth in our hearts, and that we live in him, Eph. iii. 17; Gal. ii. 20. In vain do you boast of Christ, if you are not true believers. You have no part or portion in him. None of his special benefits are yours, till you have this living, working faith.

3. You are still in the state of enmity to God, and unreconciled to him, while you are unbelievers. For you can have no peace with God, nor access unto his favour, but by Christ, Rom. v. 1—4; Ephes. ii. 14, 15, 17. And therefore you must come by faith to Christ, before you can come by Christ unto the Father, as those that have a special interest in his love.

4. Till you have this faith, you are under the guilt and load of all your sins, and under the curse and condemnation of the law; for there is no justification or forgiveness but by faith, Acts xxvi. 18; Rom. iv. v. &c.

5. Till you have this sound belief of things unseen, you will be carnal-minded, and have a carnal end to all your actions, which will make those to be evil that materially are good, and those to be fleshly that materially are holy. "Without faith it is impossible to please God," Rom. viii. 5, 8, 9; Prov. xxviii. 9; Heb. xi. 6.

6. Lastly, till you have this living faith, you have no right to heaven, nor could be saved if you die this hour. "Whoever believeth shall not perish, but have everlasting life. He that believeth on him, is not condemned; but he that believeth not, is condemned already. He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him," John iii. 16, 18, 36.

You see if you love yourselves, it concerneth you to try whether you are true believers: unless you take it for an indifferent thing, whether you live for ever in heaven or hell, it is best for you to put the question close to your consciences betimes. Have you that faith that serves instead of sight? Do you carry within you "the evidence of things unseen, and the substance of the things" which you say you "hope for?" Did you know in what manner this question must be put and determined at judgment, and how all your comfort will then depend upon the answer, and how near that day is, when you must all be sentenced to heaven or hell, as you are found to be believers or unbelievers, it would make you hearken to my counsel, and presently try whether you have a saving faith.

2. But lest you be deceived in your trial, and lest you mistake me, as if I tried the weak by the measure of the strong, and laid all your comfort upon such strong affections and high degrees, as sight itself would work within you, I shall briefly tell you how you may know whether you have any faith that is true and saving, though in the least degree. Though none of us are affected to that height as we should be if we had the sight of all that we do believe, yet all that have any saving belief of invisible things, will have these four signs of faith within them.

1. A sound belief of things unseen, will cause a practical estimation of them, and that above all earthly things. A glimpse of the heavenly glory as in a glass, will cause the soul deliberately to say, This is the chief desirable felicity; this is the crown, the pearl, the treasure; nothing but this can serve my turn. It will debase the greatest pleasures, or riches, or honours of the world in your esteem. How contemptible will they seem, while you see God stand by, and heaven as it were set open to your view; you will see there is little cause to envy the prosperous servants of the world; you will pity them, as miserable in their mirth, and bound in the fetters of their folly and concupiscence, and as strangers to all solid joy and honour. You will be moved with some compassion to them in their misery, when they are braving it among men, and domineering for a little while; and you will think, Alas! poor man! Is this all thy glory? Hast thou no better wealth, no higher honour, no sweeter pleasures than these husks? With such a practical judgment as you value gold above dirt, and jewels above common stones; you will value heaven above all the riches and pleasures of this world, if you have indeed a living, saving faith, Phil. iii. 7—9.

2. A sound belief of the things unseen, will habitually incline your wills to embrace them, with consent, and complacence, and resolution, above and against those worldly things, that would be set above them, and preferred before them. If you are true believers you have made your choice, you have fixed your hopes, you have taken up your resolutions, that God must be your portion, or you can have none that is worth the having; that Christ must be your Saviour, or you cannot be saved; and therefore you are at a point with all things else. They may be your helps, but not your happiness. You are resolved on what rock to build, and where to cast

anchor, and at what port and prize your life shall aim. You are resolved what to seek, and trust to: God or none; heaven or nothing; Christ or none, is the voice of your rooted, stable resolutions. Though you are full of fears sometimes whether you shall be accepted, and have a part in Christ, or no; and whether ever you shall attain the glory which you aim at; yet you are off all other hopes; having seen an end of all perfections, and read vanity and vexation written upon all creatures, even on the most flattering state on earth; and are unchangeably resolved not to change your Master, and your hopes, and your holy course, for any other life or hopes. Whatever come of it, you are resolved that here you will venture all; knowing that you have no other game to play, at which you are not sure to lose, and that you can lay out your love, and care, and labour on nothing else that will answer your expectations; nor make any other bargain whatsoever, but what you are sure to be utterly undone by, Psal. lxxiii. 25; iv. 6, 7; Matt. vi. 20, 21; xiii. 45, 46; Luke xviii. 33.

3. A sound belief of things invisible, will be so far an effectual spring of a holy life, as that you will "seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness," Matt. vi. 33; and not in your resolutions only, but in your practices, the bent of your lives will be for God, and your invisible felicity. It is not possible that you should see by faith the wonders of the world to come, and yet prefer this world before it. A dead, opinionative belief, may stand with a worldly, fleshly life; but a working faith will make you stir, and make the things of God your business. And the labour and industry of your lives will show whether you soundly believe the things unseen.

4. If you savingly believe the invisible things, you will purchase them at any rate, and hold them faster than your worldly accommodations; and will suffer the loss of all things visible, rather than you will cast away your hopes of the glory which you never saw. A human faith and bare opinion will not hold fast when trial comes. For such men take heaven but for a reserve, because they must leave earth against their wills, and are loth to go to hell. But they are resolved to hold the world as long as they can, because their faith apprehendeth no such satisfying certainty of the things unseen, as will encourage them to let go all that they see, and have in sensible possession. But the weakest faith that is true and saving, doth habitually dispose the soul to let go all the hopes and happiness of this world, when they are inconsistent with our spiritual hopes and happiness, Luke xiv. 33.

And now I have gone before you with the light, and showed you what a believer is, will you presently consider how far your hearts and lives agree to this description? To know whether you live by faith or not, is consequently to know, whether God or the world be your portion and felicity, and so whether you are the heirs of heaven or hell. And is not this a question that you are most nearly concerned in? O therefore, for your souls' sakes, and as ever you love your everlasting peace, "Examine yourselves, whether you are in the faith or not. Know you not that Christ is in you (by faith) except you be reprobates?" 2 Cor. xiii. 5. Will you hearken now as long to your consciences, as you have done to me? As you have heard me telling you, what is the nature of a living, saving faith, will you hearken to your consciences, while they impartially tell you, whether you have this life of faith, or not? It may be known if you are willing, and diligent, and impartial: if you search on purpose, as men that would know whether they are alive or dead, and whether they shall live or die for ever; and not as men that would be flattered and deceived, and are resolved to think well of their state, be it true or false.

Let conscience tell you: What eyes do you see by, for the conduct of the chief employment of your lives? Is it by the eye of sense or faith? I take it for granted that it is by the eye of reason. But is it by reason corrupted and biassed by sense, or is it by reason elevated by faith? What country is it that your hearts converse in? Is it in heaven or earth? What company is it that you solace yourselves with? Is it with angels and saints? Do you walk with them in the Spirit, and join your echoes to their triumphant praises, and say, Amen, when by faith you hear them ascribing honour, and praise, and glory to the Ancient of days, the omnipotent Jehovah, that is, and that was, and is to come? Do you fetch your joys from heaven or earth? from things unseen or seen? things future or present? things hoped for, or things possessed? What garden yieldeth you your sweetest flowers? Whence is the food that your hopes and comforts live upon? Whence are the spirits and cordials that revive you, when a frowning world doth cast you into a fainting fit or swoon? Where is it that you repose your souls for rest, when sin or sufferings have made you weary? Deal truly, is it in heaven or earth? Which world do you take for your pilgrimage, and which for your home? I do not ask you where you are, but where you dwell? Not where are your persons, but where are your hearts? In a word, are you in good earnest, when you say, you believe a heaven and hell? And do you think, and speak, and pray, and live, as those that do indeed believe it? Do you spend your time, and choose your condition of life, and dispose of your affairs, and answer temptations to worldly things, as those that are serious in their belief? Speak out, do you live the life of faith upon things unseen? or the life of sense on things that you behold? Deal truly; for your endless joy or sorrow doth much depend on it. The life of faith is the certain passage to the life of glory. The fleshly life on things here seen, is the certain way to endless misery. "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye by the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live," Rom. viii. 13. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap everlasting life," Gal. vi. 7, 8. If you would know where you must live for ever, know how, and for what, and upon what it is that you live here.

Use 4. Having inquired whether you are believers, I am next to ask you, what you will be for the time to come? Will you live upon things seen or unseen? While you arrogate the name and honour of being christians, will you bethink you what christianity is? And will you be indeed what you say you are, and would be thought to be? Oh! that you would give give credit to the word of God! that the God of heaven might be but heartily believed by you! and that you would but take his word to be as sure as sense; and what he hath told you is or will be, to be as certain as if you saw it with your eyes! Oh! what manner of persons would you then be! How carefully and fruitfully would you speak and live! How impossible were it then that you should be careless and profane! And here, that I may by seriousness bring you to be serious, in so serious a business, I shall first put a few suppositions to you, about the invisible objects of faith, and then I shall

put some applicatory questions to you, concerning your own resolutions and practice thereupon.

1. Suppose you saw the Lord in glory continually before you, when you are hearing, praying, talking, jesting, eating, drinking, and when you are tempted to any wilful sin. Suppose you saw the Lord stand over you as verily as you see a man (as you might do if your eyes could see him; for it is most certain that he is still present with you). Suppose you saw but such a glimpse of his back parts as Moses did, (Exod. xxxiv.) when God put him into a cleft of the rock, and covered him while he passed by, Exod. xxxiii. 23; when the face of Moses did shine with the sight, that he was fain to veil it from the people, Exod. xxxiv. 33—35. Or if you had seen but what the prophet saw, when he "beheld the Lord upon a throne, high and lifted up," &c. and "heard the seraphim cry, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory!" when he said, "Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips! for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts," Isa. vi. 1—6. Or if you had seen but what Job saw, when he said, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes," Job xlii. 5, 6. What course would you take, what manner of persons would you be, after such a sight as this? If you had seen but Christ appearing in his glory, as the disciples on the holy mount, Matt. xvii.; or as Paul saw him at his conversion, when he was smitten to the earth, Acts ix.; or as John saw him, Rev. i. 13, where he saith, "He was clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt with a golden girdle; his head and his hairs were white like wool or snow, and his eyes were as a flame of fire, and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace, and his voice as the sound of many waters; and he had in his right hand seven stars, and out of his mouth went a sharp, two-edged sword, and his countenance was as the sun shining in his strength. And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead; and he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last; I am he that liveth and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death:" what do you think you should be and do, if you had seen but such a sight as this? Would you be godly or ungodly after it? As sure as you live, and see one another, God always seeth you. He seeth your secret filthiness, and deceit, and malice, which you think is hid: he seeth you in the dark; the locking of your doors, the drawing of your curtains, the setting of the sun, or the putting out of the candle, doth hide nothing from him that is omniscient: "Understand, O ye brutish among the people! and ye fools, when will ye be wise? He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? He that formed the eye, shall he not see?" Psal. xciv. 8, 9. The lust, and filthiness, and covetousness, and envy, and vanity of your very thoughts, are as open to his view as the sun at noon. And therefore you may well suppose him present that cannot be absent; and you may suppose you saw him that still seeth you, and whom you must see. Oh, what a change a glimpse of the glory of his majesty would make in this assembly! Oh, what amazements, what passionate workings of soul would it excite! Were it but an angel that did thus appear to you, what manner of hearers would you be! how serious! how affectionate! how sensible! And yet are you believers, and have none of this; when faith makes unseen things to be as seen? If thou have faith indeed, thou seest him that is invisible; thou speakest to him; thou hearest him in his word; thou seest him in his works; thou walkest with him; he is the life of thy comforts, thy converse, and thy life.

2. Suppose you had seen the matters revealed in the gospel to your faith, as to what is past and done already. If you had seen the deluge and the ark, and preservation of one righteous family; the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah with fire from heaven; and the saving of Lot, whose righteous soul was grieved at their sins, and hunted after as a prey to their ungodly rage, because he would have hindered them from transgressing. Suppose you had seen the opening of the Red sea, the passage of the Israelites, the drowning of Pharaoh and his Egyptians; the manna and the quails that fell from heaven; the flaming mount, with the terrible thunder, when God delivered the law to Moses; what manner of people would you have been? What lives would you have led after such sights as all or any one of these? Suppose you had seen Christ in his state of incarnation, in his examples of lowliness, meekness, contempt of all the glory and vanities of this world, and had heard him speak his heavenly doctrine with power and authority, as never man spake! Suppose you had seen him heal the blind, the lame, the sick, and raise the dead; and seen him after all this made the scorn of sinners, buffeted, spit upon, when they had crowned him with thorns, and arrayed him gorgeously in scorn; and then nailed between malefactors on a cross, and pierced, and die a shameful death, and this for such as you and I! Suppose you had seen the sun darkened without any eclipse, the veil of the temple rent, the earth tremble; the angels terrifying the keepers, and Christ rise again! Suppose you had been among the disciples when he appeared in the midst of them, and with Thomas had put your fingers into his wounded side; and had seen him walking on the waters, and at last seen him ascending up to heaven. Suppose you had seen when the Holy Ghost came down on the disciples in the similitude of cloven tongues, and had heard them speak in the various languages of the nations, and seen the variety of miracles, by which they convinced the unbelieving world; what persons would you have been? What lives would you have led, if you had been eye-witnesses of all these things? And do you not profess to believe all this? and that these things are as certain truths as if you had seen them? Why then doth not your belief affect you or command you more? Why doth it not do what sight would do, in some good measure, if it were but a lively, saving faith indeed, that serveth instead of sense? Yea, I must tell you, faith must do more with you in this case, than the sight of Christ alone could do, or the sight of his miracles did on most. For many that saw him, and saw his works, and heard his word, yet perished in their unbelief.

3. Suppose you saw the everlasting glory which Christ hath purchased and prepared for his saints; that you had been once, with Paul, rapt up into the third heavens, and seen the things that are unutterable; would you not after that have rather lived like Paul, and undergone his sufferings and contempt, than to have lived like the brain-sick, brutish world? If you had seen what Stephen saw before his death; "the glory of God, and Christ standing at his right hand," Acts vii. 55, 56. If you had seen the thousands and millions of holy, glorious spirits, that are continually attending the Majesty of the Lord. If you had seen the glorified spirits of the just, that were once in flesh, despised by the blind, ungodly world, while they waited on God in faith, and holi-

ness, and hope, for that blessed crown which now they wear: if you had felt one moment of their joys: if you had seen them shine as the sun in glory, and made like unto the angels of God: if you had heard them sing the song of the Lamb, and the joyful hallelujahs, and praise to their eternal King: what would you be, and what would you resolve on, after such a sight as this? If the rich man (Luke xvi.) had seen Lazarus in Abraham's bosom, in the midst of his bravery, and honour, and feasting, and other sensual delights, as afterwards he saw it when he was tormented in the flames of hell, do you think such a sight would not have cooled his mirth and jollity, and helped him to understand the nature and value of his earthly felicity; and have proved a more effectual argument than a despised preacher's words? at least to have brought him to a freer exercise of his reason, in a sober consideration of his state and ways? Had you seen one hour what Abraham, David, Paul, and all the saints now see, while sin and flesh doth keep us here in the dark, what work do you think yourselves it would make upon your hearts and lives?

4. Suppose you saw the face of death, and that you were now lying under the power of some mortal sickness, physicians having forsaken you, and said, There is no hope; your friends weeping over you, and preparing your winding-sheet and coffin, digging your graves, and casting up the skulls, and bones, and earth, that must again be cast in to be your covering and company. Suppose you saw a messenger from God to tell you that you must die to-morrow; or heard but what one of your predecessors heard, "Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee: then whose shall these things be that thou hast provided?" Luke xii. 20. How would such a message work with you? Would it leave you as you are? If you heard a voice from God this night in your chamber in the dark, telling you that this is the last night that you shall live on earth, and before to-morrow your souls must be in another world, and come before the dreadful God; what would be the effect of such a message? And do you not verily believe that all this will very shortly be? Nay, do you not know without believing, that you must die, and leave your worldly glory? and that all your pleasures and contents on earth will be as if they had never been (and much worse)? O wonderful! that a change so sure, so great, so near, should no more affect you, and no more be forethought on, and no more prepared for! and that you be not awakened by so full and certain a foreknowledge to be in good sadness for eternal life, as you seem to be when death is at hand!

5. Suppose you saw the great and dreadful day of judgment, as it is described by Christ himself in Matt. xxv. "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left," ver. 31—33; and shall sentence the righteous to eternal life, and the rest into everlasting punishment. If you did now behold the glory and terror of that great appearance, how the saints will be magnified, and rejoice, and be justified against all the accusations of Satan, and calumnies of wicked men; and how the ungodly then would fain deny the words and deeds that now they glory in; and what horror and confusion will then overwhelm those wretched souls, that now outface the messengers of the Lord! Had you seen them trembling before the Lord, that now are braving it out in the pride and arrogancy of their hearts: had you heard how then they will change their tune, and wish they had never known their sins; and wish they had lived in greater holiness than those whom they derided for it: what would you say, and do, and be, after such an amazing sight as this? Would you sport it out in sin as you have done? Would you take no better care for your salvation? If you had seen those sayings of the Holy Ghost fulfilled; "When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;" (Jude 14, 15; 2 Thess. i. 7—9;) what mind do you think you should be of? What course would you take, if you had but seen this dreadful day? Could you go on to think, and speak, and live as sensually, stupidly, and negligently as now you do? "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up," 2 Pet. iii. 10—12. Is it possible soundly to believe such a day, so sure, so near, and no more regard it, nor make ready for it, than the careless and ungodly do?

6. Suppose at that day you had heard the devil accusing you of all the sins that you have committed; and set them out in the most odious aggravations, and call for justice against you to your Judge. If you heard him pleading all those sins against you that now he daily tempts you to commit, and now maketh you believe are harmless, or small, inconsiderable things. If you heard him saying, At such a time this sinner refused grace, neglected Christ, despised heaven, and preferred earth; at such a time he derided godliness, and made a mock of the holy word and counsels of the Lord; at such a time he profaned the name of God, he coveted his neighbour's wealth; he cherished thoughts of envy or of lust; he was drunk, or gluttonous, or committed fornication; and he was never thoroughly converted by renewing grace, and therefore he is an heir of hell, and belongs to me: I ruled him, and I must have him. What would you think of a life of sin, if once you had heard such accusations as these? How would you deal by the next temptation, if you had heard what use the tempter will hereafter make of all your sins?

7. What if you had seen the damned in their misery, and heard them cry out of the folly of their impenitent, careless lives; and wishing as Dives, (Luke xvi.) that their friends on earth might have "one sent from the dead to warn them that they come not to that place of torment," (I speak to men that say they are believers,) what would you do upon such a sight? If you had heard them there torment themselves in the remembrance of the time they lost, the mercy they neglected, the grace resisted, and wish it were all to do again, and that they might once more be tried with another life; if you saw how the world is altered with those that once were as proud and confident as others; what do you think such a sight would do with you? And why then doth the believing of it do no more, when the thing is certain?

8. Once more; suppose that in your temptations you saw the tempter appearing to you, and pleading with you, as he doth by his inward suggestions, or by the mouths of his instruments. If you saw him, and heard him hissing you on to sin, persuading you to gluttony, drunkenness, or uncleanness. If the

devil appeared to you, and led you to the place of lust, and offered you the harlot, or the cup of excess, and urged you to swear, or curse, or rail, or scorn at a holy life; would not the sight of the angler mar his game, and cool your courage, and spoil your sport, and turn your stomachs? Would you be drunk or filthy, if you saw him stand by you? Think on it the next time you are tempted. Stout men have been appalled by such a sight. And do you not believe that it is he indeed that tempteth you? as sure as if your eyes beheld him, it is he that prompteth men to jeer at godliness; and puts your wanton, ribald speeches, and oaths, and curses into your mouths: he is the tutor of the enemies of grace, that teacheth them *docte delirare, ingeniose insanire*, ingeniously to quarrel with the way of life, and learnedly to confute the arguments that would have saved them; and subtlely to dispute themselves out of the hands of mercy, and gallantly to scorn to stoop to Christ till there be no remedy; and with plausible eloquence to commend the plague and sickness of their souls; and irrefragably maintain it, that the way to hell will lead to heaven; and to justify the sins that will condemn them; and honourably and triumphantly to overcome their friends, and serve the devil in mood and figure, and valiantly to cast themselves into hell, in despite of all the laws and reproofs of God or man that would have hindered them. It being most certain that this is the devil's work, and you durst not do it if he moved you to it with open face, how dare you do it when faith would assure you, that it is as verily he as if you saw him?

More distinctly, answer these following questions, upon the foregoing suppositions.

Quest. 1. If you saw but what you say you do believe, would you not be convinced that the most pleasant, gainful sin is worse than madness? And would not you spit at the very name of it, and openly cry out of your open folly, and beg for prayers, and love reprovers, and resolve to turn without delay?

Quest. 2. What would you think of the most serious, holy life, if you had seen the things you say you do believe? Would you ever again reproach it as preciseness, or count it more ado than needs, and think your time were better spent in playing than in praying; in drinking, and sports, and filthy lusts, than in the holy services of the Lord? Would you think then that one day in seven were too much for the work for which you live; and that an hour on this holy day were enough to be spent in instructing you for eternity? Or would you not believe that he is the blessed man, whose delight is in the law of God, and meditateth in it day and night? Could you plead for sensuality, or ungodly negligence, or open your mouths against the most serious holiness of life, if heaven and hell stood open to your view?

Quest. 3. If you saw but what you say you do believe, would you ever again be offended with the ministers of Christ for the plainest reproofs, and closest exhortations, and strictest precepts and discipline, that now are disrelished so much? Or rather, would you not desire them to help you presently to try your state, and to search you to the quick, and to be more solicitous to save you than to please you? The patient that will take no bitter medicine in time, when he sees he must die, would then take any thing. When you see the things that now you hear of, then you would do any thing. Oh then, might you have these days again, sermons would not be too plain or long: in season and out of season would then be allowed of. Then you would understand what moved ministers to be so importunate with you for conversion; and whether trifling or serious preaching was the best.

Quest. 4. Had you seen the things that you say you do believe, what effect would sermons have upon you, after such a sight as this? Oh what a change it would make upon our preaching and your hearing, if we saw the things that we speak and hear of! How fervently should we importune you in the name of Christ! How attentively would you hear, and carefully consider and obey! We should then have no such sleepy preaching and hearing as now we have. Could I but show to all this congregation, while I am preaching, the invisible world of which we preach, and did you hear with heaven and hell in your eyesight, how confident should I be (though not of the saving change of all) that I should this hour teach you to plead for sin, and against a holy life, no more; and send you home another people than you came hither. I durst then ask the worst that heareth me, Dare you now be drunk, or gluttonous, or worldly? Dare you be voluptuous, proud, or fornicators any more? Dare you go home, and make a jest at piety, and neglect your souls, as you have done? And why then should not the believed truth prevail, if indeed you did believe it, when the thing is as sure as if you saw it?

Quest. 5. If you had seen what you say you do believe, would you hunt as eagerly for wealth, or honour, and regard the thoughts or words of men, as you did before? Though it is only the believer that truly honoureth his rulers, (for none else honour them for God, but use them for themselves,) yet wonder not if he fear not much the face of man, and be no admirer of worldly greatness, when he seeth what they will be, as well as what they are. Would not usurpers have been less feared, if all could have foreseen their fall? Even common reason can foresee, that shortly you will all be dust. Methinks I foresee your ghastly paleness, your loathsome blackness, and your habitation in the dark. And who can much envy or desire the advancements that have such an end? One sight of God would blast all the glory of the world, that is now the bait for man's perdition.

Quest. 6. Would temptations be as powerful as now they are, if you did but see the things you hear of? Could all the beauty or pleasures in the world entice you to filthiness or sensuality, if you saw God over you, and judgment before you, and saw what damned souls now suffer, and what believers now enjoy? Could you be persuaded by any company or recreation, to waste your precious time in vain, with such things in your eye? I am confident you would abhor the motion; and entertain temptations to the most honoured, gainful, pleasant sin, as now you would do a motion to cut your own throats, or leap into a coal pit, or thrust your head into a burning oven. Why then doth not faith thus shame temptations, if indeed you do believe these things? Will you say, it is your weakness, you cannot choose; or that it is your nature to be lustful, revengeful, sensual, and you cannot overcome it? but if you had a sight of heaven and hell, you could then resist: you cannot now because you will not; but did you see that which would make you willing, your power would appear. The sight of a judge or gallows can restrain men. The sight of a person whom you reverence, can restrain the exercise of your disgraceful sins; much more would the sight of heaven and hell. If you were but dying, you would shake the head at him that would then tempt you to the committing of your former sins. And is not a lively, foreseeing faith as effectual.

Quest. 7. Had you seen what you say you do believe, you would not so much stick at sufferings, nor make so great a matter of it to be reproached, slan-

dered, imprisoned, or condemned by man, when God and your salvation command your patience. A sight of hell would make you think it worse than madness, to run thither to escape the wrath of man, or any sufferings on earth, Rom. viii. 18.

Quest. 8. And oh how such a sight would advance the Redeemer, and his grace, and promises, and word, and ordinances in your esteem! It would quicken your desires, and make you fly to Christ for life, as a drowning man to that which may support him. How sweetly then would you relish the name, the word, the ways of Christ, which now seem dry and common things!

Quest. 9. Could you live as merrily, and sleep as quietly, in a negligent uncertainty of your salvation, if you had seen these things as now you do? Could you live at heart's ease, while you know not where you shall be to-morrow, or must live for ever? Oh no! were heaven and hell but seen before you, your consciences would be more busy in putting such questions, Am I regenerate, sanctified, reconciled, justified, or not? than any the most zealous minister is now.

Quest. 10. I will put to you but one question more. If we saw God, and heaven, and hell before us, do you think it would not effectually reconcile our differences, and heal our unbrotherly exasperations and divisions? Would it not hold the hands that itch to be using violence, against those that are not in all things of their minds? What abundance of vain controversies would it reconcile! As the coming in of the master doth part the fray among the schoolboys; so the sight of God would frighten us from contentious or uncharitable violence. This would teach us how to preach and pray better than a storm at sea can do, which yet doth it better than some in prosperity will learn. Did we see what we preach of, it would drive us out of our man-pleasing, self-seeking, sleepy strain, as the cudgel drives the beggar from his canting, and the breaking loose of the bear did teach the affected cripple to find his legs and cast away his crutches. I would desire no better outward help to end our controversies about indifferent modes of worship, than a sight of the things of which we speak. This would excite such a serious frame of soul, as would not suffer religion to evaporate into formality, nor dwindle into affectation, compliment, and ceremony. Nor should we dare to beat our fellow-servants, and thrust them out of the vineyard, and say, You shall not preach, or pray, or live, but upon these or those unnecessary terms. But the sense of our own frailty, and fear of a severe disquisition of our failings, would make us compassionate to others, and content that necessaries be the matter of our unity, unnecessaries of our liberty, and both of charity.

If sight in all these ten particulars would do so much, should not faith do much, if you verily believe the things you see not?

Alas! corrupted reason is asleep, (with men that seem wise in other things,) till it be awakened by faith or sight. And sleeping reason is unserviceable as folly. It doth no work: it avoids no danger. A doctor that is asleep, can defend the truth no better than a waking child. But reason will be reason, and conscience will be conscience, when the dust is blown out of men's eyes, and sight and feeling have awakened, and so recovered, their understandings; or faith more seasonably and happily awakened them.

And oh that now we might all consent to addict ourselves to the life of faith: and,

1. That we live not too much on visibles. 2. That we live on things invisible.

(1.) One would think that worldliness is a disease that carrieth with it a cure for itself; and that the rational nature should be loth to love at so dear a rate, and to labour for so poor a recompence. It is pity that Gehazi's leprosy and Judas's death should no more prevent a succession of Gehazis and Judases in all generations. Our Lord went before us most eminently in a contempt of earth: "his kingdom was not of this world." No men are more unlike him than the worldlings. I know necessity is the pretence; but it is the dropsy of covetousness that causeth the thirst which they call necessity: and therefore the cure is *non addere opibus, sed imminuere cupiditatem.* The disease must not be fed but healed. *Satis est divitiarum non amplius velle.* It hath lately been a controversy, whether this be not the golden age? That it is *ætas ferrea* we have felt; our demonstrations are undeniable: that it is *ætas aurata*, we have sufficient proof: and while gold is the god that rules the most, we will not deny it to be *ætas aurea*, in the poet's sense,

> "Aurea nunc vere sunt secula: plurimus auro
> Venit honos: auro conciliatur amor."

This prevalency of things seen against things unseen, is the idolatry of the world; the subversion of nature; the perversion of our faculties and actions; making the soul a drudge to flesh, and God to be used as a servant to the world. It destroyeth piety, justice, and charity. It turneth *jus* by perversion into *vis;* or by reversion into *sui.* No wonder then if it be the ruin of societies, when

> "Gens sine justitia, sine remige navis in unda."

It can possess even Demosthenes with a squinancy, if there be but an Harpalus to bring him the infection. It can make a judicature to be as Plutarch called that of Rome, ἀσεβῶν χῶραν, *impiorum regionem;* contrary to Cicero's description of Sulpitius, who was, *magis justitiæ quam juris consultus, et ad facilitatem æquitatemque omnia contulit; nec maluit litium actiones constituere, quam controversias tollere.* In a word, if you live by sense and not by faith, on things present and not on things unseen, you go backward; you stand on your heads and turn your heels against heaven; you cause the beast to ride the man; and by turning all things upside down, will turn yourselves into confusion.

(2.) Consider that it is the unseen things that are only great and necessary, that are worthy of a man, and answer the excellency of our nature, and the ends of our lives, and all our mercies. All other things are inconsiderable toys, except as they are dignified by their relation to these. Whether a man step into eternity from a palace or a prison, a lordship or a Lazarus state, is little to be regarded. All men in the world, whose designs and business take up with any thing short of heaven, are in the main of one condition, and are but in several degrees and forms in the school of folly. If the intendment of your lives fall short of God, it matters not much what it is you seek, as to any great difference. If lesser children play for pins, and bigger boys for points and penec, and aged children for lands and money, for titles of honour and command, what difference is there between these in point of wisdom and felicity? But that the little ones have more innocent delights, and at a cheaper rate than the aged have, without the vexatious cares and dangers that attend more grave and serious dotage. As holiness to the Lord is written upon all that is faithfully referred to his will and glory; so vanity and sin is written upon all that is but made provision for the flesh, and hath no higher end than self. To go to

hell with greater stir, and attendance, and repute, with greater pomp and pleasure, than the poor, is a poor consolation, a pitiful felicity.

(3.) Faith is the wisdom of the soul; and unbelief and sensuality are its blindness, folly, and brutishness. How short is the knowledge of the wisest unbelievers! They know not much of what is past; (and less they would know if histories were not of more credit with them than the word of God;) but alas! how little do they know of what is to come! Sense tells them where they are, and what they are now doing; but it tells them not where they shall be to-morrow. But faith can tell a true believer, what will be when this world is ended, and where he shall live to all eternity, and what he shall be doing, what thoughts he shall be thinking, what affections shall be the temper and employment of his soul; what he shall see, and feel, and enjoy; and with what company he shall converse for ever. If the pretenders to astrological prediction could but foretell the changes of men's lives, and the time and manner of their deaths, what resort would be to them! and how wise would they be esteemed! But what is all this to the infallible predictions of the all-knowing God, that hath given us a prospect into another world, and showed us what will be for ever, more certainly than you know what a day may bring forth.

So necessary is foreknowledge in the common affairs of men, that without it the actions of the world would be but mad, tumultuary confusion. What would you think of that man's understanding, or how would you value the employments of his life, that looked no further in all his actions, than the present hour, and saw no more than the things in hand? What would you call him that so spends the day, as one that knoweth not there will be any night; and so passed the night, as one that looked not for the day? that knew not in the spring there would be a harvest, or in the summer that there would be any winter, or in youth that there would be age or death? The silly brutes that have no foreknowledge, are furnished with an instinct that supplieth the want of it, and also have the help of man's foreknowledge, or else their kind would be soon extinct. The bees labour in summer, as if they foresaw the winter's need. And can that man be wise, that foreseeth not his everlasting state? Indeed, he that knoweth not what is to come, hath no true knowledge of what is present; for the worth and use of present things is only in their respect to things eternal; and there is no means where there is no end. What wisdom then remains in unbelievers, when all their lives are misemployed, because they know not the end of life; and when all their actions are utterly debased, by the baseness of those brutish ends, to which they serve and are referred? Nothing is truly wise or honourable that is done for small and worthless things. To draw a curious picture of a shadow, or elegantly write the history of a dream, may be an ingenious kind of foolery; but the end will not allow it the name of wisdom: and such are all the actions of the world, (though called heroic, valiant, and honourable,) that aim at transitory trifles, and tend not to the everlasting end. A bird can neatly build her nest, but is not therefore counted wise. How contrary is the judgment of the world to Christ's! when the same description that he giveth of a fool, is it that worldlings give of a wise and happy man; "One that layeth up riches for himself, and is not rich towards God," Luke xii. 20, 21. Will you persuade us that the man is wise, that can climb a little higher than his neighbours, that he may have the greater fall? that is attended in his way to hell with greater pomp and state than others? that can sin more syllogistically and rhetorically than the vulgar; and more prudently and gravely run into damnation; and can learnedly defend his madness, and prove that he is safe at the brink of hell? Would you persuade us that he is wise, that contradicts the God and rule of wisdom, and that parts with heaven for a few merry hours, and hath not wit to save his soul? When they see the end, and are arrived at eternity, let them boast of their wisdom, as they find cause: we will take them then for more competent judges. Let the eternal God be the portion of my soul; let heaven be my inheritance and hope; let Christ be my Head, and the promise my security; let faith be my wisdom, and love be my very heart and will, and patient, persevering obedience be my life; and then I can spare the wisdom of the world, because I can spare the trifles that it seeks, and all that they are like to get by it.

What abundance of complaints and calamity would foresight prevent! Had the events of this one year been (conditionally) foreseen, the actions of thousands would have been otherwise ordered, and much sin and shame have been prevented. What a change would it make on the judgments of the world! How many words would be otherwise spoken, and how many deeds would be otherwise done, and how many hours would be otherwise spent, if the change that will be made by judgment and execution were well foreseen! And why is it not foreseen, when it is foreshown? when the omniscient God, that will certainly perform his word, hath so plainly revealed it, and so frequently and loudly warns you of it? Is he wise, that after all these warnings will lie down in everlasting woe, and say, I little thought of such a day; I did not believe I should ever have seen so great a change?

Would the servants of Christ be used as they are, if the malicious world foresaw the day when "Christ shall come with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment on all that are ungodly?" Jude 14, 15. When he shall "come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that do believe," 2 Thess. i. 10. When "the saints shall judge the world," 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3; and when the ungodly seeing them on Christ's right hand, must hear their sentence on this account, "Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as you did it (or, did it not) to one of the least of these, (my brethren,) you did it unto me," Matt. xxv. Yet a few days, and all this will be done before your eyes; but the unbelieving world will not foresee it.

Would malignant Cain have slain his brother, if he had foreseen the punishment, which he calleth afterwards intolerable, Gen. iv. 13. Would the world have despised the preaching of Noah, if they had believed the deluge? Would Sodom have been Sodom, if they had foreseen that a hell from heaven would have consumed them? Would Achan have meddled with his prey, if he had foreseen the stones that were his executioners and his tomb? Would Gehazi have obeyed his covetous desire, if he had foreseen the leprosy? or Judas have betrayed Christ, if he had foreseen the hanging himself in his despair? It is foreseeing faith that saves those that are saved; and blind unbelief that causeth men's perdition.

Yea, present things as well as future are unknown to foolish unbelievers. Do they know who seeth them in their sin? and what many thousands are suffering for the like, while they see no danger? Whatever their tongues say, the hearts and lives of fools deny that there is a God that seeth them, and will be their judge, Psal. xiv. 1. You see then that you must live by faith, or perish by folly.

(4.) Consider that things visible are so transitory

and of so short continuance, that they do not deserve the name of things; being nothings, and less than nothing, and lighter than vanity itself, compared to the necessary Eternal Being, whose name is, I AM. There is but a few days' difference between a prince and no prince; a lord and no lord; a man and no man; a world and no world. And if this be all, let the time that is past inform you how small a difference this is. Rational foresight may teach a Xerxes to weep over his numerous army, as knowing how soon they were all to be dead men. Can you forget that death is ready to undress you; and tell you, that your sport and mirth is done; and that now you have had all that the world can do for those that serve it, and take it for their part? How quickly can a fever, or the choice of a hundred messengers of death, bereave you of all that earth afforded you, and turn your sweetest pleasures into gall, and turn a lord into a lump of clay! It is but as a wink, an inch of time, till you must quit the stage, and speak, and breathe, and see the face of man no more. If you foresee this, O live as men that do foresee it! I never heard of any that stole his winding-sheet, or fought for a coffin, or went to law for his grave. And if you did but see (as wise men should) how near your honours, and wealth, and pleasures do stand unto eternity, as well as your winding-sheets, your coffins, and your graves, you would then value, and desire, and seek them regularly and moderately as you do these. Oh! what a fading flower is your strength! How soon will all your gallantry shrink into the shell! *Si vestra sunt tollite ea vobiscum.* Bern. But yet this is not the great part of the change: the *terminus ad quem* doth make it greater. It is awful for persons of renown and honour to change their palaces for graves, and turn to noisome rottenness and dirt; to change their power and command for silent impoteney, unable to rebuke the poorest worm, that saucily feedeth on their hearts or faces. But if you are believers, you can look further, and foresee much more. The largest and most capacious heart alive, is unable fully to conceive what a change the stroke of death will make.

For the holy soul so suddenly to pass from prayer to angelical praise; from sorrow unto boundless joys; from the slanders, and contempt, and violence of men, to the bosom of Eternal Love; from the clamours of a tumultuous world, to the universal harmony, and perfect, uninterrupted love and peace! Oh what a blessed change is this! which believing now we shall shortly feel.

For an unholy, unrenewed soul, that yesterday was drowned in flesh, and laughed at threatenings, and scorned reproofs, to be suddenly snatched into another world; and see the heaven that he hath lost, and feel the hell which he would not believe: to fall into the gulf of bottomless eternity, and at once to find that joy and hope are both departed; that horror and grief must be his company, and desperation hath locked up the door! Oh what an amazing change is this! If you think me troublesome for mentioning such ungrateful things, what a trouble will it be to feel them! May it teach you to prevent that greater trouble, you may well bear this. Find but a medicine against death, or any security for your continuance here, or any prevention of the change, and I have done: but that which unavoidably must be seen, should be foreseen.

But the unseen world is not thus mutable; eternal life is begun in the believer. The church is built on Christ the rock; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Fix here, and you shall never be removed.

(5.) Hence followeth another difference: the mutable creature doth impart a disgraceful mutability to the soul that chooseth it. It disappointeth and deceiveth; and therefore the ungodly are of one mind to-day, and another to-morrow. In health they are all for pleasure, and commodity, and honour; and at death they cry out on it as deceitful vanity. In health they cannot abide this strictness, this meditating, and seeking, and preparing for the life to come; but at death or judgment they will all be of another mind. Then oh that they had been so wise as to know their time! and oh that they had lived as holy as the best! They are now the bold opposers and reproachers of a holy life; but then they would be glad it had been their own: they would eat their words, and will be down in the mouth, and stand to never a word they say, when sight, and sense, and judgment shall convince them.

But things unchangeable do fix the soul. Piety is no matter for repentance. Doth the believer speak against sin and sinners; and for a holy, sober, righteous life? He will do so to the last: death and judgment shall not change his mind in this, but much confirm it; and therefore he perseveres through sufferings to death, Rom. viii. 35—37. "For this cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding, eternal weight of glory. While we look not at the things that are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal," 2 Cor. iv. 16—18.

(6.) Lastly, let this move you to live by a foreseeing faith, that it is of necessity to your salvation. Believing heaven must prepare you for it before you can enjoy it. Believing hell is necessary to prevent it, Mark xvi. 16; John iii. 18, 36. "The just shall live by faith, but if any man draw back (or be lifted up) the Lord will have no pleasure in him," Heb. x. 38; Hab. ii. 4. "Take heed that there be not in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, to depart from the living God," Heb. iii. 12. "And be not of them that draw back to perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul," Heb. x. 39. It is God that saith, "They shall all be damned that believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness," 2 Thess. ii. 10—12.

May I now, in the conclusion, more particularly exhort you, 1. That you will live upon things foreseen. 2. That you will promote this life of faith in others, according to your several capacities.

Princes and nobles live not always: you are not the rulers of the unmovable kingdom; but of a boat that is in a hasty stream, or a ship under sail that will speed both pilot and passengers to the shore. *Dixi, estis Dii: ut moriemini ut homines.* It was not the least or worst of kings that said, "I am a stranger upon earth," Psal. cxix. 19. *Vermis sum, non homo:* "I am a worm, and no man," Psal. xxii. 6. You are the greater worms, and we the little ones: but we must all say with Job, "The grave is our house, and we must make our beds in darkness: corruption is our father, and the worm our mother and our sister," Job xvii. 13, 14. The inexorable leveller is ready at your backs to convince you by irresistible argument, that dust you are, and to dust you shall return. Heaven should be as desirable, and hell as terrible, to you as to others. No man will fear you after death; much less will Christ be afraid to judge you, Luke xix. 27. As the kingdoms and glory of the world were contemned by him in the hour of his temptation; so are they inconsiderable to procure his approbation. Trust not therefore to uncertain riches: value them but as they will prove at last.

As you stand on higher ground than others, it is meet that you should see further. The greater are your advantages, the wiser and better you should be; and therefore should better perceive the difference between things temporal and eternal. It is always dark where these glow-worms shine, and where a rotten post doth seem a fire.

Your difficulties also should excite you; you must go as through a needle's eye to heaven. To live as in heaven in a crowd of business and stream of temptations from the confluence of all worldly things, is so hard, that few such come to heaven. Withdraw yourselves therefore to the frequent, serious forethoughts of eternity, and live by faith.

Had time allowed it, I should have come down to some particular instances: as, 1. Let the things unseen be still at hand to answer every temptation, and shame and repel each motion to sin.

2. Let them be still at hand to quicken us to duty, when backwardness and coldness doth surprise us. What! shall we do any thing coldly for eternity?

3. Let it resolve you what company to delight in, and what society to be of, even those with whom you must dwell for ever. What side soever is uppermost on earth, you may foresee which side shall reign for ever.

4. Let the things invisible be your daily solace, and the satisfaction of your souls. Are you slandered by men? Faith tells you, it is enough that Christ will justify you. O happy day! when he will bring forth our righteousness as the light, and set all straight, which all the false histories or slanderous tongues or pens in all the world made crooked. Are you frowned on or contemned by men? Is it not enough that you shall everlastingly be honoured by the Lord? Are you wronged, oppressed, or trodden on by pride or malice? Is not heaven enough to make you reparation? and eternity long enough for your joys? O pray for your malicious enemies, lest they suffer more than you can wish them!

2. Lastly, I should have become on the behalf of Christ, a petitioner to you for protection and encouragement to the heirs of the invisible world; for them that preach, and them that live in this life of faith. Not for the honours and riches of the world; but for leave and countenance to work in the vineyard, and peaceably travel through the world as strangers, and live in the communion of saints as they believe. But, though it be for the beloved of the Lord, the apple of his eye, the people that are sure to prevail and reign with Christ for ever; whose prayers can do more for the greatest princes than you can do for them, whose joy is hastened by that which is intended for their sorrow; I shall now lay by any further suit on their behalf.

But for yourselves, O use your seeing and foreseeing faculties! Be often looking through the prospective of the promise: and live not by sense on present things; but live as if you saw the glorious things which you say you do believe. That when worldly titles are insignificant words, and fleshly pleasures have an end, and faith and holiness will be the marks of honour, and unbelief and ungodliness the badges of perpetual shame, and when you must give account of your stewardship, and shall be no longer stewards, you may then be brought by faith unto fruition, and see with joy the glorious things that you now believe. Write upon your palaces and goods that sentence; "Seeing all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting to the coming of the day of God?" 2 Pet. iii. 11.

Hebrews xi. 1.—*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*

CHAPTER I.

FOR CONVICTION.

In the opening of this text, I have already showed, that it is the nature and use of faith to be instead of presence and sight; or to make things absent, future, and unseen, to be to us as to our estimation, resolution, and conversation, as if they were present, and before our eyes; though not as to the degree, yet as to the sincerity of our acts.

In the handling of this doctrine, I have already showed, that this faith is a grounded, justifiable knowledge, and not a fancy, or uneffectual opinion; having for its object the infallible revelation and certain truth of God; and not a falsehood, nor a mere probability, or *verisimile*. I have showed how such a faith will work; how far it should carry us if its evidence were fully entertained and improved; and how far it doth carry all that have it sincerely in the least degree; and I have showed some of the moving considerations, that should prevail with us to live upon the things unseen, as if they were open to our sight.

I think I may suddenly proceed here to the remaining part of the application, without any recital of the explication or confirmation, the truth lying so naked in the text itself.

The life of faith and the life of sense, are the two ways that all the world do walk in, to the two extremely different ends which appear when death withdraws the veil. It is the ordination of God, that men's own estimation, choice, and endeavours, shall be the necessary preparative to their fruition. *Nemo nolens bonus aut beatus est.* Men shall have no better than they value, and choose, and seek. Where earthly things are highest in the esteem, and dearest to the mind of man, such persons have no higher nor more durable portion. Where the heavenly things are highest and dearest to the soul, and are practically preferred, they are the portion of that soul. Where the treasure is the heart will be, Matt. vi. 21. The sanctifying Spirit doth lead the spiritual man, by a spiritual rule in a spiritual way, to a spiritual, glorious, durable felicity. The sensual part, with the sensual inclination communicated to the corrupted mind and will, doth by carnal reasonings, and by carnal means, pursue and embrace a present, fading, carnal interest; and therefore it findeth and attaineth no more. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other," Gal. v. 17. "They that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. To be carnally-minded is death; but to be spiritually-minded is life and peace: because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, the same is none of his. If we live after the flesh, we shall die; but if by the Spirit we mortify the deeds of the body, we shall live," Rom. viii. 5—14. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. He that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap everlasting life." As a man is, so he loveth and desireth; as he desireth, he seeketh;

and as he seeketh, he findeth and possesseth. If you know which world, what riches, a man prefers, intends, and liveth for, you may know which world is his inheritance, and whither he is going as to his perpetual abode.

Reason enableth a man to know and seek more than he seeth; and faith informeth and advanceth reason, to know *that* by the means of supernatural revelation, that by no other means is fully known. To seek and hope for no better than we know, and to know no more than is objectively revealed, (while we hinder not the revelation,) is the blameless imperfection of a creature that hath limited faculties and capacities. To know what is best, and yet to choose and seek an inferior, inconsistent good; and to refuse and neglect the best, when it is discerned, is the course of such as have but a superficial opinion of the good refused, or a knowledge not awakened to speak so loudly as may be effectual for choice; and whose sensuality mastereth their wills and reason, and leads them backward: and those that know not because they would not know, or hear not because they would not hear, are under that same dominion of the flesh, which is an enemy to all knowledge, that is an enemy to its delights and interest. To profess to know good, and yet refuse it; and to profess to know evil, and yet to choose it; and this predominantly and in the main, is the description of a self-condemning hypocrite. And if malignity and opposition of the truth professed be added to the hypocrisy, it comes up to that pharisaical blindness and obdurateness, which prepareth men for the remediless sin.

Consider then but of the profession of many of the people of this land, and compare their practice with it, and judge what compassion the condition of many doth bespeak. If you will believe them, they profess that they verily believe in the invisible God; in a Christ unseen to them; in the Holy Spirit, gathering a holy church to Christ, and employing them in a communion of saints. That they believe a judgment to come, upon the glorious coming of the Lord; and an everlasting life of joy or torment thereupon. All this is in their creed: they would take him for a damnable heretic that denieth it; and perhaps would consent that he be burned at a stake. So that you would think these men should live as if heaven and hell were open to their sight. But oh what a hypocritical generation are the ungodly! How their lives do give their tongues the lie! (Remember that I apply this to no better men.) It is a wonder that such men can believe themselves, when they say they do indeed believe the gospel; and shows what a monster the blind, deceitful heart of an impenitent sinner is. In good sadness, can they think that they truly believe that God is God, and yet so wilfully disobey him? that heaven is heaven, and yet prefer the world before it? that hell is hell, and yet will venture upon it for a lust, or a thing of nought? What! believe that there is at hand a life of endless joy, and no more mind it; but hate them that set their hearts upon it? Do they believe, that except a man be converted and new-born, he shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven; as Christ hath told them, Matt. xviii. 3; John iii. 3, 5; and yet never trouble their minds about it, to try whether they are converted and new-born or not? Do they believe God, that no man shall see him without holiness, Heb. xii. 14; and yet dare they be unholy? and perhaps deride it? Do they believe that Christ will "come in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power," 2 Thess. ii. 8, 9; and yet dare they disobey the gospel? Do they take God for their absolute Lord and Governor, while they will not so much as meditate on his laws, but care more what a mortal man saith, or what their flesh and carnal reason saith, than what he saith to them in his holy word? Do they take Christ for their Saviour, and yet would not be saved by him from their sins, but had rather keep them? Do they take the Holy Ghost for their Sanctifier, while they will not have a sanctified heart or life, and love it not in those that have it? Do they take heaven for their endless home and happiness, while they neither mind nor seek it, in comparison of the world? And do they take the world for vanity and vexation, while they mind and seek it more than heaven? Do they believe the communion of saints, while they fly from it, and perhaps detest and persecute it? Is light and darkness more contrary than their words and deeds? And is not hypocrisy as visible in their practice, as christianity in their profession? It is the complexion of their religion. *Hypocrite* is legibly written in the forehead of it. They proclaim their shame to all that they converse with. When they have said, they believe the life to come, they tell men by their ungodly, worldly lives, that they are dissemblers. When their tongue hath loudly said, that they are christians, their tongue and hand more loudly say, that they are hypocrites. And when they profess their faith but now and then, in a lifeless, outside piece of worship, they profess their hypocrisy all the day long; in their impious neglect of God and their salvation, in their carnal speeches, in their worldly lives, and in their enmity to the practice of the same religion which they profess. Their hypocrisy is a web so thin, and so transparent, that it leaves their nakedness open to their shame. They have not profession enough to make a considerable cover for their unbelief: they hide but their tongues; the rest, even heart and all, is bare.

Oh the stupendous power of self-love! the wonderful blindness and stupidity of the ungodly! the dreadfulness of the judgment of God in thus deserting the wilful resisters of his grace! That ever men (in other things of seeming wisdom) should be such strangers to themselves, and so deceived by themselves, as to think they love the thing they hate! and to think their hearts are set upon heaven, when they neither love it, nor the way that leadeth to it; but are principally bent another way! that when they are strangers or enemies to a holy life, they can yet make themselves believe that they are holy; and that they seek that first, which they never seek; and make that the drift and business of their lives, which was never the serious business of an hour! O hypocrites! ask any impartial man of reason, that sees your lives, and hears your prayers, whether you pray and live like men that believe that heaven or hell must be their reward? Ask your families, whether they perceive by your constant prayer, and diligent endeavours, and holy conversations, that your hearts are set on a life to come? It was a cutting answer of a late apostate, to one that told him of the unreasonableness of infidels that denied the life to come; saith he, There's none in the world so unreasonable as you christians, that believe there is an endless life of joy or misery to come, and do no more to obtain the one and escape the other. Did I believe such a life as this, I would think all too little that I could do or suffer, to make it sure. Who sees the certainty, greatness, and eternity of the crown of life, in the resolvedness, fervency, and constancy of your holy labour? You take up with the picture of sermons and prayers, and with the

name of christianity and holy obedience. A little more religion you will admit than a parrot may learn, or a puppet may exercise. Compare your care, and labour, and cost for heaven, and for this world. That you believe the flattering, deceitful world, we see by your daily solicitousness about it: you seek it, you strive for it; you fall out with all that stand in your way; you are at it daily, and have never done; but who can see that you seriously believe another world? You talk idly, and wantonly, and proudly by the hours, but you talk of heaven and holiness but by the minutes. You do not turn the glass when you go to your unnecessary recreations, or your vain discourse, or at least, you can stay when the glass is run; but in hearing the most necessary truths of God, or in praying for everlasting life, the hour seems long to you; and the tedious preacher is your weariness and molestation. You do not feast and play by the glass; but if we do not preach and pray by it exactly, but exceed our hour, though in speaking of and for eternity, we are your burden, and put your languid patience to it, as if we were doing you some intolerable wrong.

In worldly matters, you are weary of giving, but seldom of receiving: you grudge at the asker, but seldom at the giver. But if the gift be spiritual and heavenly, you are weary to hear talk of it, and expostulate the case with him that offereth it; and he must show by what authority he would do you good. If by serious, holy conference he would further your preparations for the life to come, or help you to make sure of life eternal, he is examined what power he hath to meddle with you, and promote your salvation. And perhaps he is snappishly told, he is a busy, saucy fellow, and you bid him meddle with his own matters, and let you speed as you can, and keep his compassion and charity for himself: you give him no thanks for his undesired help. The most laborious, faithful servant you like best, that will do you the most work, with greatest skill, and care, and diligence. But the most laborious, faithful instructor and watchman for your souls, you most ungratefully vilify, as if he were more busy and precise than needs, and were upon some unprofitable work; and you love a superficial, hypocritical ministry, that teacheth you but to compliment with heaven, and leads you such a dance of comical, outside, hypocritical worship, as is agreeable to your own hypocrisy. And thus when you are mocking God, you think you worship him, and merit heaven by the abuse. Should a minister or other friend be but half as earnest with you, for the life of your immortal souls, as you are yourselves for your estates, or friends, or lives in any danger, you would take them for fanatics, and perhaps do by them as his carnal friends did once by Christ, (Mark iii. 21,) that went out to lay hold on him, and said, "He is beside himself." For trifles you account it wisdom to be serious; but for everlasting things, you account it folly, or to be more busy and solicitous than needs. You can desire an act of pardon and indemnity from man; whenas you are little solicitous about a pardon from God, to whose justice you have forfeited your souls. And if a man be but earnest in begging his pardon, and praying to be saved from everlasting misery, you scorn him, because he does it without book, and say he whines, or speaks through the nose; forgetting that we shall have you one of these days, as earnest in vain, as they are that shall prevail for their salvation; and that the terrible approach of death and judgment shall teach you also to pray without book, and cry, "Lord, Lord, open to us," when the door is shut, and it is all too late, Matt. xxv. 11.

O sirs, had you but a lively, serious, foreseeing faith, that openeth heaven and hell as to your sight, what a cure would it work of this hypocrisy!

1. Such a sight would quicken you from your sloth, and put more life into your thoughts and words, and all that you attempt for God.

2. Such a sight would soon abate your pride, and humble you before the Lord, and make you see how short you are of what you should be.

3. Such a sight would dull the edge of your covetous desires, and show you that you have greater things to mind, and another kind of world than this to seek.

4. Such a sight would make you esteem the temptations of men's reports but as the shaking of a leaf, and their allurements and threats as impertinent speeches, that would cast a feather or a fly into the balance against a mountain, or against the world.

5. Such a sight would allay the itch of lust, and quench the drunkard's insatiable thirst, and turn your gulosity into moderation and abstinence, and acquaint you with a higher sort of pleasures, that are durable, and worthy of a man.

6. Such a sight would cure your desire of pastime, and show you that you have no time to spare, when all is done that necessity and everlasting things require.

7. Such a sight would change your relish of God's ordinances, and esteem of ministers, and teach you to love and savour that which is spiritual and serious, rather than hypocritical strains and shows. It would teach you better how to judge of sermons and of prayers, than unexperienced minds will ever do.

8. Such a sight would cure your malignity against the ways and diligent servants of the Lord; and instead of opposing them, it would make you glad to be among them, and fast, and pray, and watch, and rejoice with them, and better to understand what it is to believe the communion of saints.

In a word, did you but see what God reveals, and saints believe, and must be seen, I would scarce thank you to be all as serious and solicitous for your souls, as the holiest man alive; and presently to repent and lament the folly of your negligence and delays, and to live as men that know no other work to mind, in comparison of that which extendeth to eternity. I would scarce thank the proudest of you all to lie down in the dust, and in sackcloth and ashes, with tears and cries, to beg the pardon of those sins, which before you felt no weight in. Nor the most sensual wretch, that now sticks so close to his ambition, covetousness, and lust, that he saith he cannot leave them, to spit them out as loathsome bitterness, and be ashamed of them as fruitless things. You would then say to the most godly, that now seem too precise, O why do you not make more haste, and lay hold on heaven with greater violence? Why do you pray with no more fervency, and bear witness against the sins of the world with no more undaunted courage and resolution? And why do you not more freely lay out your time, and strength, and wealth, and all that you have, on the work of God? Is heaven worth no more ado than this? Can you do no more for an endless life, and the escaping of the wrath to come? Shall worldlings overdo you? These would be your thoughts on such a sight.

CHAPTER II.

USE OF EXHORTATION.

What now remains but that you may come into the light, and beg of God, as the prophet for his servant, (2 Kings vi. 17,) to open your eyes, that you may see the things that would do so much; "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the spirit of revelation, in the knowledge of him; the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what is the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints," Ephes. i. 17, 18. O set those things continually before your eyes, that must for ever be before them! Look seriously into the infallible word; and whatsoever that foretells, believe it as if it were come to pass. The unbelief of God's threatenings and penal laws, is the perdition of souls, as well as the unbelief of promises. God giveth not false fire, when he dischargeth the cannons of his terrible comminations. If you fall not down, you shall find that the lightning is attended with the thunder, and execution will be done before you are aware. If there were any doubt of the things unseen, yet you know it is past all doubt that there is nothing else that is durable and worthy of your estimation and regard. You must be knights and gentlemen but a little while; speak but a few words more, and you will have spoke your last. When you have slept a few nights more, you must sleep till the resurrection awake you (as to the flesh). Then where are your pleasant habitations and contents? your honours and attendance? Is a day that is spent, or a life that is extinct, any thing or nothing? Is there any sweetness in a feast that was eaten, or drink that was drank, or time that was spent in sports and mirth, a year ago? Certainly a known vanity should not be preferred before a probable endless joy. But when we have certainty as well as excellency and eternity, to set against certain, transitory vanity, what room is left for further deliberation? Whether we should prefer the sun before a squib, or a flash of lightning that suddenly leaves us in the dark, one would think should be an easy question to resolve.

Up then! and work while it is day: and let us run and strive with all our might! Heaven is at hand as sure as if you saw it. You are certain you can be no losers by the choice. You part with nothing for all things. You escape the tearing of your heart, by submitting to the scratching of a brier. You that will bear the opening of a vein for the cure of a fever, and will not forbear a necessary journey for the barking of a dog, or the blowing of the wind; O leap not into hell to escape the stinking breath of a scorner! Part not with God, with conscience, and with heaven, to save your purses or your flesh. Choose not a merry way to misery, before a prudent, sober preparation for a perfect, everlasting joy. You would not prefer a merry cup before a kingdom. You would let go a lesser delight or commodity for a greater here. Thus a greater sin can forbid the exercise of a less, and shall not endless joy weigh down a brutish lust or pleasure?

If you love pleasure, take that which is true, and full, and durable. For all that he calleth you to repentance, and mortification, and necessary strictness, there is none that is more for your pleasure and delight than God; or else he would not offer you the rivers of pleasure that are at his right hand; nor himself to be your perpetual delight. If you come into a room where are variety of pictures, and one is gravely reading or meditating, and another with a cup or harlot in his hand is profusely laughing, with a gaping, grinning mouth, would you take the latter or the former to be the picture of a wise and happy man? Do you approve of the state of those in heaven? and do you like the way that brought them thither? If not, why speak you of them so honourably? and why would you keep holy days in remembrance of them? If you do; examine the sacred records, and see whether the apostles and others that are now honoured as glorified saints, did live as you do, or rather as those that you think are too precise? Did they spend the day in feasting, and sports, and idle talk? Did they swagger it out in pride and wealth, and hate their brethren that were not in all things of their conceits? Did they come to heaven by a worldly, formal, hypocritical, ceremonious religion; or by faith, and love, and self-denial, and unwearied labouring for their own and other men's salvation, while they became the wonder and the scorn of the ungodly, and as the off-scouring and refuse of the world? Do you like holiness when it is far from you; in a dead man, that never troubled you with his presence or reproofs, or in a saint in heaven, that comes not near you? Why then do you not like it for yourselves? If it be good, the nearer the better. Your own health and your own wealth do comfort you more than another man's: and so would your own holiness if you had it. If you would speed as they that are now beholding the face of God, believe, and live, and wait as they did. And as the righteous God did not forget their work and labour of love for his name, so he will remember you with the same reward, if you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end; and "be not slothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promise," Heb. vi. 10—12.

O did you but see what they now enjoy, and what they see, and what they are, and what they do, you would never sure scorn or persecute a saint more! If you believe, you see, though not as they, with open face. If you believe not, yet it is not your unbelief, that shall make God's word of none effect, Rom. iii. 3. God will be God if you be atheists. Christ will be Christ if you be infidels. Heaven will be heaven if you by despising it go to hell. Judgment sleepeth not when you sleep: it is coming as fast when you laugh at it, or question it, as if your eyes were open to foresee it. If you would not believe that you must die, do you think that this would delay your death one year or hour? If ten or twenty years' time more be allotted you, it passeth as swiftly, and death and judgment come as surely, if you spend it in voluptuousness and unbelief, as if you watched and waited for your change.

We preach not to you *ifs* and *ands*: it is not, *perhaps* there is a heaven and hell; but as sure as you are here, and must anon go hence, you must as shortly quit this world, and take up your abode in the world that is now to us invisible. And no tongue can express how sensible you will then be of the things that you will not now be made sensible of. O then with what a dreadful view will you look before you and behind you! Behind you, upon time, and say, It is gone and never will return: and hear conscience ask you, How you spent it, and what you did with it? Before you, upon eternity, and say, It is come; and to the ungodly will be an eternity of woe. What a peal will conscience then ring in the unbeliever's ears! Now the day is come that I was forewarned of. The day and change which I

would not believe! Whither must I now go? what must I now do? what shall I say before the Lord for all the sin that I have wilfully committed? for all the time of mercy which I lost? How shall I answer my contempt of Christ? my neglect of means, and enmity to a holy, serious life? What a distracted wretch was I, to condemn and dislike them that spent their lives in preparation for this day; when now I would give a thousand worlds to be but one of the meanest of them! Oh that the church doors, and the door of grace, were open to me now, as once they were, when I refused to enter. Many a time did I hear of this day, and would not believe, or soberly consider of it. Many a time was I entreated to prepare, and I thought a hypocritical, trifling show would have been taken for a sufficient preparation. Now who must be my companions? How long must I dwell with woe and horror? God by his ministers was wont to call me: How long, O scorner, wilt thou delight in scorning? How long wilt thou go on impenitently in thy folly? And now I must cry out, How long, how long must I feel the wrath of the Almighty? the unquenchable fire? the immortal worm? Alas, for ever! When shall I receive one moment's ease? When shall I see one glimpse of hope? Oh never! never! never! Now I perceive what Satan meant in his temptations; what sin intended; what God meant in the threatenings of his law; what grace was good for; what Christ was sent for; and what was the design and meaning of the gospel; and how I should have valued the offers and promises of life! Now I understand what ministers meant, to be so importunate with me for my conversion; and what was the cause that they would even have kneeled to me, to have procured my return to God in time. Now I understand that holiness was not a needless thing; that Christ and grace deserved better entertainment than contempt; that precious time was worth more than to be wasted idly; that an immortal soul, and life eternal, should have been more regarded, and not cast away for so short, so base a fleshly pleasure. Now all these things are plain and open to my understanding; but, alas! it is now too late! I know that now to my woe and torment, which I might have known in time to my recovery and joy.

For the Lord's sake, and for your souls' sake, open your eyes, and foresee the things that are even at hand, and prevent these fruitless lamentations. Judge but as you will all shortly judge, and live but as you will wish that you had lived, and I desire no more. Be serious, as if you saw the things that you say you do believe.

I know this serious discourse of another life, is usually ungrateful to men that are conscious of their strangeness to it, and taking up their portion here, are loth to be tormented before the time. This is not the smoothing, pleasing way. But remember that we have flesh as well as you, which longs not to be accounted troublesome or precise; which loves not to displease or be displeased: and had we no higher light and life, we should talk as men that saw and felt no more than sight and flesh can reach; but when we are preaching and dying, and you are hearing and dying, and we believe and know that you are now going to see the things we speak of, and death will straightway draw aside the veil, and show you the great, amazing sight, it is time for us to speak and you to hear with all our hearts. It is time for us to be serious, when we are so near the place where all are serious. There are none that are in jest in heaven or hell. Pardon us therefore if we jest not at the door and in the way to such a serious state. All that see and feel are serious; and therefore all that truly believe must be so too. Were your eyes all opened this hour to see what we believe, we appeal to your own consciences, whether it would not make you more serious than we.

Marvel not if you see believers make another matter of their salvation, than those that have hired their understandings in service to their sense; and think the world is no bigger or better than their globe or map; and reacheth no further than they can ken. As long as we see you serious about lands and lordships, and titles and honours, the rattles and tarrying irons of the cheating world, you must give us leave (whether you will or no) to be serious about the life eternal. They that scramble so eagerly for the bonds of worldly riches, and devour so greedily the dregs of sensual delights, methinks should blush (if such animals had the blushing property) to blame or deride us for being a little (alas, too little) earnest in the matters of God and our salvation. Can you not pardon us if we love God a little more than you love your lusts; and if we run as fast for the crown of life, as you run after a feather or a fly? Or if we breathe as hard after Christ in holy desires, as you do in blowing the bubble of vain-glory? If a thousand pounds a year in passage to a grave, and the chains of darkness, be worth your labour; give us leave to believe that mercy in order to everlasting mercy, grace in order to glory, and glory as the end of grace, is worth our labour, and infinitely more.

Your end is narrow though your way be broad, and our end is broad though our way be narrow. You build as miners in coal-pits do, by digging downwards into the dark; and yet you are laborious. Though we begin on earth, we build towards heaven, where an attractive loadstone draws up the workmen and the work; and shall we loiter under so great encouragements? Have you considered that faith is the beholding grace? the evidence of things not seen? and yet have you the hearts to blame believers, for doing all that they can do, in a case of such unspeakable, everlasting consequence? If we are believers, heaven and hell are as it were open to our sight! And would you wish us to trifle in the sight of heaven? or to leap into hell when we see it as before us? What name can express the inhuman cruelty of such a wish or motion? or the unchristian folly of those that will obey you?

O give us leave to be serious for a kingdom which by faith we see! Blame us for this, and blame us that we are not beside ourselves. Pardon us that we are awake, when the thunder of Jehovah's voice doth call to us, denouncing everlasting wrath to all that are sensual and ungodly. Were we asleep as you are, we would lie still, and take no heed what God or man said to us.

Pardon us that we are christians, and believe these things, seeing you profess the same yourselves. Disclaim not the practice till you dare disclaim the profession. If we were infidels, we would do as the ungodly world; we would pursue our present pleasures and commodity, and say, that things above us are nothing to us; and would take religion to be the troubler of the world: but till we are infidels or atheists at the heart, we cannot do so.

Forgive us that we are men; if you take it to be pardonable. Were we brutes, we would eat, and drink, and play, and never trouble ourselves or others with the care of our salvation, or the fears of any death but one; or with resisting sensual inclinations, and meditating on the life to come; but would take our ease and pleasure while we may.

At least forgive us that we are not blocks or stones; that we have life and feeling. Were we insensate clods, we would not see the light of heaven,

nor hear the roaring of the lion, nor fear the threats of God himself. We would not complain, or sigh, or groan, because we feel not.

If therefore we may have leave to be awake, and to be in our wits, to be christians, to be men, to be creatures that have life and sense, forgive us that we believe the living God; that we cannot laugh at heaven and hell, nor jest at the threatened wrath of the Almighty. If these things must make us the object of the world's reproach and malice, let me rather be a reproached man than an honoured beast, and a hated christian than a beloved infidel; and rather let me live in the midst of malice and contempt, than pass through honour unto shame, through mirth to misery, and through a senseless to a feeling death. Hate us when we are in heaven, and see who will be the sufferer by it. If ever we should begin to nod and relapse towards your hypocritical formality and senseless indifferency, our lively sight of the world invisible, by a serious faith, would presently awake us, and force us confidently to conclude, *Aut sanctus, aut brutus:* there is practically and predominantly no mean. He will prove a brute that is not a saint.

CHAPTER III.

Having done with this general conviction and exhortation to unbelieving hypocrites, I proceed to acquaint believers with their duty, in several particulars.

1. Worship God as believers; "serve him with reverence and godly fear, for our God is a consuming fire," Heb. xii. 28, 29. A seeing faith, if well excited, would kindle love, desire, fear, and all praying graces. No man prays well, that doth not well know what he prays for. When it comes to seeing, all men can cry loud, and pray when praying will do no good. They will not then speak sleepily, or by rote, *Fides intuendo, amorem recipit, amorem suscitat. Cor flagrans amore desideria, gemitus, orationes spirat.* Faith is the burning glass, which, beholding God, receiveth the beams of his communicated love, and inflameth the heart with love to him again; which mounteth up by groans and prayers, till it reach its original, and love for ever rest in love.

2. Desire and use the creature as believers. Interpret all things as they receive their meaning from the things unseen: understand them in no other sense. It is only God and the life to come that can tell you what is good or bad for you in the world. And therefore the ungodly that cannot go to heaven for counsel, are carried about by mere deceits. Take heed what you love; and take heed of that you love. God is very jealous of our love: he sheds abroad his own love in our hearts, that our hearts may be fruitful in love to him, which is his chief delight. By love he commandeth love; that we may suitably move towards him, and centre in him. He communicateth so much for the procuring of a little, that we should endeavour to give him all that little, and shed none of it inordinately upon the creature by the way. Nothing is great, or greatly to be admired, while the great God is in sight. And it is unsuitable for little things to have great affections; and for low matters to have a high esteem. It is the corruption and folly of the mind, and the delusion of the affections, to exalt a shrub above a cedar, and magnify a molehill above a mountain; to embrace a shadow or spectrum of felicity, which vanisheth into nothing when you bring in the light. The creature is *nihil et nullipotens:* nothing should have no interest in us, and be able to do nothing with us (as to the motions that are under the dominion of the will). God is All and Almighty; and he that is All, should have all, and command all. And the Omnipotent should do all things with us by his interest in mortals, as he will do by his force in naturals. I deny not but we may love a friend. One soul in two bodies will have one mind, and will, and love. But as it is not the body of my friend that I love or converse with principally, but the soul (and therefore should have no mind of the case, the corpse, the empty nest, if the bird were flown); so is it not the person, but Christ in him, or that of God which appeareth on him, that must be the principal object of our love. The man is mutable, and must be loved, as Plato did commend his friend to Dionysius; *Hæc tibi scribo de homine, viz. animante natura mutabili.* And therefore must be loved with a reserve. But God is unchangeable, and must be absolutely and unchangeably loved. That life is best that is likest heaven: there God will be all; and yet even there it will be no dishonour or displeasure to the Deity, that the glorified humanity of Christ, and the new Jerusalem, and our holy society, are loved more dearly than we can love any creature here on earth. So here, God taketh not that affection as stolen from him, that is given to his servants for his sake, but accepts it as sent to him by them. Let the creature have it, so God have it finally in and by the creature; and then it is not so properly the creature that hath it, as God. If you choose and love your friends for God, you will use them for God; not flattering them, or desiring to be flattered by them; but to kindle in each other the holy flame which will aspire and mount, and know no bounds, till it reach the boundless element of love. You will not value them as friends, *qui omnia dicta et facta vestra laudant, sed qui errata et delicta amice reprehendunt;* not them that call you good, but them that would make you better. And you will let them know, as Phocian did Antipater, that they can never use you *ut amicis et adulatoribus;* as friends and flatterers, that differ as a wife and a harlot.

It is hard to love the imperfect creature, without mistakes and inordinacy in our love: and therefore usually where we love most, we sin most; and our sin finds us out; and then we suffer most: and too much affection is the forerunner of much affliction, which will be much prevented, if faith might be the guide of love, and human love might be made divine; and all to be referred to the things unseen, and animated by them. Love where you can never love too much; where you are sure to have no disappointments; where there is no unkindness to eclipse or interrupt it; where the only error is, that God hath not all, and the only grief, that we love no more.

Especially in the midst of your enticing pleasures, or enticing employments and profits in the world, foresee the end, do all in faith, which telleth you, "The time is short; it remaineth therefore, that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as though they used it not (or not abusing it): for the fashion of this world passeth away," 1 Cor. vii. 29, 30.

3. Employ your time as becomes believers. Faith only can acquaint you, what an unconceivable weight doth lie upon this inch of hasty time. As you behave yourselves for a few days, it must go with you in joy or misery for ever. You have your appointed

time for your appointed work. God hath turned the glass upon you; much of it is run out already. No price can call back one hour that you have lost. No power or policy can retard its course; *Sic fugiunt fræno non remorante dies.* When it comes to the last sand, and time is gone, you will know the worth of it. You will then confess it should have seemed more precious in your eyes, than to have been cast away upon things of nought. O precious time! more worth than all the riches of the world! how highly is it valued by all at last! and how basely is it esteemed now by the most! Now it is no more worth with them than to be sold for unnecessary sports and ease, and wasted in idleness and vain delights; but then when it is gone, and all is too late, how loud would they cry, if cries could call back time again! Oh then, what a mercy would it seem, if God would try them once again! and trust them but with another life, or with Hezekiah's fifteen years! or but with fifteen days, or hours, upon such terms of grace, as they held that life which they abused! It amazeth me to observe the lamentable stupidity of the world, how hard they beg for time when they think it is near an end! and how carelessly they let it slide away, when they have strength and faculties to improve it! They are grievously afraid lest death deprive them of it; and yet they are not afraid to deprive themselves of the use and fruit of it, and to cast it away as contemptuously as if it were a useless thing. I seldom come near a dying man, but I hear him complain of the loss of time, and wish it were to spend again, that it might be better valued and used. And yet the living will not be warned! O value time, as wise men, while you have it; and not as miserable fools, when it is gone! If our Lord said, "I must do the work of him that sent me while it is day; for the night cometh when no man can work," John ix. 4; what need then have such as we to be doing, and make much of time! O let not company, mirth, or business make you forget the work of time! Can you play or loiter away your hours, with eternity in your eye? Get the sun to stand still, and time to make a truce with you, and to waste no more of the oil of life, before you lose another hour.

Oh what heads, what hearts have all those men that, standing at the verge of an endless world, can think they have any time to spare! Hath God given you too much? If not, why do you lose it? If he hath, why are you loth that he should shorten it? You would not throw away your gold as contemptuously as you do your time, when an hour's time is more valuable than gold. Frown on that company that would rob you of half an hour's time. Tell them you have something else to do than to feast, or play, or talk away your time unnecessarily. O tell them you were not made for nothing! You are in a race, and must not stand still: you are in a fight, and must not cease. Your work is great; much of it is undone. Your enemies are not idle: death will not stop: the Judge is coming, and still beholds you: and heaven and hell are ready to receive our ending life, and tell us how we spent our time: and can you find time to spare? You are not made as weathercocks, to stand up on high for men to look at, and by turning about with every wind, to show them which way it standeth. Turn not your lives into that curse, "You shall spend your strength in vain," Lev. xxvi. 20. Believe it, time must be reviewed. The day is near, when every man of you had rather find it in your accounts, So many hours spent in self-examination and holy meditation; so many in reading the word of God; so many spent in fervent prayer; and so many in doing good to others; than, So many spent in needless sports and pleasures; so many in idleness and vain discourses; and so many in the less necessary matters of the world. Ask those that tempt you to mispend your time, whether at death and judgment they had rather themselves have a life of holy diligence to review, or a life consumed in vanity, and transitory delights?

You will not suffer impertinences to interrupt your counsels and serious business in the world. You will tell intruders, that you are busy, and cannot have while to attend them. And are you going into heaven or hell, and have but a few days' time of preparation, (God knows how few,) and yet can you have while to pass this precious time in vain? Oh what would you not give ere long for one of the hours that you now mispend! when the oath is performed, "That time shall be no longer!" Rev. x. 6. Wonderful! that men can find time for any thing, save that for which they had their time! *Non quam bene vivant, sed quamdiu, considerant, (inquit* Seneca,) *cum omnibus possit contingere ut bene vivant: ut diu, nulli.* To live well is both possible and necessary, and yet is disregarded. To live long, is neither possible nor necessary; and yet is sought by almost all. *Incipiunt vivere cum desinendum est: immo quidam ante desierunt vivere, quam inciperent.* Sen. It is unseasonable we should begin to live, when we should make an end; but it is most unhappy to have made an end before they do begin. *Pulchrum est, (inquit idem,) consummare vitam ante mortem; et expectare secure reliquam temporis partem.* Do the great work, and then you may comfortably spend the rest in waiting for the conclusion. Yet you have time, and leave, and helps; you may read, and meditate, and pray if you will; but shortly time will be no more. O let not Satan insult over your carcasses and tormented souls, and say, Now it is too late! Now mourn and repent as long as you will! Now pray, and cry, and spare not! O use that faith which beholdeth the invisible world, and maketh future things as present, and then delay and loiter if you can; then waste your hours in idleness or vanity if you dare! either light or fire shall awake you!

4. Suffer as believers. Fear not the wrath of man; but endure as seeing him that is invisible, Heb. xi. 27. Show plainly that you seek a better country, ver. 14, 16. Read often Heb. xi. xii. Behold the kingdom prepared and secured for you by Christ, and then you will be indifferent which way the wind of human favour or applause shall sit; or what weather lunatic influences and aspects shall produce. Such a faith will make you, with Abraham, to turn your back on all, and engage in pilgrimage for an inheritance after to be received; though he knew not whither he went, (with a distinct, particular knowledge,) Heb. xi. 8. As strangers and travellers, you will not be troubled to leave towns and fields, buildings, and wealth, and walks behind you, as knowing that you were but to pass by them, desiring and seeking a better country, that is, a heavenly, and you shall lose nothing by this passing by all in the world; for God will not be ashamed to be called your God; and he hath prepared for you a city, Heb. xi. 13, 16. Seriously respect the recompence of reward, and it will make you "choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of the world," ver. 25, 26. Stephen's sight would cause Stephen's patience. Hold on as christians: the end is near: "Let us run with patience the race that is set before us; looking to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith; who for the joy

that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied, and faint in your mind," Heb. xii. 2, 3.

You may well endure the buffeting and scorn, if you foresee the honour. You may well endure the crown of thorns, if you foresee the crown of glory: you may endure to be forsaken of all, if you see him that will never fail you nor forsake you. This foretaste of the rivers of pleasure with the Lord, will drown the taste of vinegar and gall. Whine not like worldlings that have lost their portion, when you are stript as bare as Job. If you are true believers, you have all still, for God is All: you have lost nothing; for faith hath made the world as nothing to you: and will you whine and vex yourselves for nothing? Can you call it nothing so frequently and easily in your prayers, and ordinary speech, and do you now recall this, or tell us by your serious grief, that you speak but in hypocrisy and jest. *Frangitur nemo molestia adversorum, qui non capitur delectatione prosperorum.* August. Had there been less idolatrous love, there would have been less tormenting grief and care. Our life consisteth not in the abundance of the things that we possess. He is not happy that hath them, but he that neither needeth nor desireth them. *Cum in his quæ homines eripiunt, optant, custodiunt, nihil inveneris, non dico quod malis, sed quod velis.* Sen. Superfluity doth but burden and break down; the corn that is too rank lodgeth; and the branches break that are overladen with fruit. *Omnia quæ superfluunt nocent: segetem nimia sternit ubertas: rami onere fraguntur, ad maturitatem non pervenit fœcunditas: Idem quoque animis evenit, quos immoderata prosperitas rumpit; quia non tantum in aliorum injuriam, sed etiam in suam utuntur.* Sen. It is pleasure, and not pain, that is the world's most deadly sting. It hath never so much hurt us, as when it hath flattered us into delights or hopes. *Et fera et piscis spe aliqua oblectante decipitur.* Sen. Hope is the bait, prosperity and pleasure the net, that souls are ordinarily insnared by. Men lose not their souls for poverty, but for riches; nor for dishonour, but for honour; nor for sorrow, but for delight.

"Luxuriant animi rebus plerumque secundis."

The luxuriances of prosperity bring us so frequently under the pruning-hook. The surfeits and summer fruits of fulness and carnal contentments and delights, do put us to the trouble of our sicknesses and our physic. "How hardly shall rich men enter into heaven!" saith he that well knew who should enter. Saith Augustine, *Difficile, immo impossibile est, ut præsentibus et futuris quis fruatur bonis: ut hic ventrem, et ibi mentem impleat: ut a deliciis ad delicias transeat; et in utroque seculo primus sit; ut in terra et in cœlo appareat gloriosus?* The hope is, that with God such human impossibilities are possible. But it is more terrible than desirable, to be put upon so great a difficulty. Sweet dishes will have wasps and flies; but most of them are drowned in their delights. Saith Boetius of Prosperity and Adversity; *Illa fallit, hæc instruit: illa mendacium specie bonorum mentes fruentium ligat: hæc cogitatione fragilis fælicitatis absolvit. Itaque illam videas ventosam fluentem, suique semper ignaram: hanc sobriam, succinctamque ac ipsius adversitatis exercitatione prudentem.* A full meal seems best in eating; but a light meal is better the next day. More thank God in heaven for adversity, than for prosperity; and more in hell cry out of the fruit of prosperity, than of adversity. Many did never look towards heaven, till affliction cast them on their backs, so that they could look no other way. "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes," saith David, Psal. cxix. 71. "Before I was afflicted, I went astray," ver. 76. "In very faithfulness thou hast afflicted me," ver. 75. One sight of heaven by faith will force you to reckon "that the sufferings of this present time are unworthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us," Rom. viii. 18. To suffer for Christ and righteousness' sake, is but to turn an unavoidable, fruitless pain, into that which being involuntary, is the more easy, and hath a great reward in heaven, Matt. v. 11, 12; and to part with that for a crown of life, which else we must part with for nothing. Worldly friends, and wealth, and honour, are summer fruit that will quickly fall. Hungry fowl know where it is harvest, *At simul intonuit fugiunt.* Those that must dwell with you in heaven, are your sure and stedfast friends, *Cætera fortunæ;* &c. Those that are now highest, and least acquainted with the tongue of malice, the unfaithfulness of friends, or rage of enemies, shall shortly say,

"Atque hæc exemplis quondam collecta priorum:
Nunc mihi sunt propriis, cognita vera malis."

There is but the difference of an *est* and an *erit*, between their mirth and endless sorrows; their honour, and their endless shame; nor between our sorrow and our endless joy. Their final honour is to be embalmed, and their lust to be covered with a sumptuous monument, and their names extolled by the mouths of men, that little know how poor a comfort all this is to the miserable soul. In the height of their honour you may foresee the surgeon opening their bowels, and showing the receptacles of the treasure of the epicure, and what remains of the price that he received for his betrayed soul. He cuts out the heart with a *Hæ sedes livoris erant: jam pascua vermis.* You next tread on this interred corpse, that is honoured but with a *Hic jacet,* Here lieth the body of such a one. And if he have honour to be magnified by fame or history, it is a fool-trap to insnare the living, but easeth not the soul in hell. And shall we envy men such a happiness as this? What if they be able to command men's lives, and to hurt those that they hate for a little while? Is this a matter of honour or of delight? A pestilence is more honourable, if destroying be an honour. The devil is more powerful (if God permit him) to do men hurt, than the greatest tyrant in the world. And yet I hope you envy not his happiness, nor are ambitious to partake of it. If witches were not akin to devils, they would never sell their souls for a power to do hurt. And how little do tyrannical worldlings consider, that under a mask of government and honour, they do the same!

Let the world then rejoice while we lament and weep. "Our sorrow shall be speedily turned into joy; and our joy shall no man then take from us," John xvi. 20, 22. Envy not a dying man the happiness of a feather-bed, or a merry dream. You think it hard in them to deny you the liberties and comforts of this life, though you look for heaven; and will you be more cruel than the ungodly? Will you envy the trifling commodities or delights of earth, to those that are like to have no more, but to lie in hell when the sport is ended? It is unreasonable impatience that cannot endure to see them in silks and gallantry a few days, that must be so extremely miserable for ever. Your crumbs, and leavings, and overplus is their all. And will you grudge them this much? In this you are unlike your heavenly Father, that doth good to the just and unjust. Would you change cases with them? Would

you change the fruit of your adversity for the fruit of their prosperity?

Affliction maketh you somewhat more calm, and wise, and sober, and cautelous, and considerate, and preventeth as well as cureth sin. Prosperity makes them (through their abuse) inconsiderate, rash, insensible, foolish, proud, unpersuadable. "And the turning away of the simple slayeth them, and the prosperity of fools destroyeth them," Prov. i. 32. It is long since Lazarus' sores were healed, and his wants relieved; and long since Dives' feast was ended. O let me rather be afflicted than rejected; and be a door-keeper in the house of God, than dwell in the tents of wickedness; and rather be under the rod, than turned out of doors. Look with a serious faith upon eternity, and then make a great matter of enjoyments or sufferings here if you can. Great joys and sorrows forbid men to complain of the biting of a flea. Thunder-claps drown a whispering voice.

Oh what unbelief our impatience and disquietness in sufferings do discover! Is this living by faith, and conversing in another world, and taking God for all, and the world for nothing? What! make such ado of poverty, imprisonment, injuries, disgrace, with heaven and hell before our eyes? The Lord vouchsafe me that condition, in which I shall be nearest to himself, and have most communion with heaven; be it what it will be for the things of earth. These are the desires to which I will stand.

To thank God for the fruit of past afflictions, as the most necessary mercies of our lives, (as some of us have daily cause,) and at the same time to be impatient under present afflictions, or inordinately afraid of those to come, is an irrational as well as unbelieving incongruity.

Are we derided, slandered, abused by the ungodly? If we repine that we have enemies and must fight, we repine that we are Christ's soldiers, and that is, that we are christians. *Quomodo potest imperator militum suorum virtutem probare nisi habuerit hostem,* saith Lactantius. Enemies of God do not use to fight professedly against himself, but against his soldiers; *Non qui contra ipsum Deum pugnent, sed contra milites ejus, inquit idem.* If the remnants of goodness had not been a derision among the heathens themselves, in the more sober sort, a heathen would not have said, *Nondum fælix es, si non te turba deriserit: si beatus vis esse, cogita hoc primum contemnere, et ab aliis contemni.* Sen. Thou art not yet happy, if the rabble deride thee not: if thou wilt be blessed, learn first to contemn this, and to be contemned of others. Nobody will deride or persecute us in heaven.

5. Improve your talents and opportunities in your callings as believers; especially you that are governors. God is the original and end of government. The highest are but his ministers, Rom. xiii. 6. This world is but the way unto another. Things seen are for things unseen; and government is to order them to that end: especially by terrifying evildoers, and by promoting holiness in the earth. The moral as well as the natural motion of inferior agents, must proceed from the influence of the superior. The spring and the end of every action truly good, are out of sight. Where these are not discerned, or are ignorantly and maliciously opposed, the action is vitiated, and tendeth to confusion and ruin. God is the end of all holy actions; and carnal self is the end of sin. If God and self are infinitely distinct, you may easily see that the actions materially the same, that are intended to such distant ends, must needs be very distant. Nothing but saving faith and holiness can conquer selfishness in the lowest of the people. But where the flesh hath more plentiful provision, and self is accommodated with the fullest contents of honour and pleasure that the world affords, how difficult a work then is self-denial! And the reign of the flesh is contrary to the reign of Christ. Where the flesh and visible things bear sway, the enemy of Christ bears sway. "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to his law, nor can be," Rom. viii. 7. And how Christ's enemies will receive his laws, and use his messengers, and regard his ways and servants, the most of the world have experience to their cost. The interest of the flesh being contrary to Christ's interest, the competition maintaineth a continual conflict. The word of God doth seem to be against them; the faithful ministers that would save them from their sins do seem to wrong them, and deal too boldly with them. Were it an Elijah, he would be called "The troubler of Israel," and meet with a "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy." No measure of prudence, knowledge, piety, innocency, meekness, or self-denial, will serve to appease the wrath and displeasure of this carnal enmity. If it would, the apostles had escaped it; or at least it would not have fallen so furiously upon Christ himself. Nay, these are the oil that increase the flame. And Satan hath still the bellows in his hand: he knoweth that if he can corrupt or win the commander, he can rout the army, and ruin them with the greatest ease. It hath been Satan's grand design, since the christian's name was known on earth, to advance the selfish interest of men against the interest of Christ; and to entangle the rulers of the world in some cause, that Christ and his word and servants cannot favour, and so to make them believe that there is a necessity on them to watch against and subdue the interest of Christ. As if it were necessary that the shore be brought to the boat, and not the boat to the shore; and that the physician be brought to the patient's mind, or else destroyed or used as his enemy. I am afraid to speak out the terrible words of God in Scripture that are against such persons, lest you should misunderstand me, and think I misapply them. But Christ feareth no man, and hath not spoken his word in vain; and his messengers must be faithful, for he will bear them out; and preventive cautions are easier and safer then reprehensive corrosives. I will but refer you to the texts, that you may peruse them, Matt. xxi. 44; xviii. 3, 6; xxv. 45, 46; Luke xviii. 7; Psal. ii.; Luke xix. 27; Acts ix. 4, 5; 1 Thess. ii. 15, 16. Read them with fear as the words of God. Blessed are those rulers and nations of the earth, that perceive and escape this pernicious snare of the grand deceiver, that with all his subtlety and industry, endeavoureth to breed quarrels, and sow dissensions between them and the universal King.

The more God giveth to the carnal and unwise, the more they think themselves engaged against him; because by his commands he seems to take it from them again, by crossing the flesh, which would use it only to fulfil its lusts. Like a dog that fawneth on you till he have his bone; and then snarleth at you, lest you take it from him; and will fly in your face if you offer to meddle with it. Men readily confess that they have their wealth from God; because it cannot be denied, and because they would use the name of God as a cover to hide their covetousness, and unlawful ways of getting. But if you judge by their usage of it, and their returns to God; you would think that they believed that they had nothing at all from God but some injuries; and that all their benefits and good were from themselves. The Turkish and Tartarian emperor will

say, that all his grandeur and power is from God; that by making it most divine, he may procure the more reverence and obedience to himself: but when he hath said so for his own interest, he useth the same power against God and his interest, to the banishing of his word and holy worship, and the forbidding the preaching of the gospel of salvation; and to the cherishing of tyranny, pride, and lust. As if God had armed them against himself, and made his officers to be his enemies; and gave them power that they might powerfully hinder men's salvation, and made them great, to be great oppressors.

As a believing pastor is a priest that standeth between God and the people, to mediate under the great Mediator; to receive from God his word and ordinances, and deliver them to the flock; and to offer up supplications in their names to God: so believing governors of civil societies or families, receive from God a power to rule the subjects for their good, and they use it to make the subjects good, that God may be pleased and honoured by all: and the obedience which they require, is such as may be given to God in them. They take power from God to use it for God, and are so much more excellent than the greatest of ambitious, carnal princes, as the pleasing and honouring of God is a more excellent design and work, than the gratifying of fleshly lust, and the advancement of a lump of clay. The kingdoms of the world would all be used as the kingdoms of the Lord, if the everlasting kingdom were well believed. The families of men would be sanctified as churches unto God, if the eternal house not made with hands, were truly taken for their home, and their trade were to lay up a treasure in heaven. In cities and countries, brethren would dwell in holy peace, and all concur in honouring God, if once they were made fellow-citizens with the saints, and their burgeship and conversation were in heaven, Eph. ii. 19; Phil. iii. 20, 21.

6. Resist temptations as believers. If you live by faith, then fight against the world and flesh by faith. Faith must be your helmet, and the word of faith must be your shield, Eph. vi. 16; and your victory itself must be by faith, 1 John v. 4. If Satan tell the flesh of the preferment, riches, or the pleasures of lust, answer him with a believing foresight of God's judgment, and the life to come. Never look on the baits of sin alone, but still look at once on God and on eternity. As a just judge will hear both parties speak, or see their evidences before he will determine: so tell the tempter, that as you have heard what fleshly allurements can say, you will see also what the word of God saith, and take a view of heaven and hell, and then you will answer him.

7. Rejoice as believers. Can faith set open the windows of the soul, and no light of heavenly pleasures enter? Can it peruse the map of the land of promise, or see and taste the bunch of grapes, without any sweetness to the soul? That is the truest belief of heaven, which maketh men likest those that are in heaven. And what is their character, work, and portion, but the joys of heavenly light and love? Can we believe that we shall live in heaven for ever? Can we believe that very shortly we shall be there, and not rejoice in such believing? I know we commonly say, that the uncertainty of our proper title is the cause of all our want of joy: but if that were all, if that were the first and greatest cause, and our belief of the promise itself were lively, we should at least set our hearts on heaven as the most delightful and desirable state: and love would work by more eager desires and diligent seekings, till it had reached assurance, and cast out the hinderances of our joy. How much would a mere philosopher rejoice, if he could find out natural evidence of so much as we know by faith! You may perceive what their content in finding it would be, by their exceeding pains in seeking. The unwearied studies by day and night, which many of them used, with the contempt of the riches and greatness of the world, do tell us how glad they would have been to have seen but half so far as we may. If they could but discover more clearly and certainly, the principles, and elements, and forms of beings; the nature of spirits; the causes of motion; the nature and cause of light and heat; the order, course, and harmony of the universal system of the world; what joyful acclamations would this produce in the literate, studious sort of men? What joy then should it be to us, to know by faith the God that made us; the creation of the world; the laws and promises of our Creator; the mysteries of redemption and regeneration; the frame of the new creature; the entertainment of the spirits of the just with Christ; the judgment which all the world must undergo; the work and company which we shall have hereafter; and the endless joys which all the sanctified shall possess in the sight and love of God for ever! How blessed an invention would it be, if all the world could be brought again to the use of one universal language! Or if all the churches could be perfectly reconciled, how joyful would the author of so great a work be! Should we not then rejoice, who foresee by faith a far more perfect union and consent than ever must be expected here on earth?

Alas! the ordinary lowness of our comforts doth tell us that our faith is very small! I say not so much the sorrows of a doubting heart, as the little joy which we have in the forethoughts of heaven, when our title seemeth not much doubtful to us: for those sorrows show that such esteem it a joyful place, and would rejoice if their title were but cleared. But when we have neither the sorrow nor solicitousness of the afflicted soul, nor yet the joy which is any whit suitable to the belief of such everlasting joys, we may know what to judge of such an uneffectual belief; at best, it is very low and feeble. It is a "joy unspeakable, and full of glory," which unseen things should cause in a believer, 1 Pet. i. 6—8; because it is "an exceeding eternal weight of glory" which he believeth, 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18.

8. Finally, learn to die also as believers. The life of faith must bring you to the very entrance into glory; where one doth end the other begins: as our dark life in the womb by nutriment from the mother, continueth till our passage into the open world. You would die in the womb, if faith should cease before it bring you to full intuition and fruition. "By faith Joseph when he died made mention of the departing of the children of Israel," Heb. xi. 22. Joseph's faith did not die before him. "These all died in faith, confessing that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth, and declaring that they sought a better country," Heb. xi. 3. They that live by faith, must die in faith; yea, and die by faith too. Faith must fetch in their dying comforts. And oh how full and how near a treasure hath it to go to! To die to this world, is to be born into another. Beggars are best when they are abroad. The travail of the ungodly is better to them than their home: but the believer's home is so much better than his travail, that he hath little cause to be afraid of coming to his journey's end; but should rather every step cry out, Oh when shall I be at home with Christ! Is it earth or heaven that you have prayed for, and laboured for, and waited, and suffered for till now? And doth he indeed pray, and labour, and suffer for heaven, who would not come thither?

It is faith which overcometh the world and the flesh, which must also overcome the fears of death, and can look with boldness into the loathsome grave, and can triumph over both as victorious through Christ. It is faith which can say, Go forth, O my soul; depart in peace: thy course is finished: thy warfare is accomplished: the day of triumph is now at hand: thy patience hath no longer work: go forth with joy: the morning of thy endless joys is near; and the night of fears and darkness at an end. Thy terrible dreams are ending in eternal pleasures; the glorious light will banish all thy dreadful spectres, and resolve all those doubts which were bred and cherished in the dark. They whose employment is their weariness and toil, do take the night of darkness and cessation for their rest; but this is their weariness: defect of action is thy toil; and thy most grievous labour is to do too little work; and thy incessant vision, love, and praise, will be thy incessant ease and pleasure; and thy endless work will be thy endless rest! Depart, O my soul, with peace and gladness! Thou leavest not a world, where wisdom and piety, justice and sobriety, love, and peace, and order do prevail; but a world of ignorance and folly, of brutish sensuality and rage, of impiety and malignant enmity to good; a world of injustice and oppression, and of confusion and distracting strifes! Thou goest not to a world of darkness and of wrath, but of light and love; from hellish malice, to perfect amity; from Bedlam rage, to perfect wisdom; from mad confusion, to perfect order; to sweetest unity and peace; even to the spirits of the just made perfect, and to the celestial, glorious city of God! Thou goest not from heaven to earth, from holiness to sin, from the sight of God into an infernal dungeon; but from earth to heaven, from sin and imperfection unto perfect holiness, and from palpable darkness into the vital splendour of the face of God! Thou goest not among enemies, but to dearest friends; not amongst mere strangers, but to many whom thou hast known by sight, and to more whom thou hast known by faith, and must know by the sweetest communion for ever. Thou goest not to unsatisfied justice, nor to a condemning, unreconciled God; but to love itself, to infinite goodness, the fountain of all created and communicated good; to the Maker, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of souls; to him who prepared heaven for thee, and now hath prepared thee for heaven. Go forth then in triumph, and not with terror, O my soul! The prize is won: possess the things which thou hast so long prayed for, and sought! Make haste and enter into thy Master's joy! Go view the glory which thou hast so long heard of; and take thy place in the heavenly choir; and bear thy part in their celestial melody! Sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God; and receive that which Christ in his covenant did promise to give thee at the last. Go boldly to that blessed God, with whom thou hast so powerful a Mediator, and to the throne of whose grace thou hast had so oft and sweet access. If heaven be thy fear or sorrow, what can be thy joy? And where wilt thou have refuge, if thou fly from God? If perfect, endless pleasures be thy terror, where then dost thou expect content? If grace have taught thee long ago to prefer the heavenly and durable felicity, refuse it not now when thou art so near the port. If it have taught thee long ago to be as a stranger in this Sodom, and to renounce this sinful world and flesh, linger not now as unwilling to depart; repent not of thy choice when all that the world can do for thee is past; repent not of thy warfare when thou hast got the victory; nor of thy voyage, when thou art past the storms and waves, and ready to land at the haven of felicity.

Thus faith may sing our *nunc dimittis*, when the flesh is loathest to be dissolved.

But we must live by faith if we would thus die by faith. Such a death doth not use to be the period of a fleshly, worldly life; nor of a careless, dull, and negligent life. Nature, which brought us into the world, without our forecast or care, will turn us out of the world without it. But it will not give us a joyful passage, nor bring us to a better world, without it. It costeth worldlings no small care to die in an honourable and plentiful estate (if that they may fall from a higher place than others, and may have something to make death more grievous and unwelcome to them, and may have a greater account to make at judgment; and that their passage to heaven may be as a camel's through a needle). And may a believing, joyful death be expected, without the preparations of exercise and experience in a believing life? Nature is so much afraid of dying, and an incorporated soul is so incarcerated in sense, and so hardly riseth to serious and satisfying apprehensions of the unseen world, that even true believers do find it a work of no small difficulty, to desire to depart, and be with Christ, and to die in the joyful hopes of faith. A little abatement of the terrors of death, a little supporting hope and peace, is all that the greater part of them attain, instead of the fervent desires, and triumphant joys, which the lively belief of endless glory should produce. O therefore make it the work of your lives! of all your lives! your greatest work, your constant work, to live by faith; that the faith which hath first conquered all the rest of your enemies, may be able also to overcome the last; and may do your last work well, when it hath done the rest.

PART II.

CHAPTER I.

DIRECTIONS HOW TO LIVE BY FAITH. AND, FIRST, HOW TO STRENGTHEN FAITH. AND, SECONDLY, THE NATURAL TRUTHS PRESUPPOSED TO BE CONSIDERED.

The directions which I shall give, as helps to live by faith, are of two ranks. 1. Such as tend to the strengthening of your faith. 2. Such as tell you how to use it.

The first is the greatest part of our task: for no man can use that faith which he hath not; nor can use more of it than he hath. And the commonest reason why we use but little, is because we have but little to use.

But on this subject (supposing it most weighty)

I have written many treatises already (The Second Part of "The Saints' Rest;" "The Unreasonableness of Infidelity;" and last of all, "The Reasons of the Christian Religion;" besides others which handle it on the by). And somewhat is said in the beginning of this discourse. But yet because in so great a matter I am more afraid of doing too little than too much, I will here give you an index of some of the chief helps, to be close together before you for your memories, to be the constant fuel of your faith.

In the work of faith it is first needful that you get all the perquisite helps of natural light, and be well acquainted with their order and evidence, and their usefulness to befriend the supernatural revelations; for it is supposed that we are men before we are christians: we were created before we were redeemed; and we must know that there is a God, before we can know that we have offended him, or that we need a Saviour to reconcile us to him. And we must know that we have reasonable souls, before we can know that sin hath corrupted them, or that grace must sanctify them. And we must know, that whatsoever God saith is true, before we can believe that the Scripture is true, as being his revelation. Faith is an act of reason, and believing is a kind of knowing, even a knowing by the testimony of him whom we believe, because we have sufficient reason to believe him.

2. And next we must be well acquainted with the evidence of supernatural truth, which presupposeth the foresaid natural verities. I shall set both before you briefly in their order.

1. Think well of the nature of your souls, of their faculties or powers, their excellency, and their proper use: and then you will find that you are not mere brutes, who know not their Creator, and live not by a law, and think not of another world, nor fear any sufferings after death; but that you have reason, free-will, and executive power, to know your Maker, and to live by rule, and to hope for a reward in another life, and to fear a punishment hereafter. And that as no wise artificer maketh any thing in vain, so God is much less to be thought to have given you such souls and faculties in vain.

2. Consider next how all the world declareth to you, that there is a God, who is infinitely powerful, wise, and good. And that it is not possible that all things which we see should have no cause; or that the derived power, and wisdom, and goodness of the creature, should not proceed from that which is more excellent in the first and total cause; or that God should give more than he had to give.

3. Consider next in what relation such a creature must needs stand to such a Creator. If he made us of nothing, it is not possible but that he must be our Owner, and we and all things absolutely his own. And if he be our Maker and Owner, and be infinitely powerful, wise, and good; and we be reasonable, free agents, made to be guided by laws or moral means unto our end, it is not possible but that we should stand related to him, as subjects to their rightful governor. And if he be our Creator, Owner, and Ruler, and also infinitely good, and the grand Benefactor of the world; and if the nature of our souls be, to love God as good; it cannot be possible that he should not be our End, who is our Creator, and that we should not be related to him as to the Chiefest Good, both originally as our Benefactor, and finally as our End.

4. And then it is easy for you next to see, what duty you owe to that God to whom you are thus related. That if you are absolutely his own, you should willingly be at his absolute dispose. And if he be your Sovereign Ruler, you should labour most diligently to know his laws, and absolutely to obey them. And if he be infinitely good, and your Benefactor and your End, you are absolutely bound to love him most devotedly, and to place your own felicity in his love. All this is so evidently the duty of man to God by nature, that nothing but madness can deny it. And this is it which we call sanctification, or holiness to the Lord. And our cohabitation and relation to men will tell us, that justice and charity are our duty as to them. And when a man is fully satisfied that holiness, justice, and charity are our duty, he hath a great advantage for his progress towards the christian faith.

To which let me add, that as to ourselves also, it is undeniably our duty to take more care for our souls than for our bodies; and to rule our senses and passions by our reason, and to subject our lower faculties to the higher, and so to use all sensible and present things, as conduceth to the public good, and to the advancement of our nobler part, and to our greater benefit, though it cross our sensual appetites.

All this being unquestionably our natural duty, we see that man was made to live in holiness, justice, charity, temperance, and rational regularity in the world.

5. When you have gone thus far, consider next how far men are generally from the performance of this duty; and how backward human nature is to it, even while they cannot deny it to be their duty: and you will soon perceive that God who made it their duty, did never put in them this enmity thereto; nor ever made them without some aptitude to perform it. And if any would infer that their indisposedness proveth it to be none of their duty, the nature of man will fully confute him; and the conscience and confession of all the sober part of the world. What wretch so blind (if he believe a Deity) who will not confess that he should love God with all his heart; and that justice, charity, and sobriety are his duty; and that his sense should be ruled by his reason, &c.? The evidence before given is not to be denied: and therefore something is marred in nature. Some enemy hath seduced man; and some deplorable change hath befallen him.

6. Yea, if you had no great backwardness to this duty yourself, consider what it must cost you faithfully to perform it, in such a malignant world as we now live in! What envy and wrath, what malice and persecution, what opposition and discouragements on every side, we must expect! Universal experience is too full a proof of this (besides what it costeth our restrained flesh).

7. Proceed then to think further, that certainly God hath never appointed us so much duty, without convenient motives to perform it. It cannot be that he should make us more noble than the brutes, to be more miserable; or that he should make holiness our duty, that it might be our loss, or our calamity. If there were no other life but this, and men had no hopes of future happiness, nor any fears of punishment, what a hell would this world be! Heart-wickedness would be but little feared; nor heart-duty regarded: secret sin against princes, states, and all degrees, would be boldly committed, and go unpunished (for the most part). The sins of princes, and all that have power to defeat the law, would have little or no restraint. Every man's interest would oblige him, rather to offend God, who so seldom punisheth here, than to offend a prince, or any man in power, who seldom lets offences against himself go unrevenged: and so man, more than God, would be the ruler of the world, that is, our god.

Nay, actually the hopes and fears of another life, among most heathens, infidels, and heretics, is the principle of divine government, by which God keepeth up most of the order and virtue which is in the world.

Yea, think what you should be and do yourself, as to enemies, and as to secret faults, and as to sensual vices, if you thought there was no life but this. And is it possible that the infinitely powerful, wise, and good Creator can be put to govern all mankind by mere deceit, and a course of lies? as if he wanted better means.

By how much the better any man is, by so much the more regardful is he of the life to come, and the hopes and fears of another life are so much the more prevalent with him. And is it possible that God should make men good, to make them the most deceived and most miserable? Hath he commanded all these cares to be our needless torments, which brutes, and fools, and sottish sinners do all escape? Is the greatest obedience to God become a sign of the greatest folly, or the way to the greatest loss or disappointment?

We are all sure that this life is short and vain. No infidel can say that he is sure that there is no other life for us. And if this be so, reason commandeth us to prefer the possibilities of such a life to come, before the certain vanities of this life. So that even the infidel's uncertainty will unavoidably infer, that the preferring of the world to come is our duty: and if it be our duty, then the thing in itself is true: for God will not make it all men's duties in the frame of their nature, to seek a Utopia, and pursue a shadow; and to spend their days and chiefest cares for that which is not: godliness is not such a dreaming night-walk.

Conscience will not suffer dying men to believe that they have more cause to repent of their godliness than of their sin; and of their seeking heaven, than of wallowing in their lusts.

Nay, then these heavenly desires would be themselves our sins, as being the following of a lie, the aspiring after a state which is above us, and the abuse and loss of our faculties and time. And sensuality would be liker to be our virtue, as being natural to us, and a seeking of our most real felicity.

The common conscience of mankind doth justify the wisdom and virtue of a temperate, holy, heavenly person; and acknowledgeth that our heavenly desires are of God: and doth God give men both natural faculties, which shall never come to the perfection which is their end; and also gracious desires, which shall but deceive us, and never be satisfied? If God had made us for the enjoyments of brutes, he would have given us but the knowledge and desires of brutes.

Every king and mortal judge can punish faults against man with death; and hath God no greater or further punishment for sins as committed against himself? And are his rewards no greater than a man's?

These and many more such evidences may assure you that there is another life of rewards and punishments; and that this life is not our final state, but only a time of preparation thereunto. Settle this deeply and fixedly in your minds.

8. And look up to the heavenly regions, and think, Is this world so replenished with inhabitants, both sea and land, and air itself? and can I dream that the vast and glorious orbs and regions are all uninhabited? or that they have not more numerous and glorious possessors than this small, opacous spot of earth?

And then think, that those higher creatures are intellectual spirits; (this is many ways apparent;) and also of the communion which they have with man. And when we find also an intellectual nature in ourselves, why should we not believe that our likeness of nature doth infer our likeness in our future duration and abode.

9. And mark well but the inward and outward temptations, which solicit all the world to sin; and what notable evidences there be in many of them of an invisible power; and you will easily believe that man hath a soul to save or lose, which is of longer duration than the body.

10. Lastly, if yet there be any doubt, consider but of the sensible evidences of apparitions, witchcraft, and possessions, and it cannot choose but much confirm you. Though much be feigned in histories of such things, yet the world hath abundant evidence of that which was certainly unfeigned. See The Devil of Mascon, Mr. Mompesson's story lately acted and published; Remigius, Bodinus, Danæus, &c. of Witches; Lavater de Spectris; and what I have written elsewhere.

CHAPTER II.

THE TRUE METHOD OF INQUIRY INTO THE SUPERNATURAL EVIDENCES OF FAITH, AND RULES THEREIN TO BE OBSERVED.

When you have thus seen what evidence there is of God, and his government, and of a life of reward and punishment hereafter, and of the natural obligations which lie on man to a holy, just, and sober life; and of the depraved state of the world, which goeth so contrary to such undoubted duty; and how certain all this is, even by natural revelation; proceed next to consider what supernatural revelation God hath added, both to confirm you in the same truths, and to make known such other as were necessary for mankind to know. Where I must first direct you in the true method of inquiry, and then set before you the things themselves, which you are to know.

1. Think not that every unprepared mind is immediately capable of the truth (either this, or any other, except the first principles, which are *nota per se*, or are next to sense). All truth requireth a capacity and due preparation of the recipient. The plainest principles of any art or science are not understood by novices at the first sight or hearing; and therefore it were vain to imagine that things of the greatest distance in history, or profundity in doctrine, can be comprehended at the first attempt, by a disused and unfurnished understanding. There must be, at least, as much time, and study, and help, supposed and used, to the full discerning of the evidences of faith, as are allowed to the attainment of common sciences. Though grace, in less time, may give men so much light as is necessary to salvation; yet he that will be able to defend the truth, and answer objections, and attain establishing satisfaction in his own mind, must (ordinarily) have proportionable helps, and time, and studies; unless he look to be taught by miracles.

2. Remember that it is a practical and heavenly doctrine which you are to learn; it is the art of loving God, and being happy in his love: and therefore a worldly, sensual, vicious soul, must needs be under very great disadvantage for the receiving of such a kind of truths. Do not therefore impute that to the doubtfulness of the doctrine, which is but the effect of the enmity and incapacity of your minds. How can he presently relish the spiritual and heavenly doctrine of the gospel, who is drowned in the love and care of contrary things? Such men receive not the things of the Spirit; they seem to them both foolishness and undesirable.

3. Think not that the history of things done so long ago, and so far off, should have no more obscurities, nor be liable to any more objections, than of that which was done in the time and country where you live. Nor yet that things done in the presence of others, and words spoken in their hearing only, should be known to you otherwise than by historical evidences (unless every revelation to others must have a new revelation to bring it to each individual person in the world). And think not that he who is a stranger to all other helps of church history, should be as well able to understand the Scripture history, as those that have those other helps.

4. Think not that the narrative of things done in a country and age so remote, and to us unknown, should not have many difficulties, arising from our ignorance of the persons, places, manners, customs, and many circumstances, which if we had known would easily have resolved all such doubts.

5. Think not that a book which was written so long ago, in so remote a country, in a language which few do fully understand, and which may since then have several changes, as to phrases, and proverbial and occasional speeches, should have no more difficulties in it, than a book that were written at home, in the present age, in our country language, and the most usual dialect. To say nothing of our own language, what changes are made in all other tongues, since the times that the gospel was recorded! Many proverbial speeches and phrases may be now disused and unknown, which were then most easy to be understood. And the transcribing and preserving of the copies, require us to allow for some defects of human skill and industry therein.

6. Understand the different sorts of evidence which are requisite to the different matters in the holy Scriptures. The matters of fact acquire historical evidence (which yet is made infallible by additional miracles). The miracles which were wrought to confirm our history, are brought to our knowledge only by other history. The doctrines which are evident in nature, have further evidence of supernatural revelation, only to help us whose natural sight is much obscured. But it is the supernatural doctrines, precepts, and promises, which of themselves require supernatural revelation, to make them credible to man.

7. Mistake not the true use and end of the holy Scriptures.

1. Think not that the gospel as written was the first constitutive or governing law of Christ, for the christian churches. The churches were constituted, and the orders, and offices, and government of it settled and exercised, very many years together, before any part of the New Testament was written to them; much more before the writing of the whole. The apostles had long before taught them what was commanded them by Christ; and had settled them in the order appointed by the Holy Ghost: and therefore you are not to look for the first determination of such doctrines or orders in the Scripture as made thereby; but only for the records of what was done and established before: for the apostles being to leave the world, did know the slipperiness of the memory of man, and the danger of changing and corrupting the christian doctrine and orders, if there were not left a sure record of it; and therefore they did that for the sake of posterity.

2. You must not think that all is essential to the christian religion, which is contained in the holy Scriptures; nor that they are only the adequate form or record of that which is strictly and primarily called our religion, or christianity. For there are divers particular books of the New Testament, which contain much more than is essential to christianity. And many appurtenances, and histories, and genealogies, and circumstances are there recorded, which are indeed subservient helps to our religion; but are not strictly our religion itself.

8. As the use of the Scripture must thus be judged of according to the purpose of the Holy Spirit; so the perfection of the Scripture must be judged of in relation to its intended use. It was not written to be a system of physics, nor oratory; nor to decide grammatical controversies about words; but to record in apt expressions the things which God would have men to know, in order to their faith, their duty, and their happiness. And in this respect it is a perfect word. But you must not imagine that it is so far the word of God himself, as if God had showed in it his fullest skill, and made it as perfect in every respect, both phrase and order, as God could do. And if you meet in it with several words, which you think are less grammatical, logical, or rhetorical, than many other men could speak, and which really savour of some human imperfection, remember that this is not at all derogatory to christianity; but rather tendeth to the strengthening of our faith: for the Scriptures are perfect to their intended use; and God did purposely choose men of imperfect oratory to be his apostles, that his kingdom might not be in word, but in power; and that our faith might not be built upon the wisdom and oratory of man, but on the supernatural operations of the Almighty God: as David's sling and stone must kill Goliath; so unlearned men, that cannot outwit the world to deceive them, shall by the Spirit and miracles convince them. Looking for that in the Scripture which God never intended it for, doth tempt the unskilful into unbelief.

9. Therefore you must be sure to distinguish the christian religion, which is the vital part or kernel of the Scriptures, from all the rest; and to get well planted in your mind, the sum of that religion itself. And that is briefly contained in the two sacraments, and more largely in the creed, the Lord's prayer, and the decalogue, the summaries of our belief, desire, and practice. And then wonder no more that the other parts of Scripture have some things of less moment, than that a man hath fingers, nails, and hair, as well as a stomach, heart, and head.

10. Distinguish therefore between the method of the christian religion, and the method of the particular books of Scriptures. The books were written on several occasions, and in several methods; and though that method of them all be perfect, in order to their proper end; yet it is not necessary that there be in the method no human imperfection, or that one or all of them be written in that method which is usually most logical and best. But the fame of religion contained in these books, is composed in the most perfect method in the world. And those systems of theology which endeavour to open this method to you, do not feign it, or make it of themselves; but only attempt the explication of what they find in the holy Scriptures, synthetically or analytically (though indeed all attempts have yet fallen short of any full explication of this divine and perfect harmony).

11. Therefore the true order of settling your faith, is not first to require a proof that all the Scriptures is the word of God; but first to prove the marrow of them, which is properly called the christian religion, and then to proceed to strengthen your particular belief of the rest. The contrary opinion, which hath obtained with many in this age, hath greatly hindered the faith of the unskilful; and it came from a

preposterous care of the honour of the Scriptures, through an excessive opposition to the papists who undervalue them. For hence it comes to pass, that every seeming contradiction or inconsistency in any book of Scripture, in chronology or any other respect, is thought to be a sufficient cause, to make the whole cause of christianity as difficult as that particular text is; and so all those readers, who meet with great or insuperable difficulties, in their daily reading of the Scriptures, are thereby exposed to equal temptations, to damning infidelity in itself: so that if the tempter draw any man to doubt of the standing still of the sun in the time of Joshua, of the life of Jonas in the belly of the whale, or any other such passage in any one book of the Scriptures, he must equally doubt of all his religion.

But this was not the ancient method of faith: it was many years after Christ's resurrection, before any one book of the New Testament was written; and almost an age before it was finished: and all that time the christian churches had the same faith and religion as we have now; and the same foundation of it; that is, the gospel preached to them by the apostles: but what they delivered to them by word of mouth, is now delivered to us in their writings, with all the appurtenances and circumstances, which every christian did not then hear of. And there were many articles of the christian faith, which the Old Testament did not at all make known: (as that this Jesus is the Christ, that he was born of the Virgin Mary, and is actually crucified, risen, and ascended, &c.) And the method of the apostles was, to teach the people the sum of christianity, (as Paul doth, 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4, &c. and Peter, Acts ii.) and to bring them to the belief of that, and then baptize them, before they wrote any thing to them, or taught them the rest which is now in the holy Scriptures; they were first to disciple the nations and baptize them, and then to teach them to observe all things whatever Christ commanded: and the main bulk of the Scriptures is made up of this last, and of the main subservient histories and helps.

And accordingly it was the custom of all the primitive churches, and ancient doctors, to teach the people first the creed and sum of christianity, and to make them christians before they taught them so much as to know what books the canonical Scriptures did contain; for they had the sum of christianity itself delivered down collaterally by the two hands of tradition. 1. By the continuation of baptism, and public church professions, was delivered the creed or covenant by itself. And, 2. By the holy Scriptures, where it was delivered with all the rest; and from whence every noviee was not put to gather it of himself, but had it collected to his hand by the churches.

And you may see in the writings of all the ancient defenders of christianity (Justin, Athenagoras, Tatianus, Clemens Alexandrinus, Arnobius, Theophil. Antioch, Lactantius, Tertullian, Eusebius, Augustine, &c.) that they used the method which I now direct you to.

And if you consider it well, you will find that the miracles of Christ himself, and all those of his apostles after him, were wrought for the confirmation of christianity itself immediately, and mostly before the particular epistles or books were written; and therefore were only remotely and consequentially for the confirmation of those books as such: as they proved that the writers of them were guided by the infallible Spirit, in all the proper work of their office; of which the writing of the Scriptures was a part.

1. Therefore settle your belief of christianity itself; that is, of so much as baptism containeth, or importeth: this is more easily proved than the truth of every word in the Scriptures; because there are controversies about the canon, and the various readings, and such like; and this is the natural method, which Christ and his Spirit have directed us to, and the apostles and the ancient churches used. And when this is first soundly proved to you, then you cannot justly take any textual difficulties to be sufficient cause of raising difficulties to your faith in the essentials; but you may quietly go on in the strength of faith, to clear up all those difficulties by degrees.

I know you will meet with some who think very highly of their own mistakes, and whose unskilfulness in these things is joined with an equal measure of self-conceitedness, who will tell you that this method smells of an undervaluing of the Scripture; but I would advise you not to depart from the way of Christ, and his apostles and churches, nor to cast yourselves upon causeless hinderances, in so high a matter as saving faith is, upon the reverence of the words of any perverted factious wrangler, nor to escape the fangs of censorious ignorance. We can better justify the holy Scriptures in the true method, than they can in their false one; and can better build up, when we have laid the right foundation, than they can who begin in the middle, and omit the foundation, and call the superstructure by that name.

2. Suspect not all church history or tradition, in an extreme opposition to the papists, who cry up a private, unproved tradition of their own. They tell us of apostolical traditions, which their own faction only are the keepers of; and of which no true historical evidence is produced; and this they call the tradition of the church: but we have another sort of tradition, which must not be neglected or rejected, unless we will deny humanity and reject christianity. Our *traditio tradens*, or active tradition, is primarily nothing but the certain history or usage of the universal christian church; as baptism, the Lord's day, the ministry, the church assemblies, and the daily church exercises; which are certain proofs what religion was then received by them. And, 2. The Scriptures themselves. Our *traditio tradita*, is nothing else but these two conjunctly: 1. The christian religion, even the faith then professed, and the worship and obedience then exercised. 2. The books themselves, of the holy Scriptures, which contain all this, with much more. But we are so far from thinking that apostolical oral tradition is a supplement to the Scriptures, as being larger than them, that we believe the Scriptures to be much larger than such tradition; and that we have no certainty by any other than Scriptural tradition, of any more than the common matters of christianity, which all the churches are agreed in. But he that will not believe the most universal practice and history of the church or world in a matter of fact, must in reason much less believe his eyesight.

12. When you have soundly proved your foundation, take not every difficult objection which you cannot answer, to be a sufficient cause of doubting: for if the fundamentals be proved truths, you may trust to that proof, and be sure that there are ways of solving the seeming inconsistent points, though you are not yet acquainted with them. There are few truths so clear, which a sophister may not clog with difficulties; and there is scarce any man that hath so comprehensive a knowledge of the most certain truths, as to be able to answer all that can be said against it.

13. Come not to this study in a melancholy or distracted frame of mind; for in such a case you are

(ordinarily) incapable of so great a work, as the trial of the grounds of faith: and therefore must live upon the ground-work before laid, and wait for a fitter time to clear it.

14. When new doubts arise, mark whether they proceed not from the advantage which the tempter findeth in your minds, rather than from the difficulty of the thing itself; and whether you have not formerly had good satisfaction against the same doubts which now perplex you: if so, suffer not every discomposure of your minds to become a means of unbelief; and suffer not Satan to command you to dispute your faith at his pleasure; for if he may choose the time, he may choose the success. Many a man hath cast up a large account well, or written a learned treatise or position well, who cannot clear up all objected difficulties on a sudden, nor without books tell you all that he before wrote; especially if he be half drunk or sleepy, or in the midst of other thoughts or business.

15. When you are once persuaded of the truth of christianity, and the holy Scriptures, think not that you need not study it any more, because you do already confidently believe it; for if your faith be not built on such cogent evidence as will warrant the conclusion, (whether it be at the present sound or not,) you know not what change assaults may make upon you (as we have known them do on some ancient eminent professors of the strictest godliness, who have turned from Christ, and the belief of immortality).

Take heed how you understand the common saying of the schools, that faith differeth from knowledge, in that it hath not evidence: it hath not evidence of sense indeed; nor the immediate evidence of things invisible, as in themselves; but as they are the conclusions which follow the principles which are in themselves more evident. It is evident that God is true; and we can prove by good evidence, that the christian verity is his revelation: and therefore it is evident (though not immediately in itself) that the matter of that word or revelation is true. And as Mr. Richard Hooker truly saith, "No man indeed believeth beyond the degree of evidence of truth which appeareth to him, how confidently soever they may talk." I remember that our excellent Usher answered me to this case, as out of Ariminensis, that "faith hath evidence of credibility, and science hath evidence of certainty." But undoubtedly an evidence of divine revelation, is evidence of certainty. And all evidence of divine credibility, is evidence of certainty; though of human faith and credibility, the case be otherwise.

16. Yea, think not that you have done the settling of your faith, when once you have found out the soundest evidences, and are able to answer all objections; for you must grow still in the fuller discerning and digesting the same evidences which you have discerned; for you may hold them so loosely, that they may be easily wrested from you: and you may see them with so clear and full a knowledge, as shall establish your mind against all ordinary causes of mutation. It is one kind (or degree rather) of knowledge of the same things, which the pupil, and another which the doctor hath. I am sure the knowledge which I have now of the evidences of the christian verity, is much different from what I had fifty years ago, when perhaps I could say near as much as now; and used the same arguments.

17. Consider well the great contentions of philosophers; and the great uncertainty of most of those notions, to which the infidels would reduce our faith, or which they would make the test by which to try it. They judge christianity uncertain, because it agreeth not with their uncertainties, or certain errors.

18. Enslave not your reason to the objects of sense: while we are in the body, our souls are so imprisoned in flesh, and have so much to do with worldly things, that most men by averseness and disuse, can hardly at all employ their minds about any higher things than sensitive; nor go any further than sense conducteth them. He that will not use his soul to contemplate things invisible, will be as unfit for believing, as a lady is to travel a thousand miles on foot, who never went out of her doors but in a sedan or coach.

19. Where your want of learning, or exercise, or light, doth cause any difficulties which you cannot overcome, go to the more wise and experienced believers, and pastors of the church, to be your helpers; for it is their office to be both the preservers and expounders of the sacred doctrine, and to be the helpers of the people's faith. "The priest's lips should preserve knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts," Mal. ii. 7.

20. Lastly, Faithfully practise with love and alacrity what you do believe, lest God in justice leave you to disbelieve that which you would not love and practise.

So much to direct you in the method of your endeavours, for the getting and strengthening of faith.

CHAPTER III.

THE EVIDENCES OF FAITH.

These things in the order of your inquiry being presupposed, proceed to the consideration of the evidences themselves, which fully prove the christian verity. And here, omitting the preparatory considerations, recited at large in my "Reasons of the Christian Religion," I shall only set before you the grand evidence itself, with a brief recital of some of those means, which bring it down to our notice in these times.

The great infallible witness of Christ, is the Spirit of God, or the Holy Ghost; or that divine operation of the Holy Spirit, which infallibly proveth the attestation of God himself, as interesting him in it, as the principal cause.

As we know the coin of a prince by his image and superscription, and know his acts by his public proper seal; and as we know that God is the Creator of the world, by the seal of his likeness which is upon it; or as we know the father of a child, when he is so like him, as no other could beget: so know we Christ and christianity to be of God, by his inimitable image or impression.

The power, wisdom, and goodness of God, are the essentialities which we call the nature of God: these in their proper form, and transcendent perfection, are incommunicable: but when they produce an effect on the creature, which for the resemblance may analogically be called by the same names; the names are logically communicable, though the thing itself (which is the divine essence or perfections) be still incommunicable: but when they only produce effects more heterogeneal or equivocal, then we call those effects only the footsteps or demonstrations of their cause. So God, whose power, wisdom, and goodness in itself is incommunicable, hath produced intellectual natures, which are so like him, that

their likeness is called his image; and analogically (yet equivocally) the created faculties of their power, intellect, and will, are called by such names, as we are fain (for want of other words) to apply to God (the things signified being transcendently and unexpressibly in God, but the words first used of, and applied to, the creature). But the same God hath so demonstrated his power, and wisdom, and goodness in the creation of the material or corporeal parts of the world, that they are the *vestigia* and infallible proofs of his causation and perfections, (being such as no other cause without him can produce,) but yet not so properly called his image, as to his wisdom and goodness, but only of his power. But no wise man who seeth this world, can doubt whether a God of perfect power, wisdom, and goodness, was the Maker of it. Even so the person and doctrine of Christ, or the christian religion objectively considered, hath so much of the image, and so much of the demonstrative impressions, of the nature of God, as may fully assure us that he himself is the approving cause.

And as the sun hath a double light, *lux et lumen*, its essential light in itself, and its emitted beams, or communicated light; so the Spirit and image of God, by which Christ and christianity are demonstrated, are partly that which is essential, constitutive, and inherent, and partly that which is sent and communicated from him to others.

In the person of Christ there is the most excellent image of God. 1. Wonderful power, by which he wrought miracles, and commanded sea and land, men and devils, and raised the dead, and raised himself; and is now the glorious Lord of all things. 2. Wonderful wisdom, by which he formed his laws and kingdom, and by which he knew the hearts of men, and prophesied of things to come. 3. Most wonderful love and goodness, by which he healed all diseases, and by which he saved miserable souls, and procured our happiness at so dear a rate.

But as the essential light of the sun is too glorious to be well observed by us; but the emitted light is it which doth affect our eyes, and is the immediate object of our sight; at least that we can best endure and use: so the essential perfections of Jesus Christ are not so immediately and ordinarily fit for our observation and use, as the lesser communicated beams, which he sent forth. And these are either such as were the immediate effects of the Spirit in Christ himself, or his personal operations, or else the effects of his Spirit in others: and that is either such as went before him, or such as were present with him, or such as followed after him: even as the emitted light of the sun, is either that which is next to its essence, or that which streameth further to other creatures; and this last is either that which it sendeth to us before its own appearing or rising, or that which accompanieth its appearing, or that which it leaveth behind it as it setteth or passeth away: so must we distinguish in the present case.

But all this is but one light, and one Spirit.

So then I should in order speak, 1. Of that Spirit in the words and works of Christ himself, which constituteth the christian religion. 2. That Spirit in the prophets and fathers before Christ, which was the antecedent light. 3. That Spirit in Christ's followers, which was the concomitant and subsequent light or witness: both, 1. In those next his abode on earth: and, 2. Of those that are more remote.

CHAPTER IV.

THE IMAGE OF GOD'S WISDOM.

I. And first, observe the three parts of God's image, or impress, upon the christian religion in itself, as containing the whole work of man's redemption, as it is found in the works and doctrine of Christ.

1. The wisdom of it appeareth in these particular observations (which yet show it to us but very defectively, for want of the clearness, and the integrality, and the order of our knowledge: for to see but here and there a parcel of one entire frame or work, and to see those few parcels as dislocated, and not in their proper places and order, and all this but with a dark, imperfect sight, is far from that full and open view of the manifold wisdom of God in Christ, which angels and superior intellects have).

1. Mark how wisely God hath ordered it, that the three essentialities in the divine nature, power, intellection, and will, omnipotency, wisdom, and goodness, and the Three Persons in the Trinity, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, and the three causalities of God, as the efficient, directive, and final cause, (of whom, and through whom, and to whom are all things,) should have three most eminent specimens or impressions in the world, or three most conspicuous works to declare and glorify them; viz. nature, grace, and glory. And that God should accordingly stand related to man in three answerable relations, viz. as our Creator, our Redeemer, and our Perfecter (by holiness initially, and glory finally).

2. How wisely it is ordered, that seeing man's love to God is both his greatest duty, and his perfection and felicity, there should be some standing eminent means for the attraction and excitation of our love: and this should be the most eminent manifestation of the love of God to us; and withal, of his own most perfect holiness and goodness; and that as we have as much need of the sense of his goodness as of his power, (loving him being our chief work,) that there should be as observable a demonstration of his goodness extant, as the world is of his power.

3. Especially when man had fallen by sin from the love of God, to the love of his carnal self, and of the creature; and when he was fallen under vindictive justice, and was conscious of the displeasure of his Maker, and had made himself an heir of hell; and when man's nature can so hardly love one that in justice standeth engaged or resolved to damn him, forsake him, and hate him: how wisely is it ordered, that he that would recover him to his love, should first declare his love to the offender in the fullest sort, and should reconcile himself unto him, and show his readiness to forgive him, and to save him, yea, to be his felicity and his chiefest good; that so the remedy may be answerable to the disease, and to the duty.

4. How wisely is it thus contrived, that the frame and course of man's obedience should be appointed to consist in love and gratitude, and to run out in such praise and cheerful duty as is animated throughout by love, that so sweet a spring may bring forth answerable streams: that so the goodness of our Master may appear in the sweetness of our work; and we may not serve the God of love and glory, like slaves, with a grudging, weary mind; but like children, with delight and quietness; and our work and way may be to us a foretaste of our reward and end.

5. And yet how meet was it, that while we live in such a dark, material world, in a body of corruptible

flesh, among enemies and snares, our duty should have somewhat of caution and vigilancy, and therefore of fear and godly sorrow, to teach us to relish grace the more; and that our condition should have in it much of neccssity and trouble, to drive us homeward to God, who is our rest. And how aptly doth the very permission of sin itself subserve this end!

6. How wisely is it thus contrived, that glory at last should be better relished, and that man who hath the joy should give God the glory; and be bound to this by a double obligation.

7. How aptly is this remedying design, and all the work of man's redemption, and all the precepts of the gospel, built upon, or planted into, the law of natural perfection: faith being but the means to recover love; and grace being to nature, but as medicine is to the body; and being to glory, as medicine is to health: so that as a man that was never taught to speak, or to go, or to do any work, or to know any science, or trade, or business, which must be known acquisitively, is a miserable man, as wanting all that which should help him to use his natural powers to their proper ends; so it is much more with him that hath nature without grace, which must heal it, and use it to its proper ends.

8. So that it appeareth, that as the love of perfection is fitly called the law of nature, because it is agreeable to man in his natural state of innocency; so the law of grace may be now called the law of depraved nature, because it it as suitable to lapsed man. And when our pravity is undeniable, how credible should it be, that we have such a law!

9. And there is nothing in the gospel, either unsuitable to the first law of nature, or contradictory to it, or yet of any alien nature; but only that which hath the most excellent aptitude to subserve it: "Giving the glory to God in the highest," by restoring "peace unto the earth, and good-will towards men."

10. And when the divine monarchy is apt in the order of government, to communicate some image of itself to the creature, as well as the divine perfections have communicated their image to the creatures in their natures or beings, how wisely it is ordered, that mankind should have one universal vicarious Head or Monarch. There is great reason to believe that there is monarchy among angels: and in the world it most apparently excelleth all other forms of government, in order to unity, and strength, and glory: and if it be apter than some others to degenerate into oppressing tyranny, that is only caused by the great corruption of human nature; and therefore if we have a head who hath no such corruption, there is no place for that objection. And as it is not credible that God would make no communication of this image of his dominions in the world; so it is certain, that besides the Lord Jesus, the world hath no other universal head (however the pope may pretend to be a universal vicarious monarch, under the Universal Vicarious Monarch). Kingdoms have their monarchs subordinate to Christ; but the world hath none but Christ alone.

11. And how meet was it that he who was the Monarch or Deputy of God, should be also the Mediator; and that a polluted sinner dwelling in clay, should not come immediately to God, but by a Reconciler, who is worthy to prevail.

12. And when we had lost the knowledge of God, and of the world to come, and of the way thereto; yea, and of ourselves too, and our own immortality of soul; how meet was it that a sure revelation should settle us, that we might know what to seek, and whither to return, and by what way; seeing light must be the guide of our love and power. And who could so infallibly and satisfactorily do this, as a Teacher sent from God, of perfectest knowledge and veracity?

13. And when God intended the free forgiveness of our sins, how meet was it that he who would be the Mediator of our pardon, should yield to those terms, which are consistent with the ends of government, and expose not the wisdom, and veracity, and justice, and the laws of God to the world's contempt: if no mark of odiousness should be put upon sin, nor any demonstration of justice been made, the devil would have triumphed, and said, Did not I say truer than God; when he told you of dying, and I told you that you should not die? And if the grand penalty had been remitted to the world, for four thousand years together successively, without any sufficient demonstration of God's justice undertaken, why should any sinner have feared hell to the world's end? If you say, that repentance alone might be sufficient, I answer, 1. That is no vindication of the justice and truth of the Law-maker. 2. Who should bring a sinner to repentance, whose heart is corrupted with the love of sin? 3. It would hinder repentance, if men knew that God can forgive all the world upon bare repentance, without any reparation of the breaches made by sin, in the order of the world. For if he that threateneth future misery or death for sin, can absolutely dispense with that commination, they may think that he may do so as easily by his threatening of death to the impenitent.

If you say, that threatenings in a law are not false when they are not fulfilled, because they speak not *de eventu*, but *de debito pœnæ;* I answer, they speak directly only *de debito;* but withal he that maketh a law, doth thereby say, This shall be the rule of your lives, and of my ordinary judgment. And therefore consequently they speak of an ordinary event also: and they are the rule of just judgment, and therefore justice must not be contemned by their contempt.

Or if any shall think, that all this proveth not a demonstration of justice on the Redeemer to be absolutely necessary, but that God could have pardoned the penitent without it; it is nevertheless manifest that this was a very wise and congruous way: as he that cannot prove that God could not have illuminated, and moved, and quickened the inferior sensitives without the sun, may yet prove that the sun is a noble creature, in whose operations God's wisdom, and power, and goodness do appear.

14. And how agreeable is this doctrine of the sacrifice of Christ, to the common doctrine of sacrificing, which hath been received throughout almost all the world. And who can imagine any other original of that practice, so early and so universally obtaining, than either divine revelation, or somewhat, even in nature, which beareth witness to the necessity of a demonstration of God's justice and displeasure against sin?

15. How wisely is it determined of God, that he who undertakes all this, should be man, and yet more than man, even God: that the Monarch of mankind, and the Mediator, and the Teacher of man, and the sacrifice for sin, should not be only of another kind; but that he be one that is fit to be familiar with man, and to be interested naturally in his concerns; and one that is by nature and nearness capable of these undertakings and relations: and yet that he be so high and near the Father, as may put a sufficient value on his works, and make him most meet to mediate for us.

16. How wisely is it ordered, that with a perfect

doctrine, we should have the pattern of a perfect life, as knowing how agreeable the way of imitation is to our natures and necessities.

17. And as a pattern of all other virtue is still before us; so how fit was it, especially, that we should have a lively example, to teach us to contemn this deceitful world, and to set little, comparatively, by reputation, wealth, pre-eminence, grandeur, pleasures, yea, and life itself, which are the things which all that perish prefer before God and immortality.

18. And how needful is it that they that must be overtaken with renewed faults, should have a daily remedy and refuge, and a plaster for their wounds; and a more acceptable name than their own to plead with God for pardon.

19. How meet was it that our Saviour should rise from the dead (and consequently that he should die) to show us, that his sacrifice was accepted, and that there is indeed another life for man; and that death and the grave shall still not detain us.

20. And how meet was it that our Saviour should ascend into heaven, and therein our natures be glorified with God; that he might have all power to finish the work of man's salvation, and his possession might be a pledge of our future possession.

21. Most wisely also is it ordered of God, that man might not be left under the covenant of works, or of entire nature, which after it was broken, could never justify him, and which was now unsuitable to his lapsed state, and that God should make a new covenant with him as his Redeemer, as he made the first as his Creator: and that an act of general pardon and oblivion, might secure us of forgiveness and everlasting life; and that as we had a rule to live by for preventing sin and misery, we might have a rule for our duty in order to our recovery.

22. And what more convenient conditions could this covenant have had, "than a believing and thankful acceptance of the mercy, and a penitent and obedient following of our Redeemer unto everlasting life?"

23. And how convenient is it, that when our King is to depart from earth, and keep his residence in the court of heaven, he should appoint his officers to manage the human part of his remaining work on earth: and that some should do the extraordinary work in laying the foundation, and leaving a certain rule and order to the rest, and that the rest should proceed to build hereupon; and that the wisest and the best of men should be the teachers and guides of the rest unto the end.

24. And how necessary was it that our Sun in glory should continually send down his beams and influence on the earth; even the Spirit of the Father, to be his constant Agent here below; and to plead his cause, and do his work on the hearts of men: and that the apostles, who were to found the church, should have that Spirit, in so conspicuous a degree, and for such various works of wonder and power, as might suffice to confirm their testimony to the world: and that all others as well as they to the end, should have the Spirit for those works of love and renovation, which are necessary to their own obedience and salvation.

25. How wisely it is ordered, that he who is our King, is Lord of all, and able to defend his church, and to repress his proudest enemies.

26. And also that he should be our final Judge, who was our Saviour and Lawgiver, and made and sealed that covenant of grace by which we must be judged; that judgment may not be over-dreadful, but rather desirable to his faithful servants, who shall openly be justified by him before all.

27. How wisely hath God ordered it, that when death is naturally so terrible to man, we should have a Saviour that went that way before us, and was once dead, but now liveth, and is where we must be, and hath the keys of death and heaven; that we may boldly go forth as to his presence, and to the innumerable perfected spirits of the just, and may commend our souls to the hands of our Redeemer and our Head.

28. As also that this should be plainly revealed; and that the Scriptures are written in a method and manner fit for all, even for the meanest; and that ministers be commanded to open it, and apply it, by translation, exposition, and earnest exhortation; that the remedy may be suited to the nature and extent of the disease; and yet that there be some depths, to keep presumptuous daring wits at a distance, and to humble them, and to exercise our diligence.

29. As also that the life of faith and holiness should have much opposition in the world, that its glory and excellency might the more appear, partly by the presence of its contraries, and partly by its exercise and victories in its trials; and that the godly may have use for patience and fortitude, and every grace; and may be kept the easilier from loving the world, and taught the more to desire the presence of their Lord.

30. Lastly, And how wisely is it ordered, that God in heaven, from whom all cometh, should be the end of all his graces and our duties: and that himself alone should be our home and happiness; and that as we are made by him, and for him, so we should live with him, to his praise, and in his love for ever; and that there, as we shall have both glorified souls and bodies, so both might have a suitable glory; and that our glorified Redeemer might there be in part the Mediator of our fruition, as here he was the Mediator of acquisition.

I have recited hastily a few of the parts of this wondrous frame, to show you, that if you saw them all, and that in the true order and method, you might not think it strange that "Now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, is made known by the church the manifold wisdom of God," Eph. ii. 11; which was the first part of God's image upon the christian religion, which I was to show you.

But besides all this, the wisdom of God is expressed in the holy Scriptures these several ways: 1. In the revelation of things past, which could not be known by any mortal man: as the creation of the world, and what was therein done, before man himself was made; which experience itself doth help us to believe, because we see exceeding great probabilities that the world was not eternal, nor of any longer duration than the Scriptures mention; in that no place on earth hath any true monument of ancienter original; and in that human sciences and arts are yet so imperfect, and such important additions are made but of late.

2. In the revelation of things distant, out of the reach of man's discovery. So Scripture history and prophecy do frequently speak of preparations and actions of princes and people afar off.

3. In the revelation of the secrets of men's hearts: as Elisha told Gehazi what he did at a distance: Christ told Nathaniel what he said, and where: so frequently Christ told the Jews and his disciples what they thought, and showed that he knew the heart of man: to which we may add, the searching power of the word of God, which doth so notably rip up the secrets of men's corruptions, and may show all men's hearts unto themselves.

4. In the revelation of contingent things to come, which is most frequent in the prophecies and promises of the Scripture; not only in the Old Testa-

ment, as Daniel, &c. but also in the gospel. When Christ foretelleth his death and resurrection, and the usage and successes of his apostles, and promiseth them the miraculous gifts of the Spirit; and foretold Peter's thrice denying him; and foretold the grievous destruction of Jerusalem, with other such-like clear predictions.

5. But nothing of all these predictions doth shine so clearly to ourselves, as those great promises of Christ, which are fulfilled to ourselves, in all generations. Even the promises and prophetical descriptions of the great work of conversion, regeneration, or sanctification upon men's souls, which is wrought in all ages, just according to the delineations of it in the word: all the humblings, the repentings, the desires, the faith, the joys, the prayers, and the answers of them, which were foretold, and was found in the first believers, are performed and given to all true christians to this day.

To which may be added, all the prophecies of the extent of the church; of the conversions of the kingdoms of the world to Christ; and of the oppositions of the ungodly sort thereto; and of the persecutions of the followers of Christ, which are all fulfilled.

6. The wisdom of God also is clearly manifested in the concatenation or harmony of all these revelations; not only that there is no real contradiction between them, but that they all conjunctly compose one entire frame. As the age of man goeth on from infancy to maturity, and nature fitteth her endowments and provisions accordingly to each degree; so hath the church proceeded from its infancy, and so have the revelations of God been suited to its several times: Christ who was promised to Adam, and the fathers before Moses, for the first two thousand years, and signified by their sacrifices; was more fully revealed for the next two thousand years, by Moses first in a typical gospel, (the adumbration of the grace to come,) and then by the prophets, (especially Isaiah, Micah, Daniel, and Malachi,) in plainer predictions. And then came John the Baptist, the forerunner, and Christ, the Messiah, and the Spirit upon the apostles, and finished the revelation: so that it may appear to be all one frame, contrived and indicted by one Spirit. And the effects of it have been according to these degrees of the revelation.

And the end of the world (whether at the end of the last two thousand years, or when else God pleaseth) will shortly show the unbelieving themselves, that the period shall fulfil what is yet unfulfilled to the least jot and tittle.

CHAPTER V.

THE IMAGE OF GOD'S GOODNESS.

II. THE second part of God's image on our religion, is that of his matchless goodness. The whole system of it is, the harmonious expression of God's holiness and love. The particulars I must but name, lest I be too long.

1. The author of it, Jesus Christ, was perfectly good himself; being God and man; sinless in nature, and in life; living, and dying, and rising to do good; and making it his office and his work, even in heaven, to do mankind the greatest good.

2. The matter of the christian religion, is God himself the infinite good. The use of it is, to teach men to know God, and to bring us to him. To which end it maketh a fuller discovery of his blessed nature, attributes, and works, than is any where else to be found in this world.

3. The utmost end of it is the highest imaginable; the pleasing and glorifying of God: for he that is the beginning of all, must needs be the end of all.

4. It leadeth man to the highest state of felicity for himself (which is an end conjunct in subordination to the highest). There can be no greater happiness imaginable, than the christian religion directeth us to attain.

5. It placeth our happiness so certainly and clearly in that which is happiness indeed, that it directeth man's intentions and desires, and leaveth them no longer to the old variety of opinions about the chiefest good: nature perfected, and working by its perfectest acts upon the most perfect object, and receiving the most full communications from him, and this for ever, must needs be the most perfect felicity of man. To have all our faculties fully perfect, and to live for ever in the perfect light and love of God, and to be accordingly beloved of him; this is the end of christianity.

6. To this end, the whole design of the christian religion is to make man good, and to cure him of all evil, and to prepare him justly for that blessed state.

7. To that end the great work of Jesus Christ is, to send down the sanctifying Spirit of God, to make men new creatures, and to regenerate them to the nature of God himself, and to a heavenly mind and life: that they may not only have precepts which are good, but the power of God to make them good, and a heavenly principle to fit them for heaven.

8. To that end, the principal means is, the fullest revelation of the love of God to man, that ever was made, and more than is any where else revealed. All the design of christianity is but to show God to man, in the fullest prospect of his goodness and unmeasurable love, that so he may appear more amiable to us; and may be more beloved by us; that loving goodness may make us good, and make us happy.

9. To encourage us to love and goodness, God doth in the gospel give us the pardon of all our sins, as soon as ever we turn to him by faith and repentance: though we have deserved hell, he declareth that he will forgive us that desert. If we had come to hell before we had been redeemed, I think we should have taken that religion to be good indeed, which would have brought us the tidings of forgiveness, and showed us so ready a way to escape.

10. And this mercy is given by a universal covenant, offered to all, without exception: and the conditions are so reasonable, that no one can have any just pretence against them. It is but to accept the mercy offered with a believing, thankful mind, as a condemned man would do a pardon. And what can be more suitable to our miserable state?

11. And to bring us to all this, and make us holy, Christ hath given us a most holy word and doctrine; perfectly holy in its precepts, and in its prohibitions, and all the subservient histories and narratives: and he hath added the perfect pattern of his holy life, that our rule and example might agree.

12. So good is this word, that it calleth us to the highest degree of goodness, and maketh perfection itself our duty; that our duty and happiness may agree; and we may not have liberty to be bad and miserable; but may be every way bound to our own felicity: and yet so good is this covenant of grace, that it taketh not advantage of our infirmities to ruin us, but noteth them to humble us, in order to our cure: and it accepteth sincerity, though it command perfection. And Christ looketh not at our failings, as a severe judge, but as a physician, and a tender father.

13. So good is our religion, that the great thing which it requireth of us, is to prefer the greatest good before the lesser, and not to be like children, who take it for their riches to fill their pin-box; or like foolish merchants, who had rather trade for trash than for gold. The great business of christian precepts is, to make us know that we are capable of better things than meat, and drink, and lust, and sports, and wealth, and worldly honours; that the love of God, and the felicity of the soul, in grace and glory, may be preferred before the pleasure of a swine. And is not that good, which calleth us up to the greatest good, and will not allow us to be such enemies to ourselves, as to take up with the lesser?

14. Yea, when we have most, it still engageth us to seek more; and will not allow us to take up with a low degree of grace, or with a little measure of the greatest good: but to show that God would have us to be still better, and to have more, it is made our duty still to ask more, and still to press higher, and labour to be better. Asking in prayer is made our daily work; and God's giving, and our receiving, may be our daily blessedness.

15. The mercies here provided for us, extend both to soul and body; for though we may not prefer the less before the greater, yet we shall have it in its place: if we seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and labour first for the food which never perisheth, all other things shall be added to us; we shall have them to do us good, but not to do us hurt. "For godliness is profitable to all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come," 1 Tim. iv. 7, 8; vi. 6.

16. And that future perfect goodness may invite us to present imperfect goodness, the promises of the gospel do second the precepts, with the strongest motives in the world: so that everlasting blessedness and joy is made the reward of temporal sincerity, in faith, love, and obedience. And if heaven itself be not a reward sufficient to invite men to be good, there is none sufficient.

17. Yea, the penalties and severities of the christian religion, do show the goodness of it; when God doth therefore threaten hell to save men from it, and to draw them up to the obedience of the gospel. Threatened evil of punishment is but to keep them from the evil of sin, and to make men better; and he that will testify his hatred of sinful evil to the highest, doth show himself the greatest enemy of it, and the greatest lover of good: and he that setteth the sharpest hedge before us, and most terrible warnings, to keep us from damnation, doth show himself most willing to serve us.

18. So good is christianity, that it turneth all our afflictions unto good: it assureth us that they are sent as needful medicine, however merited by our sin; and it directeth us how to bear them easily, and to make them sweet, and safe, and profitable, and to turn them to our increase of holiness, and to the furtherance of our greatest good, Heb. xii. 10, 11; Rom. viii. 18; 2 Cor. iv. 16—18.

19. It also establisheth a perpetual office, even the sacred ministry, for the fuller and surer communication of all this good before mentioned. In which observe these particulars, which show the greatness of this benefit. 1. The person called to it must (by Christ's appointment) be the wisest and best of men that can be had. 2. The number of them is to be suited to the number of the people, so that none may be without the benefit. 3. Their work is, to declare all this before-mentioned goodness and love of God to man, and to offer them all this grace and mercy; and to teach them to be holy and happy, and to set before them the everlasting joys. 4. The manner of their doing it must be with humility, as the servants of all; with tender love, as fathers of the flock; with wisdom and skill, lest their work be frustrate; with the greatest importunity, even compelling them to come in, as men that are loth to take any denial; and with patient enduring all oppositions, as those that had rather suffer any thing, than the people's souls should be unhealed, and be damned; and they must continue to the end, as those that will never give up a soul as desperate and lost, while there is any hope; and all this must be seconded with their own example of holiness, temperance, and love, Acts xx.; 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25; Matt. xxii. 8, 9.

20. So good is our religion, that nothing but doing good is the work in which it doth employ us. Besides all the good of piety and self-preservation, it requireth us to live in love to others, and to do all the good in the world that we are able, Eph. ii. 10; Matt. v. 16; vi. 1, 2, &c.; Titus ii. 14; Gal. vi. 7—9. Good works must be our study and our life, our work and our delight; even our enemies we must love and do good to, Matt. v. 44; Rom. xii. 19—21. And sure that doctrine is good, which is purposely to employ men in doing good to all.

21. So good is christianity, that it favoureth not any one sin, but it is the greatest condemner of them all. It is all for knowledge against hurtful ignorance; it is all for humility against all pride; for self-denial against all injurious selfishness; for spirituality, and the dominion of true reason, against sensuality and the dominion of the flesh; for heavenliness against a worldly mind; for sincerity and simplicity against all hypocrisy and deceit; for love against malice; for unity and peace against divisions and contentions; for justice and lenity in superiors, and obedience and patience in inferiors; for faithfulness in all relations: its precepts extend to secret as well as open practices; to the desires and thoughts, as well as to the words and deeds; it alloweth not a thought, or word, or action, which is ungodly, intemperate, rebellious, injurious, unchaste, or covetous or uncharitable, Matt. v.

22. All the troublesome part of our religion is but our warfare against evil; against sin, and the temptations which would make us sinful: and it must needs be good, if all the conflicting part of it be only against evil, Gal. v. 17, 21, 23; Rom. vi.; vii.; viii. 1, 7—10, 13.

23. It teacheth us the only way to live in the greatest and most constant joy. If we attain not this, it is because we follow not its precepts. If endless joy foreseen, and all the foresaid mercies in the way, are not matter for continual delight, there is no greater to be thought on. Rejoicing always in the Lord, even in our sharpest persecutions, is a great part of religious duty, Phil. iii. 1; iv. 4; Psal. xxxiii. 1; Zech. x. 7; Matt. v. 11, 12; Deut. xii. 12, 18.

24. It overcometh both the danger and the fear of death; and that must be good, which conquereth so great an evil; and maketh the day of the ungodly's fears, and utter misery, to be the day of our desire and felicity, Rom. vi. 23; 1 Cor. xv. 55; Col. iii. 1, 4; Phil. iii. 21.

25. It obligeth all the rulers of the world to use all their power to do good; against all sin within their reach; and to make their subjects happy both in body and in soul, Rom. xiii. 3—6.

26. It appointeth churches to be societies of saints, that holiness and goodness combined may be strong and honourable, 1 Cor. i. 1; 2 Cor. i. 1; Heb. iii. 13; 1 Thess. v. 12, 13. That holy assemblies employed in the holy love and praises of God might be

a representation of the heavenly Jerusalem, Col. ii. 5.

27. It doth make the love and union of all the saints to be so strict, that the mercies and joys of every member might extend to all; all the corporal and spiritual blessings of all the christians (yea, and persons) in the world are mine as to my comfort, as long as I can love them as myself: if it would please me to be rich, or honourable, or learned myself, it must please me also to have them so, whom I love as myself. And when millions have so much matter for my joy, how joyfully should I then live! And though I am obliged also to sorrow with them, it is with such a sorrow only, as shall not hinder any seasonable joy.

28. In these societies every member is bound to contribute his help to the benefit of each other; so that I have as many obliged to do me good, as there be christians in the world; at least, according to their several opportunities and capacities; by prayer and such distant means, if they can do no more. And the religion which giveth every man so great an interest in the good of all others, and engageth all men to do good to one another, is evidently good itself, 1 Cor. xii.; Eph. iv. 15, 16.

29. And all this good is not destroyed, but advantaged and aggravated accidentally by our sin: so that where sin abounded, there grace did superabound, Rom. v. 15—19. Grace hath taken occasion by sin to be grace indeed, and to be the greater manifestation of the goodness of God, and the greater obligation for gratitude to the sinner.

30. Lastly, all this goodness is beautified by harmony; it is all placed in a perfect order. One mercy doth not keep us from another; nor one grace oppose another; nor one duty exclude another. As it is the great declaration of mercy and justice wonderfully conspiring in God (mercy so used as to magnify justice; justice so used as to magnify mercy, and not only so as to consist); so also it worketh answerably on us. It setteth not love against filial fear, nor joy against necessary sorrow, nor faith against repentance, nor praise and thanksgiving against penitent confession of sin, nor true repentance against the profitable use of the creatures, nor the care of our souls against the peace and quiet of our minds, nor care for our families against contentedness and trusting God, nor our labour against our necessary rest, nor self-denial against the due care of our own welfare, nor patience against due sensibility and lawful passion, nor mercy to men against true justice, nor public and private good against each other; nor doth it set the duty of the sovereign and the subject, the master and the servant, the pastor and the flock, nor yet their interest, in any contrariety; but all parts of religion know their place; and every duty (even those which seem most opposite) are helpful to each other; and all interests are co-ordinate, and all doth contribute to the good of the whole, and of every part, Eph. iv. 2, 3, 15, 16.

And now peruse all this together, (but let it have more of your thoughts by far, than it hath had of my words,) and then determine indifferently, whether the christian religion bear not the lively image and superscription of God, the Prime Essential Good.

But all this will be more manifest, when we have considered how power hath in the execution brought all this into effect.

CHAPTER VI.

THE IMAGE OF GOD'S POWER.

III. THE third part of God's image and superscription on the christian religion, is his power. And as man's own corruption lieth more in the want of wisdom and goodness, than of power; therefore he is less capable of discerning God, in the impressions of his wisdom and goodness, than of his power. Seeing therefore he is here most capable of conviction, and acknowledging the hand of God, I shall open this also in the several parts, in some degree.

1. In the history of the creation, the omnipotency of God is abundantly set forth; which is proved true, both by the agreeableness of the history to the effects, and by much subsequent evidence of the writer's veracity.

2. The same may be said of God's drowning the old world, and the preserving of Noah and his family in the ark.

3. And of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah with fire from heaven.

4. The many miracles done by Moses upon Pharaoh and the Egyptians, and in the opening of the Red sea, and in the feeding of the Israelites in the wilderness, and keeping their clothes from wearing for forty years; and the pillar which went before them as a fire by night, and a cloud by day, for so long a time; and the darkness, and thunder, and trembling of the mount at the giving of the law; with the rest of the miracles then done, not in a corner, or before a few, but before all the people: who were persuaded to receive and obey the law, by reason of these motives which their eyes had seen. And if all this had been false; if no plagues had been shown on Egypt; if no Red sea had opened; if no pillar had gone before them; if no such terrible sights and sounds at mount Sinai had prepared them for the law; such reasons would have been so unfit to have persuaded them to obedience, that they would rather, with any reasonable creatures, have procured contempt.

And to show posterity that the history of all this was not forged, or to be suspected; 1. They had the law itself then delivered in two tables of stone, to be still seen. 2. They had a pot of manna still preserved. 3. They had the miracle-working rod of Moses and Aaron kept likewise as a monument. 4. They had an ark on purpose to keep these in, and that in the most inviolable place of worship. 5. They had the brazen serpent (till Hezekiah broke it) still to be seen. 6. They had the song of their deliverance at the Red sea for their continued use. 7. They had set feasts to keep the chief of all these things in remembrance. They had the feast of unleavened bread, which all Israel was to observe for seven days, to keep the remembrance of their passing out of Egypt in so great haste, that they could not stay to knead up and make their bread, but took it as in meal or unready dough. They had the feast of the passover, when every family was to eat of the paschal lamb, and the door-posts to be sprinkled with the blood, to keep in remembrance the night when the Egyptians' first-born were destroyed, and the Israelites all preserved. And if these had been instituted at that time, upon a pretended occasion which they knew to be untrue, they would rather have derided than observed them. If they had been afterwards instituted in another generation which knew not the story, the beginning would have been known, and the fiction of the name and institution of Moses

would have been apparent to all; and the institution would not have been found in the same law which was given by Moses. And it could not have been so expressly said, that the Israelites did all observe these feasts and solemnities from the very time of their deliverance, but in those times when the forgery began all would have known it to be false. 8. And they had many other words and ceremonies among them, and even in God's public worship, which were all used to keep up the memory of these things. 9. And they had an office of priesthood constantly among them, which saw to the execution and preservation of all these. 10. And they had a form of civil policy then established, and the rulers were to preserve the memory of these things, and the practice of this law, and to learn it themselves, and govern by it. So that the very form of the commonwealth, and the order of it, was a commemoration hereof. And the parents were to teach and tell their children all these things, and to expound all these solemnities, laws, and ceremonies to them: so that the frame of church, and state, and families, was a preservative hereof.

5. But, to pass by all the rest in the Old Testament, the incarnation of Christ was such a work of omnipotent love, as cannot by us be comprehended. That God should be united to humanity in person! That humanity should be thus advanced into union with the Deity! and man be set above the angels! That a virgin should conceive! That men from the east should be led thither to worship an infant by the conduct of a star! (which Cæsarius thinks was one of those angels or spirits which are called a flame of fire, Psal. civ. 4.) That angels from heaven should declare his nativity to the shepherds, and celebrate it with their praises! That John the Baptist should be so called to be his forerunner, and Elisabeth, Zachary, Simeon, and Anna, should so prophesy of him! That the Spirit should be seen descending on him at his baptism, and the voice be heard from heaven, which owned him! That he should fast forty days and nights! and that he should be transfigured before his three disciples on the mount, and Moses and Elias be seen with him in that glory; and the voice from heaven again bear witness to him! These, and many such like, were the attestations of divine omnipotency to the truth of Christ.

6. To these may be next joined, the whole course of miracles performed by Christ, in healing the sick, and raising the dead; and in many other miraculous acts, which are most of the substance of the gospel history, and which I have recited together in my "Reasons of the Christian Religion." See Heb. ii. 2—4.

7. And to these may be added, the power which was given over all the creatures to Christ our Mediator. All power in heaven and earth was given him, John xvii. 2; xiii. 3; Matt. xxviii. 19; Rom. xiv. 9; Ephes. i. 22, 23. He was made Head over all things to the church, and all principalities and powers were put under him. And this was not barely asserted by him, but demonstrated. He showed his power over the devils in casting them out; and his power over angels by their attendance; and his power of life and death, by raising the dead; and his power over all diseases, by healing them; and his power over the winds and waters, by appeasing them; and his power over our food and natures, by turning water into wine, and by feeding many thousands miraculously. Yea, and his power over them into whose hands he was resolved to yield himself, by restraining them till his hour was come, and by making them all fall to the ground at his name: and his power over sun, and heaven, and earth, by the darkening of the sun, and the trembling of the earth, and the rending of the rocks, and of the veil of the temple, Matt. xxvii. 45, 51: and his power over the dead, by the rising of the bodies of many, Matt. xxvii. 52: and his power over the saints in heaven, by the attendance of Moses and Elias: and his power to forgive sins, by taking away the penal maladies: and his power to change hearts, and save souls, by causing his disciples to leave all and follow him at a word; and Zaccheus to receive him, and believe; and the thief on the cross to be converted, and to enter that day into paradise.

8. And his own resurrection is an undoubted attestation of divine omnipotency. If God gave him such a victory over death, and raised him to life when men had killed him, and rolled a stone upon his sepulchre, and sealed and guarded it, there needeth no further evidence of the power of God impressing and attesting the christian religion, than that which ascertaineth to us the truth of Christ's resurrection. For he was declared to be the Son of God with power, by his resurrection from the dead, Rom. i. 4.

9. And his bodily appearance to his congregated disciples when the doors were shut, his miracle at their fishing, his walking on the sea, his vanishing out of their sight, (Luke xxiv.) when he had discoursed with the two disciples, his opening their hearts to understand his word, &c. do all show this part of God's image on our religion, even his power.

10. And so doth his bodily ascending into heaven before the face of his disciples, Acts i.

11. But especially the sending down the Holy Ghost upon his disciples according as he promised; to cause them that were before so low in knowledge, to be suddenly inspired with languages, and with the full understanding of his own will, and with unanimity and concord herein: this made his disciples the living monuments and effects of his own omnipotency, Acts ii.

12. And accordingly all the miracles which they did by this power, recorded partly in the Acts of the Apostles (or rather, the Acts of Paul, by Luke who was his companion); which you may there read (and no doubt but other apostles in their measures did the like as Paul, though they are not recorded; for they had all the same promise and Spirit). This is another impression of power.

13. Whereto must be added the great and wonderful gifts of communicating the same Spirit (or doing that upon which God would give it) to those converted believers on whom they laid their hands, (which Simon Magus would fain have bought with money, Acts viii.) to enable them to speak with tongues, to heal diseases, to prophesy, &c. as they themselves had done; which is a great attestation of omnipotency.

14. And the lamentable destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, foretold by Christ, was an attestation of God's power in the revenge or punishment of their unbelief, and putting Christ to death.

15. And so was the great fortitude and constancy of believers, who underwent all persecutions so joyfully as they did for the sake of Christ; which was the effect of the corroborating power of the Almighty.

16. And so was the power which the apostles had to execute present judgments upon the enemies of the gospel, (as Elimas and Simon Magus,) and on the abusers of religion, (as Ananias and Sapphira,) and on many whom they excommunicated and delivered up to Satan.

17. The same evidence is found in Christ's legislation, as a universal sovereign making laws for heart and life, for all the world: taking down the

laws of the Jewish polity and ceremonies, which God by Moses had for a time set up; commanding his ministers to proclaim his laws to all the world, and princes and people to obey them; and by these laws conferring on believers no less than forgiveness and salvation, and binding over the impenitent to everlasting punishment.

18. But the great and continued impress of God's power, is that which, together with his wisdom and love, is made and showed in the conversion of men's souls to God by Christ. You may here first consider the numbers which were suddenly converted by the preaching of the apostles at the first. And in how little time there were churches planted abroad the world: and then, how the Roman empire was brought in, and subdued to Christ, and crowns and sceptres resigned to him; and all this aceording to his own prediction, that when he was lifted up, he would draw all men to him; and according to the predictions of his prophets. But that which I would especially open is, the power which is manifested in the work of the Spirit on the souls of men, both then and to this day.

Hitherto what I have mentioned belonging to the Scripture itself, is to be taken as part of our religion objectively considered. But that which followeth is the effect of that, even our religion subjectively considered. To observe how God maketh men believers, and by believing sanctifieth their hearts and lives, is a great motive to further our own believing. Consider the work, 1. As it is in itself; 2. As it is opposed by all its enemies; and you may see that it is the work of God.

1. As the goodness, so also the greatness of it, is God's own image. It is the raising up of our stupid faculties to be lively and active to those holy uses, to which they were become as dead by sin. To cause in an unlearned person, a firmer and more distinct belief of the unseen world, than the most learned philosophers can attain to by all their natural contemplations; to bring up a soul to place its happiness on things so high and far from sense! To cause him who naturally is imprisoned in selfishness, to deny himself, and devote himself entirely to God; to love him, to trust him, and to live to him! To raise an earthly mind to heaven, that our business and hope may be daily there! To overcome our pride and sensuality, and bring our senses in subjection unto reason, and to keep a holy government in our thoughts, and over our passions, words, and deeds; and to live in continual preparation for death, as the only time of our true felicity; and to suffer any loss or pain for the safe accomplishment of this! All this is the work of the power of God.

2. Which will the more appear when we consider, what is done against it within us and without us; what privative and positive averseness we have to it, till God do send down that life, and light, and love into our souls, which is indeed his image! How violently our fleshly sense and appetite strive against the restraints of God, and would hurry us contrary to the motions of grace! How importunately Satan joineth with his suggestions! What baits the world doth still set before us, to divert us, and pervert us! And how many instruments of its flattery or its cruelty are still at work, to stop us, or to turn us back; to invite our affections down to earth, and insnare them to some deluding vanity, or to distract us in our heavenly design, and to affright or discourage us from the holy way.

And if we think this an easy work, because it is also reasonable, do but observe how hardly it goeth on, till the power of God by grace accomplish it! What a deal of pains may the best and wisest parents take with a graceless child, and all in vain! What labours the worthiest ministers lose on graceless people! and how blind, and dead, and senseless a thing the graceless heart is to any thing that is holy, even when reason itself cannot gainsay it! And God is pleased ofttimes to weary out parents, and masters, and ministers with such unteachable and stony hearts, to make them know what naturally they are themselves, to bring them to the more lively acknowledgment of the power which is necessary to renew and save a soul. But having spoken at large of this in the forementioned treatise, I shall take up with these brief intimations.

19. And the preservation of that grace in the soul which is once given us, is also an effect of the power of God. Our strength is in the Lord, and in the power of his might, Eph. vi. 10. It is our Lord himself who is the Lord of life, and whose priesthood was made after the power of an endless life, Heb. vii. 16; who giveth us the spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind, 2 Tim. i. 7 (or of received wisdom, for σωφρονισμὸς is sound understanding received by instruction). And this text expresseth the three parts of God's image in the new creature, πνεῦμα δυνάμεως, καὶ ἀγάπης καὶ σωφρονισμοῦ. And as power is given us with love and wisdom; so power with love and wisdom do give it us; and power also must preserve it. "We are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation," 1 Pet. i. 5. "According to the power of God; who hath saved us," 2 Tim. i. 8. The gospel is the power of God (that is, the instrument of his power) to our salvation, Rom. i. 16. So 1 Cor. i. 18, "To us that are saved it is the power of God," because Christ whom it revealeth, is the "power and wisdom of God," ver. 24. And thus our faith standeth in the power of God, 1 Cor. ii. 5; 2 Cor. vi. 7. And the kingdom of God in us doth consist in power, 1 Cor. iv. 20. The mind of man is very mutable; and he that is possessed once with the desires of the things spiritual and eternal, would quickly lose those desires, and turn to present things again, (which are still before him, while higher things are beyond our sense,) if the power and activity of the divine life did not preserve the spark which is kindled in us. Though the doctrine of perseverance be controverted in the christian church, yet experience assureth us of that which all parties are agreed in. Some hold that all true christians persevere; and some hold that all *confirmed* christians persevere (that is, those who come to a strong degree of grace); but those that think otherwise do yet all grant, that if any fall away, it is comparatively but a very few of those who are sincere; when none would persevere if Omnipotency did not preserve them.

20. Lastly, the power of God also doth consequently own the christian religion, by the preservation of the church, in this malicious and opposing world (as well as by the preservation of grace in the soul); which will be the more apparent if you observe, 1. That the number of true christians is still very small in comparison of the wicked. 2. That all wicked men are naturally (by the corruption of nature) their enemies; because the precepts and practice of christianity are utterly against their carnal minds and interests. 3. That the doctrine and practice of christianity is still galling them, and exciting and sublimating this enmity into rage: and God doth by persecutions ordinarily tell us to our smart, that all this is true. 4. That all carnal men are exceeding hardly moved from their own way. 5. That the government of the earth is commonly in their hand, because of their numbers, and their wealth. For it is commonly the rich that rule; and the rich are

usually bad; so that the godly christians are in their power. 6. That all the hypocrites that are among ourselves, have the same sinful nature and enmity against holiness, and are usually as bitter against the power and practice of their own profession, as open infidels are. 7. That christianity is not a fruit of nature; *Non nati sed facti sumus christiani*; said Tertullian. And therefore if God's power preserved not religion, the degenerating of the christian's children from their parent's mind and way, would hasten its extinction in the world. 8. And as it is a religion which must be taught us; so it requireth or consisteth in so much wisdom, and willingness, and fortitude of mind, that few are naturally apt to receive it; because folly, and badness, and feebleness of mind, are so common in the world. And as we see that learning will never be common but in the possession of a very few, because a natural ingenuity is necessary thereto, which few are borne with; so it would be with christianity, if divine power maintained it not. 9. And it is a religion which requireth much time and contemplation, in the learning and in the practising of it: whereas the world are taken up with so much business for the body, and are so slothful to those exercises of the mind, which bring them no present, sensible commodity, that this also would quickly wear it out. 10. And then the terms of it being so contrary to all men's fleshly interest and sense, in self-denial, and forsaking all for Christ; and in mortifying the most beloved sins, and the world putting us to it so ordinarily by persecution; this also would deter the most, and weary out the rest, if the power of God did not uphold them. That which is done by exceeding industry, against the inclinations and interest of nature, will have no considerable number of practisers. As we see in horses and dogs, which are capable, with great labour, of being taught extraordinary things which resemble reason; and yet because it must cost so much labour, there is but one in a century that is brought to it. But (though the truly religious are but few in comparison of the wicked, yet) godly persons are not so few as they would be, if it were the work of industry alone. God maketh it as a new nature to them; and (which is very much to be observed) the main change is ofttimes wrought in an hour, and that after all exhortations, and the labours of parents and teachers, have failed, and left the sinner as seemingly hopeless.

And thus I have showed you, 1. That our religion objectively taken, is the image of God's wisdom, goodness, and power, and thereby fully proved it to be from God. 2. And that our religion subjectively taken, is answerably the spirit or impress of power, and of love, and of sound understanding, and is in us a constant seal and witness to the truth of Christ.

CHAPTER VII.

THE MEANS OF MAKING KNOWN ALL THIS INFALLIBLY TO US.

I suppose the evidence of divine attestation is so clear in this image of God on the christian religion, which I have been opening, that few can doubt of it who are satisfied of the historical truth of the facts; and therefore this is next to be considered, How the certain knowledge of all those things cometh down to us?

The first question is, whether this doctrine and religion indeed be the impress of God's wisdom, and his goodness and power, supposing the truth of the historical part? This is what I think few reasonable persons will deny; for the doctrine is legible, and showeth itself.

But the next question, which I am now to resolve, is, How we shall know that this doctrine was indeed delivered by Christ and his apostles, and these things done by them, which the Scriptures mention?

And here the first question shall be, How the apostles, and all other the first witnesses, knew it themselves? For it is by every reasonable man to be supposed, that they who were present, and we who are at seventeen hundred years' distance, could not receive the knowledge of the matters of fact, in the very same manner. It is certain that their knowledge was by their present sense and reason: they saw Christ and his miracles: they heard his words: they saw him risen from the dead: they discoursed with him, and ate and drank with him: they saw him ascending up bodily to heaven. They needed no other revelation to tell them what they saw, and heard, and felt.

If you had asked them then, How know you that all these things were said and done? They would have answered you, Because we saw and heard them. But we were not then present: we did not see and hear what they did: not did we see or hear them, who were the eyewitnesses. And therefore as their senses told it them; so the natural way for our knowledge, must be by derivation from their senses to ours: for when they themselves received it in a way so natural, (though not without the help of God's Spirit, in the remembering, recording, and attesting it,) we that can less pretend to inspiration, or immediate revelation, have small reason to think that we must know the same facts by either of those supernatural ways. Nor can our knowledge of a history, carried down through so many ages, be so clearly satisfactory to ourselves, as sight and hearing was to them. And yet we have a certainty, not only infallible, but so far satisfactory, as is sufficient to warrant all our faith, and duty, and sufferings for the reward which Christ hath set before us.

Let us next then inquire, How did the first churches know that the apostles and other preachers of the gospel did not deceive them in the matter of fact? I answer, They had their degrees of assurance or knowledge in this part of their belief. 1. They had the most credible human testimony of men that were not like to deceive them. But this was not infallible.

2. They had in their testimony the evidence of a natural certainty. It being naturally impossible, that so many persons should agree together to deceive the world, in such matters of fact, at so dear a rate, in the very place and age when the things were pretended to be done and said, when any one might have presently evinced the falsehood, if they had been liars; about the twice feeding of many thousands miraculously, and the raising of the dead, and many other public miracles, and the darkness at his death, and the rending of the rocks and veil of the temple, and the earthquake, and the coming down of the Holy Ghost upon themselves, with many the like; they would have been detected and confuted to their confusion. And we should have read what apologies they made against such detections and confutations. And some of them (at least at their death) would have been forced by conscience to confess the plot.

3. But to leave no room for doubting, God gave those first churches the addition of his own supernatural attestation, by the same threefold impress of his image before described. 1. In the holy wisdom

and light which was in their doctrine. 2. In the holy love, and piety, and purity, which was conspicuous in their doctrine, and in their lives. 3. And in the evidences of divine power, in the many gifts, and wonders, and miracles which they wrought and manifested. And these things seem a fuller testimony than the miracles of Christ himself. For Christ's miracles were the deeds of one alone; and his resurrection was witnessed but by twelve chosen witnesses, and about five hundred other persons; and he conversed with them but forty days, and that but seldom; but the miracles of the disciples were wrought by many, and before many thousands, at several times, and in many countries, and for many, many years together, and in the sight and hearing of many of the churches: so that these first churches had sight and hearing to assure them of the divine, miraculous attestation of the truth of their testimony, who told them of the doctrines, miracles, and resurrection of Christ: and all this from Christ's solemn promise and gift; "Verily, verily I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do, shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go to the Father," John xiv. 12.

But if it be demanded, How did the next christians of the second age receive all this from the first churches, who received it from the apostles? I answer, by the same evidence, and with some advantages. For, 1. They had the credible human testimony of all their pastors, neighbours, parents, who told them but what they saw and heard. 2. They had a greater evidence of natural infallible certainty. For, (1.) The doctrine was now delivered to them in the records of the sacred Scriptures, and so less liable to the misreports of the ignorant, forgetful, or erroneous. (2.) The reporters were now more numerous, and the miracles reported more numerous also. (3.) They were persons now dispersed over much of the world, and could not possibly agree together to deceive. (4.) The deceit would now have been yet more easily detected and abhorred.

3. But besides this, they had also the supernatural testimony of God: for the apostles' converts received the same Spirit as they had themselves; and though the miracles of other persons were not so numerous as those of the apostles, yet the persons were many thousands more that wrought them. All this is asserted in the Scripture itself; as Gal. iii. 3, 4; 1 Cor. xiv.; xii.; and many places. And he that should have told them falsely that they themselves had the spirit of extraordinary gifts and miracles, would hardly have been believed by them. And all this also the following ages have themselves asserted unto us.

The question then which remaineth is, How we receive all this infallibly from the subsequent ages or churches to this day? The answer to which is, still by the same way, with yet greater advantages in some respects, though less in others. As, 1. We have the human testimony of all our ancestors, and of many of our enemies. 2. We have greater evidence of natural certainty, that they could not possibly meet or plot together to deceive us. 3. We have still the supernatural, divine attestation (though rarely of miracles, yet) of those more necessary and noble operations of the Spirit, in the sanctification of all true believers; which Spirit accompanieth and worketh by the doctrine which from our ancestors we have received.

More distinctly observe all these conjunct means of our full reception of our religion.

1. The very being of the christians and churches, is a testimony to us that they believed and received this religion. For what maketh them christians and churches but the receiving of it?

2. The ordinance of baptism is a notable tradition of it. For all that ever were made christians have been baptized; and baptism is nothing but the solemn initiation of persons into this religion, by a vowed consent to it, as summarily there expressed in the christian covenant. And this was used to be openly done.

3. The use of the creed, which, at baptism and other sacred seasons, was always wont to be professed, (together with the Lord's prayer and the decalogue; the summaries of our faith, desire, and practice,) is another notable tradition; by which this religion hath been sent down to the following ages. For though perhaps all the terms of the creed were not so early, as some think, thus constantly used, yet all the sense and substance of it was.

4. The holy Scriptures, or records of this religion, containing integrally all the doctrine, and all the necessary matter of fact, is the most complete way of tradition. And it will appear to you in what further shall be said, that we have infallible proof, that these Scriptures are the same which the first churches did receive; whatever inconsiderable errors may be crept into any copies by the unavoidable oversight of the scribes.

5. The constant use of the sacred assemblies, hath been another means of sure tradition: for we have infallible proof of the successive continuation of such assemblies; and that their use was still, the solemn profession of the christian faith, and worshipping God according to it.

6. And the constant use of reading the Scriptures in those assemblies, is another full historical tradition: for that which is constantly and publicly read, as the doctrine of their religion, cannot be changed, without the notice of all the church, and without an impossible combination of all the churches in the world.

7. And it secureth the tradition that one set day hath been kept for this public exercise of religion, from the very first; even the Lord's day (besides all occasional times). The day itself being appointed to celebrate the memorial of Christ's resurrection, is a most current history of it; as the feast of unleavened bread, and the passover, was of the Israelites' deliverance from Egypt. And the exercises still performed on that day, do make the tradition more complete.

And because some few sabbatarians among ourselves do keep the old sabbath only, and call still for Scripture proof for the institution of the Lord's day; let me briefly tell them that which is enough to evince their error.

1. That the apostles were officers immediately commissioned by Christ to disciple the nations, and to teach them all that Christ commanded, and so to settle orders in the church, Matt. xxviii. 19—21; Acts xv. &c.

2. That Christ promised and gave them his Spirit infallibly to guide them in the performance of this commission, (though not to make them perfectly free from sin,) John xvi. 13.

3. That *de facto* the apostles appointed the use of the Lord's day for the church assemblies. This being all that is left to be proved, and this being matter of fact, which requireth no other kind of proof but history, part of the history of it is in the Scripture, and the rest in the history of all the following ages. In the Scripture itself it is evident that the churches and the apostles used this day accordingly. And it hath most infallible history (im-

possible to be false) that the churches have used it ever to this day, as that which they found practised in their times by their appointment: and this is not a bare narrative, but an uninterrupted matter of public fact and practice; so universal, that I remember not in all my reading, that ever one enemy questioned it, or ever one christian or heretic denied or once scrupled it. So that they who tell us that all this is yet but human testimony, do show their egregious inconsiderateness, that know not that such human testimony or history in a matter of public, constant fact, may be most certain, and all that the nature of the case will allow a sober person to require. And they might as well reject the canon of the Scriptures, because human testimony is it which in point of fact doth certify us that these are the very unaltered canonical books, which were delivered at first to the churches. Yea, they may reject all the store of historical tradition of Christianity itself, which I am here reciting to the shame of their understandings.

And consider also, that the Lord's day was settled, and constantly used in solemn worship by the churches, many and many years before any part of the New Testament was written, and above threescore years before it was finished. And when the churches had so many years been in public possession of it, who would require that the Scriptures should, after all, make a law to institute that which was instituted so long ago?

If you say, that it might have declared the institution, I answer, so it hath, as I have showed; there needing no other declaration, but, 1. Christ's commission to the apostles to order the church, and declare his commands. 2. And his promise of infallible guidance therein. 3. And the history of the churches' order and practice, to show *de facto* what they did: and that history need not be written in Scripture for the churches that then were; any more than we need a revelation from heaven to tell us that the Lord's day is kept in England. And sure the next age needed no supernatural testimony of it; and therefore neither do we: but yet it is occasionally oft intimated or expressed in the Scripture, though on the by, as that which was no further necessary.

So that I may well conclude, that we have better historical evidence that the Lord's day was actually observed by the churches, for their public worship and profession of the christian faith, than we have that ever there was such a man as William the Conqueror in England, yea, or King James; much more than that there was a Cæsar or Cicero.

8. Moreover, the very office of the pastors of the church, and their continuance from the beginning to this day, is a great part of the certain tradition of this religion. For it is most certain that the churches were constituted, and the assemblies held, and the worship performed with them, and by their conduct, and not without. And it is certain by infallible history, that their office hath been still the same, even to teach men this christian religion, and to guide them in the practice of it, and to read the same Scriptures as the word of truth, and to explain it to the people. And therefore as the judicatures and offices of the judges is a certain proof that there have been those laws by which they judge, (especially if they had been also the weekly public readers and expounders of them,) so much more is it in our case.

9. And the constant use of the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, hath, according to his appointment, been an infallible tradition of his covenant, and a means to keep him in remembrance in the churches. For when all the churches in the world have made this sacramental commemoration, and renewed covenanting with Christ as dead and risen, to be their constant public practice here, this is a tradition of that faith and covenant which cannot be counterfeit or false.

10. To this we may add, the constant use of discipline in these churches: it having been their constant law and practice, to inquire into the faith and lives of the members, and to censure or cast out those that impenitently violated their religion: which showeth, that *de facto* that faith and religion was then received; and is a means of delivering it down to us. Under which we may mention, 1. Their synods and officers. 2. And their canons by which this discipline was exercised.

11. Another tradition hath been, the published confessions of their faith and religion in those apologies, which persecutions and calumnies have caused them to write.

12. And another is, all those published confutations of the many heresies, which in every age have risen up; and all the controversies which the churches have had with them, and among themselves.

13. And another is, all the treatises, sermons, and other instructing writings of the pastors of those times.

14. And another way of tradition hath been, by the testimony and sufferings of confessors and martyrs, who have endured either torments or death, in the defence and owning of this religion. In all which ways of tradition, the doctrine and the matter were jointly attested by them. For the resurrection of Christ (which is part of the matter of fact) was one of the articles of their creed, which they suffered for. And all of them received the holy Scriptures, which declare the apostles' miracles; and they received their faith, as delivered by those apostles, with the confirmation of those miracles. So that when they professed to believe the doctrine, they especially professed to believe the history of the life and death of Christ, and of his apostles; and the religion which they suffered for, and daily professed, contained both: and the historical books called the gospels, were the chief part of the Scripture which they called The Word of God, and the records of the christian religion.

15. To this I may add, that all the ordinary prayers and praises of the churches, did continue the recital of much of this history, and of the apostles' names and acts, and were composed much in Scripture phrase, which preserved the memory, and professed the belief of all those things.

16. And the festivals or other days, which were kept in honourable commemoration of those apostles and martyrs, was another way of keeping these things in memory. Whether it were well done or not, is not my present inquiry (only I may say, I cannot accuse it of any sin, till it come to overdoing, and ascribing too much to them). But certainly it was a way of transmitting the memory of those things to posterity.

17. Another hath been by the constant commemoration of the great works of Christ, by the days or seasons of the year, which were annually observed. How far here also the church did well or ill, I now meddle not; but doubtless the observing of anniversary solemnities for their commemoration, was a way of preserving the memory of the acts themselves to posterity. How long the day of Christ's nativity hath been celebrated, I know not. Reading what Selden hath said on one side; and on the other finding no current author mention it (that I have read) before Nazianzen; and finding by Chrysostom, that the churches of the east, till his time, had differed

from the western churches, as far as the sixth of January is from the twenty-fifth of December. But that is of less moment, because Christ's birth is a thing unquestioned in itself. But we find that the time of his fasting forty days, the time of his passion, and of his resurrection, and the giving of the Holy Ghost, were long before kept in memory by some kind of observation by fasts or festivals. And though there was a controversy about the due season of the successive observation of Easter, yet that signified no uncertainty of the first day, or the season of the year. And though at first it was but few days that were kept in fasting at that season, yet they were enough to commemorate both the forty days' fasting, and the death of Christ.

18. And the histories of the heathens and enemies of the church do also declare how long christianity continued, and what they were, and what they suffered, who were called christians; such as Pliny, Celsus, Porphyry, Plotinus, Lucian, Suetonius, and others.

19. And the constant instruction of children by their parents, which is family tradition, hath been a very great means also of this commemoration. For it cannot be (though some be negligent) but that multitudes in all times would teach their children what the christian religion was, as to its doctrine and its history. And the practice of catechising, and teaching children the creed, the Lord's prayer, and the decalogue, and the Scriptures, the more secured this tradition in families.

20. Lastly, a succession of the same Spirit which was in the apostles, and of much of the same works which were done by them, was such a way of assuring us of the truth of their doctrine and history, as a succession of posterity telleth us that our progenitors were men. The same spirit of wisdom and goodness in a great degree continued after them to this day. And all wrought by their doctrine: and very credible history assureth us, that many miracles also were done, in many ages after them, though not so many as by them. Eusebius, Cyprian, Augustine, Victor Uticensis, Sulpitius Severus, and many others, show us so much as may make the belief of the apostles the more easy.

And indeed, the image of God's wisdom, goodness, and power on the souls of all true christians in the world, successively to this day, considered in itself, and in its agreement with the same image in the holy Scriptures, which do imprint it, and in its agreement or sameness as found in all ages, nations, and persons, is such a standing perpetual evidence that the christian religion is divine, that (being still at hand) it should be exceeding satisfactory to a considerate believer, against all doubts and temptations to unbelief. And were it not lest I should, instead of an index, give you too large a recital of what I have more fully written in my aforesaid treatise, I would here stay yet to show you how impossible it is that this spirit of holiness, which we feel in us, and see by the effects in others, even in every true believer, should be caused by a word of falsehood, which he abhorreth, and, as the just Ruler of the world, would be obliged to disown.

I shall only here desire you by the way to note that when I have all this while showed you that the Spirit is the great witness of the truth of christianity, that it is this Spirit of wisdom, goodness, and power, in the prophets, in Christ, in the apostles, and in all christians, expressed in the doctrine and the practices aforesaid, which I mean; as being principally the evidences, or objective witness, of Jesus Christ; and secondarily, being in all true believers their teacher, or illuminator and sanctifier, efficiently to cause them to perceive the aforesaid objective evidences in its cogent, undeniable power. And thus the Holy Ghost is the promised agent or advocate of Christ; to do his work in his bodily absence in the world: and that in this sense it is, that we believe in the Holy Ghost, and are baptized into his name; and not only as he is the third person in the eternal Trinity.

And therefore it is to be lamented exceedingly, that any orthodox teachers should recite over many of these parts of the witness of the Spirit, and when they have done, tell us, that yet all these are not sufficient to convince us without the testimony of the Spirit: as if all this were none of the testimony of the Spirit; and as if they would persuade us and our enemies, that the testimony which must satisfy us, is only some inward impress of this proposition on the mind, by way of inspiration, The Scriptures are the Word of God, and true. Overlooking the great witness of the Spirit, which is his especial work, and which our baptism relateth to, and feigning some extraordinary new thing as the only testimony.

And it is to be lamented, that papists and quarrelling sectaries should take this occasion to reproach us as infidels, that have no true grounded faith in Christ; as telling us that we resolve it all into a private, inward, pretended witness of the Spirit; and then they ask us, Who can know that witness but ourselves? And how can we preach the gospel to others, if the only cogent argument of faith be incommunicable, or such as we cannot prove? Though both the believing soul and the church be the kingdom of the Prince of light, yet oh what wrong hath the prince of darkness done, by the mixtures of darkness in them both!

So much for the first direction for the strengthening of faith; which is, by discerning the evidences of truth in our religion.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE REST OF THE DIRECTIONS FOR STRENGTHENING OUR FAITH.

I shall be more brief in the rest of the directions, for the increase of faith: and they are these.

Direct. 2. Compare the christian religion with all other in the world. And seeing it is certain that some way or other God hath revealed, to guide man in his duty, unto his end, and it is no other; you will see that it must needs be this.

1. The way of the heathenish idolaters cannot be it. The principles and the effects of their religion may easily satisfy you of this. The only true God would not command idolatry, nor befriend such ignorance, error, and wickedness as do constitute their religion, and are produced by it as its genuine fruits.

2. The way of Judaism cannot be it: for it doth but lead us up to christianity, and bear witness to Christ, and of itself is evidently insufficient; its multitude of ceremonies being but the pictures and alphabet of that truth which Jesus Christ hath brought to light, and which hath evidence, which to us is more convincing than that of the Jewish law.

3. The Mahometan delusion is so gross, that it seemeth vain to say any more against it, than it saith itself; unless it be to those who are bred up in such darkness, as to hear of nothing else, and never to see

the sun which shineth on the christian world; and withal are under the terror of the sword, which is the strongest reason of that barbarous sect.

4. And to think that the atheism of infidels is the way, (who hold only the five articles, of the unity of God, the duty of obedience, the immortality of the soul, the life of retribution, and the necessity of repentance,) is but to go against the light. For, 1. It is a denial of that abundant evidence of the truth of the christian faith, which cannot by any sound reason be confuted. 2. It is evidently too narrow for man's necessities, and leaveth our misery without a sufficient remedy. 3. Its inclusions and exclusions are contradictory: it asserteth the necessity of obedience and repentance, and yet excludeth the necessary means (the revealed light, and love, and power) by which both obedience and repentance must be had. It excludeth Christ and his Spirit, and yet requireth that which none but Christ and his Spirit can effect. 4. It proposeth a way as the only religion, which few ever went from the beginning (as to the exclusions). As if that were God's only way to heaven, which scarce any visible societies of men can be proved to have practised to this day.

Which of all these religions have the most wise, and holy, and heavenly, and mortified, and righteous, and sober persons to profess it; and the greatest numbers of such? If you will judge of the medicine by the effects, and take him for the best physician who doth the greatest cures upon the souls, you will soon conclude that Christ is the "way, the truth, and the life, and no man cometh to the Father but by him," John xiv. 6.

Direct. 3. Think how impossible it is that any but God should be the author of the christian religion.

1. No good man could be guilty of so horrid a crime as to forge a volume of delusions, and put God's name to it; to cheat the world so blasphemously and hypocritically, and to draw them into a life of trouble to promote it. Much less could so great a number of good men do this, as the success of such a cheat (were it possible) would require. There is no man that can believe it to be a deceit, but must needs believe, as we do of Mahomet, that the author was one of the worst men that ever lived in the world.

2. No bad man could lay so excellent a design, and frame a doctrine and law so holy, so self-denying, so merciful, so just, so spiritual, so heavenly, and so concordant in itself; nor carry on so high and divine an undertaking for so divine and excellent an end. No bad man could so universally condemn all badness, and prescribe such powerful remedies against it, and so effectually cure and conquer it in so considerable a part of the world.

3. If it be below any good man, to be guilty of such a forgery as aforesaid, we can much less suspect that any good angel could be guilty of it.

4. And if no bad man could do so much good, we can much less imagine that any devil or bad spirit could be the author of it. The devil, who is the worst in evil, could never so much contradict his nature, and overthrow his own kingdom, and say so much evil of himself, and do so much against himself, and do so much for the sanctifying and saving of the world: he that doth so much to draw men to sin and misery, would never do so much to destroy their sin. And we plainly feel within ourselves, that the spirit or party which draweth us to sin, doth resist the Spirit which draweth us to believe and obey the gospel; and that these two maintain a war within us.

5. And if you should say, that the good which is in christianity is caused by God, and the evil of it by the father of sin; I answer, either it is true or false: if it be true, it is so good, that the devil can never possibly be a contributor to it: nay, it cannot then be suspected justly of any evil. But if it be false it is then so bad, that God cannot be any otherwise the author of it, than as he is the author of any common natural verity which it may take in and abuse; or as his general concourse extendeth to the whole creation. But it is somewhat in christianity, which it hath more than other religions have, which must make it more pure, and more powerful and successful, than any other religions have been. Therefore it must be more than common natural truths; even the contexture of those natural truths, with the supernatural revelations of it, and the addition of a spirit of power, and light, and love, to procure the success. And God cannot be the author of any such contexture, or additions, if it be false.

6. If it be said, that men that had some good and some bad in them, did contrive it (such as those fanatics or enthusiasts, who have pious notions and words, with pride and self-exalting minds); I answer, The good is so great which is found in christianity, that it is not possible that a bad man, much less an extremely bad man, could be the author of it. And the wickedness of the plot would be so great if it were false, that it is not possible that any but an extremely bad man could be guilty of it: much less that a multitude should be found at once so extremely good as to promote it, even with their greatest labour and suffering, and also so extremely bad as to join together in the plot to cheat the world, in a matter of such high importance. Such exceeding good and evil cannot consist in any one person, much less in so many as must do such a thing. And if such a heated, brain-sick person as Hacket, Nailer, David George, or John of Leyden, should cry up themselves upon prophetical and pious pretences, their madness hath still appeared, in the mixture of their impious doctrines and practices: and if any would and could be so wicked, God never would or did assist them, by an age of numerous open miracles, nor lend them his omnipotency to deceive the world; but left them to the shame of their proud attempts, and made their folly known to all.

Direct. 4. Study all the evidences of the christian verity, till their sense, and weight, and order be thoroughly digested, understood, and remembered by you; and be as plain and familiar to you, as the lesson which you have most thoroughly learned.

It is not once or twice reading, or hearing, or thinking on such a great and difficult matter, that will make it your own, for the establishing of your faith. He that will understand the art of a seaman, a soldier, a musician, a physician, &c. so as to practise it; must study it hard, and understand it clearly and comprehensively, and have all the whole frame of it printed on his mind; and not only here and there a scrap. Faith is a practical knowledge: we must have the heart and life directed and commanded by it: we must live by it, both in the intention of our end, and in the choice and use of all the means. Whilst the gospel and the reasons of our religion are strange to people, like a lesson but half learned, who can expect that they should be settled against all temptations which assault their faith, and be able to confute the tempter? We lay together the proofs of our religion, and you read them twice or thrice, and then think that if after that you have any doubting, the fault is in the want of evidence, and not in your want of understanding: but the life of faith must cost you more labour than so: study it till you clearly understand it, and remember the whole method of the evidence together, and have it all as

at your fingers' ends, and then you may have a confirmed faith to live by.

Direct. 5. When you know what are the sorest temptations to unbelief, get all those speeial arguments and provisions into your minds, whieh are necessary against those partieular temptations. And do not strengthen your own temptations by your imprudent entertaining them.

Here are three things whieh I would especially advise you to against temptations to unbelief. 1. Enter not into the debate of so great a business when you are uneapable of it. Especially, 1. When your minds are taken up with worldly business, or other thoughts have earried them away, let not Satan then surprise you, and say, Come now and question thy religion. You eould not resolve a question in philosophy, nor cast up any long aecount, on sueh a sudden, with an unprepared mind. When the evidences of your faith are out of mind, stay till you can have leisure to set yourselves to the business with that studiousness and those helps whieh so great a matter doth require. 2. When sickness or melancholy doth weaken your understandings, you are then unfit for such a work. You would not in such a case dispute for your lives with a eunning sophister upon any diffieult question whatsoever; and will you in sueh a case dispute with the devil, when your salvation may lie upon it?

2. When your faith is once settled, suffer not the devil to eall you to dispute it over again at his command. Do it not when his suggestions urge you at his pleasure; but when God maketh it your duty, and at his pleasure: else your very disputing with Satan, will be some degree of yielding to him, and gratifying him. And he will one time or other take you at the advantage, and assault you when you are without your arms.

3. Mark what it is that atheists and infidels most object against christianity; but espceially mark what it is which Satan maketh most use of against yourselves, to shake your faith: and there let your studies be prineipally bent, that you may have particular armour to defend you against particular assaults: and get such light by communication with wiser and morc experienced men, as may furnish you for that use; that no objeetion may be made against your faith, which you are not always ready to answer. This is the true sense of 1 Pet. iii. 15, "Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear."

Direct. 6. Mark well those works of God in the world, which are the plain fulfilling of his word.

God doth not make sueh notable diffcrence by his judgments, as shall prevent the great discoveries at the last, and make his assize and final judgment to be unnecessary, by doing the same work before the time. But yet his providenees do own and bear witness to his word; and he leaveth not the world without some present sensible testimonies of his sovereign government, to convince them, and restrain them.

1. Mark how the state of the sinful world agreeth to God's description of it, and how malieiously godliness is every where opposed by them, and how notably God still easteth shame upon sinners; so that even in their prosperity and rage they are pitied and contemned in the eyes of all that are wise and sober, and in the next generation their names do rot, Psal. xv. 3, 4; Prov. x. 7. And it is wonderful to observe, that sin in the general and abstract is still spoken of by all as an odious thing, even by them that will be damned rather than they will leave it: and that virtue and godliness, charity and justiee, are still praised in the world, even by them that abhor and perseeute it.

2. And it is very observable, how most of the great ehanges of the world are made; by how small, eontemptible, and unthought-of means! espeeially where the interest of the gospel is most concerned! The instance of the reformation in Luther's time, and many others nearer to our days, would show us much of the eonjunetion of God's works with his word, if they were partieularly and wisely opened.

3. The many prodigies or extraordinary events whieh have fallen out at several times, would be found to be of use this way, if wisely eonsidered. A great number have fallen out among us of late years, of real eertainty, and of a considerable usefulness but the erafty enemy (who useth most to wrong Christ and his cause, by his most passionate, injudicious followers) prevailed with some over-forward minister of this strain, to publish them in many volumes, with the mixture of so many falsehoods and mistaken eircumstanees, as turned them to the advantage of the devil and ungodliness, and made the very mention of prodigies to become a scorn.

4. The strange deliveranees of many of God's servants in the greatest dangers, by the most unlikely means, is a great encouragement to faith; and there are a great number of christians that have experienee of sueh. The very manner of our preservations is often sueh as foreeth us to say, It is the hand of God.

5. The notable answer and grant of prayers, (of which many ehristians have eonvincing experience,) is also a great confirmation to our faith (of which I have before spoken).

6. The three sensible evidences formerly mentioned, eompared with the Scriptures, may much persuade us of its truth. I mean, 1. Apparitions. 2. Witches. 3. Satanieal possessions or diseases, which plainly deelare the operation of Satan in them: of all which I eould give you manifold and proved instanees. These, and many other instances of God's providence, are great means to help us to believe his word (though we must not, with fanatieal persons, put first our interpretation upon God's works, and then expound his word by them; but use his works as the fulfilling of his word, and expound his providenees by his preeepts, and his promises and threats).

Direct. 7. Mark well God's inward work of government upon the soul; and you shall find it very agreeable to the gospel.

There is a very great evidenee of a eertain kingdom of God within us. And as he is himself a Spirit, so it is with the spirit that he doth most apparently eonverse, in the work of his moral government in the world.

1. Therc you shall find a law of duty, or an inward eonviction of much of that obedienee whieh you owe to God.

2. There you shall find an inward mover, striving with you to draw you to perform this duty.

3. There you shall find the inward suggestions of an enemy, labouring to draw you away from this duty, and to make a godly life seem grievous to you; and also to draw you to all the sins whieh Christ forbiddeth.

4. There you shall find an inward eonvietion, that God is your Judge, and that he will eall you to aceount for your wilful violations of the laws of Christ.

5. There you shall find an inward sentenee passed upon you, aceording as you do good or evil.

6. And there you may find the sorest judgments

of God inflicted, which any short of hell endure. You may there find how God for sin doth first afflict the soul that is not quite forsaken, with troubles and affrightments, and some feeling of his displeasure. And where that is long despised, and men sin on still, he useth to withhold his gracious motions, and leave the sinner dull and senseless, so that he can sin with sinful remorse, having no heart or life to any thing that is spiritually good. And if yet the sinner think not of his condition, to repent, he is usually so far forsaken as to be given up to the power of his most brutish lust; and to glory impudently in his shame, and to hate and persecute the servants of Christ who would recover him; till he hath filled up the measure of his sin, and wrath be come upon him to the uttermost, (Ephes. iv. 18, 19; 1 Thess. ii. 15, 16,) being abominable, and disobedient, and to every good work reprobate, Titus i. 15, 16. Besides the lesser penal withdrawings of the Spirit, which God's own servants find in themselves, after some sins or neglects of grace.

7. And there also you may find the rewards of love and faithful duty; by many tastes of God's acceptance, and many comforts of his Spirit, and by his owning the soul, and giving out larger assistances of his Spirit, and peace of conscience, and entertainment in prayer, and in all approaches of the soul to God, and sweeter foretastes of life eternal. In a word, if we did but note God's dreadful judgments on the souls of the ungodly in this age, as well as we have noted our plagues and flames; and if God's servants kept as exact observations of their inward rewards and punishments, and that in particulars, as suited to their particular sins and duties; you would see that Christ is King indeed, and that there is a real government according to his gospel, kept up in the consciences or souls of men (though not so observable as the rewards and punishments at the last day).

Direct. 8. Dwell not too much on sensual objects, and let them not come too near your hearts.

Three things I here persuade you carefully to avoid: 1. That you keep your hearts at a meet distance from all things in this world; that they grow not too sweet to you, nor too great in your esteem. 2. That you gratify not sense itself too much; and live not in the pleasing of your taste or lust. 3. That you suffer not your imaginations to run out greedily after things sensible, nor make them the too frequent objects of your thoughts.

You may ask perhaps, what is all this to our faith? Why, the life of faith is exercised upon things that are not seen; and if you live upon the things that are seen, and imprison your soul in the fetters of your concupiscence, and fill your fancies with things of another nature, how can you be acquainted with the life of faith? Can a bird fly that hath a stone tied to her foot? Can you have a mind full of lust and of God at once? Or can that mind that is used to these inordinate sensualities, be fit to relish the things that are spiritual? And can it be a lover of earth and fleshly pleasures, and also a believer and lover of heaven?

Direct. 9. Use yourselves much to think and speak of heaven, and the invisible things of faith.

Speaking of heaven is needful both to express your thoughts, and to actuate and preserve them. And the often thoughts of heaven, will make the mind familiar there: and familiarity will assist and encourage faith; for it will much acquaint us with those reasons and inducements of faith, which a few strange and distant thoughts will never reach to. As he that converseth much with a learned, wise, or godly man, will easilier believe that he is learned, wise, or godly, than he that is a stranger to him, and only now and then seeth him afar off. So he that thinketh so frequently of God and heaven, till his mind hath contracted a humble acquaintance and familiarity, must needs believe the truth of all that excellency which before he doubted of. For doubting is the effect of ignorance; and he that knoweth most here, believeth best. Falsehood and evil cannot bear the light; but the more you think of them, and know them, the more they are detected and ashamed: but truth and goodness love the light; and the better you are acquainted with them, the more will your belief and love be increased.

Direct. 10. Live not in the guilt of wilful sin; for that will many ways hinder your belief.

1. It will breed fear and horror in your minds, and make you wish that it were not true, that there is a day of judgment, and a hell for the ungodly, and such a God, such a Christ, and such a life to come, as the gospel doth describe: and when you take it for your interest to be an unbeliever, you will hearken with desire to all that the devil and infidels can say: and you will the more easily make yourselves believe that the gospel is not true, by how much the more you desire that it should not be true. 2. And you will forfeit the grace which should help you to believe; both by your wilful sin, and by your unwillingness to believe: for who can expect that Christ should give his grace to them, who wilfully despise him and abuse it; or that he should make men believe, who had rather not believe? Indeed he may possibly do both these, but these are not the way, nor is it a thing which we can expect. 3. And this guilt, and fear, and unwillingness together, will all keep down your thoughts from heaven; so that seldom thinking of it will increase your unbelief: and they will make you unfit to see the evidences of truth in the gospel, when you do think of them, or hear them; for he that would not know, cannot learn. Obey therefore according to the knowledge which you have, if ever you would have more, and would not be given up to the blindness of infidelity.

Direct. 11. Trust not only to your understandings, and think not that study is all which is necessary to faith; but remember that faith is the gift of God, and therefore pray as well as study.

"Trust in the Lord with all thy heart, and lean not to thy own understanding," Prov. iii. 5. It is a precept as necessary in this point as in any. In all things God abhorreth the proud, and looketh at them afar off, as with disowning and disdain; but in no case more, than when a blind, ungodly sinner shall so overvalue his own understanding, as to think that if there be evidence of truth in the mystery of faith, he is able presently to discern it, before or without any heavenly illumination, to cure his dark, distempered mind. Remember that as the sun is seen only by his own light; so is God, our Creator and Redeemer. Faith is the gift of God, as well as repentance, Ephes. ii. 8; 2 Tim. ii. 25, 26. Apply yourselves therefore to God by earnest prayer for it. As he, Mark ix. 24, "Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief." And as the disciples, Luke xvii. 5, "Increase our faith." A humble soul that waiteth on God in fervent prayer, and yet neglecteth not to study and search for truth, is much liker to become a confirmed believer, than ungodly students, who trust and seek no further than to their books, and their perverted minds. For as God will be sought to for his grace; so those that draw near him, do draw unto the light; and therefore are like as children of light to be delivered from the power of darkness; for in his light we shall see the light that must acquaint us with him.

Direct. 12. Lastly, What measure of light soever God vouchsafeth you, labour to turn it all into love; and make it your serious care and business to know God that you may love him, and to love God so far as you know him.

For he that desireth satisfaction in his doubts, to no better end than to please his mind by knowing, and to free it from the disquiet of uncertainty, hath an end so low in all his studies, that he cannot expect that God and his grace should be called down, to serve such a low and base design. That faith which is not employed in beholding the love of God in the face of Christ, on purpose to increase and exercise our love, is not indeed the true christian faith, but a dead opinion. And he that hath never so weak a faith, and useth it to this end, to know God's amiableness, and to love him, doth take the most certain way for the confirmation of his faith. For love is the closest adherence of the soul to God, and therefore will set it in the clearest light, and will teach it by the sweet convincing way of experience and spiritual taste. Believing alone is like the knowledge of our meat by seeing it: and love is as the knowledge of our meat by eating and digesting it. And he that hath tasted that it is sweet, hath a stronger kind of persuasion that it is sweet, than he that only seeth it; and will much more tenaciously hold his apprehension: it is more possible to dispute him out of his belief, who only seeth, than him that also tasteth and concocteth. A parent and child will not so easily believe any false reports of one another, as strangers or enemies will; because love is a powerful resister of such hard conceits. And though this be delusory and blinding partiality, where love is guided by mistake; yet when a sound understanding leadeth it, and love hath chosen the truest object, it is the naturally perfective motion of the soul.

And love keepeth us under the fullest influences of God's love; and therefore in the reception of that grace which will increase our faith: for love is that act which the ancient doctors were wont to call, the principle of merit, or first meritorious act of the soul; and which we call the principle of rewardable acts. God beginneth and loveth us first, partly with a love of complacency, only as his creatures, and also as *in esse cognito*, he foreseeth how amiable his grace will make us; and partly with a love of benevolence, intending to give us that grace which shall make us really the objects of his further love; and having received this grace, it causeth us to love God: and when we love God, we are really the objects of his complacential love; and when we perceive this, it still increaseth our love: and thus the mutual love of God and man, is the true perpetual motion, which hath an everlasting cause, and therefore must have an everlasting duration. And so the faith which hath once kindled love, even sincere love to God in Christ, hath taken rooting in the heart, and lieth deeper than the head, and will hold fast and increase as love increaseth.

And this is the true reason of the stedfastness and happiness of many weak, unlearned christians, who have not the distinct conceptions and reasonings of learned men; and yet because their faith is turned into love, their love doth help to confirm their faith: and as they love more heartily, so they believe more stedfastly, and perseveringly, than many who can say more for their faith. And so much for the strengthening of your faith.

CHAPTER IX.

GENERAL DIRECTIONS FOR EXERCISING THE LIFE OF YOUR FAITH.

HAVING told you how faith must be confirmed, I am next to tell you how it must be used. And in this I shall begin with some general directions, and then proceed to such particular cases, in which we have the greatest use for faith.

Direct. 1. Remember the necessity of faith in all the business of your hearts and lives, that nothing can be done well without it. There is no sin to be conquered, no grace to be exercised, no worship to be performed, nor any acts of mercy, or justice, or worldly business, to be done well without it, in any manner acceptable to God. "Without faith it is impossible to please God," Heb. xi. 6. You may as well go about your bodily work without your eyesight, as about your spiritual work without faith.

Direct. 2. Make it therefore your care and work to get faith, and to use it; and think not that God must reveal his mind to you, as in visions, while you idly neglect your proper work. Believing is the first part of your trade of life; and the practice of it must be your constant business. It is not living ordinarily by sense, and looking when God will cast in the light of faith extraordinarily, which is indeed the life of faith; nor is it seeming to stir up faith in a prayer or sermon, and looking no more after it all the day; this is but to give God a salutation, and not to dwell and walk with him; and to give heaven a complimental visit sometimes, but not to have your conversation there, 2 Cor. v. 7, 8.

Direct. 3. Be not too seldom in solitary meditation. Though it be a duty which melancholy persons are disabled to perform, in any set, and long, and orderly manner; yet it is so needful to those who are able, that the greatest works of faith are to be managed by it. How should things unseen be apprehended so as to affect our hearts, without any serious exercise of our thoughts? How should we search into mysteries of the gospel, or converse with God, or walk in heaven, or fetch either joys or motives thence, without any retired, studious contemplation? If you cannot meditate or think, you cannot believe. Meditation abstracteth the mind from vanity, and lifteth it up above the world, and setteth it about the work of faith; which by a mindless, thoughtless, or worldly soul, can never be performed, 2 Cor. iv. 16—18; Phil. iii. 20; Matt. vi. 21; Col. iii. 1, 3.

Direct. 4. Let the image of the life of Christ, and his martyrs, and holiest servants, be deeply imprinted on your minds. That you may know what the way is which you have to go, and what patterns they be which you have to imitate; think how much they were above things sensitive, and how light they set by all the pleasures, wealth, and glory of this world. Therefore the Holy Ghost doth set before us that cloud of witnesses, and catalogue of martyrs, in Heb. xi. that example may help us, and we may see with how good company we go, in the life of faith. Paul had well studied the example of Christ, when he took pleasure in infirmities, and gloried only in the cross, to be base and afflicted in this world, for the hopes of endless glory, 2 Cor. xi. 30; xii. 5, 9, 10. And when he could say, "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ——that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death,"

Phil. iii. 8—10. No man will militate in the life of faith, but he that followeth the "Captain of his salvation," Heb. ii. 10; who for the bringing of many sons to glory (even those whom he is not ashamed to call his brethren) was made perfect (as to perfection of action or performance) by suffering; thereby to show us, how little the best of these visible and sensible corporeal things are to be valued in comparison of the things invisible: and therefore as the general and the soldiers make up one army, and militate in one militia; so "he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one," Heb. ii. 10—12. Though that which is called the life of faith in us, deserved a higher title in Christ, and his faith in his Father, and ours, do much differ, and he had not many of the objects, acts, and uses of faith, as we have who are sinners; yet in this we must follow him as our great example, in valuing things invisible, and vilifying things visible in comparison of them. And therefore Paul saith, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me," Gal. ii. 20.

Direct. 5. Remember therefore that God and heaven, the unseen things, are the final object of true faith; and that the final object is the noblest; and that the principal use of faith is to carry up the whole heart and life from things visible and temporal, to things invisible and eternal; and not only to comfort us in the assurance of our own forgiveness and salvation.

It is an exceeding common and dangerous deceit, to overlook both this principal object and principal use of the christian faith. 1. Many think of no other object of it, but the death and righteousness of Christ, and the pardon of sin, and the promise of that pardon: and God and heaven they look at as the objects of some other common kind of faith. 2. And they think of little other use of it, than to comfort them against the guilt of sin, with the assurance of their justification. But the great and principal work of faith is, that which is about its final object; to carry up the soul to God and heaven, where the world, and things sensible, are the *terminus a quo*, and God, and things invisible, the *terminus ad quem*: and thus it is put in contradistinction to living by sight, in 2 Cor. v. 6, 7. And thus mortification is made one part of this great effect, in Rom. vi. throughout, and many other places: and thus it is that Heb. xi. doth set before us those numerous examples of a life of faith, as it was expressed in valuing things unseen, upon the belief of the word of God, and the vilifying of things seen which stand against them. And thus Christ tried the rich man, (Luke xviii. 22,) whether he would be his disciple, by calling him to sell all, and give to the poor, for the hopes of a treasure in heaven. And thus Christ maketh bearing the cross, and denying ourselves, and forsaking all for him, to be necessary in all that are his disciples. And thus Paul describeth the life of faith, (2 Cor. iv. 17, 18,) by the contempt of the world, and suffering afflictions for the hopes of heaven: "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." Our faith is our victory over the world, even in the very nature of it, and not only in the remote effect; for its aspect and believing approaches to God and the things unseen, and a proportionable recess from the things which are seen, is one and the same motion of the soul, denominated variously from its various respects to the *terminus ad quem* and *a quo*.

Direct. 6. Remember, that as God to be believed in, is the principal and final object of faith; so the kindling of love to God in the soul, is the principal use and effect of faith; and to live by faith, is but to love (obey and suffer) by faith. Faith working by love, is the description of our christianity, Gal. v. 6. As Christ is the way to the Father, (John xiv. 6,) and came into the world to recover apostate man to God, to love him, and be beloved by him; so the true use of faith in Jesus Christ is to be as it were the bellows to kindle love; or the burning-glass as it were of the soul, to receive the beams of the love of God, as they shine upon us in Jesus Christ, and thereby to inflame our hearts in love to God again. Therefore if you would live by faith indeed, begin here, and first receive the deepest apprehensions of that love of the Father, "who so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life:" and by these apprehensions, stir up your hearts to the love of God; and make this very endeavour the work and business of your lives.

Oh that mistaken christians would be rectified in this point! How much would it tend to their holiness and their peace! You think of almost nothing of the life of faith; but how to believe that you have a special interest in Christ, and shall be saved by him: but you have first another work to do; you must first believe that common love and grace before-mentioned, John iii. 16; 2 Cor. v. 19, 20, 14, 15; 1 Tim. ii. 16; Heb. ii. 9. And you must believe your own interest in this; that is, that God hath, by Christ, made to all, and therefore unto you, an act of oblivion, and free deed of gift, that you shall have Christ, and pardon, and eternal life, if you will believingly accept the gift, and will not finally reject it. And the belief of this, even of this common love and grace, must first persuade your hearts accordingly to accept the offer, (and then you have a special interest,) and withal, at the same time, must kindle in your souls a thankful love to the Lord and fountain of this grace: and if you were so ingenuous as to begin here, and first use your faith upon the aforesaid common gift of Christ, for the kindling of love to God within you, and would account this the work which faith hath every day to do; you would then find that in the very exciting and exercise of this holy love, your assurance of your own special interest in Christ would be sooner and more comfortably brought about, than by searching to find either evidence of pardon before you find your love to God; or to find your love to God before you have laboured to get and exercise it.

I tell you, they are dangerous deceivers of your souls, that shall contradict this obvious truth; that the true method and motive of man's first special love to God, must not be by believing first God's special love to us; but by believing his more common love and mercy in the general act and offer of grace before mentioned. For he that believeth God's special love to him, and his special interest in Christ, before he hath any special love to God, doth sinfully presume, and not believe. For if by God's special love, you mean his love of complacency to you, as a living member of Christ; to believe this before you love God truly, is to believe a dangerous lie: and if you mean only God's love of benevolence, by which he decreeth to make you the objects of his foresaid complacency, and to sanctify and save you; to believe this before you truly love God, is to believe that which is utterly unknown to you, and

may be false for aught you know, but it is not at all revealed by God, and therefore is not the object of faith.

Therefore if you cannot have true assurance or persuasion of your special interest in Christ, and of your justification, before you have a special love to God, then this special love must be kindled (I say not by a common faith, but) by a true faith in the general love and promise mentioned before.

Nay, you must not only have first this special love, but also must have so much knowledge that indeed you have it, as you will have knowledge of your special interest in Christ, and the love of God: for no act of faith will truly evidence special grace, which is not immediately and intimately accompanied with true love to God, our Father and Redeemer, and the ultimate object of our faith: nor can you any further perceive or prove the sincerity of your faith itself, than you discern in or with it the love here mentioned. For faith is not only an act of the intellect, but of the will also: and there is no volition or consent to this or any offered good, which hath not in it the true nature of love: and the intention of the end, being in order of nature, before our choice or use of means; the intending of God as our end, cannot come behind that act of faith, which is about Christ as the chosen means or way to God.

Therefore make this your great and principal use of your faith, to receive all the expressions of God's love in Christ, and thereby to kindle in you a love to God; that first the special true belief of God's more common love and grace, may kindle in you a special love, and then the sense of this may assure you of your special interest in Christ; and then the assurance of that special interest, may increase your love to a much higher degree; and thus live by faith in the work of love.

Direct. 7. That you may understand what that faith is which you must live by, take in all the parts (at least that are essential to it) in your description; and take not some parcels of it for the christian faith; nor think not that it must needs be several sorts of faith, if it have several objects; and hearken not to that dull, philosophical subtlety, which would persuade you that faith is but some single physical act of the soul.

1. If you know not what faith is, it must needs be a great hinderance to you, in the seeking of it, the trying it, and the using it. For though one may use his natural faculties, which work by natural inclination and necessity, without knowing what they are; yet it is not so where the choice of the rational appetite is necessary; for it must be guided by the reasoning faculty. And though unlearned persons may have and use repentance, faith, and other graces, who cannot define them, yet they do truly (though not perfectly) know the thing itself, though they know not the terms of a just definition: and all defect of knowing the true nature of faith, will be some hinderance to us in using it.

2. It is a moral subject which we are speaking of; and terms are to be understood according to the nature of the subject: therefore faith is to be taken for a moral act, which comprehendeth many physical acts: such as is the act of believing in or taking such a man for my physician, or my master, or my tutor, or my king. Even our philosophers themselves know not what doth individuate a physical act of the soul (nay, they are not agreed whether its acts should be called physical properly, or not). Nay, they cannot tell what doth individuate an act of sense; whether when my eye doth at once see many words and letters of my book, every word or letter doth make as many individual acts, by being so many objects? And if so, whether the parts of every letter also do not constitute an individual act; and where shall we here stop? And must all these trifles be considered in our faith? Assenting to the truths is not one faith, (unless when separated from the rest,) and consenting to the good, another act: nor is it one faith to believe the promise, and another to believe the pardon of sin, and another to believe salvation, and another to believe in God, and another to believe in Jesus Christ; nor one to believe in Christ as our ransom, and another as our intercessor, and another as our teacher, and another as our king, and another to believe in the Holy Ghost, &c. I deny not but some one of these may be separated from the rest, and being so separated may be called faith; but not the christian faith, but only a material parcel of it, which is like the limb of a man, or of a tree, which, cut off from the rest, is dead, and ceaseth when separated to be a part, any other than logical (a part of the description).

The faith which hath the promise of salvation, and which you must live by, hath, 1. God for the principal Revealer, and his veracity for its formal object. 2. It hath Christ, and angels, and prophets, and apostles, for the sub-revealers. 3. It hath the Holy Ghost by the divine attesting operations before described, to be the seal and the confirmer. 4. It hath the same Holy Ghost for the internal exciter of it. 5. It hath all truths of known divine revelation, and all good of known divine donation, by his covenant, to be the material general object. 6. It hath the covenant of grace, and the holy Scriptures, (and formerly the voice of Christ and his apostles,) or any such sign of the mind of God, for the instrumental efficient cause of the object *in esse cognito;* and also the instrumental efficient of the act. 7. It hath the true Deity, God himself, as he is to be known and loved, inceptively here, and perfectly in heaven, for the final and most necessary material object. 8. It hath the Lord Jesus Christ entirely in all essential to him, as God and man, and as our Redeemer or Saviour, as our ransom, intercessor, teacher, and ruler, for the most necessary, mediate, material object. 9. It hath the gifts of pardon, justification, the Spirit of sanctification or love, and all the necessary gifts of the covenant, for the material, never-final objects. And all this is essential to the christian faith, even to that faith which hath the promise of pardon and salvation: and no one of these must be totally left out in the definition of it, if you would not be deceived. It is heresy, and not the christian faith, if it exclude any one essential part; and if it include it not, it is infidelity: and indeed there is such a connexion of the objects, that there is no part (in truth) where there is not the whole. And it is impiety if any one part of the offered good that is necessary be refused. It is no true faith, if it be not a true composition of all these.

Direct. 8. There is no nearer way to know what true faith is, than truly to understand what your baptismal covenanting did contain.

In Scripture phrase, to be a disciple, a believer, and a christian, is all one, Acts xi. 26; v. 14; 1 Tim. iv. 12; Matt. x. 42; xxvii. 57; Luke xiv. 26, 27, 33; Acts xxi. 16; John ix. 28. And to be a believer, and to have belief or faith, is all one; and therefore to be a christian and to have faith is all one. Christianity signifieth either our first entrance into the christian state, or our progress in it. (As marriage signifieth either matrimony, or the conjugal state continued in.) In the latter sense christianity signifieth more than faith; for more than faith is necessary to a christian. But in the former sense, as christianity signifieth but our becoming

christians, by our covenanting with God, so to have faith, or to be a believer, and internally to become a christian in Scripture sense, is all one; and the outward covenanting is but the profession of faith or christianity: not that the word faith is never taken in a narrower sense, or that christianity, as it is our heart-covenant or consent, containeth nothing but faith, as faith is so taken in the narrowest sense: but when faith is taken (as ordinarily in Scripture) for that which is made the condition of justification and salvation, and opposed to heathenism, infidelity, Judaism, or the works of the law, it is commonly taken in this larger sense.

Faith is well enough described to them, that understand what is implied, by the usual shorter description; as, that it is a believing acceptance of Christ and relying on him as our Saviour, or for salvation: or, a belief of pardon, and the heavenly glory, as procured by the redemption wrought by Christ, and given by God in the covenant of grace; but the reason is, because all the rest is con-noted, and so to be understood by us, as if it were expressed in words: but the true and full definition of it is this:

The christian faith which is required at baptism, and then professed, and hath the promise of justification and glorification, is a true belief of the gospel, and an acceptance of and consent unto the covenant of grace: particularly, a believing that God is our Creator, our Owner, our Ruler, and our chief good; and that Jesus Christ is God and man, our Saviour, our Ransom, our Teacher, and our King; and that the Holy Ghost is the Sanctifier of the church of Christ: and it is an understanding, serious consent, that this God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be my God and reconciled Father in Christ, my Saviour, and my Sanctifier; to justify me, sanctify me, and glorify me, in the perfect knowledge of God, and mutual complacence in heaven; which belief and consent wrought in me by the word and Spirit of Christ, is grounded upon the veracity of God as the chief revealer, and upon his love and mercy as the donor; and upon Christ and his apostles as the messengers of God; and upon the gospel, and especially the covenant of grace, as the instrumental revelation and donation itself; and upon the many signal operations of the Holy Ghost, as the divine, infallible attestation of their truth.

Learn this definition, and understand it thoroughly, and it may prove a more solid, useful knowledge, (to have the true nature of faith or christianity thus methodically printed on your minds,) than to read over a thousand volumes in a rambling and confused way of knowledge.

If any quarrel at this definition, because the foundation is not first set down, I only tell him that no logicians do judge of the logical order of words by the mere priority and posteriority of place. And if any think that here is more than every true christian doth understand and remember, I answer, that here is no more than every true christian hath a true knowledge of; though perhaps every one have not a knowledge, so methodical, explicit, and distinct, as to define faith thus, or to think so distinctly and clearly of it, as others do, or to be able by words to express to another, what he hath a real conception of in himself. There is first in the mind of man a conception of the object or matter (by those words or means which introduce it); and next that *verbum mentis*, or inward word, which is a distincter conception of the matter in the mould of such notions as may be expressed; and next the *verbum oris*, the word of mouth expressing it. Now many have the conception of the matter, long before they have the *verbum mentis*, or logical notions of it; and many have the *verbum mentis*, who by a hesitating tongue are hindered from oral expressions; and in both there are divers degrees of distinctness and clearness.

Direct. 9. Turn not plain gospel doctrine into the philosophical fooleries of wrangling and ill-moulded wits; nor feign to yourselves any new notions, or offices of faith, or any new terms as necessary, which are not in the holy Scriptures.

I do not say, use no terms which are not in the Scriptures; for the Scriptures were not written in English: nor do I persuade you to use no other notions than the Scriptures use; but only that you use them not as necessary, and lay not too great a stress upon them. I confess new heresies may give occasion for new words (as the bishops in the first council of Nice thought): and yet as Hilary vehemently inveigheth against making new creeds on such pretences, and wisheth no such practice had been known (not excepting theirs at Nice) because it taught the heretics and contenders to imitate them; and they that made the third creed, might have the like arguments for it as those that made the second; and he knew not when there would be an end: so I could wish that there had been no new notions in the doctrine of faith, so much as used, for the same reasons; and especially because that while the first inventors do but use them, the next age which followeth them will hold them necessary, and lay the churches' communion and peace upon them.

For instance, I think the word satisfaction, as used by the orthodox, is of a very sound sense in our controversies against the Socinians; and yet I will never account it necessary, as long as it is not in the Scriptures, and as long as the words sacrifice, ransom, price, propitiation, atonement, &c. which the Scripture useth, are full as good.

So I think that imputing Christ's righteousness to us, is a phrase which the orthodox use in a very sound sense; and yet as long as it is not used by the Spirit of God in the Scriptures, and there are other phrases enough, which as well, or better, express the true sense, I will never hold it necessary.

So also the notions and phrases of faith being the instrument of our justification, and faith justifieth only objectively, and that faith justifieth only as it receiveth Christ's blood, or Christ's righteousness, or Christ as a priest; that faith is only one physical act; that it is only in the understanding, or only in the will; that its only justifying act is recumbency, or resting on Christ for justification; that it is not an action, but a passion; that all acts of faith save one, and that one as an act, are the works which Paul excludeth from our justification; and that to expect justification by believing in Christ for sanctification, or glorification, or by believing in him as our Teacher, or King, or justifying Judge, or by repenting, or loving God, or Christ, as our Redeemer, or by confessing our sins, and praying for pardon and justification, &c. is to expect justification by works, and so to fall from grace or true justification; that he that will escape his pernicious expectance of justification by works, must know what that one act of faith is by which only we are justified, and must expect justification by it only relatively, (that is, not by it at all, but by Christ, say some,) or as an instrument, (say others,) &c.

Many of these assertions are pernicious errors; most of them false; and the best of them are the unnecessary inventions of men's dark yet busy wits, who condemn their own doctrine by their practice, and their practice by their doctrine; whilst they cry

up the sufficiency of the Scriptures, and cry down other men's additions, and yet so largely add themselves.

Direct. 10. Take heed lest parties and contendings tempt you to lay so much upon the right notion or doctrines of faith, as to take up with these alone as true christianity; and to take a dead opinion, instead of the life of faith.

This dogmatical christianity cheateth many thousands into hell, who would scarce be led so quietly thither, if they knew that they were indeed no christians. It is ordinary, by the advantages of education, and converse, and teachers, and books, and studies, and the custom of the times, and the countenance of christian rulers, and for reputation, and worldly advantage, &c. to fall into right opinions about Christ, and faith, and godliness, and heaven; and tenaciously to defend these in disputings; and perhaps to make a trade of preaching of it: and what is all this to the saving of the soul, if there be no more? And yet the case of many learned, orthodox men, is greatly to be pitied, who make that a means to cheat and undo themselves, which should be the only wisdom and way to life; and know but little more of christianity, than to hold, and defend, and teach sound doctine, and to practise it so far as the interest of the flesh will give them leave; I had almost said, so far as the flesh itself will command them to do well, and sin itself forbiddeth sin; that it may not disgrace them in the world, nor bring some hurt or punishment upon them.

Direct. 11. Set not any other graces against faith; as raising a jealousy, lest the honouring of one be a diminution of the honour of the other: but labour to see the necessary and harmonious consent of all, and how all contribute to the common end.

Though other graces are not faith, and have not the office proper to faith; yet every one is conjunct in the work of our salvation, and in our pleasing and glorifying God: some of them being the concomitants of faith, and some of them its end, to which it is a means: yea, ofttimes the words faith and repentance are used as signifying much of the same works, the latter named from the respect to the term from which, and the former from the respect to part of the term to which, the soul is moving: and faith is oft taken as containing somewhat of love and desire in it; and he that will without any prejudice and partiality study Paul where he opposeth faith and works, as to our justification, shall find by his almost constant naming "the works of the law," or by the context and analysis, that indeed his chief meaning is to prove, that we are justified by the christian religion, and must be saved by it, and not by the Jewish, which the adversaries of christianity then pleaded for, and trusted to.

Direct. 12. Set not the helps of faith as if they were against faith; but understand their several places and offices, and use them accordingly.

Do not like those ignorant, self-conceited heretics, who cry out, It is by believing, and not by repenting, or reading, or hearing sermons, or by praying, or by forbearing sin, or by doing good, that we are justified; and therefore it is by faith only that we are saved; the same which is sufficient for our justification, being sufficient for our salvation; seeing the justified cannot be condemned; and justification and salvation are both equally ascribed to faith without the works of the law, by the apostle. For we are justified only by such a faith, as is caused by God's word, and maintained and actuated by hearing, reading, meditation, prayer, and sacraments; and as is accompanied by repentance, and worketh by love, and is indeed the beholding of those invisible and glorious motives, which may incite our love, and set us on good works, and obedience to our Redeemer. And he that by negligence omitteth, or by error excludeth any one of these in the life of faith, will find that he hath erred against his own interest, peace, and comfort, if not against his own salvation. And that he might as wisely have disputed that it is his eyes only that must see his way, and therefore he may travel without his legs.

Direct. 13. Take heed lest a misconceit of the certainty of some common philosophical opinions, should make you stagger in those articles of faith which seem to contradict them.

Not indeed that any truths can be contrary one to another: for that which is true in philosophy, is contrary to no one truth in theology; but philosophers have deceived themselves and the world, with a multitude of uncertainties and falsities; and by straining them to subtle niceties, and locking them up in uncouth terms, have kept the common people from trying them and understanding them; and thereby have made it their own prerogative explicitly to err, and the people's duty not to contradict them; but to admire that error as profound parts of learning, which they cannot understand. And then their conclusions oft go for principles which must not be gainsaid, when they are perhaps either false or nonsense. And when they meet with any thing in Scripture, which crosses their own opinions, the reputation of human folly maketh them despise the wisdom of God. I have given you elsewhere some instances about the immortality of the soul: they know not what generation is; they do not know it: nor what are the true principles and elements of mixed bodies; nor what is the true difference between immaterial and material substances; with a hundred such like: and yet some expect, that we should sacrifice the most certain useful truths, to their false or uncertain useless suppositions, which is the true reason why Paul saith, "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy, and vain deceit, (not true philosophy, which is the true knowledge of the works of God, but the vain models which every sect of them cried up,) after the tradition of men, (that is, the opinions of the masters of their sects,) after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ: for in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily: and ye are complete in him," Col. ii. 8—10. See Acts xvii. 18. It is Christ who is the kernel and summary of the christian philosophy; who is therefore called "The wisdom of God," (1 Cor. i. 24, 30,) both because he is the heavenly Teacher of true wisdom, and because that true wisdom consisteth in knowing him. And indeed even in those times, the several sects of philosophers accounted much of each other's principles to be erroneous; and the philosophers of these times begin to vilify them all; and withal to confess that they have yet little of certainty to substitute in the room of the demolished idols; but they are about their experiments, to try if any thing in time may be found out.

Direct. 14. Especially take heed lest you be cheated into infidelity, by the Dominicans' metaphysical doctrine, of the necessity of God's physical predetermining promotion as the first total cause, to the being of every action natural and free, not only *in genere actionis*, but also as respectively and comparatively exercised on this object rather than on that.

I add this only for the learned, who are as much in danger of infidelity as others; and will use it to the greater injury of the truth. I will meddle now with no other reasons of my advice, but what the subject in hand requireth. If God can and do thus

premove and predetermine the mind, will, and tongue of every liar in the world, to every lie (or material falsehood) which ever they did conceive or speak, there would be no certainty of the gospel, nor of any divine revelation at all: seeing all such certainty is resolved into God's veracity; that God cannot lie. And God speaketh not to us by any but a created voice: and if he can thus predetermine others to those words which are a lie, rather than to the contrary which are true, there would be no certainty, but he may do so by prophets and apostles: and let them tell you what they will of the greater certainty of inspirations and miracles, than of predeterminations, it will be found upon trial, that no man can prove, or make it so much as probable, that any inspiration hath more of a divine causation, than such a premoving predetermination as aforesaid doth amount to; much less so much more, as will prove that one is more certain than the other.

This doctrine therefore which undeniably (whatever may be wrangled) taketh down christianity, and all belief of God or man, is not to be believed merely upon such a philosophical conceit, that every action is a being, and therefore must in all its circumstances be caused by God. As if God were not able to make a faculty, which can determine its own comparative act to this rather than to that, by his sustentation, and universal precausation and concourse, without the said predetermining premotion: whenas an action as such is but a *modus entis;* and the comparative exercise of it, on this rather than on that, is but a *modus vel circumstantia modi.* And they leave no work for gracious determination, because that natural determination doth all the same thing (equally to duty and sin) without it.

Direct. 15. Consider well how much all human converse is maintained by the necessary belief of one another, and what the world would be without it; and how much you expect yourselves to be believed; and then think how much more belief is due to God.

Though sin hath made the world so bad, that we may say, that all men are liars, that is, deceitful vanity, and little to be trusted; yet the honesty of those that are more virtuous, doth help so far to keep up the honour of veracity, and the shamefulness of lying, that throughout the word, a lie is in disgrace, and truth in speech and dealing is well spoken of. And the remnants of natural honesty in the worst, do so far second the true honesty of the best, that no man is so well spoken of commonly in the world, as a man of truth and trustiness, whose word is his law and master, and never speaketh deceitfully to any; nor is any man so commonly ill spoken of as a knave, as he that will lie, and is not to be trusted: insomuch, that even those debauched ruffians, who live as if they said in their hearts, There is no God, will yet venture their lives in revenge against him that shall give them the lie. Perhaps you will say, that this is not from any virtue or natural law, or honesty, but from common interest, there being nothing more the interest of mankind, than that men be trusty to each other. To which I answer, that you oppose things which are conjunct; it is both: for all God's natural laws are for the interest of mankind, and that which is truly most for our good, is made most our duty; and that which is most our duty, is most for our good. And that which is so much for the interest of mankind, must needs be good; if it were not for credibility and trustiness in men, there were no living in families; but masters and servants, parents and children, husbands and wives, would live together as enemies; and neighbours would be as so many thieves to one another: there could be no society or commonwealth, when prince and people could put no trust in one another: nay, thieves themselves, that are not to be trusted by any others, do yet strengthen themselves by confederacies, and oaths of secresy, and gather into troops and armies, and there put trust in one another. And can we think that God is not much more to be trusted, and is not a greater hater of a lie? and is not the fountain of all fidelity? and hath not a greater care of the interest of his creatures? Surely he that thinketh that God is a liar, and not to be trusted, will think no better of any mortal man or angel, (and therefore trusteth no one, and is very censorious,) and would be thought no better of himself, and therefore would have none believe or trust him: for who would be better than his God?

Direct. 16. Consider also that veracity in God is his nature or essence; and cannot be denied without denying him to be God.

For it is nothing but his three essentialities, or principles, power, wisdom, and goodness, as they are expressed in his word or revelations, as congruous to his mind, and to the matter expressed. He that neither wanteth knowledge, (to know what to say and do,) nor goodness, (to love truth, and hate all evil,) nor power to do what he please, and to make good his word, cannot possibly lie; because every lie is for want of one or more of these, Heb. vi. 18; Titus i. 2. And there, as it is said, that he cannot lie, and that it is impossible; so it is called a denying of himself, if he could be unfaithful. "If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful, and cannot deny himself," 2 Tim. ii. 13.

Direct. 17. Exercise faith much in those proper works, in which self and sense are most denied and overcome.

Bodily motions and labours which we are not used to, are done both unskilfully and with pain. If faith be not much exercised in its warfare and victorious acts, you will neither know its strength, nor find it to be strong, when you come to use it. It is not the easy and common acts of faith, which will serve turn to try and strengthen it. As the life of sense is the adversary which faith must conquer: so use it much in such conflicts and conquests, if you would find it strong and useful: use it in such acts of mortification and self-denial, as will plainly show that it overruleth sense: use it in patience and rejoicing in such sufferings, and in contentment in so low and cross a state, where you are sure that sight and sense do not contribute to your peace and joy: use it not only in giving some little of your superfluities, but in giving your whole two mites, even all your substance, and selling all and giving to the poor, when indeed God maketh it your duty; at least in forsaking all for his sake in a day of trial. Faith never doth work so like itself, so clearly, so powerfully, and so comfortably, as in these self-denying and overcoming acts, when it doth not work alone, without the help of sense to comfort us; but also against sense, which would discourage us, Luke xviii. 22, 23; xiv. 26, 33; 2 Cor. v. 7.

Direct. 18. Keep a constant observation of God's converse with your hearts, and workings on them.

For, as I said before, there are within us such demonstrations of a kingdom of God, in precepts, mercies, rewards, and punishments, that he which well marketh them, will have much help in the maintaining and exercising his belief of the everlasting kingdom: especially the godly, who have that Spirit there working, which is indeed the very seal, and pledge, and earnest of life eternal, 2 Cor. i. 22; v. 5; Eph. i. 13, 14; Gal. iv. 5, 6; Rom. viii. 16, 17. There is so much of God and heaven in a true be-

liever's heart, that (as we see the moon and stars when we look down into the water, so) we may see much of God and heaven within us, if the heart itself be throughly studied.

And I must add, that experiences here must be carefully recorded: and when God fulfilleth promises to us, it must not be forgotten.

Direct. 19. Converse much with them that live by faith, and fetch their motives and comforts from the things unseen.

Converse hath a transforming power. To converse with them that live all by sense, and show no other desires, or joys, or sorrows, but what are fetched from fleshly, sensible things, is a great means to draw us downwards with them. And to converse with them who converse in heaven; and speak of nothing else so comfortably or so seriously; who show us that heaven is the place they travel to, and the state that all their life doth aim at; and who make little of all the wants or plenty, pains or pleasures, of the flesh; this much conduceth to make us heavenly. As men are apt to learn and use the language, the motives, and the employments of the country and people where they live; so he that is most familiar with such as live by faith, upon things unseen, and taketh God's promise for full security, hath a very great help to learn and live that life himself, Heb. x. 24, 25; 1 Thess. iv. 17, 18; Phil. iii. 20, 21.

Direct. 20. Forget not the nearness of the things unseen, and think not of a long continuance in this world; but live in continual expectations of your change.

Distant things, be they never so great, do hardly move us; as in bodily motion, the mover must be contiguous: and as our senses are not fit to apprehend beyond a certain distance; so our minds also are finite, and have their bounds and measure; and sin hath made them much narrower, foolish, and short-sighted than they would have been. A certainty of dying at last, should do much with us: but yet he that looketh to live long on earth, will the more hardly live by faith in heaven; when he that daily waiteth for his change, will have easily the more serious and effectual thoughts of the world in which he must live next, and of all the preparations necessary thereunto; and will the more easily despise the things on earth, which are the employment and felicity of the sensual, Col. iii. 1—3; Phil. i. 20—23; 1 Cor. xv. 31. As we see it in constant experience in men; when they see that they must presently die indeed, how light then set they by the world! How little are they moved with the talk of honour, with the voice of mirth, with the sight of meat, or drink, or beauty, or any thing which before they had not power to deny! And how seriously they will then talk of sin and grace, of God and heaven, which before they could not be awakened to regard! If therefore you would live by faith indeed, set yourselves as at the entrance of that world which faith foreseeth, and live as men that know they may die to-morrow, and certainly must be gone ere long. Dream not of I know not how many years more on earth, which God never promised you; unless you make it your business to vanquish faith by setting its objects at a greater distance than God hath set them. Learn Christ's warning to one and all, To watch, and to be always ready, Mark xiii. 33, 35, 37; 1 Pet. iv. 7; Matt. xxiv. 44; Luke xii. 40. He that thinketh he hath yet time enough, and daylight before him, will be the apter to loiter in his work or journey; when every man will make haste when the sun is setting, if he have much to do, or far to go. Delays, which are the great preventers of repentance, and undoers of the world, do take their greatest advantage from this ungrounded expectation of long life. When they hear the physician say, He is a dead man, and there is no hope, then they would fain begin to live, and then how religious and reformed would they be! Whereas if this foolish error did not hinder them, they might be of the same mind all their lives, and might have then done their work, and waited with desire for the crown; and said with Paul, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing," 2 Tim. iv. 6—8.

And so much for the general directions to be observed by them that will live by faith: I only add, that as the well-doing of all our particular duties dependeth most on the common health and soundness of the soul, in its state of grace; so our living by faith in all the particular cases after instanced, doth depend more upon these general directions, than on the particular ones which are next to be adjoined.

PART III.

CHAPTER I.

AN ENUMERATION OF THE PARTICULAR CASES IN WHICH ESPECIALLY FAITH MUST BE USED. 1. HOW TO LIVE BY FAITH ON GOD.

The general directions before given must be practised in all the particular cases following, or in order to them; but besides them, it is needful to have some special directions for each case. And the particular cases which I shall instance in are these: 1. How to exercise faith on God himself. 2. Upon Jesus Christ. 3. Upon the Holy Ghost. 4. About the Scripture precepts and examples. 5. About the Scripture promises. 6. About the threatenings. 7. About pardon of sin, and justification. 8. About sanctification, and the exercises of other graces. 9. Against inward vices and temptations to actual sin. 10. In case of prosperity. 11. In adversity and particular afflictions. 12. In God's worship, public and private. 13. For spiritual peace and joy. 14. For the world, and the church of God. 15. For our relations. 16. In loving others as ourselves. 17. About heaven, and following the saints. 18. How to die in faith. 19. About the coming of Christ to judgment.

God is both the object of our knowledge, as he is revealed in nature, and of our faith, as he is revealed in the holy Scriptures. He is the first and last object of our faith. "It is life eternal to know him the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent." "Ye believe in God, believe also in me," was Christ's order in commanding and causing faith, John xiv. 1. Seeing therefore this is the principal part of faith, (to know God, and live upon him, and to him,) I shall give you many (though brief) directions in it.

Direct. 1. Behold the glorious and full demonstrations of the being of the Deity, in the whole frame of nature, and especially in yourselves.

The great argument from the effect to the cause is unanswerable. All the caused and derived beings in the world, must needs have a first being for their cause. All action, intellection, and volition, all power, wisdom, and goodness, which is caused by another, doth prove that the cause can have no less than the total effect hath. To see the world, and to know what a man is, and yet to deny that there is a God, is to be mad. He that will not know that which all the world doth more plainly preach than words can possibly express, and will not know the sense of his own being and faculties, doth declare himself uncapable of teaching, Psal. xiv. 1; xlix. 12, 20; Isa. i. 2, 3. It is the greatest shame that man's understanding is capable of, to be ignorant of God, 1 Cor. xv. 34; and the greatest shame to any nation, Hos. iv. 1; vi. 6; as it is the highest advancement of the mind to know him, and therefore the sum of all our duty, Prov. ii. 5; Hos. vi. 6; 2 Chron. xxx. 21, 22; Isa. xi. 9; 2 Pet. ii. 20; Rom. i. 20, 28; John xvii. 3.

Direct. 2. Therefore take not the being and perfections of God, for superstructures and conclusions, which may be tried, and made bow to the interest of other points; but as the greatest, clearest, surest truths, next to the knowledge of our own being and intellection: and that which all other (at least, not the proper objects of sense) must be tried and reduced to.

When there is no right method or order of knowledge, there is no true and solid knowledge. It is distraction, and not knowing, to begin at the top, and to lay the foundation last, and reduce things certain to things uncertain. And it is no wiselier done of atheists, who argue from their apprehensions of other things, against the beings or perfections of God. As when they say, There is much evil in the world permitted by God, and there is death and many tormenting pains befall even the innocent brutes; and there are wars and confusions; and ignorance and wickedness have dominion in the earth: therefore God is not perfectly good, nor perfectly wise, and just, and powerful in his government of the world. The error in the method of arguing here, helpeth to continue their blindness. That God is perfectly good, is *prius cognitum*. Nothing is more certain than that he who is the cause of all the derived goodness in the whole universe, must have as much or more than all himself. Seeing therefore that heaven and earth, and all things, bear so evident a witness to this truth, this is the foundation and first to be laid, and never more questioned, nor any argument brought against it. For all that possibly can be said against it, must be *a minus notis*, from that which is more obscure. Seeing then that it is most certain by sense, that calamities and evils are in the world; and no less certain that there is a God, who is most perfectly good; it must needs follow that these two are perfectly consistent, and that some other cause of evil must be found out, than any imperfection in the chief good. But as to the being of things, and order in the world, it followeth not that they must be as good and perfect as their Maker and Governor is himself; nor one part as good and perfect in itself as any other. Because it was not the Creator's purpose when he made the world, to make another God, that should be equal with himself (for two infinite beings and perfections is a contradiction). But it was his will to imprint such measures of his own likeness and excellences upon the creatures, and with such variety, as his wisdom saw fittest; the reasons of which are beyond our search. The divine agency, as it is in him the agent, is perfect; but the effect hath those measures of goodness which he was freely pleased to communicate.

And as I have given you this instance, to show the folly of trying the certain foundation by the less certain notions or accidents in the world; so you must abhor the same error in all other instances. Some wit may consist with the questioning of many plain conclusions; but he is a fool indeed, who saith, "There is no God," or doubteth of his essential properties, Psal. xiv. 1, 2; Rom. i. 19—21.

Direct. 3. Remember that all our knowledge of God, while we are in the body here, is but enigmatical, and as in a glass; and that all words which man can speak of God (at least except being and substance) are but terms below him, borrowed from his image on the creatures, and not signifying the same thing formally in God, which they signify in us.

If you think otherwise, you will make an idol in your conception, instead of God; and you will debase him, and bring him down to the condition of the creature. And yet it doth not follow that we know nothing of him, or that all such expressions of God are vain, or false, or must be disused; for then we must not think or talk of God at all. But we must speak of him according to the highest notions which we can borrow from the noblest parts of his image; confessing still, that they are but borrowed: and these must be used till we come nearer, and see as face to face; and "when that which is perfect is come, then that which is imperfect shall be done away," 1 Cor. xiii. 10—12. And yet it is (in comparison of darker revelations) as with open face that we behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord; and it is a sight that can change us into the same image, as from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord, 2 Cor. iii. 18.

Direct. 4. Abhor the furious ignorance which brandeth every one with the names of heresy or blasphemy, who differ from them in the use of some unnecessary metaphor of God, when their different phrases tend not indeed to his dishonour, and perhaps may have the same signification with their own.

When we are all forced to confess, that all our terms of God are improper or metaphorical, and yet men will run those metaphors into numerous branches, and carry them unto greater impropriety, and then rail at all as blasphemers that question them; this practice is (though too common) a heinous sin in them, as it hath direful effects upon the church. Should I recite the sad histories of this iniquity, and show what it hath done between the Greek and Latin churches, and between those called orthodox and catholic, and many through the world that have been numbered with heretics; it would be too large a subject for our sorrow and complaints.

Direct. 5. Abhor presumptuous curiosities in inquiring into the secret things of God; much more in pretending to know them; and most of all in reviling and contending against others upon those pretences.

It is sad to observe abundance of seemingly learn-

ed men, who are posed in the smallest creature which they study, yet talking as confidently of the unsearchable things of God, yea, and raving as furiously and voluminously against all that contradict them, as if they had dwelt in the inaccessible light, and knew all the order of the acts of God, much better than they know themselves, and the motions of their own minds; or better than they can anatomize a worm or a beast. They that will not presume to say, that they know the secrets of their prince, or the heart of any of their neighbours; yea, they that perceive the difficulty of knowing the state of a man's own soul, because our hearts are a maze and labyrinth, and our thoughts so various and confused, can yet give you so exact a scheme of all God's conceptions, that it shall be no less than heresy to question the order of any part of it. They can tell you what ideas are in the mind of God, and in what order they lie; and how those ideas are the same unchanged about things that are changed; about things past, and present, and to come; and what futurition was from eternity, as in the idea of God's mind: they can tell me in what order he knoweth things, and by what means; and whether future contingents are known to him in their causes, or in his decree, or in their co-existence in eternity. They can tell what decrees he hath about negatives; as that such a man shall not have faith given him; that millions of things possible shall not be; that you shall not be a plant, or a beast, nor any other man, nor called by any other name, &c.: and how all God's decrees are indeed but one, and yet not only unconceivably numerous, but the order of them as to priority and posteriority is to be exactly defined and defended, though to the detriment of charity and peace. As to sin, they can tell you whether he have a real positive decree, *de re eveniente*, or only *de eventu rei*, or only *de propria permissione eventus*, i. e. *de non impediendo*, i. e. *de non agendo;* whether *non agere* need and have a positive act of volition or nolition antecedent: though they know not when they hear the sound of the wind, either whence it cometh, or whither it goeth; yet know they all the methods of the Spirit. They know how God, as the first mover, predetermineth the motions of all agents, natural and free, and whether his influence be upon the essence, or faculty, or act immediately, and what that influx is. In a word, how voluminously do they darken counsel by words without knowledge! As if they had never read God's large expostulation with Job, Job xxxviii. &c. "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us, and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law," Deut. xxix. 29. Even an angel could say to Manoah, "Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is secret?" Judges xiii. 18. "No man hath seen God at any time, (saving) the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father; he hath declared him," John i. 18. And what he hath declared we may know; but how much more do these men pretend to know, than ever Christ declared! But "who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor?" Rom. xi. 34.

Etiam vera de Deo loqui periculosum. Even things that are true should be spoken of God, not only with reverence, but with great caution. And a wise man will rather admire and adore, than boldly speak what he is not certain is true and congruous.

Direct. 6. Let all your knowledge of God be practical; yea, more practical than any other knowledge; and let not your thoughts once use God's name in vain.

If it be a sin to use idle or unprofitable words, and especially to take God's name in vain; it cannot be faultless to have idle, unprofitable thoughts of God: for the thoughts are the operations of the mind itself. There is no thought or knowledge which ever cometh into our minds, which, 1. Hath so great work to do; and, 2. Is so fit and powerful to do it, as the knowledge and thoughts which we have of God. The very renovation of the soul to his image, and transforming it into the divine nature, must be wrought hereby. The thoughts of his wisdom, must silence all our contradicting folly, and bring our souls to an absolute submission and subjection to his laws. The knowledge of his goodness, must cause all true saving goodness in us, by possessing us with the highest love to God. The knowledge of his power, must cause both our confidence and our fear; and the impress of God's attributes must be his image on our souls. It is a common (and true) observation of divines, that in Scripture words of God which express his knowledge, do imply his will and affections (as his knowing the way of the righteous, Psal. ii. 6, is his approving and loving it, &c.): and it is as true, that words of our knowledge of God, should all imply affection towards him. It is a grievous aggravation of ungodliness to be a learned, ungodly man: "To profess to know God, and deny him in works, being abominable and disobedient, and reprobate to every good work," Titus i. 16 (though as orthodox and ready in good words as others.)

A thought of God should be able to do any thing upon the soul. It should partake of the omnipotency and perfection of the blessed object. No creature should be able to stand before him, when our minds entertain any serious thoughts of him, and converse with him. A thought of God should annihilate all the grandeur and honours of the world to us; and all the pleasures and treasures of the flesh; and all the power of temptations. What fervency in prayer! what earnestness of desire! what confidence of faith! what hatred of sin! what ardent love! what transporting joy! what constant patience, should one serious thought of God possess the believing, holy soul with!

If the thing known become as much one with the understanding, as Plotinus and other Platonists thought; or if man were so far partaker of a kind of deification, as Gibieuf and other oratorians, and Benedictus de Benedictis, Barbanson, and other fanatic friars, think; surely the knowledge of God should raise us more above our sensitive desires and passions, and make us a more excellent sort of persons, and it should make us more like those blessed spirits who know him more than we on earth; and it should be the beginning of our eternal life, John xvii. 3.

Direct. 7. By faith deliver up yourselves to God as your Creator and your Owner, and live to him as those that perceive they are absolutely his own.

The word "God" doth signify both God's essence, and his three great relations unto man, and we take him not for our God, if we take him not as in these divine relations. Therefore God would have faith to be expressed at our entrance into his church, by baptism; because a believing soul doth deliver up itself to God. The first and greatest work of faith, is to enter us sincerely into the holy covenant; in which this is the first part, that we take God for our Owner, and resign up ourselves to him, without either express or implicit reserve, as those that are absolutely his own. And though these words are by any hypocrite quickly spoken, yet when the thing is really done, the very heart of sin is broken; for as the apostle saith, "He that is dead is freed from sin,"

Rom. vi. 7. Because a dead man hath no faculties to do evil. So we may say, He that is resigned to God as his absolute Owner, is freed from sin; because he that is not his own, hath nothing which is his own, and therefore hath nothing to alienate from his Owner. "We are not our own, we are bought with a price," (which is the second title of God's propriety in us,) and therefore "must glorify God in body and spirit, as being his," 1 Cor. vi. 20.

And from this relation faith will fetch abundant consolation, seeing they that by consent, and not only by constraint, are absolutely his, shall undoubtedly be loved and cared for as his own, and used and provided for as his own. He will not neglect his own, and those of his family, who will take us to be worse than infidels, if we do so, 1 Tim. v. 8.

Direct. 8. By faith deliver up yourselves to God, as your sovereign Ruler, with an absolute resolution to learn, and love, and obey his laws.

Though I have often and more largely spoken of these duties in other treatises, I must not here totally omit them, where I speak of that faith in God, which essentially consisteth in them. It is a narrow, and foolish, and pernicious conceit of faith, which thinketh it hath no object but promises and pardon; and that it hath nothing to do with God as our sovereign Governor. And it is too large a description of faith, which maketh actual and formal obedience to be a part of it. As marriage is not conjugal fidelity and duty, but it is a covenant which obligeth to it; and as the oath of allegiance is not a formal obedience to the laws, but it is a covenanting to obey them; and as the hiring or covenant of a servant, is not doing service, but it is an entering into an obligation and state of service: so faith and our first christianity, is not strictly formal obedience to him that we believe in, as such; but it is an entering of ourselves by covenant into an obligation and state of future obedience. Faith hath God's precepts for its objects as truly as his promises; but his own relation as our King or Ruler is its primary object, before his precepts, Hos. xiii. 10; Psal. ii. 6; v. 2; x. 16; xxiv. 7, 8, 10; xlvii. 6, 7; lxxxix. 18; cxlix. 2; Rev. xv. 3; 1 Tim. i. 17; Luke xix. 27.

Direct. 9. By faith acknowledge God as your total benefactor; from him you have, and must have, all that is worth the having; and accordingly live in a dependence on him.

Faith taketh every good thing as a stream from this inexhausted spring, and as a token of love from this unmeasurable love. It knoweth a differenee in the means and way of conveyance, but no difference as to the fountain; for all that we receive is equally from the same original; though not sent to us by the same hand. Faith should not take or look at any good abstractedly, as separated from God; but ever see the streams as continued up to the fountain; and the fruit as proceeding from the tree and roots. Remember still that he doth illuminate you by the sun; and he doth nourish you by your food (for you live not by bread only, but by his word and blessing); and it is he that doth teach you by his ministers, and protect you by his magistrates, and comfort you by your friends. You have that from one, which another cannot give you; but you have nothing from any creature whatsoever, which is not totally from God; for though he honour creatures to be his messengers or instruments, the benefit is equally from him, when he useth an instrument, and when he useth none. From him we have our being and our comforts, and all the means and hopes of our well-being; and therefore our dependence must be absolutely on him. The blessings of this life, and of that to come, all things which appertain to life and godliness, are the gifts of his incomprehensible benignity. For it is natural to him, who is infinitely good, to do good, when he doth work *ad extra*? though when to communicate, and in what various degrees, is free to him, 1 Tim. iv. 8; Matt. vi. 33; 2 Pet. i. 3; Psal. cxlv. 14, 15; cxlvi. 7; xviii. 50; 1 Tim. vi. 17; James i. 5; iv. 6; Jer. v. 24, 25.

Direct. 10. By faith set your eye and your heart most fixedly and devotedly on God, as your ultimate end (which is your felicity, and much more).

He taketh not God for God indeed, who taketh him not as his ultimate end. Nay, he debaseth God, who placing his felicity in any thing else, doth cleave to God but as the means to such a felicity. But to make God our felicity is lawful and necessary; but not to dream that this is the highest respect that we must have to God, to be our felicity. To love him, and to be beloved by him, to please him, and to be pleased in him, is our ultimate end; which though it be complex, and contain our own felicity, yet doth it, as infinitely supereminent, contain the complacency of God, and God as the object of our love, considered in his own infinite perfections: for he is the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last; "and of him, and through him, and to him are all things," Rom. xi. 36. It is the highest and noblest work of faith, to make our own original to be our end, and to set our love entirely upon God; and to see that we ourselves are but worms and vanity; capable of no higher honour, than to be means to please and glorify God; and must not take down God so, as to love him only for ourselves. And he only who thus denieth himself for God, doth rightly improve self-love, and seek the only exaltation and felicity, by carrying up himself to God, and adhering to the eternal good, 1 Cor. x. 31; Luke xiv. 33; Matt. xvi. 25; Mark viii. 35.

Direct. 11. Distinguish these relations of God, but divide them not; much less set them in any opposition to each other; and remember that the effects of them are all marvellously and harmoniously mixed, but undivided.

The effects of God's power, are always the effects also of his wisdom and goodness: and the effects of his wisdom, are always the effects of his goodness and his power: and the effects of his goodness, are always the effects of his power and his wisdom. The effects of his dominion on his rational subjects, are always the effects also of his government and love: and the effects of his government, are always the effects also of his dominion and love: and the effects of his love as Benefactor, are always the effects of his dominion and government. Though some one principal, and some one relation, may more eminently appear in one work, as others do in the other works. Disposal is the effect of propriety; but it is always a regular and loving disposal of the subjects of his government. Legislation and judgment are the effects of his kingdom; but dominion and love have a hand in both, till rebellion turn men from subjection. Glorification is the highest effect of love; but it is given also by our Owner, as by one that may do as he list with his own; and by our Governor by the way of a reward, Matt. xx. 15; 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8; Matt. xxv. throughout.

Direct. 12. Especially let faith unveil to you the face of the goodness of God; and see that your thoughts of it be neither false nor low; but equal to your thoughts of his power and understanding.

1. As our loss by sin is more in the point of goodness than of power or knowledge (the devils having much of the two last, who have but little or nothing of the first); so it is the goodness of God which must be more studied by a believer, than his power

or his wisdom, because the impress of it is more necessary to us in our lapsed state.

2. They have false thoughts of God's goodness, who make it to consist only, or chiefly, in a communicative inclination *ad extra*, which we call benignity: for he was as good from eternity, before he made any creature, as he is since; and his goodness considered as essential in himself, and as his own perfection, is infinitely higher than the consideration of it, as terminated on any creature. Man is denominated good from his adaptation to the will of God, and not God chiefly from his adaptation to the commodity or will of man. And they do therefore debase God, and deify his creature, who make the creature the ultimate end of God and itself; and not God the ultimate end of the creature. And they might as well make the creature the beginning also of itself and God. (And yet this sottish notion taketh much with many half-witted novelists in this age, who account themselves the men of ingenuity.)

And they have also false thoughts of the goodness of God, who think that there is nothing of communicative benignity in it at all. For all the good which God doth, he doth it from the goodness of his nature. "Thou art good, and docst good," Psal. cxix. 68. And his doing good is usually expressed by the phrase of being good to them. "The Lord is good to all," Psal. cxlv. 9; xxv. 8; lxxxvi. 5.

Object. But if communicative benignity be natural to God as his essential goodness is, then he must do good *per modum naturæ, et ad ultimum potentiæ;* and then the world was from eternity, and as good as God could make it.

Answ. 1. Those christian divines who do hold that the universe was from eternity, and that it is as good as God can make it; do not yet hold that it was its own original, but an eternal emanation from God, and therefore that God who is the beginning of it, is the ultimate end, and eternally and voluntarily, though naturally and necessarily, produced it for himself, even for the pleasure of his will: and therefore that God's essential goodness, as it is in itself, is much higher than the same as terminated in, or productive of, the universe. And that no mixed bodies which do *oriri et interire*, are generated and corrupted, were from eternity; and consequently, that this present system called the world, which is within our sight, was not from eternity; but that as spring and fall doth revive the plants, and end their transitory life, so it hath been with these particular systems, the simpler and nobler parts of the universe continuing the same. And they hold that the world is next to infinitely good, and as good as it is possible to be without being God; and that for God to produce another God, or an infinite good, is a contradiction: and that all the baser, and pained, and miserable parts of the world, are best respectively to the perfection of the whole, though not best in and to themselves. (As every nuck and pin in a watch is necessary as well as the chief parts.) And that all things set together, it is best that all things be as they are, and will be. But of this, the Infinite Wisdom, who seeth not only some little parts, but the whole universe at one perfect view, is the fittest judge.

2. But the generality of divines do hold the contrary, and say, that it is natural to God to be the all-sufficient, pregnant good; not only able to communicate goodness, but inclined to it, as far as his perfection doth require; but not inclined to communicate in a way of natural, constant necessity, as the sun shineth, but in a way of liberty, when, and in what degrees, he pleaseth; which pleasure is guided by his infinite understanding, which no mortal man can comprehend; and therefore must not ask any further reason of the first reason and will, but stop here, and be satisfied to find that it is indeed God's will and reason, which causeth all things when and what they are and not otherwise. And that God hath not made the universe as good in itself, as by his absolute power he could have made it; but that it is best to be as it is and will be, because it is most suitable to his perfect will and wisdom. And this answer seemeth most agreeable to God's word.

And as you must see that your thoughts of God's goodness be not false; so also that they be not diminutive and low. As no knowledge is more useful and necessary to us, so nothing is more wonderfully revealed by God, than is his amiable goodness: for this end he sent his Son into flesh, to declare his love to the forlorn world, and to call them to behold it, and admire it, John i. 8—10; iii. 16; 1 John iii. 1; Rev. xxi. 3. And as Christ is the chief glass of the Father's love on this side heaven; so it is the chief part of the office of faith, to see God's love and goodness in the face of Christ. Let him not reveal his love in vain, at so dear a rate, and in a way of such wonderful condescension. Think of his goodness, as equal to his greatness: and as you see his greatness in the frame of the world; so his goodness in the wonderful work of man's redemption and salvation. Let faith beholding God in Christ, and daily thus gazing on his goodness, or rather tasting it, and feasting on it, be the very sum of all your religion and your lives. This is indeed to live by faith, when it worketh by that love which is our holiness and life.

Direct. 13. Let not faith overlook the books of the creation, and the wonderful demonstrations of God's attributes therein.

Even such revelations of God's goodness and fidelity as are made in nature, or the works of creation, are sometimes in Scripture made the objects of faith. At least we who by the belief of the Scriptures do know how the worlds were made, (Heb. xi. 2, 3,) must believingly study this glorious work of our great Creator. All those admirations and praises of God as appearing in his works, which David useth, were not without the use of faith. Thus faith can use the world as a sanctified thing, and as a glass to see the glory of God in, while sensual sinners use it against God to their own perdition, and make it an enemy to God and them; so contrary is the life of faith and of sense. He hath not the heart of a man within him, who is not stricken with admiration of the power, and wisdom, and goodness of the incomprehensible Creator, when he seriously looketh to the sun and stars, to sea and land, to the course of all things, and to the wonderful variety and natures of the particular creatures. And he hath not the heart of a believer in him, who doth not think, Oh what a God is it whom I am bound to serve, and who hath taken me into his covenant as his child! How happy are they who have such a God, engaged to be their God and happiness! And how miserable are they who make such a God their revenging judge and enemy! Shall I ever again wilfully or carelessly sin against a God of so great majesty? If the sun were an intellectual deity, and still looked on me, should I presumptuously offend him? Shall I ever distrust the power of him that made such a world? Shall I fear a worm, a mortal man, above this great and terrible Creator? Shall I ever again resist or disobey the word and wisdom of him, who made and ruleth such a world? Doth he govern the whole world, and should not I be governed by him? Hath he goodness enough to communicate

as he hath done to sun and stars, to heaven and earth, to angels and men, and every wight? and hath he not goodness enough to draw, and engage, and continually delight this dull and narrow heart of mine? Doth the return of his sun turn the darksome night into the lightsome day, and bring forth the creatures to their food and labour; doth its approach revive the torpid earth, and turn the congealed winter into the pleasant spring, and cover the earth with the fragrant, many-coloured robes, and renew the life and joy of the terrestrial inhabitants; and shall I find nothing in the God who made and still continueth the world, to be the life, and strength, and pleasure of my soul? "Make a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands: sing forth the honour of his name; make his praise glorious: say unto God, How terrible art thou in thy works!—Come and see the works of God: he is terrible in his doing towards the children of men.—He ruleth by his power for ever: his eyes behold the nations: let not the rebellious exalt themselves. O bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of his praise to be heard! who holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved!" Psal. lxvi. 1, &c. "Among the gods there is none like unto thee, O Lord, neither are there any works like unto thy works. All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord, and shall glorify thy name: for thou art great and dost wondrous things: thou art God alone," Psal. lxxxvi. 8—10. "O Lord, how great are thy works! Thy thoughts are very deep, a brutish man knoweth not, neither doth a fool understand this," Psal. xcii. 5, 6.

Faith doth not separate itself from natural knowledge, nor neglect God's works while it studieth his word; but saith, "I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the work of thy hands," Psal. cxliii. 5. "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches; so is the great and wide sea," &c. Psal. civ. 24.

Nay, it is greatly to be noted, that as redemption is to repair the creation, and the Redeemer came to recover the soul of man to his Creator, and Christ is the way to the Father; so on the Lord's day our commemoration of redemption includeth and is subservient to our commemoration of the creation, and the work of the ancient sabbath is not shut out, but taken in with the proper work of the Lord's day: and as faith in Christ is a mediate grace to cause in us the love of God, so the word of the Redeemer doth not call off our thoughts from the works of the great Creator, but call them back to that employment, and fit us for it by reconciling us to God.

Therefore it is as suitable to the gospel church at least, as it was to the Jewish, to make God's works the matter of our sabbath praises, and to say, as Psal. cxlv. 4, 5, 10. "One generation shall praise thy works to another; and shall declare thy mighty acts: I will speak of the glorious honour of thy Majesty, and of thy wondrous works: and men shall speak of the might of thy terrible acts, and I will declare thy greatness.—All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord, and thy saints shall bless thee." "I will wash my hands in innocency, and so I will compass thine altar, O Lord, that I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works," Psal. xxvi. 6, 7. "I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart, I will show forth all thy marvellous works," Psal. ix. 12.

Direct. 14. Let faith also observe God in his daily providences; and equally honour him for the ordinary and the extraordinary passages thereof.

The upholding of the world is a continual causing of it; and differeth from creation, as the continued shining of a candle doth from the first lighting of it. If therefore the creation do wonderfully declare the power, and wisdom, and goodness of God; so also doth the conversation. And note that God's ordinary works are as great demonstrations of him in all his perfections, as his extraordinary. Is it not as great a declaration of the power of God, that he cause the sun to shine, and to keep its wondrous course from age to age, as if he did such a thing but for a day or hour? and as if he caused it to stand still a day? And is it not as great a demonstration of his knowledge also, and of his goodness? Surely we should take it for as great an act of love, to have plenty, and health, and joy continued to us as long as we desired it, as for an hour. Let not then that duration and ordinariness of God's manifestations to us, which is their aggravation, be looked upon as if it were their extenuation; but let us admire God in the sun and stars, in sea and land, as if this were the first time that ever we had seen them.

And yet let the extraordinariness of his works have its effects also. Their use is to stir up the drowsy mind of man to see God in that which is unusual, who is grown customary and lifeless in observing him in things usual. Pharaoh and his magicians will acknowledge God, in those unusual works, which they are no way able to imitate themselves, and say, "This is the finger of God," Exod. viii. 19. And therefore miracles are never to be made light of, but the finger of God to be acknowledged in them, whoever be the instrument or occasion, Luke xi. 20.

There are frequently also some notable, though not miraculous, providences in the changes of the world, and in the disposal of all events, and particularly of ourselves, in which a believer should still see God; yea, see him as the total cause, and take the instruments to be next to nothing; and not gaze all at men as unbelievers do; but say, "This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes," Psal. cxviii. 23. "Sing unto the Lord a new song; for he hath done marvellous things," Psal. xcviii. 1. "Marvellous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well," Psal. cxxxix. 14.

Direct. 15. But let the chief study of faith for the knowledge of God, be of the face of Jesus Christ; and the most wonderful mystery of his incarnation, and our redemption.

For God is nowhere else so fully manifested to man in that goodness, love, and mercy, which it most concerneth us to know; and the knowledge of which will be most healing and sanctifying to the soul: but of this I must speak more in the chapter next following.

Direct. 16. Let faith make use of every mercy, not only to acknowledge God therein, but to have a pleasant taste and relish of his love.

For thus it is that they are all sanctified to believers, and this is the holy use of mercies. Remember that as in order to understanding, your eyes and ears are but the passages or inlets to your minds; and if sights and sounds went no farther than the senses, you would be no better, if not worse, than beasts. So also in order to affection, the taste and sense of sweetness or any other pleasure, is to pass by the sense unto the heart; and what should it do there, but affect the heart with the love and goodness of the giver. A beast tasteth as much of the sensitive sweetness of his food and ease as you do: but it is the believer who heartily saith, How good is the Author and End of all this mercy! Whence is it that this cometh? and whither doth it tend? "I love the Lord because he hath heard the voice of my

supplication," Psal. cxvi. 1. "Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness." Psal. cxlv. 15, 16, "The eyes of all things wait on thee; thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thy hand, and satisfiest the desires of every living thing." He leaveth not himself without witness in that he doth good, and giveth us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness, Acts xiv. 17. The near conjunction of soul and body, and the near relation of God and his mercies, do tell us plainly, that every pleasure which toucheth the sense, should touch the heart, and reach unto the soul itself; and that as the creature is fitted to the sense, and God is suitable to the soul; so the creature should be but God's servant to knock and cause us to open the door to himself, and the way of his communication and accession to the heart. Therefore so great a judgment is threatened against the Israelites in their prosperity, if they did not serve God with joyfulness and gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things, Deut. xxviii. 47. And therefore the days in which men were to rejoice in God with the greatest love and thankfulness, were appointed to be days of feasting, that the pleasure of the bodily senses might promote the spiritual pleasure and gratitude of the mind, 2 Chron. xix. 21; xxix. 30; Neh. viii. 17; xii. 27; Esther ix. 17—19; Numb. x. 10.

Direct. 17. Let faith feel God's displeasure in every chastisement and judgment.

For we must be equally careful that we despise them not, and that we faint not under them, Heb. xii. 5. They that pretend that it is the work of faith to see nothing in any affliction but the love and benefit, do but set one act of faith against another: for the same word which telleth us that it shall turn to a true believer's good, doth tell us that it is of itself a natural evil; and that as the good is from God's love, so the evil is from our sins, and his displeasure; and that he would give us the good without the evil, if man were without sin. He therefore that believeth not that it is a castigatory punishment for sin, is an unbeliever, as well as he that believeth not the promise of the benefit, Rom. v. 12, 14, 16—18; 1 Cor. xi. 30, 32; Jer. v. 25; Micah i. 5; Amos iii. 2.

Yea, this opinion directly frustrateth the first end and use of all chastisements, which is to further men's repentance for the evil of sin, by the sense of the evil of punishment, and the notice of God's displeasure manifested thereby: and next to make us warnings to others, that they incur not the same correction and displeasure as we have done. For he that saith, there is no penalty or evil in the suffering, nor no displeasure of God expressed thereby, doth contradict all this. But as it is a great benefit which we are to reap by our corrections, even the furtherance of our repentance and amendment; so it is a great work of faith, to perceive the bitterness of sin and the displeasure of God in these corrections: of which more anon.

Direct. 18. Faith must hear the voice of God in all his word, and in all the counsel which by any one he shall send us.

When sense taketh notice of nothing but a book, or of none but a man, faith must perceive the mind and message of God; not only in preachers, (2 Cor. v. 19, 20; 1 Thess. ii. 13; Titus ii. 5; Heb. xiii. 7,) but also in the mouth of wicked enemies, when it is indeed the will of God which they reveal. And so David heard the curse of Shimei, speaking to him the rebukes of God, for his sin in the matter of Uriah, 2 Sam. xvi. 10, 11. And Paul rejoiced that Christ was preached by men of envy and strife, who did it to add affliction to his bonds, Phil. i. 18. Moses perceived the will of God in the counsel of Jethro, even in as great a matter as the governing and judging of the people, Exod. xviii. 19. The counsel of the ancients which Rehoboam forsook, was the counsel of God which he rejected, 1 Kings xii. 8. David blessed God for the counsel of a woman, Abigail. Whoever be the messenger, a believer should be acquainted with the voice of God, and know the true significations of his will. The true sheep of Christ do know his voice, and follow him, because they are acquainted with his word; and though the preacher be himself of a sinful life, he can distinguish between God and the preacher; and will not say, it is not the word of God, because it cometh from a wicked mouth. For he hath read Psal. l. 16, where God saith to the wicked, "What hast thou to do to take my covenant in thy mouth, seeing thou hatest instruction, and hast cast my words behind thee?" but he never read to the godly, saith God, Why didst thou hear a wicked preacher? He hath read, "The scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' chair, hear them, but do not as they do;" but he never read, Hear none that live not according to their doctrine. An unbeliever will not know Christ's word, if a Judas be the preacher of it; but a believer can read the commission of Judas, or at least can understand whose counsel he delivereth: and though he would be loth to choose a Judas, or to prefer him before a holy man; yet if workers of iniquity do preach in Christ's name, he leaveth it to Christ to say at judgment, "I know you not," Matt. vii. 21, 22; Acts i. 17, 24.

Direct. 19. Faith must not look at God now and then, and leave the soul in ordinary forgetfulness of him; but remember that he is always present, and must make us rather forget them that are talking to us, or conversing with us, than to forget the Lord.

Nothing is more the work of faith, than to see him who is invisible, Heb. xi. 27. And to live as one that still remembereth that God standeth by; to think as one that knoweth that our thoughts are always in his sight, and to speak and do as one that forgetteth not, that he is the constant and most reverend witness of all. To hear, and pray, and live, and labour as if we saw the God who employeth us, and will reward us, Matt. vi. 4, 6; Isa. lix. 18; Rev. xx. 12; Matt. xvi. 27; Rom. ii. 6.

Direct. 20. Faith must lay the heart of man to rest in the will of God, and to make it our chief delight to please him, and quietly to trust him whatever cometh to pass: and to make nothing of all that would rise up against him, or entice us from him, or would be to us as in his stead.

Faith seeth that it is the pleasing of the will of God, which is all our work, and all our reward: and that we should be fully pleased in the pleasing of him: and that there is no other rest for the soul to be thought on, but the will of God: and it must content the soul in him alone, 2 Thess. i. 11; Col. iii. 20; 1 Cor. vii. 32; 1 Thess. iv. 1; 2 Tim. ii. 4; Heb. xi. 6; Matt. iii. 17; xvii. 5; Heb. xiii. 16; Psal. xvi. 5; lxxiii. 26; cxix. 57; cxlii. 5.

As God is often called jealous, especially over the heart of man; so faith must make us jealous of ourselves, and very watchful against every creature, which would become any part of the felicity or ultimate object of our souls. God is so great to a believing soul, that ease and honour, wealth and pleasure, and all men high and low, must be as dead and nothing to us, when they speak against him, or would be loved, or feared, or trusted, or obeyed before him, or above him. It is as natural to a true life of faith on God, to make nothing of the encroach-

ing creature, as for our beholding the sun, to make nothing of a candle. And thus is faith our victory over the world, 1 John v. 4; Jer. xvii. 5; Isa. ii. 22; 1 Cor. xv. 28; Ephes. iv. 6; Col. iii. 11.

CHAPTER II.

DIRECTIONS HOW TO LIVE BY FAITH ON JESUS CHRIST.

So much is said already towards this in opening the grounds of faith, as will excuse me from being prolix in the rest: and the following parts of the life of faith, are still supposed as subordinate to these two which go before.

Direct. 1. Keep still the true reasons of Christ's incarnation and mediation upon your mind, (as they are before expressed,) else Christ will not be known by you as Christ. Therefore the Scriptures are much in declaring the reasons of Christ's coming into the world: as, to be a sacrifice for sin; to declare God's love and mercy to sinners; to seek and to save that which was lost; to destroy the works of the devil, &c. 1 Tim. i. 15; 1 John iii. 8; Heb. ii. 14; Luke xix. 10; Rom. v. 10; 1 John iii. 1; Gal. iv. 4, 6, &c. Let this name or description of Christ be engraven as in capital letters upon your minds, THE ETERNAL WISDOM OF GOD INCARNATE TO REVEAL AND COMMUNICATE HIS WILL, HIS LOVE, HIS SPIRIT TO SINFUL, MISERABLE MAN.

Direct. 2. See therefore that you join no conceit of Christ which dishonoureth God, and is contrary to this character, and to God's design.

Many by mistaking the doctrine of Christ's intercession, do think of God the Father, as one that is all wrath and justice, and unwilling of himself to be reconciled unto man: and of the second Person in the Trinity, as more gracious and merciful, whose mediation abateth the wrath of the Father, and with much ado maketh him willing to have mercy on us. Whereas it is the love of God which is the original of our redemption, and it was God's loving the world, which provoked him to give his Son to be their Redeemer, John iii. 16; Rom. viii. 32. "And God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing to them their trespasses," 2 Cor. v. 19. And therefore we still read of Christ's reconciling man to God, and not the phrase of his reconciling God to man: not but that both are truly wrought by Christ's mediation (for the Scripture frequently speaketh of God's hating the workers of iniquity, and of his vindictive justice, and of that propitiating and atonement which signifieth the same thing); but the reason is, because the enmity began on man's part, and not on God's, by man's forsaking God, and turning his love from him to the creature, and not by God's forsaking man: and the change of man's state and heart towards God, by true reconciliation, will make him again capable of peace with God; and as soon as man is made an object fit for the complacency of God, it cannot be but that God will again take complacency in him: so that the real change must be only on man; and then that relative or denominative change which must be on God, will thence immediately result.

Some also there be who gather from Christ's death, that God desired the sufferings of Christ as pleasing to him in itself; as if he made a bargain with Christ to sell so much mercy to man, for so much blood and pains of Christ; and as if he so delighted in the blood of the innocent, that he would the willinglier do good to us, if he might first forsake and crucify Christ. But this is to contradict Christ's business in the world, as if he who came from heaven to declare God's love, had come to declare him to delight in doing hurt; and as if he who came to demonstrate God's justice, had come to show, that he had rather punish the innocent than the guilty: but the case is quite otherwise: God doth not delight in man's sufferings as such; no, not of the guilty, much less of the innocent: he desired not Christ's suffering for itself; but as it was a convenient means to demonstrate his justice and his holiness, and to vindicate the honour of his government and law, and to be a warning to sinners, not to sin presumptuously; and yet to declare to them the greatness of his love.

And some are ready to gather from Christ's propitiation, that God is now more reconcilable to sin, and so they blaspheme him as if he were unholy: as if he made a smaller matter of our misdoings, since he is satisfied for them by a Mediator. And they are ready to gather, that God can now take complacency in man, though he have no inherent holiness at all, because of the righteousness of Christ imputed to him. And some take God's imputation of Christ's righteousness to us, to be a reputing us to be the persons, who ourselves fulfilled the law in or by Christ; so that his very attributes of wisdom, and love, and holiness, and justice, and mercy, &c. which Christ came purposely to declare, are by some denied, blasphemed, or abused, on pretence of extolling Christ and our redemption; as if we might sin that grace may abound, Rom. vi. 1, 2. "But if while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid," Gal. ii. 17.

Direct. 3. Distinguish between the common and the special benefits of man's redemption by Christ; and see how the latter do suppose the former; and set not these parts against each other, which God in wisdom hath joined together.

To pass by all other the great and notable common benefit, is the conditional covenant of grace; or the conditional pardon of sin, and gift of eternal life to all without exception, John iii. 16; Mark xvi. 15, 16; Rom. x. 9; Matt. vi. 14, 15; xxii. 7—9. And this general conditional promise must be first preached; and the preaching of this is the universal or common call and offer of grace: and it must be first believed as is before said. But the actual belief of it, according to its true intent and meaning, doth prove our actual personal title to all the benefits which were before given but conditionally, John iii. 16; 1 John v. 10—12; 2 Cor. v. 19—21.

Direct. 4. Accordingly judge how far redemption is common or speeial, by the common and special benefits procured.

For no man can deny but it is so far common, as the benefits are common: that is, so far as to procure and give to sinners a common conditional pardon as aforesaid (as Dr. Twisse very often taketh notice). And no man can affirm, that it is common to all, so far as absolutely or eventually to give them actual pardon and salvation, unless they dream that all are saved. But that some eventually and infallibly are saved all confess: and we had rather think that Christ and the good pleasure of God is the chief differencing causc, than we ourselves.

Direct. 5. Set not the several parts of the office of Christ against each other; nor either depress or forget any one part, while you magnify and meditate only on the other.

It is most ordinary to reduce all the office of Christ

to the prophetical, priestly, and kingly part. (For it is more proper to call them three parts of one office, than three offices.) But it is hard to reduce his incarnation, or his infant-humiliation, and his whole course of obedience, and fulfilling the law, to any one, or all of these, totally. Though in some respect, as it is his example, it is teaching; and as it is part of his humiliation, it may be called a part of his sacrifice; yet as it is meritorious, obedience and perfection, it belongeth indeed to our High Priest, but not formally to his priesthood: no, nor yet as he himself is the sacrifice for sin; for it is not an act of priesthood to be himself a sacrifice. But yet I think the common distribution intimateth to us that sense which containeth the truth which we inquire after: for the word priesthood is applied to Christ in a peculiar notion, so as it is never applied to any other; and therefore is taken more comprehensively, as including all that good which he doth for us (as good) by the way of mediation with the Father, and all his acts of mediation with God; as the prophetical and kingly parts contain his other acts towards men. But yet a more plain and accurate distribution should be made; in which it should be manifested also to what heads his many other assumed titles of relation are to be reduced; but this is not a work for this place.

But that which now I advise you to avoid, is the error of them who look so much at Christ's mediation with God, that they scarce observe his work with man; and the error of them who look so much at his work on man, that they overlook his mediation with God: and theirs that so observe his sacrifice, as to make light of his continual intercession; or that observing both, make light of his doctrine and example; or that observe these so much as to make light of his sacrifice and intercession; or that extol his doctrine and example, and overlook his giving of the Spirit to all his living members; or that cannot magnify any one of these, without depressing or extenuating some other. If Christ's kingdom be not divided, (Matt. xii. 25,) sure Christ himself is not divided, nor his works, 1 Cor. i. 13.

Direct. 6. Still distinguish between Christ's work of redemption, which he hath already wrought on earth, to constitute him our mediatory Head, and that which he was further to do for us in that relation; that you may ground your faith on the first as a foundation laid by him, and may seek after the second as that which requireth somewhat from yourselves to your own participation.

The first part is commonly called the impetration, the second the application (or rather, the communication.) As God did first do himself the work of creation, and thence result his relations of our Owner, our Ruler, and our chief good; (or our love, or end, or benefactor;) so Christ first doth the works which make him our Redeemer towards God; and then he is also our Owner, our Ruler, and our communicative Benefactor, hereupon. And this seemeth intimated by those phrases, (Heb. v. 8; ii. 9, 10,) where he is said to "learn obedience by the things which he suffered," that is, as a subject exercised obedience, and so learnt to know by experience what obeying is. And that "the Captain of our salvation was made perfect by sufferings, and for suffering death was crowned with glory," because his sufferings did constitute him a perfect Captain or Redeemer in performance; though before he was perfect in ability. As he that undertaketh to redeem some Turkish galley-slaves by conquering their navy, is made a perfect redeemer, or conqueror, when he hath taken the fleet, though yet the prisoners are in his power, to release them on such terms as seem best to him. And as a man is a perfect chirurgeon, when (besides his skill) he is furnished with all his instruments or salves, (how costly soever,) though yet the cure is not done: or as he that hath ransomed prisoners is a perfect ransomer, when he hath paid the price, though yet they are not delivered, nor have any actual right themselves to claim deliverance by. I here mention this, because the building upon that foundation, which is supposed to be already laid and finished, and the seeking of the further salvation which yet we have no possession of, nor perhaps any title to, are works so very different, that he that doth not discern the difference, cannot exercise the christian faith; because it is to be necessarily exercised by two such different acts, or different ways of acting and applying ourselves to our Redeemer.

Direct. 7. Still think of Christ's nearness both to the Father and to us; and so of our nearness to God in and by him.

Our distance is the lamentable fruit of our apostasy; which inferreth our fears, and estrangedness, and backwardness to draw near to God; it causeth our ignorance of him, and our false conceits of his will and works; it greatly hindereth both love and confidence: whereas the apprehension of our nearness to God will do much to cure all these evils. As it is the misery of the proud, that God looketh on them as afar off, that is, with strangeness, and abhorrence, and disdain, Psal. cxxxviii. 6; and accordingly they shall be far off from the blessed ones hereafter, Luke xvi. 23; so it is the happiness of believers to be nigh to God, in Jesus Christ, who condescended to be nigh to us; which is our preparation to be yet nearer to him for ever, Psal. cxlviii. 14; xxxiv. 18; cxlv. 18; Eph. ii. 13. It giveth the soul more familiar thoughts of God, who seemed before to be at an inaccessible distance; which is part of the boldness of access and confidence mentioned, Eph. iii. 12; ii. 18; Rom. v. 2; Heb. x. 19. We may come boldly to the throne of grace, Heb. iv. 16. And it greatly helpeth us in the work of love, to think how near God is come to us in Christ, and how near he hath taken the human nature unto him. When a sinner looketh at God only as in himself, and as he is estranged from the guilty, he is amazed and confounded, as if God were quite out of the reach of our love; but when he thinketh how he hath voluntarily come down into our flesh, that he might be man, and be familiar with man, and what a wonderful marriage the divine nature hath made with the human, this wonderfully reconcileth the heart to God, and maketh the thoughts of him more sweet and acceptable. If the life of faith be a dwelling in God, and God in us, and a walking with God, (1 John iii. 24; iv. 12, 15, 16; Eph. iii. 17; Gen. xvii. 1; xxiv. 40; v. 22; vi. 9; Heb. xi. 5,) then must we perceive our nearness to God: the just apprehension of this nearness in Christ's incarnation and relation to us, is the chief means to bring us to the nearness of love and heavenly conversation, Col. iii. 1, 3, 4.

Direct. 8. Make Christ therefore the mediation for all your practical thoughts of God.

The thoughts of God will be strange to us through our distance, and terrible through our guilt, if we look not upon him through the prospective of Christ's humanity and cross. God out of Christ is a consuming fire to guilty souls. As our acceptance must be through the beloved, in whom he is well pleased; so our thoughts must be encouraged with the sense of that acceptance; and every thought must be led up to God, and imboldened by the Mediator, Matt. iii. 17; xvii. 5; xii. 18; Eph. i. 6; Heb. ii. 9, 10, 12, 13, 17.

Direct. 9. Never come to God in prayer, or any other act of worship, but by the mediation of the Son; and put all your prayers as into his hand, that he may present them to the Father.

There is no hoping for any thing from God to sinners, but by Christ; and therefore there is no speaking to God but by him; not only in his name, but also by his mediation: and this is the exercise of his priesthood for us, by his heavenly intercession, so much spoken of by the Holy Ghost in the epistle to the Hebrews: "Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need," Heb. iv. 14, 16.

Direct. 10. Hear every word of Scripture precept, and ministerial exhortation, (consonant to the Scripture,) as sent to us by Christ, and from the Father by him, as the appointed Teacher of the church.

Hear Christ in his gospel and his ministers, and hear God the Father in the Son. Take heed of giving only a slight and verbal acknowledgment of the voice of Christ, whilst you really are more taken with the preacher's voice, as if he had a greater share in the sermon than Christ hath. The voice in the holy mount, which Peter witnesseth that he heard, was, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him," 2 Pet. i. 17; Matt. xvii. 5. "And it shall come to pass, that every soul which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people," Acts iii. 23. "When ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which worketh effectually in you that believe," 1 Thess. ii. 13. "The sheep will follow him, for they know his voice: a stranger they will not follow," John x. 4, 5.

Direct. 11. Take every mercy from God as from the hand of Christ; both as procured by his cross, and as delivered by his mediatory administration.

It is still supposed that the giving of the Son himself by the Father to this office, is excepted as presupposed. But all subsequent particular mercies, are both procured for us, and given to us, by the Mediator. Yet is it nevertheless from God the Father, nor doth it ever the less, but the more fully, signify his love. But the state of sinners alloweth them no other way of communication from God, for their benefit and happiness, but by one who is more near and capable to God, who from him may convey all blessings unto them. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in things heavenly in Christ," Eph. i. 3. "He that spared not his own Son, but gave him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Rom. viii. 32. Through the knowledge of him, the divine power giveth us "all things that pertain to life and godliness," 2 Pet. i. 3. God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son, 1 John v. 10, 11. All things are delivered into his hand, John xiii. 3; xvii. 2. Therefore receive every particular mercy for soul and body, as from the blood and from the present mediation of Christ, that you may rightly understand it, and have it as sanctified and sweetened by Christ.

Direct. 12. Let faith take occasion by every sin, to renew your sense of the want of Christ, and to bring you to him, to mediate and grant you a renewed pardon.

Therefore entertain not their mistake, who tell men that all sin, past, present, and to come, is fully pardoned at once (whether it be before you were born in God's decree, or Christ's satisfaction, or at the time of your conversion); nor theirs who teach that Christ pardoneth only sins before conversion, but as for all that are committed afterward, he doth prevent the need of pardon, by preventing all guilt and obligation to punishment (except mere temporal chastisement.) The preparation which Christ hath made for our pardon, is in itself sufficient, yea, and effectual as to that end which he would have it attain before our believing: but our actual pardon is no such end: nor can sin be forgiven before it be committed; because it is no sin. Christ never intended to justify or sanctify us perfectly at the first, (whatsoever many say to the contrary, because they understand not what they say,) but to carry on both proportionably and by degrees, that we may have daily use for his daily mediation, and may daily pray, "Forgive us our trespasses." There is no guilt on them that are in Christ, so far as they "walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit;" nor no proper condemnation by sentence or execution at all; because their pardon is renewed by Christ, as they renew their sins of infirmity; but not because he preventeth their need of any further pardon.

Therefore as God made advantage of the sins of the world, for the honouring of his grace in Christ, that grace might abound where sin abounded, Rom. v. 12, 16, 17; so do you make advantage of your renewed sins, for a renewed use of faith in Christ; and let it drive you to him with renewed desires and expectations of pardon by his intercession: that Satan may be a loser, and Christ may have more honour by every sin that we commit. Not that we should sin that grace may abound; but that we may make use of abounding grace when we have sinned. It is the true nature and use of faith and repentance to draw good out of sin itself, or to make the remembrance of it to be a means of our hatred and mortification of it, and of our love and gratitude to our Redeemer: not that sin itself doth (formally or efficiently) ever do any good; but sin objectively is turned into good: for so sin is no sin; because to remember sin is not sin. When David saith, (Psal. li. 3,) that "his sin was ever before him," he meaneth not only involuntarily to his grief, but voluntarily as a meditation useful to his future duty, and to stir him up to all that which afterwards he promiseth.

Direct. 13. In all the weaknesses and languishings of the new creature, let faith look up to Christ for strength.

For God hath put our life into his hand, and he is our root, and hath promised that we shall live because he liveth, John xiv. 19. Do not think only of using Christ as you do a friend when you have need of him; or as I do my pen, to write, and lay it down when I have done: but as the branches use the vine, and as the members use the head, which they live by; and from which when they are separated, they die and wither, John xv. 1—3, &c.; Eph. i. 22; v. 27, 30; iv. 4, 5, 12, 15, 16. Christ must even "dwell in our hearts by faith," Eph. iii. 17; that is, 1. Faith must be the means of Christ's dwelling in us by his Spirit; and, 2. Faith must so habituate the heart to a dependence upon Christ, and to an improvement of him, that objectively he must dwell in our hearts, as our friend doth whom we most dearly love; as that which we cannot choose but always think on.

Remember therefore that we live in Christ, and that the life which we now live is by the faith of the Son of God, who hath loved us, and given himself for us, Gal. ii. 20. And his grace is sufficient for us, and his strength most manifested in our weakness,

2 Cor. xii. 9. And that when Satan desireth to sift us, he prayeth for us that our faith may not fail, Luke xxii. 32. And that our life is "hid with Christ in God," even with "Christ, who is our life," Col. iii. 3, 4. That he is the Head, in whom all the members live, by the communication of his appointed ligaments and joints, Eph. iv. 14—16. Therefore when any grace is weak, go to your Head for life and strength. If faith be weak, pray, "Lord, increase our faith," Luke xvii. 5. If you are ignorant, pray him to open your understandings, Luke xxiv. 45. If your hearts grow cold, go to him by faith, till he shed abroad the love of God upon your hearts, Rom. v. 3, 4. For of his fulness it is that we must receive grace for grace, John i. 16.

Direct. 14. Let the chief and most diligent work of your faith in Christ be, to inflame your hearts with love to God, as his goodness and love is revealed to us in Christ.

Faith kindling love, and working by it, is the whole sum of christianity; of which before.

Direct. 15. Let faith keep the example of Christ continually before your eyes; especially in those parts of it which he intended for the contradicting and healing of our greatest sins.

Above all others, these things seem purposely and specially chosen in the life of Christ, for the condemning and curing of our sins; and therefore are principally to be observed by faith.

1. His wonderful love to God, to his elect, and to his enemies; expressed in so strange an undertaking, and in his sufferings, and in his abundant grace; which must teach us, what fervours of love to God and man, to friends and enemies, must dwell and have dominion in us, 1 John iv. 10; Rev. i. 5; Rom. v. 8, 10; John xiii. 34, 35; xv. 13; 1 John iii. 14, 23, 17; iv. 7, 8, 20, 21.

2. His full obedience to his Father's will, upon the dearest rates or terms: to teach us that no labour or cost should seem too great to us in our obeying the will of God; nor any thing seem to us of so much value, as to be a price great enough to hire us to commit any wilful sin, Rom. v. 19; Heb. v. 8; Phil. ii. 8; 1 Sam. xv. 22; 2 Cor. x. 5, 6; Heb. v. 9; John xiv. 15; xv. 10; 1 John ii. 3; iii. 22; v. 2, 3; Rev. xxii. 14.

3. His wonderful contempt of all the riches and greatness of the world, and all the pleasures of the flesh, and all the honour which is of man; which he showed in his taking the form of a servant, and making himself of no reputation, and living a mean, inferior life. He came not to be served (or ministered to) but to serve: not to live in state with abundance of attendants, with provisions for every turn and use, which pride, curiosity, or carnal imagination, taketh for a conveniency, or a decency, no nor a necessity: but he came to be as a servant unto others; not as despising his liberty, but as exercising his voluntary humility and love. He that was Lord of all, for our sakes became poor, to make us rich: he lived in lowliness and meekness: he submitted to the greatest scorn of sinners; and even to the false accusations and imputations of most odious sin in itself, Phil. ii. 6—9; Heb. xii. 1—3; Matt. xxvi. 55, 60, 61, 63, 66; xxvii. 28—31; Matt. xi. 29, 30; xx. 28; 2 Cor. viii. 9; which was to teach us to see the vanity of the wealth and honours of the world, and to despise the idol of the ungodly, and to lay that under our feet, which is nearest to their heart; and to be able without impatiency to be scorned, spit upon, buffeted, and abused; to be poor and of no reputation among men; and though not to enslave ourselves to any (but if we can be free to use it rather, 1 Cor. vii. 21,) yet to be the loving and voluntary servants of as many as we can to do them good; and not to desire to have a great retinue, and to be such voluntary burdens to the world, as to be served by many, while we serve none: as if we (who are taught by Christ and nature, that it is more honourable to give than to receive, and to be helpful unto many, than to need the help of many) would declare our impotency to be so great, that when every poor man can serve himself and others, we are (and had rather be) so indigent, as not to live and help ourselves, without the help of many servants; yea, scarce to undress and dress ourselves, or to do any thing which another can do for us. Only such persons are willing to eat, and drink, and sleep for themselves, and to play, and laugh, and to sin for themselves; but as to any thing that is good and useful, without their present sensitive delight, they are not only unserviceable to the world, but would live like the lame or dead, that must be moved and carried about by others. Among Christ's servants, he that is the chief, must be the chief in service, even as a servant unto all, Luke xxii. 26; Matt. xxiii. 11. And all "by love must serve one another," Gal. v. 13.

4. His submission unto death, and conquest of the natural love of life, for a greater good, even the pleasing of God, and the crown of glory, and the good of many in their salvation: to teach us that not only the pleasures of life, but life itself, must be willingly laid down, when any of these three ends require it, Matt. xx. 28; John x. 11; xv. 13; 1 John iii. 16; John x. 17; Acts xx. 24; Matt. x. 39; xvi. 25; Mark xiv. 26; Phil. ii. 30; 1 John iii. 16; Rev. xii. 11.

Direct. 16. Let faith behold Christ in his relation to his universal church, and not unto yourselves alone.

1. Because else you overlook his most honourable relation: it is more his glory to be the church's Head and Saviour, than yours, Eph. v. 23; i. 21, 22. And, 2. You else overlook his chief design and work; which is for the perfecting and saving of his body, Eph. i. 23; Col. i. 24, 18. And, 3. Else you overlook the chief part of your own duty, and of your conformity to Christ, which is in loving and edifying the body, Eph. iv. 12, 16. Whereas if you see Christ as the undivided and impartial Head of all saints, you will see also all saints as dear to him, and as united in him; and you will have communion by faith with them in him; and you will love them all, and pray for all, and desire a part in the prayers of all (instead of carping at their different indifferent manner, and forms, and words of prayer, and running away from them, to show that you disown them). And you will have a tender care of the unity, and honour, and prosperity of the church, and regard the welfare of particular brethren as your own, 1 Cor. xii. throughout, John xiii. 14, 34; xv. 12, 17; Rom. xiii. 8; stooping to the lowest service to one another, if it were the washing of the feet; and in honour preferring one another, Rom. xii. 10. Not judging, nor despising, nor persecuting, but receiving and forbearing one another, Rom. xiv. throughout; xv. 1—4, 7, 8; Gal. v. 13; vi. 1—3; Eph. iv. 2, 32; Col. iii. 13. Edifying, exhorting, and seeking the saving of one another, 1 Thess. v. 11; iv. 9, 18; Heb. iii. 13; x. 24. Not speaking evil one of another, James iv. 11. Much less biting and devouring one another, Gal. v. 15. But "having compassion one of another," as those that are "members one of another," 1 Pet. iii. 8; Rom. xii. 5.

Direct. 17. Make all your opposition to the temptations of Satan, the world, and the flesh, by the exercise of faith in Christ.

From him you must have your weapons, skill, and strength. It is the great work of faith, to militate under him, as the Captain of our salvation; and by virtue of his precepts, example, and Spirit, to overcome as he hath overcome. Of which more anon.

Direct. 18. Death also must be entertained and conquered by faith in Christ.

We must see it as already conquered by him, and entertain it as the passage to him; this also will be after spoken to.

Direct. 19. Faith must believe in Christ as our judge, to give us our final justification, and sentence us to endless life, Rom. xiv. 9, 10; John v. 22, 24, 25.

Direct. 20. Lastly, Faith must see Christ as preparing us a place in heaven, and possessing it for us, and ready to receive us to himself. But all this I only name, because it will fall in in the last chapters.

CHAPTER III.

DIRECTIONS TO LIVE BY FAITH ON THE HOLY GHOST.

THIS is not the least part of the life of faith. If the Spirit give us faith itself, then faith hath certainly its proper work to do towards that Spirit which giveth it: and if the Spirit be the worker of all other grace, and faith be the means on our part, then faith hath somewhat to do with the Holy Ghost herein. The best way that I can take in helping you to believe aright in the Holy Ghost, will be by opening the true sense of this great article of our faith to you, that by understanding the matter aright, you may know what you are here both to do and to expect.

Direct. 1. The name of the Holy Ghost, or Spirit of God, is used in Scripture for the third person in the Trinity as constitutive, and as the third perfective principle of operation; and most usually as operating *ad extra*, by communication. And therefore many fathers and ancient divines and schoolmen say, That the Holy Ghost the third person and principle is the love of God; which, as it is God's love of himself, is a constitutive person or principle in the Trinity; but as it is pregnant and productive, it is the third principle of operation *ad extra*; and so that it is taken usually for the pregnant, operative love of God.

And thus they suppose that the divine power, intellect, and will (or wisdom and love) are the three constitutive persons in themselves, and the three principles of operation *ad extra*. To this purpose writeth Origen, Ambrose, and Richardus the schoolman; but plainlier and fuller Damascene and Bernard, and Edmundus Cantuariensis, and Potho Prumensis cited by me in my "Reasons of the Christian Religion." Augustine only putteth memory for power, by which yet Campanella thinketh he meant power, Metaphys. par. 2. l. 6. c. 12. art. 4. p. 88. What Cæsarius and many others say, *de triplici lumine*, I pass by: the *Lux Radii et Lumen*, are thought a fit similitude by many; but the motion, light, and heat, is a plain impression of the Trinity on that noble element of fire. The holy man, Ephræm Syrus, in his Testament, useth the phrase, (in his adjuration of his disciples, and the protestation of his own stedfastness in the doctrine of the Trinity against all heresies,) "By that three-named fire of the most Holy Trinity, (or divine Majesty, as another copy hath it,) and by that infinite and sole, one power of God; and by those three subsistences of the intelligible (or intellectual) fire." And as it is a most great and certain truth, that this sacred Trinity of divine principles have made their impress communicatively upon the frame of nature, and most evidently on the noblest parts, which are in excellency nearest their Creator; so it is evident that in the creatures, love is the pregnant communicative principle: so is natural love in generation, and friendly love in benefiting others; and spiritual love, in propagating knowledge and grace, for the winning of souls.

What I said of the Scripture use of the word is found in 1 John v. 5—8; Heb. ix. 14; 1 Cor. xii. 2—4; Rom. i. 4; John i. 32, 33; iii. 5, 34; vi. 63; Gen. i. 2; Job xxxiii. 4; 2 Cor. iii. 17, 18; Luke iv. 18; Micah iii. 8; Isa. xi. 2; lxi. 1.

Direct. 2. The more excellent measure of the Spirit given by Christ after his ascension to the gospel church, is to be distinguished from that which was before communicated; and this Spirit of Christ is it which our christian faith hath special respect to.

Without the Spirit of God, as the perfective principle, nature would not have been nature, Gen. i. 2. All things would not have been good, and very good, but by the communication of goodness; and without somewhat of that Spirit, there would be no moral goodness in any of mankind; and without some special operations of that Spirit, the godly before Christ's coming in the flesh, would not have been godly, nor in any present capacity of glory: therefore there was some gift of the Spirit before.

But yet there was an eminent gift of the Spirit proper to the gospel times, which the former ages did not know; which is so much above the former gift, that it is sufficient to prove the verity of Christ.

For, 1. There was use for the special attestation of the Father by way of power, by miracles, and his resurrection to own his Son. 2. The wisdom and word of God incarnate, must needs bring a special measure of wisdom to his disciples; and therefore give a greater measure of the Spirit for illumination. 3. The design of redemption being the revelation of the love of God, and the recovery of our love to him, there must needs be a special measure of the Spirit of love shed abroad upon our hearts. And in all these three respects, the Spirit was accordingly communicated.

Quest. Was it not the Spirit of Christ which was in the prophets, and in all the godly before Christ's coming?

Answ. The Spirit of Christ is either that measure of the Spirit which was given after the first covenant of grace, as it differeth from the state of man in innocency, and from the state of man in his apostasy and condemnation: and thus it was the Spirit of Christ which was then given, so far as it was the covenant and grace of Christ; by which men were then saved. But there was a fuller covenant to be made after his coming, and a fuller measure of grace to be given, and a full attestation of God for the establishment and promulgation of this covenant; and accordingly a fuller and special gift of the Spirit. And this is called the Spirit of Christ, in the peculiar gospel sense.

Quest. How is it said, John vii. 37, that the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because Christ was not yet glorified?

Answ. It is meant of the special measure of the Spirit, which was to be Christ's special Witness and Agent in the world. They had before that measure of true grace which was necessary to the salvation of believers, before the incarnation and resurrection of Christ, (which was the Spirit of Christ, as the light before sun-rising is the light of the sun,) and

if they died in that case, they would have been saved: but they had not the signal Spirit of the gospel, settled and resident with them, but only some little taste of it for casting out devils, and for cures at that time when Christ sent them by a special mission to preach, and gave them a sudden special gift, Luke ix. 1; x. 17.

Quest. How is it said of those baptized believers, Acts xix. that they had not heard that there was a Holy Ghost?

Answ. It is meant of this eminent gospel gift of the Holy Ghost, as he is the great Witness and Agent of Christ; and not of all the graces of the Holy Ghost.

Quest. Was it before necessary to have an explicit belief in the Holy Ghost as the third person in the blessed Trinity, and as the third principle of the divine operations; and were the faithful then in covenant with him?

Answ. Distinguish between the person and the name. No name is necessary to salvation; else none could be saved but men of one language. To believe in the Holy Ghost under that name, was not necessary to salvation (nor yet is); for he that speaketh and heareth of him in Greek, or Latin, or Sclavonian, &c. may be saved, though he never learned the English tongue: but to believe in the energetical, or operative, or communicative love of God, was always necessary to salvation, considered in the thing, and not only in the name; as it was to believe in his power, and his wisdom: and to believe which is the first, and which the second, and which the third, is not yet of absolute necessity to salvation; while they are co-equal and co-essential. And it was necessary to the Jews to believe, that this love of God did operate, and was communicated to the faithful; not upon the terms of innocency, according to the first covenant; but to sinners that deserved death, and upon terms of mercy, through the covenant of grace, which was made with lapsed man in order to his recovery, through a Redeemer.

Direct. 3. All that is efficiently necessary to our salvation, in or of God, is not objectively necessary to be known. And such a measure of the knowledge of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is necessary to save us, as is necessary objectively to sanctify us under the efficiency of the said Spirit: and all the rest is not of such necessity. And therefore as, under the gospel, the Spirit is Christ's great Witness, as well as Agent in the world, it is more necessary now to believe distinctly in the Holy Ghost in that relation, than it was before Christ's coming in the flesh.

There is a great deal of the divine perfection, which causeth our salvation, unknown to us. As the sun will shine upon us, and the wind will blow, and the rain will fall, and the earth will bear fruits, whether we know it or not; so our knowledge of it is not at all necessary to any divine efficiency as such: the Spirit by which we are regenerate, is like the wind that bloweth, whose sound we hear, but know not whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth, (no nor what it is,) John iii. 6—9. But all those things which are necessary do work objectively and morally on the soul, to work *in esse cognito;* and the knowledge of them is as necessary as the operation is. It was of absolute necessity to the salvation of all, before Christ's coming, and among the gentiles as well as the Jews, that the Spirit should sanctify them to God, by possessing them with a predominant love of him in his goodness; and that this Spirit proceed from the Son or Wisdom of God: but it was not so necessary to them as it is now to us, to have a distinct knowledge of the personality and operations of the Spirit and of the Son. And though now it is certain that Christ is the way, the truth, and the life, and no man cometh to the Father but by the Son, John xiv. 6; yet that knowledge of him which is necessary to them that hear the gospel, is not all necessary to them that never hear it; though the same efficiency on his part be necessary: and so it is about the knowledge of the Holy Ghost, without which Christ cannot be sufficiently now known and rightly believed in.

Direct. 4. The presence or operation of the Spirit of God is causally the spiritual life of man, in his holiness: as there is no natural being but by influence from his being; so no life but by communication from his life, and no light but from his light, and no love or goodness but from this Spirit of love.

It is therefore a vain conceit of them, that think man in innocency had not the Spirit of God: they that say, his natural rectitude was instead of the Spirit, do but say and unsay; for his natural rectitude was the effect of the influx or communication of God's Spirit: and he could have no moral rectitude without it; as there can be no effect without the chief cause. The nature of love and holiness cannot subsist but in dependence on the love and holiness of God; and those papists who talk of man's state first in pure naturals, and an after-donation of the Spirit, must mean by pure naturals, man in his mere essentials, not really, but notionally by abstraction, distinguished from the same man at the same instant as a saint; or else they speak unsoundly: for God made man in moral dispositive goodness at the first; and the same love or Spirit, which did first make him so, was necessary after to continue him so. It was never his nature to be a prime good, or to be good independently without the influence of the prime good; Isa. xliv. 3; Ezek. xxxvi. 27; Job xxvi. 13; Psal. li. 10, 12; cxliii. 10; Prov. xx. 27; Mal. ii. 15, John iii. 5, 6; vi. 63; vii. 39; Rom. viii. 1, 5, 6, 9, 13, 16; 1 Cor. vi. 11; ii. 11, 12; vi. 17; xii. 11, 13; xv. 45; 2 Cor. iii. 3, 17; Ephes. ii. 18, 22; iii. 16; v. 9; Col. i. 8; Jude 19.

Direct. 5. The Spirit of God and the holiness of the soul may be lost, without the destruction of our essence, or species of human nature; and may be restored without making us specifically other things.

That influence of the Spirit which giveth us the faculty of a rational appetite or will, inclined to good as good, cannot cease, but our humanity or being would cease: but that influence of the Spirit which causeth our adherence to God by love may cease, without the cessation of our beings: as our health may be lost, while our life continueth; Psal. li. 10; 1 Thess. v. 19.

Direct. 6. The greatest mercy in this world is the gift of the Spirit, and the greatest misery is to be deprived of the Spirit; and both these are done to man by God, as a Governor, by way of reward and punishment ofttimes: therefore the greatest reward to be observed in this world, is the increase of the Spirit upon us, and the greatest punishment in this world, is the denying or withholding of the Spirit.

It is therefore a great part of a christian's wisdom and work, to observe the accesses and assistances of the Spirit, and its withdrawings; and to take more notice to God in his thankfulness of the gift of the Spirit, than of all other benefits in this world; and to lament more the retiring or withholding of God's Spirit, than all the calamities in the world; and to fear this more as a punishment of his sin; lest God should say, as Psal. lxxxi. 11, 12, "But my people would not hearken to my voice, Israel would none of me: so I gave them up to their own hearts' lust, to walk in their own counsels." And we must

obey God through the motive of this promise and reward. "Turn you at my reproof; behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you," Prov. i. 23. "But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive," John vii. 39; Luke xi. 13. God will give his Holy Spirit to them that ask it. And we have great cause when we have sinned to pray with David, "Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free Spirit," Psal. li. 10—12. And as the sin to be feared is the grieving of the Holy Spirit, Ephes. iv. 30; so the judgment to be feared, is accordingly the withdrawing of it. "But they rebelled, and vexed his Holy Spirit; therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and fought against them. Then he remembered the days of old, Moses, and his people, saying, Where is he that brought them up?—Where is he that put his holy Spirit within them?" Isa. lxiii. 10, 11. The great thing to be dreaded, is, lest "those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost—shall fall away, and be no more renewed by repentance,—" Heb. vi. 4, 6.

Direct. 7. Therefore executive pardon or justification cannot possibly be any perfecter than sanctification is: because no sin is further forgiven, or the person justified executively, than the punishment is taken off; and the privation of the Spirit, being the great punishment, the giving of it is the great executive remission in this life.

But of this more in the chapter of justification following.

Direct. 8. The three great operations in man, which each of the three persons in the Trinity eminently perform, are *natura, medicina, salus:* the first by the Creator, the second by the Redeemer, the third by the Sanctifier.

Commonly it is called nature, grace, and glory: but either the terms grace and glory must be plainer expounded, or that distribution is not sound. If by grace be meant all the extrinsic medical preparations made by Christ, and if by glory be meant only the holiness of the soul, the sense is good; but in common use those words are otherwise understood. Sanctification is usually ascribed to the Holy Ghost: but glorification in heaven, is the perfective effect of all the three persons in our state of perfect union with God, Rom. xv. 16; Titus iii. 5, 6. But yet in the work of sanctification itself, the Trinity undividedly concur: and so in the sanctifying and raising the church, the apostle distinctly calleth the act of the Father by the name of operation, and the work of the Son by the name of administration, and the part of the Holy Ghost by the name of gifts, 1 Cor. xii. 4—6. And in respect to these sanctifying operations of God, *ad extra*, the same apostle distributeth them thus: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all," 2 Cor. xiii. 14. Where by God, seemeth to be meant all the persons in the Trinity in their perfection; but especially the Father, as the fountain of love, and as expressing love by the Son and the Spirit: and by the grace of Christ, is meant all that gracious provision he hath made for man's salvation, and the relative application of it, by his intercession, together with his mission of the Holy Spirit: and by the communion of the Spirit, is meant that actual communication of life, light, and love to the soul itself, which is eminently ascribed to the Spirit.

Direct. 9. The Spirit itself is given to true believers, and not only grace from the Spirit.

Not that the essence of God, or the person of the Holy Ghost, is capable of being contained in any place, or removing to or from a place by local motion: but, 1. The Holy Ghost is given to us relatively, as our covenanting Sanctifier in the baptismal covenant: we have a covenant right to him, that is, to his operation. 2. And the Spirit itself is present as the immediate operator; not so immediate as to be without means, but so immediately as to be no distant agent, but by proximate attingency, not only *ratione virtutis*, but also *ratione suppositi*, performeth his operations: if you say, so he is present every where; I answer, but he is not a present operator every where alike. We are called the temples of the Holy Ghost, both because he buildeth us up for so holy a use, and because he also dwelleth in us, 1 Cor. vi. 19.

Direct. 10. By the sanctification commonly ascribed to the Holy Ghost, is meant that recovery of the soul to God from whom it is fallen, which consisteth in our primitive holiness, or devotedness to God, but summarily in the love of God, as God.

Direct. 11. And faith in Christ is often placed as before it; not as if the Spirit were no cause of faith, nor as if faith were no part of our saving special grace; nor as if any had saving faith before they had love to God; but because as Christ is the Mediator and way to the Father, so faith in him is but a mediate grace to bring us up to the love of God, which is the final perfective grace; and beeause, though they are inseparably complicate, yet some acts of faith go before our special love to God in order of nature, though some others follow after it, or go with it.

It is a question that seemeth very difficult to many, whether love to God or faith in Christ must go first (whether in time or order of nature). For if we say that faith in Christ must go first, then it seemeth that we take not faith or Christ as a means to bring us to God as our end; for our end is *Deus amatus*, God as beloved; and to make God our end, and to love him, are inseparable. We first love the good which appeareth to us, and then we choose and use the means to attain it; and in so doing we make that our end, which we did love; so that it is the first loved for itself, and then made our end. Now if Christ be not used as a means to God as our ultimate end, then he is not believed in or used as Christ, and therefore it is no true faith: and that which hath not the true end, is not the true act or grace in question, nor can that be any special grace at all, which hath not God for his ultimate end: on both which accounts, it can be no true faith; the *intentio finis* being before the choice or use of means, though the assecution be after.

And yet on the other side, if God be loved as our end before we believe in Christ as the means, then we are sanctified before we believe. And then faith in Christ is not the means of our first special love to God. And the consequents on both parts are intolerable; and how are they to be avoided?

Consider here, 1. You must distinguish betwixt the assenting or knowing act of faith, and the consenting or choosing act of it in the will. 2. And between Christ as he is a means of God's choosing and using, and as he is a means of our choosing and using. And so I answer the case in these propositions.

1. The knowledge of a Deity is supposed before the knowledge of Christ as a Mediator: for no man can believe that he is a Teacher sent from God, nor a Mediator between us and God, nor a sacrifice to

appease God's wrath, who doth not believe first that there is a God.

2. In this belief or knowledge of God, is contained the knowledge of his essential power, wisdom, and goodness, and that he is our Creator and Governor, and that we have broken his laws, and that we are obnoxious to his justice, and deserve punishment for our sins. All this is to be known before we believe in Christ as the Mediator.

3. Yet where christianity is the religion of the country, it is Christ himself by his word and ministers who teacheth us these things concerning God; but it is not Christ as a means chosen or used by us, to bring us to the love of God; (for no man can choose or use a means for an end not yet known or intended;) but it is Christ as a means chosen and used by God, to bring home sinners to himself (even as his dying for us on the cross was).

4. The soul that knoweth all this concerning God, cannot yet love him savingly, both because he wanteth the Spirit to effect it, and because a holy, sin-hating God, engaged in justice to damn the sinner, is not such an object, as a guilty soul can love; but it must be a loving and reconciled God that is willing to forgive.

5. When Christ by his word and ministers hath taught a sinner both what God is in himself, and what he is to us, and what we have deserved, and what our case is; and then hath taught him what he himself is as to his person and his office, and what he hath done to reconcile us to God, and how far God is reconciled hereupon, and what a common, conditional, pardoning covenant he hath made and offereth to all, and what he will be and do to those that do come in; the belief of all this seriously (by the assenting act of the understanding) is the first part of saving faith, going in nature before both the love of God and the consenting act of the will to the Redeemer. (And yet perhaps the same acts of faith in an uneffectual, superficial measure, may go along before this in many.)

6. In this assent our belief in God, and in the Mediator, are conjunct in time and nature; they being relatives here as the objects of our faith. It is not possible to believe in Christ as the Mediator, who hath propitiated God to us, before we believe that God is propitiated by the Mediator; nor *vice versa:* indeed there is a difference in order of dignity and desirableness; God as propitiated being represented to us as the end, and the Propitiator but as the means: but as to the order of our apprehension or believing, there can be no difference at all, no more than in the order of knowing the father and the son, the husband and wife, the king and subjects: these relatives are *simul natura et tempore.*

7. This assenting act of faith, by which at once we believe Christ to be the Propitiator, and God to be propitiated by him, is not the belief that my sins are actually pardoned, and my soul actually reconciled and justified; but it includeth the belief of the history of Christ's satisfaction, and of the common conditional covenant of promise and offer from God, viz. that God is so far reconciled by the Mediator, as that he will forgive, and justify, and glorify all that repent and believe, that is, that return to God by faith in Christ; and offereth this mercy to all, and entreateth them to accept it, and will condemn none of them but those that finally reject it. "All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God," 2 Cor. v. 18—20. So that it is at once the belief of the Father as reconciled, and the Son as the Reconciler, and that according to the tenor of the common conditional covenant, which is the first assenting part of saving faith.

8. This same covenant which revealeth God as thus far reconciled by Christ, doth offer him to be further actually and fully reconciled, and to justify and glorify us, that is, to forgive, accept, and love us perfectly for ever. And it offereth us Christ to be our actual Head and Mediator, to procure and give us all this mercy, by communicating the benefits which he hath purchased according to his covenant terms: so that as before the Father and the Son were revealed to our assent together, so here they are offered to the will together.

9. In this offer, God is offered as the end, and Christ as Mediator is offered as the means; therefore the act of the will to God, which is here required, is simple love of complacency (with subjection which is a consent to obey); but the act of the will to Christ, is called choice or consent, though there be in it *amor medii*, the love of that means for its aptitude as to the end.

10. This love of God as the end, and consent to Christ as the means, being not acts of the intellect, but of the will, cannot be the first acts of faith, but do presuppose the first assenting acts.

11. But the assenting act of faith, doth cause these acts of the will to God and the Mediator. Because we believe the truth and goodness, we consent and love.

12. Both these acts of the will are caused by assent at one time, without the least distance.

13. But here is a difference in order of nature, because we will God as the end, and for himself, and therefore first in the natural order of intention; and we will Christ as the means for that end, and therefore but secondarily. Though in the intellects, apprehension and assent, there be no such difference; because in the truth, which is the understanding's object, there is no difference, but only in the goodness which is the will's object: and as goodness itself is apprehended by the understanding, *ut vere bonum*, there is only an objective difference of dignity.

14. Therefore as the gospel revelation cometh to us in a way of offer, promise, and covenant, so our faith must act in a way of acceptance and covenanting with God and the Redeemer and Sanctifier. And the sacrament of baptism is the solemnizing of this covenant on both parts. And till our hearts do consent to the baptismal covenant of grace, we are not believers in a saving sense.

15. There is no distance of time between the assent of faith, and the first true degree of love and consent; (though an unsound assent may go long before; yet sound assent doth immediately produce love and consent;) and though a clear and full resolved degree of consent may be some time afterward: and therefore the soul may not at the first degree so well understand itself, as to be ready for an open covenanting.

16. This being the true order of the work of faith and love, the case now lieth plain before those that can observe things distinctly, and take not up with confused knowledge (and no other are fit to meddle with such cases); viz. that the knowing or assenting acts of faith in God as reconciled (so far) and in Christ as the Reconciler, so far as to give out the offer or covenant of grace, are both at once, and both go before the acts of the will, as the cause before the immediate effect; and that this assent first in order of nature (but at once in time) causeth the will to

love God as our end, and to consent to and choose Christ in heart covenant as the means, and so in our covenant we give up ourselves to both: and that this repentance and love to God, which are both one work called conversion, or turning from the creature to God, the one as denominated from the *terminus a quo*, (viz. repentance,) the other from the *terminus ad quem*, (viz. love,) are twisted at once with true saving faith. And that Christ as the means used by God is our first Teacher, and bringeth us to assent; and then that assent bringeth us to take God for our end, and Christ for the means of our actual justification and glory: so that Christ is not by faith chosen and used by us under the notion of a Mediator or means to our first act of love and consent; but is a means to that of the Father's choosing only; but is in that first consent chosen by us for the standing means of our justification and glory, and of all our following exercise and increase of love to God and our sanctification; so that it is only the assenting act of faith, and not the electing act, which is the efficient cause of our very first act of love to God, and of our first degree of sanctification; and thus it is that faith is called the seed and mother grace: but it is not that saving faith which is our christianity, and the condition of justification and of glory, till it come up to a covenant consent of heart, and take in the foresaid acts of repentance and love to God as our God and ultimate end.

The observation of many written mistakes about the order of the work of grace, and the ill and contentious consequents that have followed them, hath made me think that this true and accurate decision of this case is not unuseful or unnecessary.

Direct. 12. The Holy Ghost so far concurred with the eternal word, in our redemption, that he was the perfecting Operator, in the conception, the holiness, the miracles, the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Of his conception it is said, "For that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost," Matt. i. 20. And ver. 18, "She was found with child of the Holy Ghost." And of his holy perfection, as it is said, that "he increased in wisdom and stature, and favour with God and men," Luke ii. 52, (meaning those positive perfections of his human nature which were to grow up with nature itself, and not the supply of any culpable or privative defects,) so when he was baptized, the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, Luke iii. 22. And Luke iv. 1, it is said, "Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost," &c. "And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might; the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord," &c. Isa. xi. 2. "For God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him," John iii. 34. "After that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen," Acts i. 2. "And was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, (that is, the Holy Spirit,) by the resurrection from the dead," Rom. i. 4. "If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God," &c. Matt. xii. 28. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, he hath sent me to heal," &c. Luke iv. 18; Isa. lxi. 1.

In all this you see how great the work of the Holy Spirit was upon Christ himself, to fit his human nature for the work of our redemption, and actuate him in it; though it was the Word only which was made flesh, and dwelt among us, John i. 3.

Direct. 13. Christ was thus filled with the Spirit, to be the Head or quickening Spirit to his body: and accordingly to fit each member for its peculiar office: and therefore the Spirit now given is called the Spirit of Christ, as communicated by him.

"If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, the same is none of his," Rom. viii. 9. "This spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive," (John vii. 39,) viz. it is the water of life, which Christ will give them. "The last Adam was made a quickening Spirit," 1 Cor. xv. 45. "God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father," Gal. iv. 6. "Through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ," Phil. i. 19. See also Ephes. i. 22, 23; iii. 17—19; ii. 18, 22; iv. 3, 12, 16; 1 Cor. xii. &c.

Direct. 14. The greatest extraordinary measure of the Spirit, was given by him to his apostles, and the primitive christians, to be the seal of his own truth and power, and to fit them to found the first churches, and to convince unbelievers, and to deliver his will on record in the Scriptures infallibly to the church for future times.

It would be tedious to cite the proofs of this, they are so numerous; take but a few: "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you," Matt. xxviii. 20 (that is the commission). "And these signs shall follow them that believe," &c. Mark xvi. 17. "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," &c. John xx. 22. "But the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you," John xiv. 26. "When the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth," &c. John xvi. 13. "God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will," Heb. ii. 4.

Direct. 15. And as such gifts of the Spirit were given to the apostles as their office required; so those sanctifying graces, or that spiritual life, light, and love, are given by it to all true christians, which their calling and salvation doth require.

"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit," John iii. 5, 6. "Without holiness none shall see God," Heb. xii. 14. "They that are in the flesh cannot please God: but ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his," Rom. viii. 8—10, 14. See also ver. 1, 3—7, &c. "He saved us by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs, according to the hope of eternal life," Titus iii. 5—7. But the testimonies of this truth are more numerous than I may recite.

Direct. 16. By all this it appeareth that the Holy Ghost is both Christ's great witness objectively in the world, by which it is that he is owned of God, and proved to be true; and also his Advocate or great Agent in the church, both to indite the Scriptures, and to sanctify souls.

So that no man can be a christian indeed, without these three: 1. The objective witness of the Spirit to the truth of Christ. 2. The gospel taught by the Spirit in the apostles. 3. And the quickening, illuminating, and sanctifying work of the Spirit upon their souls.

Direct. 17. It is therefore in these respects that we are baptized into the name of the Holy Ghost, as well as of the Father and the Son, it being his work to make us thus both believers and saints; and

his perfective work of our real sanctification, being as necessary to us as our redemption or creation, Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; Heb. vi. 1, 2, 4—6.

Direct. 18. Therefore as every christian must look upon himself as being in special covenant with the Holy Ghost, so he must understand distinctly what are the benefits, and what are the conditions, and what are the duties of that part of his covenant.

The special benefits are the life, light, and love before mentioned, by the quickening illumination and sanctification of the Spirit; not as in the first act or seed; for so they are presupposed in that faith and repentance which is the condition; but as in the following acts and habits, and increase of both unto perfection: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, and to as many as the Lord our God shall call," Acts ii. 38, 39. See Acts xxvi. 18; Eph. i. 18, 19; Tit. iii. 5—7.

The special condition on our parts, is our consent to the whole covenant of grace, viz. To give up ourselves to God as our reconciled God and Father in Christ, and to Jesus Christ as our Saviour, and to the Holy Spirit as to his Agent and our Sanctifier. There needeth no other proof of this, than actual baptism as celebrated in the church from Christ's days till now. And the institution of it, Matt. xxviii. 19, with 1 John v. 7—9; 1 Pet. iii. 21, with John iii. 5.

The special duties afterwards to be performed, have their rewards as aforesaid, and the neglect of them their penalties; and therefore have the nature of a condition as of those particular rewards or benefits.

Direct. 19. The duties which our covenant with the Holy Ghost doth bind us to, are, 1. Faithfully to endeavour by the power and help which he giveth us, to continue our consent to all the foresaid covenant. And, 2. To obey his further motions, for the work of obedience and love. 3. And to use Christ's appointed means with which his Spirit worketh. And, 4. To forbear those wilful sins which grieve the Spirit.

"Abide in me, and I in you," John xv. 4. "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you," ver. 7. "Continue ye in my love," ver. 9. "If ye continue in the faith," &c. Col. i. 23. "Keep yourselves in the love of God," Jude 21. "Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, &c. For if we sin wilfully, &c. Of how much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy, who hath done despite to the Spirit of grace," Heb. x. 25, 26, 29; vi. 4—6. "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God," Eph. iv. 30. "Quench not the Spirit," 1 Thess. v. 19.

Direct. 20. By this it is plain that the Spirit worketh not on man as a dead thing, which hath no principle of activity in itself; nor as on a naturally necessitated agent, which hath no self-determining faculty of will; but as on a living, free, self-determining agent, which hath duty of its own to perform for the attaining of the end desired.

Those therefore that upon the pretence of the Spirit's doing all, and our doing nothing without him, will lie idle and not do their parts with him, and say that they wait for the motions of the Spirit, and that our endeavours will not further the end, do abuse the Spirit, and contradict themselves; seeing the Spirit's work is to stir us up to endeavour, which when we refuse to do, we disobey and strive against the Spirit.

Direct. 21. Though sometimes the Spirit work so efficaciously, as certainly to cause the volition or other effect which it moveth to; yet sometimes it so moveth, as procureth not the effect, when yet it gave man all the power and help which was necessary to the effect; because that man failed of that endeavour of his own, which should have concurred to the effect, and which he was able without more help to have performed.

That there is such effectual grace, Acts ix. and many Scriptures, with our great experience, tell us. That there is such mere necessary uneffectual grace possible, and sometimes in being, (which some call sufficient grace,) is undeniable in the case of Adam; who sinned not for want of necessary grace, without which he could not do otherwise. And to deny this, blotteth out all christianity and religion at one dash.

By all which it appeareth, that the work of the Spirit is such on man's will, as that sometimes the effect is suspended on our concurrence; so that though the Spirit be the total cause of its own proper effect, and of the act of man, in its own place and kind of action; yet not simply a total cause of man's act or volition; but man's concurrence may be further required to it, and may fail.

Direct. 22. Satan transformeth himself oft into an angel of light, to deceive men by pretending to be the Spirit of God: therefore the spirits must be tried, and not every spirit trusted, 2 Cor. xi. 14, 15; Matt. xxiv. 4, 5, 11, 24; 1 John iii. 7; Eph. iv. 14; Rev. xx. 3, 8; 2 Thess. ii. 2; 1 John iv. 1, 3, 6.

Direct. 23. The way of trying the spirits is to try all their uncertain suggestions, by the rule of the certain truths already revealed in nature, and in the holy Scriptures: and to try them by the Scriptures, is but to try the spirits by the Spirit; the doubtful spirit by the undoubted Spirit, which indited and sealed the Scriptures more fully than can be expected in any after-revelation, 1 Thess. i. 21; Isa. viii. 16, 20; 2 Pet. i. 19; John v. 39; Acts xvii. 11. The Spirit of God is never contrary to itself. Therefore nothing can be from that Spirit, which is contrary to the Scriptures which the Spirit indited.

Direct. 24. When you would have an increase of the Spirit, go to Christ for it, by renewed acts of that same faith, by which at first you obtained the Spirit, Gal. iii. 3, 4; iv. 6.

Faith in Christ doth two ways help us to the Spirit. 1. As it is that condition upon which he hath promised it, to whom it belongeth to give us the Spirit. 2. As it is that act of the soul which is fitted in the nature of it to the work of the Spirit: that is, as it is the serious contemplation of the infinite goodness and love of God, most brightly shining to us in the face of the Redeemer; and as it is a serious contemplation of that heavenly glory procured by Christ, which is the fullest expression of the love of God; and so is fittest to kindle that love to God in the soul, which is the work of the Spirit. These are joined, Rom. v. 1, 2, 5, 6. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. By whom also we have access by faith into this grace, wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.——The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given to us. For when we were without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.——God commended his love to us, that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."—— So Eph. iii. 17—19. Let Christ dwell in your hearts by faith, and it would help you to be rooted and grounded in love, and to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, and so to be filled with the ful-

ness of God. If faith be the way to see God's love, and faith be the way thereby to raise our love to God, then faith in Christ must needs be the continual instrument of the Spirit, or that means which we must still use for the increase of the Spirit.

Direct. 25. The works of the Spirit, next to the excitation of life, light, and love, do consist in the subduing of the lusts of the flesh, and of the power of all the objects of sense which serve it. Therefore be sure that you faithfully serve the Spirit in this mortifying work, and that you take not part with the flesh against it.

A great part of our duty towards the Holy Ghost, doth consist in this joining with him, and obeying him in his strivings against the flesh: and therefore it is that so many and earnest exhortations are used with us, to live after the Spirit, and not after the flesh; and to mortify the lusts of the flesh, and the deeds of it, by the Spirit; especially in Rom. viii. 1—16; and in Gal. v. throughout; Rom. vi.; vii.; Col. iii.; Eph. v.

Direct. 26. Take not every striving for a victory, nor every desire of grace to be true grace itself; unless grace be desired as it is the lovely image of God, and pleasing to him, and be desired before all earthly things; and unless you not only strive against but conquer the predominant love of every sin.

There are many uneffectual desires and strivings which consist with the dominion of sin. Many a fornicator, and glutton, and drunkard, hath earnest wishes that he could leave his sin, when he thinketh of the shame and punishment; and hath a great deal of striving against it before he yieldeth; but yet he liveth in it still, because his love to it is the predominant part in him. "How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" Rom. vi. 2. "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Christ, were baptized into his death.——We are buried with him by baptism.——Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin: for he that is dead is freed from sin."——Ver. 12, "Let not sin reign therefore in your mortal bodies, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof."——Ver. 13, "Neither yield your members servants of unrighteousness unto sin.——For sin shall not have dominion over you.——Know ye not that to whom you yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey? whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" "If ye live after the flesh ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body ye shall live," Rom. viii. 13. See Gal. v. 16, 18—23. "They that are Christ's, have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts," ver. 24. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth who are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity," 2 Tim. ii. 19.

Object. But it is said, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit—so that ye cannot do the things that ye would," Gal. v. 17.

Answ. That is, every true christian would fain be perfect in holiness and obedience, but cannot, because of the lustings of the flesh. But it doth not say or mean, that any true christian would live without wilful, gross, or reigning sin, and cannot; that he would live without murder, adultery, theft, or any sin which is more loved than hated, but cannot. We cannot do all that we would; but it doth not follow that we can do nothing which we would, or cannot sincerely obey the gospel.

Object. Paul saith, "To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not: and what I would, that I do not," Rom. vii. 15, 18.

Answ. The same answer will serve. To will perfect obedience to all God's laws was present with Paul; but not to do it. He would be free from every infirmity, but could not (and therefore could not be justified by the law of works). But he never saith, that he would obey sincerely, and could not; or that he would live without heinous sin, and could not. Indeed, in his flesh he saith "there dwelleth no good thing;" but that denieth not his spiritual power (who so often proposeth himself as an example to be imitated by those that he wrote to). Thousands are deceived about their state, by taking every uneffectual desire and wish, and every striving before they sin, to be a mark of saving grace. Misunderstanding Mr. Perkins, and some others with him, who make a desire of grace to be the grace itself, and a combat against the flesh to be a sign of the renovation by the Spirit; whereas they mean only, such a desire of grace, as grace for the love of God, as is more powerful than any contrary desires; and such a combating as conquereth gross (or mortal) sin, and striveth against infirmities. And of this, this saying is very true.

Direct 27. Strive with your hearts when the Spirit is striving with you. And take the season of its special help; and make one gale of grace advantageous to another.

This is a great point of christian wisdom. The help of the Spirit is not at our command: take it while you have it. Use wind and tide before they cease. God will not be a servant to our slothfulness and negligence. As he that will not come to the church at the hour when the minister of Christ is there, but say, I will come another time, will have none of his teaching there; so he that will not take the Spirit's time, but say, I am not now at leisure, may be left without its help, and taught by sad experience to know, that it is fitter for man to wait on God, than for God to wait on man. More may be done and got at one hour, than at another, when we have no such help and motions.

Direct. 28. Be much in the contemplation of the heavenly glory; for there are the highest objects, and the greatest demonstrations of God's love and goodness; and therefore in such thoughts we are most likely to meet with the Spirit, with whose nature and design they are so agreeable.

We fall in with the heavenly Spirit in his own way, when we set ourselves to be most heavenly. Heavenly thoughts are the work which he would set you on; and the love of God is the thing which he works you to thereby: and nothing will so powerfully inflame the soul with the love of God, as to think that we shall live in his love and glory for evermore. Set yourselves therefore to this work, and it will be a sign that the Spirit sets you on it; and you may be sure that he will not be behind with you, in a work which both he and you must do. To this sense the apostle bids us "pray in the Holy Ghost," Jude 20. Because though prayer must be from the Spirit, which is not in our power; yet when we set ourselves to pray, it is both a sign that the Spirit exciteth, and a certain proof that he will not be behind with us, but will afford us his assistance.

Direct. 29. Converse with those who have most of the Spirit, as far as you can attain it.

And that is not those that are most for revelations or visions, or that pretend to extraordinary illuminations, or that set the Spirit against the word; or that boast most of the Spirit in contempt of others; but those who are most humble, most holy, and most heavenly, who love God most, and hate sin most.

Converse with such as have most of the Spirit (of love and heavenliness) is the way to make you more spiritual; as converse with learned men is the way to learning: for the Spirit giveth his graces in the use of suitable means, as well as he doth his common gifts, Jude 20, 21; Heb. x. 24, 25; iii. 13; Eph. iv. 12, 15, 16.

Direct. 30. Lastly, The right ordering of the body itself, is a help to our spirituality. A clean and a cheerful body is a fitter instrument for the Spirit to make use of than one that is oppressed with crudities, or dejected with heavy melancholy. Therefore especially avoid two extremes: 1. The satisfying the lusts of the flesh, and clogging the body with excess of meat or drink, or corrupting the fancy with foolish pleasures. 2. And the addicting yourselves to distracting melancholy, or to any disconsolate or discontented thoughts.

And from hence you may both take notice of the sense of all that fasting and abstinence which God commandeth us, and of the true measure of it, viz. as it either fitteth or unfitteth the body for our duty, and for our ready obedience to the Spirit of God. "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway," I Cor. ix. 27. "Let us walk honestly as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying; but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, for lust," Rom. xiii. 12—14. Pampering the body, and addicting ourselves to the pleasing of it, turneth a man from spirituality into brutishness; and savouring or minding the things of the flesh, destroyeth both the relish and minding of the things of the Spirit, Rom. viii. 5—8. And a sour, discontented, melancholy temper, is contrary to that alacrity requisite in God's service; and to those which the Comforter is to work in us.

So much for living by faith on the Holy Ghost.

CHAPTER IV

DIRECTIONS HOW TO EXERCISE FAITH UPON GOD'S COMMANDMENTS, FOR DUTY.

It being presupposed that your faith is settled about the truth of the Scriptures in general, (by the means here before and elsewhere more at large described,) you are next to learn how to exercise the life of faith about the precepts of God in particular; and herein take these helps.

Direct. 1. Observe well how suitable God's commands are to reason and humanity, and natural revelation itself; and so how nature and Scripture do fully agree, in all the precepts for primitive holiness.

This is the cause why divines that thought it so useful to read heathen moralists themselves, that in a Cicero, a Plutarch, a Seneca, an Antoninus, an Epictetus, &c. they might see what testimony nature itself yieldeth, against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. See Rom, xix. 20, &c. But of this I have been larger in my "Reasons of the Christian Religion."

Direct. 2. Observe well how suitable all God's commandments are to your own good, and how necessary to your own felicity.

All that God commandeth you is, 1. To be active, and use the faculties of your souls, in opposition to idleness. 2. To use them rightly, and on the highest objects, and not to debase them by preferring vanity and sordid things, nor to pervert them by illdoing. And are not both these suitable to your natural perfection, and necessary to your good?

1. If there were one law made, that men should lie or stand still all the day, with their eyes shut, and their ears stopped, and their mouths closed, and that they should not stir, nor see, nor hear, nor taste; and another law that men should use their eyes, and ears, and limbs, &c.; which of these were more suitable to humanity, and more easy for a sound man to obey (though the first might best suit with the lame, and blind, and sick)? and why should not the goodness of God's law be discerned, which requireth men to use the higher faculties, the reason, and elective and executive powers, which God hath given them? If men should make a law that no one should use his reason to get learning, or for his trade or business in the world, you would think that it were an institution of a kingdom of bedlams, or a herd of beasts: and should not you then be required to use your reason faithfully and diligently in greater things?

2. And if one law were made, that every man that travelleth shall stumble and wallow in the dirt, and wander up and down out of his way; and that every man that eateth and drinketh, should feed on dirt, and ditch-water, or poison, &c. And another law, that all men should keep their right way, and live soberly, and feed healthfully; which of these would fit a wise man best, and be easiest to obey? Or if one law were made, that all scholars shall learn nothing but lies and errors; and another, that they shall learn nothing but truth and wisdom; which of them would be more easy and suitable to humanity? (Though the first might be more pleasing to some fools.) Why then should not the goodness of God's laws be confessed, who doth but forbid men learning the most pernicious errors, and wandering in the maze of folly, and wallowing in the dirt of sensuality, and feeding on the dung and poison of sin? Is the love of a harlot, or of gluttony, drunkenness, rioting, or gaming, more suitable to humanity, than the love of God, and heaven, and holiness, of wisdom, temperance, and doing good? To a swine or a bedlam it may be more suitable; but not to one that liveth like a man. What did God ever forbid you, that was not hurtful to you? And what did he ever command you, which was not for your benefit? either for your present delight, or for your future happiness; for the healing of your diseases, or the preventing them?

And if reason can discern the goodness of God's laws to us, faith can acknowledge it with more advantage. For we can see by faith the goodness of their author, and the goodness of the reward and end, more fully than by reason only. And a believer hath found by sad experience, how bad and bitter the ways of sin are, and by sweet experience, how good and pleasant the ways of God are. He hath found that it is the way to peace, and hope, and joy, to deny his lusts, and obey his Maker and Redeemer. And it is the way to terror, and a troubled soul, and a broken heart, to sin and to gratify his sensuality: "All her ways are pleasantness, and all her paths are peace," Prov. iii. 17. "Great peace have they which love thy law, and nothing can offend them," Psal. cxix. 165. "Mark the upright man, and behold the just, for the end of that man is peace," Psal. xxxvii. 37. "Righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, are the kingdom of God," Rom. xiv. 17. Grace, mercy, and peace are God's entertainment of the faithful soul, Titus i. 4; 1 Tim. i. 2; 2 Tim. i. 2; 1 Cor. i. 3, &c. "But

there is no peace to the wicked, saith my God," Isa. lvii. 21; xlviii. 22. "For the way of peace they have not known. They have made them crooked paths; whosoever goeth therein, shall not know peace," Isa. liv. 8.

Direct. 3. Mark well how those commands of God, which seem not necessary for yourselves, are plainly necessary for the good of others, and for the public welfare, which God must provide for as well as yours.

He is not your God only, but the God of all the world. And the welfare of many, especially of kingdoms and societies, is more to be regarded than the welfare (much more than the humouring or pleasing) of any one. You may think that if you had leave to be fornicators, and adulterers, to be riotous, and examples of evil, to be covetous, and to deceive, and steal, and lie, that it would do you no harm: but suppose it were so, yet a little wit may serve to show you how pernicious it would be to others, and to societies. And faith can tell a true believer, what is like to be the end; and that "sin is a reproach to any people," Prov. xiv. 34.

You may think perhaps that if you were excused from many duties of charity and justice, in ministry, magistracy, or a more private state, it would be no harm to yourselves. But suppose it were so, must not others be regarded? If God should regard but one, why should it fall to your lot rather than to another's? And why should any others be bound to use justice or charity to you any more than you to them? There is no member of the body politic or ecclesiastic, which will not receive more good to itself, by the laws of communion, if truly practised, than it can do to others. For you are but one who are bound to be charitable and do good to others, and that but according to your own ability; but it may be hundreds or thousands who may be all bound to do good to you. You have the vital influences and assistances of all the parts: you have the prayers of all the christians in the world.

Suppose that the laws were made to secure yourselves of your estates and lives; but to leave the estates and lives of your children to the will of any one that hath a will to wrong them; would you be content with such kind of laws as these? And why should not others' good be secured, as well as your posterity's? 1 Cor. xii. 12, 14, 20, &c.; Rom. xii. 4, 5; xvi. 2; 1 Cor. x. 17, 33; Eph. iv. 3, 11, 12, 14—16.

Direct. 4. The chief work of faith is to make the obedience of God's commands to be sweet and pleasant to us, by seeing still that intrinsical goodness, and the extrinsical motives, and the eternal rewards, which may cause the soul to embrace them with the dearest love.

They are much mistaken who know no use for faith but to comfort them, and save them from hell: the great work of faith is to bring up the soul to obedience, thankfulness, and love. Therefore it hath to do with the precepts as well as with the promises, and with the promises to sweeten the precepts to us. Believers are not called to the obedience of slaves, nor to be actuated only by the fear of pain; but to the obedience of redeemed ones and sons, that faith may cause them to obey in love; and the essential act of love is complacency. Therefore it is the work of faith, to cause us to obey God with pleasure and delight. Forced motives endure not long: they are accompanied with unwillingness and weariness, which at last will sit down, when the fears do by distance delay or dulness abate. Love is our nature; but fear is only a servant to watch for us while we do the work of love. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, are the sons of God (and therefore will obey as sons). For we have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but we have received the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father," Rom. viii. 14, 15. Christ suffered death to overcome the devil that had the power of death, and to deliver us from the fears of it, which was the bondage of our lives, Heb. ii. 14, 15. That we might serve God without fear, in holiness and righteousness, all the days of our lives, Luke i. 74. "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath torment," 1 John iv. 18. The meaning is, not only that the love of God casteth out the fear of men, and persecution; but also it maketh the fear of tormenting punishment to become unnecessary to drive us to obedience, so far as the love of God and of obedience doth prevail. He that loveth more to feast than to fare hardly, to be rich than to be poor, (and so to be obedient and holy than to be unholy,) need not (so far) any fear of punishment to drive him to it. Even as the love of the world, as adverse to the love of God, is overcome by faith, (1 John ii. 15,) and yet the love of the world as God's creature, and as representing him, and sanctified to his service, is but subordinate to the love of the Father, so also fear as adverse to love, or as disjunct from it, is cast out by it; but as it subserveth it in watching against the enemies of love, and is truly filial, it is a fruit of faith, and the beginning of wisdom.

Employ faith therefore day by day, in looking into the love of God in Christ, and the kingdom of glory, the reward of obedience, and the beauties of holiness, and the merciful conditions of filial obedience, (when we have a pardon of our infirmities and are accepted in Christ,) that so we may feel that Christ's "yoke is easy, and his burden light, and his commandments are not grievous," Matt. xi. 28, 29; 1 John v. 3. And when faith hath taught you to hunger and thirst after righteousness, and to delight to do the will of God, love, which is the end of faith, will satisfy you, Matt. v. 6; Psal. xl. 8.

Direct. 5. Take especial notice how suitable a holy law is to the nature of a most holy God; and how much he is honoured in that demonstration of his holiness; and how odious a thing it would be to wish, that the most holy One would have made for us an unholy law.

Would you draw the picture of your friend like an ape or a monkey, or a monster? Or would you have the king pictured like a fool? Or would you have his laws written like the words of a bedlam, or the laws of barbarians or cannibals? How much more intolerable were it to wish, that an unholy or unrighteous law should be the product and impress of the most great, most wise, and holy God! This thought should make every believer exceedingly in love with the holiness of God's commands, because they are the appearance or image of his holiness, and necessary to his honour, as he is the governor of the world, Rom. vii. 6, 7, 12. When Paul confesseth that he could no more perfectly keep the law without sin, than a fettered prisoner could walk at liberty, (for that is the sense of the text,) yet doth he give the law this honour, that it is holy, just, and good; and therefore he loveth it, and fain would perfectly obey it, if he could. See Psal. xix. 7, 12, &c.; cxix. 72; xxxvii. 31; i. 2; Isa. v. 24, &c.

Direct. 6. Remember that both promises, and threatenings, and God's mercies, and his judgments, are appointed means to bring us to obey the precepts; and therefore obedience, which is their end, is highly to be esteemed.

It seemeth a great difficulty whether the precept before the promise, or the promise before the pre-

cept; which is the end, and which is the means; whether obedience be a means to attain the reward, or the reward be a means to procure obedience. And the answer is as pleasant to our consideration, viz. that as the works of the Trinity of persons, and of God's power, and wisdom, and goodness *ad extra*, are undivided; so are the effects of the one in God's laws the effects also of the other; and they are harmoniously and inseparably conjunct. So that we must obey the command, that we may attain the blessing of the promise, and be assured of it. And we must believe the promise, and the reward, that we may be moved to obey the precept: and when all is done, we find that all comes to one; and in the end, the duty and the reward will be the same, when duty cometh to perfection: and that the reward which is promised is our perfection in that holiness, and love, and conformity to the will of God, in which God doth take that complacency which is our ultimate end.

But if you look at the matter of obedience rather than the form, it sometimes consisteth in troublesome things, as suffering persecution, &c. which is less desirable than the promised reward, which is but pleasing God, and obeying him, in a more desirable and grateful matter, even in perfect love for ever: and therefore the more desirable must be considered to draw us to the less desirable; and that consideration of the reward, (and not the possessing of it,) is the means to our obedience, not for the sake of the ungrateful matter, but of the form and end; Matt. v. 10—12; vi. 1, 4; x. 41, 42; 1 Cor. ix. 17, 18; 1 Tim. v. 18; Heb. xi. 6; x. 35; xi. 26; Col. iii. 24.

Direct. 7. Remember how much Christ himself hath condescended, to be made a means or Mediator to procure our obedience to God.

And surely that must be an excellent end, which Christ himself became a means to! He came to save his people from their sins, Matt. i. 21. And "to call sinners to repentance," Luke v. 32; Matt. ix. 13. "Is Christ the minister of sin? God forbid," Gal. ii. 17. "For this end was he revealed, that he might destroy the works of the devil," 1 John iii. 8. And he died to redeem and "purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works," Titus ii. 14. Christ came as much to kill sin, as to pardon it. Judge therefore of the worth of obedience by the nobleness and dignity of the means.

Direct. 8. Remember still that the same law which governeth us must judge us. Let faith see the sure and close connexion between obedience and judgment.

If faith do but speak aloud to a sluggish soul, Thou must be judged by the same word which commandeth thee to watch and pray, and to walk in holiness with God, it will much awaken the soul to duty: and if faith do but say aloud to a tempted sinner, The judge is at the door, and thou must hear of this again, and review sin when it will have another countenance, it will do much to kill the force of the temptation, Rom. xiv. 12; Phil. iv. 17; Heb. xiii. 17; Matt. xii. 36; 2 Pet. iii. 11, 12.

Direct. 9. Be sure that your heart-subjection to God be fixed, that you may live under the sense of his authority.

For as God's veracity is the formal object of all faith; so God's authority is the formal object of all obedience. And therefore the deep, renewed apprehension of his majesty, his wisdom, and absolute authority, will make us perceive that all things and persons must give place to him, and he to none; and will be a constant spring within us, to move the will to a ready obedience in particular cases; Mal. i. 6; Matt. xxiii. 8, 10; Jer. v. 22.

Direct. 10. Keep in memory some plain texts of Scripture for every particular duty, and against every particular sin; which I would willingly here write down, but that the book swelleth too big, and it is so plentifully done already in most catechisms, where they confirm all such commands with the texts of Scripture cited to that use. As you may see in the Assembly's Catechism with the proofs, and more briefly in Mr. Tobias Ellis's "English School," where a text or more for every article of faith, and every duty, is recited for the use of children. God's word, which is the object and rule of faith, should be before the eye of faith in this great work of causing our obedience.

Direct. 11. Understand well the different nature and use of Scripture examples; how some of them have the nature of a divine revelation and a law; and others are only motives to obedience, and others of them are evils to be avoided by us.

1. To Moses and the apostles of Christ, a special commission was granted, to one to settle the tabernacle and its worship, and to the other, to settle the orders of the gospel church. Christ sent them to "teach all things, whatsoever he commanded," Matt. xxviii. 20. And he promised to be with them, and to send them the "Spirit to lead them into all truth, and to bring all things to their remembrance." Accordingly they did obey this commission, and settle the gospel churches according to the will of Christ; and this many years before any of the New Testament was written. Therefore these acts of theirs have the nature and use of a divine revelation and a law. For if they were fallible in this, Christ must break the foresaid promise.

2. But all the acts of the apostles which were either about indifferent things, or which were about fore-commanded duties, and not in the execution of the foresaid commission, for which they had the promise of infallibility, have no such force or interpretation. For, (1.) Their holy actions of obedience to former laws, are not properly laws to us, but motives to obey God's laws. And this is the common use of all other good examples of the saints in Scripture: their examples are to be tried by the law, and followed as secondary copies or motives, and not as the law itself: "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ," 1 Cor. xi. 1. "Be ye followers of them, who through faith and patience do inherit the promise," Heb. vi. 12; 1 Cor. iv. 16; Phil. iii. 17; 1 Thess. i. 6; ii. 16; iii. 7, 9; Heb. xiii. 7.

(2.) And the evil examples even of apostles are to be avoided, as all other evil examples recorded in the Scriptures are; such as Peter's denial of his Lord, and the disciples all forsaking him, and Peter's sinful separation and dissimulation, and Barnabas's with him, (Gal. ii.) and the falling out of Paul and Barnabas, &c.

(3.) And the history of indifferent actions, or those which were the performance of but a temporary duty, are instructing to us, but not examples which we must imitate. It is not divine faith which forgeth an object or rule to itself. Whatsoever example we will prove to be obligatory to us to imitate, we must either prove, 1. That it was an execution of God's own commission, which had a promise of infallible guidance. Or, 2. That it was done according to some former law of God, which is common to them and us. (As the first must be the revealing of some duty extended to this age, as well as that.)

Direct. 12. Faith must make great use of Scripture examples, both for motive and comfort, when we find their case to be the same with ours.

We cannot conclude that we must imitate them in

extraordinary circumstances; nor can we conclude that God will give every extraordinary mercy to us, which he gave to them, (as that he will make all kings as he did David, or all apostles, or raise all as he did Lazarus now, &c.) nor that every believer shall have the same outward things, or will have just the same degrees of grace, &c. But we may conclude that we shall have all God's promises fulfilled to us, as they had to them; and shall have all that is suitable to our condition. As David was pardoned upon repentance, so many others: "I confessed, and thou forgavest: for this shall every one that is godly pray to thee," Psal. xxxii. 5, 6. Hath God pardoned a Manasseh, a Peter, a Paul, &c. upon repentance? So is he ready to do to us. Hath he helped the distressed? Hath he heard and pitied even the weak in faith? So we may hope he will do by us, Isa. xxxviii. 10, 11; Psal. cxvi. 3; Acts xxvii. 20; Jonah ii. 4. We have the same God, the same Christ, the same promise, if we have the same faith, and pray with the same Spirit, Rom. viii. 26; Heb. iv. 15; though we may not have just the same case, or the same manner of deliverance. Therefore it is a mercy that the Scripture is written historically; and therefore we should remember such particular examples as suit our own case.

CHAPTER V.

DIRECTIONS HOW TO LIVE BY FAITH UPON GOD'S PROMISES.

This part of the work of faith is more noble, because the eminent part of the gospel is the promises, or covenant of grace; and it is the more necessary, because our lapsed, miserable state hath made the promises so necessary to our use. The helps to be used herein are these:

Direct. 1. Consider that every promise of God is the expression of his immutable will and counsel.

It is a great dispute among the schoolmen, whether God be properly obliged to us by his promises; when the word obligation itself is but a metaphor, which must be cast away or explained, before the question can be answered. God cannot be bound as man is, who transferreth a propriety to another from himself; or maketh himself a proper debtor in point of communicative justice; or may be sued at law, and made to perform against his will. But it is a higher obligation than all this which lieth upon God. His power, wisdom, and goodness, which are himself, do constitute his veracity; and his very nature is immutable and just; and therefore his nature and being is the infallible cause of the fulfilling of his promises. He freely made them; but he necessarily performeth them: and therefore the apostle saith, that "God that cannot lie hath promised eternal life, before the world began;" which is either promised according to his counsel which he had before the world began, or from the beginning of the world, Titus i. 2; or as the word also signifieth, many ages ago. And Heb. vi. 17, 18, "Wherefore God, willing more abundantly to show to the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us; which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast."——And therefore when the apostle meaneth, that Christ will not be unfaithful to us, his phrase is, "He cannot deny himself," 2 Tim. ii. 13. As if his very nature and being consisted more in his truth and fidelity, than any mortal man's can do.

Direct. 2. Understand the nature and reasons of fidelity among men, viz. 1. To make them conformable to God: and, 2. To maintain all justice, order, and virtue in the world. And when you have pondered these two, you will see that it is impossible for God to be unfaithful. For, 1. If it be a vice in the copy, what would it be in the original? Nay, would not falsehood and perfidiousness become our perfection, to make us like God? 2. And if all the world would be like a company of enemies, bedlams, brutes, or worse, if it were not for the remnants of fidelity, it is impossible that the nature or will of God should be the pattern or original of so great evil.

Direct. 3. Consider what a foundation of his promises God hath laid in Jesus Christ, and what a seal his blood and resurrection is unto them.

When it hath cost Christ so dear to procure them, certainly God will not break them. A promise ratified in the blood of the Son of God, called the "blood of the everlasting covenant," (Heb. xiii. 20,) and by his rising from the dead, can never be broken. If the law given by Moses was firm, and a jot or tittle should not pass away till all were fulfilled, much more the word and testament of the Mediator of a better covenant. "All the promises in him are yea and amen," 2 Cor. i. 20; that is, they are asserted or made in him, and they are ratified, and shall be fulfilled in him. "He hath obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises," Heb. viii. 6. And those that are better cannot be less sure. It is the sure mercies of David that are given us, by a promise which is sure to all the seed, Acts xiii. 34; Isa. lv. 3; Rom. iv. 16.

Direct. 4. Consider well that it is God's own interest to fulfil his promises; for he attaineth not that glory of his love and grace in the perfection of his people till it be done, which he designed in the making of them.

And certainly God will not fail himself and his own interest. The happiness will be ours, but it will be his everlasting pleasure to see his creatures in their perfection. If he was so pleased after the creation, to see them all good, that he appointed a sabbath of rest, to celebrate the commemoration of it; how much more will it please him to see all restored by Jesus Christ, and brought up to that perfection which Adam was but in the way to when he sinned and fell short of the glory of God. He will not miss of his own design, nor lose the everlasting complacency of his love.

Direct. 5. Consider how great stress God hath laid upon the belief of his promises, and of how great use he hath made them in the world.

If the intimation of another world and reward which we find in nature, and the promise of it in Scripture, were out of the world, or were not believed, and so men had nothing but temporal motives to rule their hearts and lives by, oh what an odious thing would man be! and what a hell would the world be! I have elsewhere showed that the government of the world is mainly steered by the hopes and fears of another life, and could not be otherwise, unless man be turned into far worse than a beast. And certainly those promises cannot be false, which God hath laid so great a stress on, and the belief of which is of so great moment. For the wise, and holy, and powerful God, neither needeth a lie, nor can use it to so great a work.

Direct. 6. Take notice how agreeable God's promises are to the nature both of God and man.

It is not only God's precepts that have a congruence to natural reason, but his promises also. It is agreeable to the nature of Infinite goodness to do good: and yet we see that he doth not do to all alike. He maketh not every creature an angel, nor a man: how then shall we discern what he intendeth to do by his creatures, but by their several natures? The nature of every thing is fitted to its use. Seeing therefore God hath given man a nature capable of knowing, loving, and enjoying him, we have reason to think he gave it not in vain. And we have reason to think that nature may be brought up to its own perfection; and that he never intended to employ man all his days on earth, in seeking an end which cannot be attained. And yet we see that some do unfit themselves for this end, by turning from it, and following vanity: and that God requireth every man as a free agent, to use his guidance and help aright, for his own preparation to felicity. Therefore reason may tell us, that those who are so prepared by the nearest capacity, and have a love to God, and a heavenly mind, shall enjoy the glory which they are fitted for. And it helpeth much our belief of God's promise, to find that reason thus discerneth the equity of it; yea, to find that a Cicero, a Seneca, a Socrates, a Plato, &c. expected much the like felicity to the just, which the Scripture promiseth.

Direct. 7. Be sure to understand God's promises aright, that you expect not that which he never promised, and take not presumption to be faith.

Many do make promises to themselves by misunderstanding, and look that God should fulfil them. And if any of them be not fulfilled, they are ready to suspect the truth of God. And thus men become false prophets to themselves and others, and speak words in the name of the Lord, which he hath never spoken, and incur much of the guilt, which God oft chargeth on false prophets, and such as add to the word of God. It is no small fault to father an untruth on God, and to call that his promise which he never made.

Direct. 8. Think not that God promiseth you all that you desire or think you want, in bodily things.

It is not our own desires which he hath made the measure of his outward gifts; no, nor our own opinion of our necessity neither: else most men would have nothing but riches, and health, and love, and respect from men; and few would have any want, or pain, or suffering. But it is so much as is good, 1. To the common ends of government, and the societies with which we live. 2. And to our souls, which God doth promise to his own. And his wisdom, and not their partial conceits, shall be the judge. Our Father knoweth what we need, and therefore we must cast our care on him, and take not too particular nor anxious thoughts for ourselves, Matt. vi. 24, to the end; 1 Pet. v. 7.

Direct. 9. Think not that God promiseth you all that you will ask; no, not that which he commandeth you to ask; unless it agree with his promising will, as well as with his commanding will.

That promise of Christ, "Ask and ye shall receive," &c. "And whatsoever you ask the Father in my name, according to his will, he will give it you," are often misunderstood. And there is some difficulty in understanding what will of God is here meant. If it be his decreeing will, that is secret, and the promise giveth us no sure consolation: if it be meant of his promising will, what use is this general promise for, if we must have a particular promise also for all that we can expect? If it be meant of his commanding will, the event notoriously gainsayeth it: for it is most certain, that since the church hath long prayed for the conversion of the infidel world, and the reforming of the corrupted churches, &c. it is not yet done: and it is all christians' duty, to pray for kings, and all in authority; and to ask that wisdom and grace for them which God doth seldom give them. And all parents who are bound to pray for grace for their children, do not speed according to their prayers.

Object. That is because that prayers for other men suppose others to concur in the qualifying conditions as well as ourselves. But the promise is meant only of whatsoever we ask for ourselves as he commandeth, or for others who are prepared as he requireth. *Answ.* 1. If so, then the promise is not only made to our praying as commanded. 2. It cannot be thought that our prayers for infidels, who must have preparing grace before they can be prepared, should be thus suspended in their preparation of themselves. 3. It may be a duty to pray for many things for ourselves too, which yet we shall not particularly receive: as a minister may pray for greater abilities for his work, &c.

Object. We pray not as commanded for any such things, if we pray not conditionally for them. *Answ.* But still the difficulty is, What is the condition to be inserted? Whether it be, If God will? or, If it be for our good? or, If it be for the universal good of the world? If it were the last, then we might be sure of the salvation of all men, when we ask it; and the second cannot be the condition when we pray for others: and if it be the first, then it telleth us that the commanding will of God is not it which is principally meant in the promise.

In this difficulty we must conclude, that the text respecteth God's will comprehensively in all these three forementioned respects; but primarily his promising will in matters which fall under promise, and his decreeing will in things which he hath thought meet to make no promise of; and then secondarily, his commanding will to us; but this extendeth not only to prayer itself, but also to the manner of prayer, and to our conjunct and subsequent endeavours. And so this meeteth and closeth with the former will of God; because we do not pray according to his commanding will, unless we do it with due respect to his promising and decreeing will. And so it is as if it were said, Of all these things which God hath promised or decreed, whatsoever you ask in my name, in a manner agreeable to his command, and do second your prayers with faithful endeavours, you shall obtain it; because neither his decrees or promises are nakedly or merely to give such a thing; but complicately to give it in this way of asking.

And as to the objections in the beginning, I answer, 1. Where only God's decreeing will is the measure of the matter to be granted, the text intendeth not to us a particular assurance of the thing; but the comfort that we and our prayers are accepted, and they shall be granted if it be not such a thing as God in his wisdom and eternal counsel hath secretly determined not to do. As if you pray for the conversion of the kingdom of China, of Japan, of Hindostan, of Tartary, &c.

And, 2. Where God's promise hath given us security of the thing in particular; yet this general promise, and our prayer, are neither of them in vain. For, 1. The general promise doth both confirm our faith in general, which is a help to us in each particular case; and also it directeth us to Christ as the means, in whose name we are to ask all things of the Father; and assureth us, that it is for his sake that God doth fulfil those particular promises to us.

2. And prayer in his name, is the condition, way, or means of the fulfilling them.

It is a very common error among many praying persons, to think that if they can but prove it their duty to ask such a thing, this promise telleth them, that they shall have it: but you see there is more necessary to the understanding of it than so.

Direct. 10. Think not that God promiseth you all that you do believe that you shall receive, when you ask it; though it be with never so confident an expectation.

This is a more common error than the former. Many think that if the thing be but lawful which they pray for, much more if it be their duty to pray for it, then a particular belief that they shall receive it is the condition of the promise, and therefore that they shall certainly receive it. As if they pray for the recovery of one that is sick, or for the conversion of one that is unconverted, and can but believe that it shall be done, they think God is then obliged by promise to do it. "If thou canst believe, all things are possible," Mark ix. 23. And Mark xi. 23, 24, "Whosoever shall say to this mountain, Be thou removed, &c. and shall not doubt in his heart, but believe, &c. Therefore I say unto you, what things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them."

Answ. The reason of this was, because they had a special promise of the gift of miracles, as is expressed, Mark xvi. 17, 18. And even this text is such a particular promise: for the Spirit of miracles was then given to confirm the gospel, and gather the first churches, and faith was the condition of them; or the Spirit, whenever he would work a miracle, would first work an extraordinary faith to prepare for it. And yet if you examine well the particular texts which speak of this subject, you shall find that as it was the doubt of the divine authority of Christ's testimony, and of his own real power, which was the unbelief of those times; so it was the belief of his authority and power, which was the faith required: and this is oftener expressed than the belief of the event is extolled, it is because the belief of Christ's power is contained in it. "If thou canst believe, all things are possible," Mark ix. 23. Not all things shall come to pass. "The blind men came to him, and Jesus said, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord. Then he touched their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you," Matt. ix. 28. So the centurion's faith is described as a belief of Christ's power, Matt. viii. 7—10. So is it in many other instances.

So that this text is no exception from the general rule; but the meaning of it is, Whatsoever promised thing you ask, not doubting, ye shall receive it: or doubt not of my enabling power, and you shall receive whatever you ask, which I have promised you; and miracles themselves shall be done by you.

Object. But what if they had only doubted of Christ's will? *Answ.* If they had doubted of his will in cases where he never expressed his will, they could not indeed have been certain of the event (for that is contrary to the doubt). But they could not have charged Christ with any breach of promise; and therefore could not themselves have been charged with any unbelief. (For it is no unbelief to doubt of that will which never was revealed.) But if they had doubted of his revealed will concerning the event, they had then charged him with falsehood, and had sinned against him, as ill as those who deny his power.

And the large experience of this our age, confuteth this foresaid error of a particular belief: for we have abundance of instances of good people who were thus mistaken, and have ventured thereupon to conclude with confidence, that such a sick person shall be healed, and such a thing shall come to pass; when over and over the event hath proved contrary, and brought such confidence into contempt, upon the failing of it.

Direct. 11. Think not that because some strong imagination bringeth some promise to your minds, that therefore it belongeth unto you, unless, upon trial, the true meaning of it do extend to you.

Many and many an honest, ignorant, melancholy woman hath told me what abundance of sudden comfort they have had, because such a text was brought to their minds, and such a promise was suddenly set upon their hearts; whenas they mistook the very sense of the promise, and upon true inquiry, it was nothing to their purpose. Yet it is best not always to contradict those mistaken and ungrounded comforts of such persons; because when they are godly, and have true right to sounder comforts, but cannot see it, it is better that they support themselves a while with such mistakes, than that they sink into despair. For though we may not offer them such mistakes, nor comfort them by a lie; yet we may permit that which we may not do (as God himself doth). It is not at all times that we are bound to rectify other men's mistakes, viz. not when it will do them more harm than good.

Many an occasion may bring a text to our remembrance which concerneth us not, without the Spirit of God. Our own imaginations may do much that way of themselves. Try therefore what is the true sense of the text, before you build your conclusion on it.

But yet if indeed God bring to your minds any pertinent promise, I would not have you to neglect the comfort of it.

Direct. 12. Think not that God hath promised to all christians the same degrees of grace; and therefore that you may expect as much as any others have.

Object. But shall not all at last be perfect? And what can there be added to perfection?

Answ. The perfection of a creature is to be advanced to the highest degree, which his own specifical and individual nature is capable of. A beast may be perfect, and yet not be a man. And a man may be perfect, and yet not be an angel. And Lazarus may be perfect, and yet not reach the degree of Abraham. For there is, no doubt, a gradual difference between the capacities of several individual souls, of the same species; as there is of several vessels of the same metal, though not by such difference of corporal extension. And there is no great probability that all the difference in the degrees of wit from the idiot to Ahithophel, is founded only in the bodily organs, and not at all in the souls. And it is certain, that there are various degrees of glory in heaven, and yet that every one there is perfect.

But if this were not so, yet it is in this life only that we are now telling you, that all christians have not a promise of the same degrees.

Object. But is not additional grace given by way of reward? And then have not all a promise of the same degree which the best attain, conditionally, if they do as much as they for it?

Answ. Of objective grace: yes, objective; but not subjective; because all have not the same natural capacity, nor are bound to the same degree of duty as to the condition itself. As perfection in heaven is given by way of reward, and yet all shall not have the same degree of perfection; so is it as to the degree of grace on earth. 2. All have not the same degrees of the first preventing grace given them;

and therefore it is most certain that all will not use the same degree of industry for more. Some have but one talent, and some two, when some have five, and therefore gain ten talents in the improvement, Matt. xxv.

All must strive for the highest measure; and all the sincere may at last expect their own perfection; but God breaketh no promise, if he giveth them not all as much as some have.

Direct. 13. Much less hath God promised the same degree of common gifts to all.

If you never attain to the same measure of acuteness, learning, memory, utterance, do not think that God breaketh promise with you: nor do not call your presumption by the name of faith, if you have such expectations. See 1.Cor. xii. throughout.

Direct. 14. God often promiseth not the thing itself, when he promiseth the time of giving it: therefore do not take it to be an act of faith to believe a set time, where God hath set no time at all. .

Many are the troubles of the righteous, but God will deliver them out of all, Psal. xxxvii; but he hath not set them just the time. Christ hath promised to come again and take us to himself, John xiv. 1—3; but of that day and hour knoweth no man. God will give necessary comfort to his servants; but he best knoweth when it is necessary: and therefore they must not set him a time, and say, Let it be now, or thou breakest thy word. Patient waiting God's own time, is as needful as believing: yea, he that believeth, will not make haste, Isa. xxviii. 16; Rom. ii. 7; 2 Thess. iii. 5; James v. 7, 8; Heb. vi. 12; x. 36; xii. 1; James v. 7; Rev. xiii. 10; xiv. 12; 1 Thess. i. 3, 11.

Direct. 15. God often promiseth the thing, when he promiseth not either in what manner, or by what instrument, he will do it.

He may deliver his church, and may deliver particular persons out of trouble; and yet do it in a way, and by such means, as they never dreamed of. Sometimes he foretelleth his means, when it is we that in duty are to use them. And sometimes he keepeth them unknown to us, when they are only to be used by himself. In the mount will the Lord be seen; but yet Abraham thought not of the ram in the thicket. The Israelites knew not that God would deliver them by the hand of Moses, Acts vii. 25.

Direct. 16. Take not the promises proper to one time or age of the church, as if they were common to all, or unto us.

There were many promises to the Israelites, which belong not to us, as well as many precepts: the increase of their seed, and the notable prosperity in the world which was promised them, was partly because that the motive should be suited to the ceremonial duties, and partly because the eternal things being not then so fully brought to light as now, they were the more to be moved with the present outward tokens of God's love. And so the gift of the spirit of miracles, and infallibility, for writing and confirming Scriptures, was promised to the first age, which is not promised to us.

Direct. 17. Take not any good man's observation in those times for a universal promise of God.

For instance, David saith, "I have been young and now am old; yet did I never see the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread," Psal. lxxiii. But if he had lived in the gospel times, where God giveth greater heavenly blessings and comforts, and calleth men to higher degrees of patience and mortification and contempt of the world, he might have seen many both of the righteous and their seed begging their bread, though not forsaken; yea, Christ himself asking for water of a woman, John iv

Direct. 18. Take heed of making promises to seem instead of precepts; as if you were to do that yourselves, which God hath promised that he will do.

If God promise to deliver his church, or to free any of his servants from trouble or persecution, you must have a precept to tell you what is your own duty, and what means you must use, before you must attempt your own deliverance. What God will do, is one thing; and what you must do, is another. This hath been the strange delusion of the people that call themselves the Fifth-monarchy men in our times; who believing that Christ will set up righteousness, and pull down tyrants in the earth, have thought that therefore they must do it by arms; and so have been drawn into many rebellions, to the scandal of others, and their own ruin.

Direct. 19. Take heed of mistaking prophecies for promises; especially dark prophecies not understood.

Many things are foretold by God in prophecies, which are men's sins: Herod, and Pontius Pilate, and the people of the Jews, fulfilled prophecies in the crucifying of Christ; and all the persecutors and murderers of the saints fulfil Christ's prophecies; and so do all that hate us, "and say all manner of evil falsely against us for his sake," Matt. v. 11, 12. But the sin is never the less for that. It is "prophesied that the ten kings shall give up their kingdoms to the beast; that in the last days shall come scoffers walking after their own lusts; and in the last days shall be perilous times," &c. These are not promises nor precepts.

It hath lamentably disturbed the church of Christ, when ignorant, self-conceited christians, who see not the difficulty, grow confident that they understand many prophecies in Daniel, the Revelations, &c. and thereupon found their presumption (miscalled faith) upon their own mistakes, and then form their prayers, their communion, their practice into such schism, and sedition, and uncharitable ways, as the interest of their opinions do require (as the Millenaries before mentioned have done in this generation).

Direct. 20. Think not that all God's promises are made to mere sincerity; and that every true christian must be freed from all penal hurt, however they behave themselves.

For there are further helps of the Spirit, which are promised only to our diligence in attending the Spirit, and to the degrees of industry, and fervour, and fidelity in watching, praying, striving, and other use of means. And there are heavy chastisements which God threateneth to the godly, when they misbehave themselves; especially the hiding of his face, and withholding any measure of his Spirit. The Scripture is full of such threatenings and instances.

Direct. 21. Much less may you imagine that God hath made any promise, that all the sins of true believers shall work together for their good.

They misexpound Rom. viii. 28, who so expound it (as I have elsewhere showed). For, 1. The context confineth it to sufferings. 2. The qualification added, "to them that love God," doth show that the abatement of love to God, is none of the things meant that shall work our good. 3. And it showeth that it is love as love, and therefore not the least that is consistent with neglect and sin, which is our full condition. 4. Experience telleth us, that too many true christians may fall from some degrees of grace, and the love of God, and die in a less degree than they once had; and that loss of holiness doth not work for their good. 5. And it is not a thing suitable to all the rest of God's method in the Scriptures,

that he should assure all beforehand, that all their sins shall work for their good. That he should command obedience so strictly, and promise rewards so liberally, and threaten punishment so terribly, and give such frightful examples as Solomon's, David's, and others are; and at the same time say, Whatever sin thou committest inwardly or outwardly by neglecting my love, and grace, and Spirit, by loving the world, by pleasing the flesh, as David did, &c. it shall all be turned to do thee more good than hurt. This is not a suitable means to men in our case, to keep them from sin, nor to cause their perseverance.

Direct. 22. Understand well what promises are universal to all believers, and what are but particular and proper to some few.

There are many particular promises in Scripture, made by name, to Noah, to Abraham, to Moses, to Aaron, to David, to Solomon, to Hezekiah, to Christ, to Peter, to Paul, &c. which we cannot say are made to us. Therefore the covenant of grace, which is the universal promise, must especially be made the ground of our faith, and all other, as they are branches and appurtenances of that, and have in the Scripture some true signification, that they indeed extend to us. For if we should believe that every promise made to any saint of God (as Hannah, Sarah, Rebecca, Elizabeth, Mary, &c.) do belong to us, we should abuse ourselves and God. And yet to us they have their use.

Direct. 23. It is of very great importance, to understand what promises are absolute, and which are suspended upon any condition to be performed by us; and what each of those conditions is.

As the promise to the fathers that the Messiah should come, was absolute. God gave not a Saviour to the world, so as to suspend his coming on any thing to be done by man. The not drowning of the world, was an absolute promise made to Noah: so was the calling of the gentiles promised. But the covenant of promises sealed in baptism, is conditional; and therefore both parties, God and man, are the covenanters therein.

And in the gospel the promises of our first justification and adoption, and of our after-pardon, and of our justification at judgment, and of our additional degrees of grace, and of our freedom from chastisements, have some difference in the conditions, though true christianity be the main substance of them all. Mere christianity, or true consent to the covenant, is the condition of our first justification. And the continuance of this, with actual sincere obedience, is the condition of nonamission, or of continuance of this state of justification: and the use of prayer and other means, is a condition of our further reception of more grace. And perseverance in true holiness with faith, is the condition of our final justification and glorification (of which more anon).

Direct. 24. You can no further believe the fulfilling of any of these conditional promises, than you know that you perform the condition.

It is presumption, and not faith, for an impenitent person to expect the benefit of those promises, which belong to the penitent only: and so it is for him that forgiveth not others, to expect to be forgiven his particular sins: and so in all the rest of the promises.

Direct. 25. But be sure that you ascribe no more to yourselves, for performing any condition of a promise, than God doth.

A condition as such is no cause at all of the performance of the promise; either natural or moral: only the non-performance of the condition is a cause of the non-performance of the promise: for the true nature of a condition as such, is only to suspend the benefit. Though naturally a condition may be meritorious among men; and for their own commodity (which God is not capable of) they ordinarily make only meritorious acts to be conditions: as God also doth only such acts as are pleasing to him, and suited to their proper ends. But this is nothing to a condition formerly, which is but to suspend the benefit till it be done.

Direct. 26. When you find a promise to be common or universal, apply it as boldly as if your name were written in it: and also when you find that any particular promise to a saint is but a branch of that universal promise to all saints; or to all that are in the same case, and find that the case and reason of the promise proveth the sense of it to belong to you as well as them.

If it be said, that "whosoever believeth shall not perish, but have everlasting life," John iii. 16, you may apply it as boldly as if it were said, If thou John, or Thomas, be a believer, thou shalt not perish, but have everlasting life. As I may apply the absolute promise of the resurrection to myself as boldly as if my name were in it, because it is all that shall be raised, John v. 22, 24, 25; 1 Cor. xv.; so may I all the conditional promises of pardon and glory conditionally, if I repent and believe. And you may absolutely thence conclude your certain interest in the benefit, so far as you are certain that you repent and believe.

And when you read that Christ promiseth his twelve apostles, to be with them, and to reward their labours, and to see that they shall be no losers by him, if they lose their lives, &c.; you may believe that he will do so by you also. For though your work be not altogether the same with theirs; yet this is but a branch of the common promise to all the faithful, who must all follow him on the same terms of self-denial, Luke xiv. 26, 27, 33; Matt. x.; Rom. viii. 17, 18. And on this ground the promise to Joshua is applied, "I will never fail thee nor forsake thee," (Heb. xiii. 5,) because it is but a branch of the covenant common to all the faithful.

Direct. 27. Be sure that you lay the stress of all your hopes on the promises of God, and venture all your happiness on them; and when God calleth to it, express this by forsaking all else for these hopes, that it may appear you really trust God's word, without any secret, hypocritical reserves.

This is the true life, and work, and trial of faith: whether we build so much on the promise of God, that we can take the thing promised for all our treasure, and the word of God for our whole security.

As faith is called a trusting in God, so it is a practical kind of trust; and the principal trial of it, lieth in forsaking all other happiness and hopes, in confidence of God's promise through Jesus Christ.

To open the matter by a similitude: suppose that Christ came again on earth as he did at his incarnation, and should confirm his truth by the same miracles, and other means; and suppose he should then tell all the country, I have a kingdom at the antipodes, where men never die, but live in perpetual prosperity; and those of you shall freely possess it, who will part with your own estates and country, and go in a ship of my providing, and trust me for your pilot to bring you thither, and trust me to give it you when you come there. My power to do all this I have proved by my miracles, and my love and will my offer proveth. How now will you know whether a man believe Christ, and trust this promise, or not? Why, if he believe and trust him, he will go with him, and will leave all, and venture over the seas whithersoever he conducteth him, and in that ship which he prepareth for him: but if he

dare not venture, or will not leave his present country and possessions, it is a sign that he doth not trust him.

If you were going to sea, and had several ships and pilots offered you, and you were afraid lest one were unsafe, and the pilot unskilful, and it were doubtful which were to be trusted; when after all deliberation you choose one, and refuse the rest, and resolve to venture your life and goods in it, this is properly called trusting it. So trusting in God, and in Jesus Christ, is not a bare opinion of his fidelity, but a practical trust; and that you may be sure to understand it clearly, I will once open the parts of it distinctly.

Divines commonly tell us that faith is an affiance or trust in God: and some of them say, that this is an act of the understanding, and some, that it is an act of the will, and others say, that faith consisteth in assent alone, and that trust or affiance is as hope, a fruit of faith, and not faith itself: and what affiance itself is, is no small controversy (and so it is what faith and christianity is, even among the teachers of christians).

The plain truth is this: As to the name of faith, it sometimes signifieth a mere intellectual assent, when the object requireth no more: and sometimes it signifieth a practical trust or affiance, in the truth or trustiness of the undertaker or promiser, that is, in his power, wisdom, and goodness, or honesty, conjunct as expressed in his word; and that is, when the matter is practical, requiring such a trust. The former is often called, the christian faith; because it is the belief of the truth of the christian principles; and is the leading part of faith in the full sense.

What true christian faith is.

But it is the latter which is the christian faith, as it is taken, not *secundum quid*, but simply; not for a part, but the whole; not for the opinion of men about Christ, but for christianity itself, or that faith which must be professed in baptism, and which hath the promise of justification and salvation.

And this trust or affiance is placed respectively on all the objects mentioned in the beginning; on God as the first efficient foundation, and on God as the ultimate end; as the certain full felicity, and final object of the soul: on Christ as the Mediator, and as the secondary foundation, and the guide, and the finisher of our faith and salvation; the chief subrevealer and performer: on the Holy Ghost, as the third foundation; both revealing and attesting the doctrine by his gifts: and on the apostles and prophets as his instruments, and Christ's chief intrusted messengers: and on the promise or covenant of Christ as his instrumental revelation itself: and on the Scriptures as the authentic record of this revelation and promise. And the benefit for which all these are trusted, is, recovery to God, or redemption and salvation, viz. pardon of sin, and justification, adoption, sanctification, and glorification; and all things necessary hereunto.

This trust is an act of all the three faculties, (for three there are,) even of the whole man; of the vital power, the understanding, and the will: and is most properly called a practical trust; such as trusting a physician with your life and health; or a tutor to teach you; or a master to govern and reward you; or a ship and pilot (as aforesaid) to carry you safe through the dangers of the sea: as in this similitude, affiance as in the understanding, is its assent to the sufficiency and fidelity of the pilot and ship (or physician) that I trust: affiance in the will is the choosing of this ship, pilot, physician, to venture my life with, and refusing all others; which is called consent, when it followeth the motion and offer of him whom we trust. Affiance in the vital power of the soul, is the fortitude and venturing all upon this chosen Trustee; which is the quieting (in some measure) disturbing fears, and the *exitus* or *conatus*, or first egress of the soul towards execution.

And whereas the quarrelling, peevish ignorance of this age, hath caused a great deal of bitter, reproachful, uncharitable contention on both sides, about the question, How far obedience belongeth to faith? whether as a part, or end, or fruit, or consequent? In all this it is easily discerned, that as allegiance or subjection differ from obedience; and hiring myself to a master differeth from obeying him; and taking a man for my tutor differeth from learning of him; and marriage differeth from conjugal duty; and giving up myself to a physician differeth from taking his counsel and medicines; and taking a man for my pilot differeth from being conducted by him; so doth our first faith or christianity differ from actual obedience to the healing precepts of our Saviour. It is the covenant of obedience and consent to it, immediately entering us into the practice: it is the seed of obedience, or the soul, or life of it, which will immediately bring it forth, and act it. It is virtual, but not actual obedience to Christ; because it is but the first consent to his kingly relation to us; unless you will call it that inception from whence all obedience followeth. But it may be actual (common) obedience to God, where he is believed in and acknowledged before Christ: and all following acts of faith after the first, are both the root of all other obedience, and a part of it: as our continued allegiance to the king is: and as the heart, when it is the first formed organ in nature, is no part of the man, but the organ to make all the parts, because it is solitary; and there is yet no man, of whom it can be called a part; but when the man is formed, the heart is both his chief part, and the organ to actuate and maintain the rest.

Object. But faith, as faith, is not obedience.

Answ. Nor learning, as learning, is not obedience to your tutor; nor ploughing, as ploughing, is not obedience to your master: or to speak more aptly, the continuance of your consent, that this man may be your tutor, as such, is not obedience to him; but it is materially part of your obedience to your father who commandeth it: and your continued allegiance or subjection as such, is not obedience to your king; but as primarily it was the foundation or heart of future obedience; so afterward it is also materially a part of your obedience, being commanded by him to whom you are now subject. And so it is in the case of faith: and therefore true faith and obedience are as nearly conjoined as life and motion; and the one is ever connoted in the other. Faith is for obedience to Christ's healing means, as trusting and taking a physician is for the using of his counsel: and faith is for love and holy obedience to God, which is called our sanctification, as trusting a physician is for health. Faith is implicit, virtual obedience to a Saviour; and obedience to a Saviour is explicit operating faith or trust.

I. In the understanding, faith in God's promises hath all these acts contained in it.

1. A belief that God is, and that he is perfectly powerful, wise, and good.

2. A belief that he is our Maker, and so our Owner, our Ruler, and our chief good, (initially and finally,) delighting to do good, and the perfect felicitating end and object of the soul.

3. A belief that God hath expressed the benignity of his nature, by a covenant or promise of life to man.

4. To believe that Jesus Christ, God and man, is the Mediator of this covenant, (Heb. viii. 6; ix. 15;

xii. 24,) procuring it, and intrusted to administer or communicate the blessings of it, Heb. v. 9.

5. To believe that the Holy Ghost is the seal and witness of this covenant.

6. To believe that this covenant giveth pardon of sin, and justification and adoption, and further grace, to penitent believers; and glorification to those that persevere in true faith, love, and obedience to the end.

7. To believe that the holy Scriptures, or word delivered by the apostles, is the sure record of this covenant, and of the history and doctrine on which it is grounded.

8. To believe that God is most perfectly regardful and faithful to fulfil this covenant, and that he cannot lie or break it; Titus i. 2; Heb. vi. 17, 18.

9. To believe that you in particular are included in this covenant, as well as others, it being universal as conditional to all if they will repent and believe, and no exception put in against you to exclude you; John iii. 16; Mark xvi. 15, 16.

10. To believe or know that there is nothing else to be trusted to, as our felicity and end, instead of God; nor as our way, instead of the Mediator, and the foresaid means appointed by him.

II. In the will, faith or trust hath, 1. A simple complacency in God as believed to be most perfectly good, as fore-described.

2. It hath an actual intending and desiring of him as our end and whole felicity to be enjoyed in heaven; Gal. v. 6, 7; Ephes. iii. 17—19; Col. iii. 1, 3, 4; 1 Cor. xiii.; Heb. xi.; Matt. vi. 20, 21.

3. It is the turning away from and refusing all other seeming felicity or ends, and casting all our happiness and hopes upon God alone.

4. It is the choosing Jesus Christ as the only way and Mediator to this end; with the refusing of all other, (John xiv. 6,) and trusting all that we are or hope for upon his mediation.

III. In the vital power, it is the casting away all inconsistent fears, and the inward resolved delivering up the soul to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in this covenant, entering ourselves into a resolved war with the devil, the world, and the flesh, which in the performance will resist us. And thus faith or trust is constituted and completed in the true baptismal covenant.

Direct. 28. In all this be sure that you observe the differenee between the truth of faith and the high degrees.

The truth of it is most certainly discerned by (as consisting in) THE ABSOLUTE CASTING OR VENTURING not part, but ALL YOUR HAPPINESS and HOPES UPON GOD and the MEDIATOR ONLY, and LETTING GO ALL WHICH IS INCONSISTENT WITH THIS CHOICE AND TRUST. This is true and saving faith and trust.

Pardon me that I sometimes use the word VENTURING ALL, as if there were any uncertainty in the matter. I intend not by it to express the least uncertainty or fallibility in God's promise; for heaven and earth shall pass away, but one jot or tittle of his word shall not pass, till all be fulfilled: but I shall here add,

1. True faith or trust may consist with uncertainty in the person who believeth; if he believe and trust Christ but so far, that he can cast away all his worldly treasures and hopes, even life itself, upon that trust. Every one is not an infidel, nor a hypocrite, who must say, if he speak his heart, I am not certain past all doubts, that the soul is immortal, or the gospel true: but I am certain, that immortal happiness is most desirable, and endless misery most terrible; and that this world is vanity, and nothing in it worthy to be compared with the hopes which Christ hath given us of a better life: and therefore upon just deliberation I am resolved to let go all my sinful pleasures, profits, and worldly reputation, and life itself, when it is inconsistent with those hopes: and to take God's love for my felicity and end, and to trust and venture absolutely all my happiness and hopes on the favour of God, the mediation of Christ, and the promises which he hath given us in the gospel.

I know I shall meet with abundance of teachers and people, that will shake the head at this doctrine as dangerous, and ery out of it as savouring unbelief, that any one should have true saving faith, who doubteth, or is uncertain, of the immortality of the soul, or the truth of the gospel! But I see so much in hot-brained, proud persons to be pitied, and so much of their work in the church to be with tears lamented, that I will not by speeeh or silence favour their brain-sick, bold assertions, nor will I fear their phrenetic, furious censures. If it be not a mark of a wise and good minister of Christ, to be utterly ignorant of the state of souls, both his own, and all the people's, then I will not concur to the advancement of the reputation of such ignorance. It is enough to pardon the great injury which such do to the church of God, without eountenancing it. Though this one instance only now reminds me of it, abundance more do second it, and tell us, that there are in the churches through the world, abundance of divines, who are first taught by a party which they most esteem, what is to be held and said as orthodox, and then make it their work to contend for that orthodoxness which they were taught so to honour, even with the most unmanly and unchristian scorns and censures; when, as if they had not been dolefully ignorant both of the Scriptures, and themselves, and the souls of men, they would have known, that it is the fool that rageth and is confident, and that it was not their knowing more than others, but their knowing less, which made them so presumptuous; and that they are themselves as far from certainty as others, when they condemn themselves to defend their opinions; even like our late perfeetionists, who all lived more imperfectly than others, but wrote and railed for sinless perfection, as soon as they did but take up the opinion. As if turning to that opinion had made them perfeet. So men may pass the censure of hypocrisy and damnation upon themselves when they please, by damning all as hypocrites, whose faith is thus far imperfect; but they shall never make any wise man believe by it, that their own faith is ever the more certain or perfect.

As far as I can judge by acquaintance with persons most religious, though there be many who are afraid to speak it out, yet the far greater number of the most faithful christians, have but such a faith which I described, and their hearts say, I am not eertain, or past all doubt, of the truth of our immortality, or of the gospel; but I will venture all my hopes and happiness, though to the parting with life itself upon it.

And I will venture to say it, as the truth of Christ, that he that truly can do this, hath a sincere and saving faith, whatsoever opinionists may say against it. For Christ hath promised, that he that loseth his life for his sake and the gospel's, shall have life everlasting, Matt. x. 37—39, 42; xvi. 25; xix. 29; Luke xviii. 30. And he hath appointed no higher expressions of faith, as necessary to salvation, than denying ourselves, and taking up the cross, and forsaking all that we have; or in one word, than martyrdom; and this as proceeding from the love of God, Luke xiv. 26, 27, 29, 33; Rom. viii. 17, 18, 28—30, 35—39.

And it is most evident that the sincere have been weak in faith: "And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith," Luke xvii. 5. "Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief," Mark ix. 24. "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel," Luke vii. 9. The weak faith was the more common.

2. And as true faith or trust may consist with doubts and uncertainty in the subject; so may it with much anxiety, care, disquietment, and sinful fear; which showeth the imperfection of our faith. "Shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith," Matt. xvi. 8. "O ye of little faith, why reason you among yourselves?" &c. Matt. viii. 26. "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" Matt. xiv. 31. Peter had a faith that could venture his life on the waters to come to Christ, as confident of a miracle upon his command; but yet it was not without fear, (ver. 30,) "when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid;" which caused Christ to say, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?"

And you cannot say that this is only a hinderance in the applying act, and not in the direct and principal act of faith: for we find some disciples at this pass; "But we trusted that it had been he, who should have redeemed Israel," Luke xxiv. 21. Christ saith unto them, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken; ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory," Luke xxiv. 25, 26. The words of them who told the apostles, that Christ was risen, "seemed but as tales to them, and they believed them not," Luke xxiv. 11. "While they believed not for joy, and wondered," &c. ver. 41.

3. Nay, a weak faith may have such a swooning fit, as to fail extraordinarily in an hour of temptation, so far as to deny Christ, or shrink from him in this fear: so did Peter, and not only he, but "all the disciples forsook him, and fled," Matt. xxvi. 56.

But yet he that according to the habituated state of his soul, hath so much faith and love, as will cause him to venture life and all upon the trust which he hath to the promises of the gospel, hath a true and saving faith.

And here I desire all doubting christians to lay by the common mistake in the trying of their faith or trust in Christ, and to go hereafter upon surer grounds. Many say, I cannot believe or trust Christ for salvation, for I am full of doubts, and fears, and troubles; and surely this is not trusting God. *Answ.* 1. The question is not, whether you trust him perfectly, so as to have no fears, no troubles, no doubts; but whether you trust him sincerely, so far as to venture all upon him in his way. If you can venture all on him, and let go all to follow him, your faith is true and saving.

This would abundantly comfort many fearful, troubled christians, if they did but understand it well: for many of them that thus fear, would, as soon as any, forsake all for Christ, and let go all carnal pleasures, and worldly things, or any wilful sin whatsoever, rather than forsake him; and would not take to any other portion and felicity than God, nor any other way than Christ, and the Spirit of holiness, for all the temptations in the world: and yet they fear because they fear; and doubt more because they doubt. Doubting soul, let this resolve thee: Suppose Christ and his way were like a pilot with his ship at sea: many more promise to convey thee safely, and many persuade thee not to venture, but stay at land: but if thou hast so much trust as that thou wilt go, and put thyself and all that thou hast into this ship, and forsake all other, though thou go trembling all the way, and be afraid of every storm, and tempest, and gulf; yet thou hast true faith, though it be weak. If thy faith will but keep thee in the ship with Christ, that thou neither turn back again to the flesh and world, nor yet take another ship and pilot, (as Mahometans, and those without the church,) undoubtedly Christ will bring thee safe to land, though thy fear and distrust be still thy sin.

For the hypocrite's case is always some of these: 1. Some of them will only trust God in some smaller matter, wherein their happiness consisteth not; as a man will trust one with some trifle which he doth not much regard, whom yet he thinks so ill of, that he cannot trust him in a matter of weight.

2. Some of them will trust God for the saving of their souls, and the life to come, (or rather presume on him, while they call it trusting him,) but they will not trust him with their bodies, their wealth, and honours, and fleshly pleasures, or their lives. These they are resolved to shift for, and secure themselves as well as they can. For they know that for the world to come, they must be at God's disposal, and they have no way of their own to shift out of his hands: whether there be such a life or no, they know not; but if there be, they will cast their souls upon God's mercy, when they have kept the world as long as they can, and have had all that it can do for them. But they will not lose their present part, for such uncertain hopes as they account them.

3. Some of them will trust him only in pretence and name, while it is the creature which they trust indeed. Because they have learned to say, that God is the disposer of all, and only to be trusted, and all creatures are but used by his will; therefore they think that when they trust the creature, it is but in subordination to God; though indeed they trust not God at all.

4. Some of them will trust God and the creature jointly; and as they serve God and mammon, and think to make sure of the prosperity of the body and the salvation of the soul, without losing either of them; so they trust in both conjunctly, to make up their felicity. Some think when they read Christ's words, "How hard is it for them that trust in riches, to enter into the kingdom of God!" (Mark x. 24,) that they are safe enough if that be all the danger; for they do not trust in their riches, though they love them; he is a mad-man, they say, that will put his trust in them. And yet Christ intimateth it as the true reason why few that have riches can be saved, because there are few that have riches who do not trust in them. You know that riches will not save your souls; you know that they will not save you from the grave; you know that they will not cure your diseases, nor ease your pains: and therefore you do not trust to riches, either to keep you from sickness, or from dying, or from hell; but yet you think that riches may help you to live in pleasure, and in reputation with the world, and in plenty of all things, and to have your will, as long as health and life will last; and this you take to be the chiefest happiness which a man can make sure of; and for this you trust them. The fool in Luke xii. 19, who said, "Soul, take thy ease, eat, drink, and be merry, thou hast enough laid up for many years," did not trust his riches to make him immortal, nor to save his soul: but he trusted in them, as a provision which might suffice for many years, that he might "eat, drink, and be merry, and take his ease;" and this he loved better, and preferred before any pleasures or happiness which he hoped for in another world. And thus it is that all worldly hypocrites do trust in riches; yea, the poorest do trust in their little poor provisions in this world, as seeming to them surer,

and therefore better than any which they can expect hereafter. This is the way of trusting in uncertain riches, (viz. to be their surest happiness,) instead of trusting in the living God, 1 Tim. vi. 17; iv. 10; Psal. xlix. 6; lii. 7.

But yet because the hypocrite knoweth, that he cannot live here always, but must die, and his riches must be parted with at last, and heareth of a life of glory afterwards, he would fain have his part in that too, when he can keep the world no longer: and so he taketh both together for his part and hope, viz. as much bodily happiness as he can get in this world, and heaven at last, when he must die: not knowing that God will be our portion and felicity, or none; and that the world must be valued and used but for his sake, and in subordination to him and a better world.

5. Yet some hypocrites seem to go further, (though they do not,) for they will seem, even to themselves, to resign goods, and life, and all things absolutely to the will of God. But the reason is, because they are secretly persuaded in their hearts, that their resignation shall no whit deprive them of them; and that God will never the more take it from them; but that they may possess as much present corporal felicity in a life of religion, as if they lived in the dangerous case of the ungodly: or at least that they may keep so much, as not to be undone or left to any great sufferings in the world: or at least, their lives may not be called for. For they live in a time when few suffer for Christ; and therefore they see little cause to fear that they should be of the smaller number: and it is but being a little the more wise and cautelous, and they hope they may escape well enough. And if they had not this hope, they would never give up all to Christ. But like persons that will be liberal to their physician, they will offer a great deal, when they think he will not take it; but if they thought he would take all that is offered, they would offer less. Or as if a sick person should hear that such a physician will give him no very strong or loathsome physic; and therefore when the physician telleth him, I will be none of your physician unless you will absolutely promise to take every thing which I shall give you, he promiseth that he will do it; but it is only because he supposeth that he will give him nothing which is troublesome. And if he find his expectation crossed, he breaketh his promise, and saith, If I had known he would have used me thus, I would never have promised it him. So hypocrites by promise give up themselves absolutely to God, and to be wholly at his will, without excepting life itself; but their hearts do secretly except it: for all this is because they doubt not but they may save their earthly prosperity and lives, and be christians too: and if once Christ call them to suffer death for him, they show then what was the meaning of their hearts.

To reassume the former similitude: If Christ on earth should offer to convey you to a kingdom at the antipodes, where men live for ever in glorious holiness, if you will but trust him, and go in his ship, and take him for your pilot. Here one saith, I do not believe him that there is such a place, and therefore I will not go (that is the infidel). Another saith, I like my merry life at home, better than his glorious holiness (that is the open worldly and profane). Another saith, I will live in my own country and on my own estate as long as I can, and when I find that I am dying, and can stay here no longer, that I may be sure to lose nothing by him, I will take his offer. Another saith, I will go with him, but I will turn back again if I find any dangerous storms and gulfs in the passage. Another saith, I will take another ship and pilot along with me, lest he should fail me, that I may not be deceived. Another saith, I am told that the seas are calm, and there is no danger in the passage, and therefore I will absolutely trust him, and venture all; but when he meets with storms and hideous waves, he saith, This is not as I expected; and so he turneth back again. But another (the true christian) saith, I will venture all, and wholly trust him: and so, though he is oft afraid in dangers, when he seeth the devouring gulfs, yet not so fearful as to turn back, but on he goeth, come on it what will; because he knoweth that the place which he goeth to is most desirable, and mortality will soon end his old prosperity; and he hath great reason to believe his pilot to be trusty.

By all this you may see how it cometh to pass that Christ, who promiseth life to believers, doth yet make self-denial, and forsaking all that we have, even life itself, to be also necessary, Luke xiv. 26, 33; and what relation self-denial hath to faith, nearer by far than most consider. You may see here the reason why Christ tried the rich man, (Luke xviii. 22,) with selling all, and following him in hope of a reward in heaven. And why he bid his disciples, (Luke xii. 33,) "Sell that ye have and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens which faileth not."——And why the first christians were made a pattern of entire christianity, by selling all, and laying down at the apostles' feet; and Ananias and Sapphira were the instances of hypocrisy, who secretly and lyingly kept back part. You see here how it comes to pass, that all true christians must be heart-martyrs, or prepared to die for Christ and heaven, rather than forsake him. You may plainly perceive that faith itself is an affiance or trusting in God by Christ, even a trusting in God in heaven as our felicity, and in Christ as the Mediator and the way; and that this trust is a venturing all upon him, and a forsaking all for God, and his promises in Christ. And that it is one and the same motion, which from the *terminus a quo* is called repentance and forsaking all; and from the *terminus ad quem* is called trust and love. They that are willing to see, may profit much by this observation; and they that are not may quarrel at it, and talk against that which their prejudice will not allow them to understand.

And by all this you may see also wherein the strength of faith consisteth: and that is, 1. In so clear a sight of the evidences of truth as shall leave no considerable doubtings, Matt. xxi. 21. So Abraham "staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God," Rom. iv.

2. In so confirmed a resolution to cleave to God and Christ alone, as leaveth no wavering, or looking back; that we may say groundedly with Peter, "Though I die, I will not deny thee;" which doubtless signified then some strength of faith: and as Paul, "I am ready not only to be bound, but to die for the name of the Lord Jesus," Acts xxi. 13.

3. In so strong a fortitude of soul, as to venture and give up ourselves, our lives, and all our comforts and hopes into the hand of Christ, without any trouble or sinful fears, and to pass through all difficulties and trials in the way, without any distrust or anxiety of mind. These be the characters of a strong and great degree of faith.

And you may note how Heb. xi. describeth faith commonly by this venturing and forsaking all upon the belief of God. As in Noah's case, ver. 7; and in Abraham's leaving his country, ver. 8, and in his sacrificing Isaac, ver. 17; and in Moses' forsaking Pharaoh's court, and choosing the reproach of Christ, rather than the pleasures of sin for a season, ver.

24—26; and in the Israelites venturing into the Red sea, ver. 29; and in Rahab's hiding the spies, which must needs be her danger in her own country. And in all those, who "by faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong.——Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: and others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonments: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheep-skins, and goat-skins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; of whom the world was not worthy: they wandered in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth." And in Heb. x. 32, 33, &c. "They endured a great fight of afflictions; partly whilst they were made a gazing-stock, both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly whilst they became companions of them that were so used.——And took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing in themselves that they had in heaven a better and an enduring substance. And thus the just do live by faith; but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him, saith the Lord." See also Rom. viii. 33. 36, 37, &c.

These are the Spirit's descriptions of faith; but if you will rather take a whimsical, ignorant man's description, who can only toss in his mouth the name of FREE GRACE, and knoweth not of what he speaketh, or what he affirmeth, or what that name signifieth, which he cheateth his own soul with, instead of true free grace itself, you must suffer the bitter fruits of your own delusion. For my part I shall say thus much more, to tell you why I say so much, to help you to a right understanding of the nature of true christian faith.

1. If you understand not truly what faith is, you understand not what religion it is that you profess. And so you call yourselves christians, and know not what it is. It seems those that said, "Lord, we have eaten and drunken in thy presence, and prophesied in thy name," did think they had been true believers, Matt. vii. 21, 22.

2. To err about the nature of true faith, will engage you in abundance of other errors, which will necessarily arise from that; as it did them against whom James disputeth, James ii. 14, 15, &c. about justification by faith and by works.

3. It will damnably delude your souls, about your own state, and draw you to think that you have saving faith, because you have that fancy which you thought was it. One comes boldly to Christ, "Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest," Matt. viii. 19. But when he heard, "The foxes have holes, and the birds have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head," we hear no more of him. And another came with a "Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Luke xviii. 18; as if he would have been one of Christ's disciples, and have done any thing for heaven. (And it is like that he would have been a christian, if free grace had been as large, and as little grace, as some now imagine.) But when he heard, "Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me: he was then very sorrowful, for he was very rich," Luke xviii. 21—23. Thousands cheat their souls with a conceit that they are believers, because they believe that they shall be saved by free grace, without the faith and grace which Christ hath made necessary to salvation.

4. And this will take off all those needful thoughts and means, which would help you to the faith, which yet you have not.

5. And it will engage you in perverse disputes against that true faith which you understand not. And you will think, that you are contending for free grace, and for the faith, when you are "proud, knowing nothing, but sick to doting about questions," which engender no better birth than "strifes, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings," &c. I Tim. vi. 4, 5.

6. Lastly, You can scarce more dishonour the christian religion, nor injure God and our Mediator, or harden men in infidelity, than by fathering your ill-shapen fictions on Christ, and calling them the christian or justifying faith.

Direct. 29. Take not all doubts and fears of your salvation, to be the proper effects and signs of unbelief; seeing that in many they arise from the misunderstanding of the meaning of God's promise, and in more from the doubtfulness of their own qualifications, rather than from any unbelief of the promise, or distrust of Christ.

It is ordinary with ignorant christians to say, that they cannot believe, because they doubt of their own sincerity and salvation: as thinking that it is the nature of true faith, to believe that they themselves are justified and shall be saved; and that to doubt of this, is to doubt of the promises, because they doubtingly apply it. Such distresses have false principles brought many to. But there are two other things besides the weakness of faith, which are usually the causes of all this. 1. Many mistake the meaning of Christ's covenant, and think that it hath no universality in it; and that he died only for the elect, and promiseth pardon to none but the elect (no not on the condition of believing). And therefore thinking that they can have no assurance that they are elect, they doubt of the conclusion.

And many of them think that the promise extendeth not to such as they, because of some sin or great unworthiness which they are guilty of.

And others think that they have not that faith and repentance which are the condition of the promise of pardon and salvation: and in some of these the thing itself may be so obscure, as to be indeed the matter of rational doubtfulness. And in others of them, the cause may be either a mistake about the true nature and signs of faith and repentance, or else a timorous, melancholy, causeless suspicion of themselves; but which of all these soever be the cause, it is something different from proper unbelief or distrust of God. For he that mistaketh the extent of the promise, and thinketh that it belongeth not to such as he, would believe and trust it, if he understood it that it extends to him as well as others. And he that doubteth of his own repentance and faith, may yet be confident of the truth of God's promise to all true, penitent believers.

I mention this for the cure of two mischiefs: the first is that of the presumptuous opinionist, who goeth to hell presuming that he hath true saving faith, because he confidently believeth, that he himself is pardoned, and shall be saved. The second is that of the perplexed, fearful christian, who thinks that all his uncertainty of his own sincerity, and so of his salvation, is properly unbelief, and so concludeth that he cannot believe, and shall not be saved: because he knoweth not that faith is such a belief and trust in Christ, as will bring us absolutely and undeservedly to venture our all upon him alone.

And yet I must tell all these persons, that all this while it is ten to one, but there is really a great deal of unbelief in them which they know not. And that

their belief of the truth of the immortality of the soul, and the life to come, and of the gospel itself, is not so strong and firm, as their never doubting of it would intimate, or as some of their definitions of faith, and their book-opinions and disputes, import. And it had been well for some of them, that they had doubted more, that they might have believed, and been settled better.

Direct. 30. Think often of the excellences of the life of faith, that the motives may be still inducing you thereto.

As, 1. It is but reasonable that God should be trusted; or else indeed we deny him to be God, Psal. xx. 7.

2. What else shall we trust to? Shall we deify creatures, and say to a stock, "Thou art my Father?" Jer. ii. 27; Lam. i. 19. Shall we distrust God, and trust a liar and a worm?

3. Trying times will shortly come; and then woe to the soul that cannot trust in God! Then nothing else will serve our turns. Then "cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and withdraweth his heart from the Lord; he shall be like the barren wilderness, &c. Then none that trusted in him shall be ashamed," Jer. xvii. 5, 6; Psal. xxv. 3, 4; lxxiii. 26—28.

4. God's all-sufficiency leaveth no reason for the least distrust. There is the most absolute certainty that God cannot fail us, because his veracity is grounded on his essential perfections.

5. No witness could ever stand up against the life of faith, and say that he lost by trusting God, or that ever God deceived any.

6. The life of faith is the conquest of all that would distress the soul, and it is a life of constant peace and quietness: yea, it feasteth the soul upon the everlasting joys. Though the mountains be removed; though this world be turned upside down, and be dissolved; whether poverty or wealth, sickness or health, evil report or good, persecution or prosperity, befall us; how little are we concerned in all this! And how little should they do to disturb the peace and comfort of that soul, who believeth that he shall live with God for ever. Many such considerations should make us more willing to live by faith upon God's promises, than to live by sense on transitory things.

Direct. 31. Renew your covenant with Christ in his holy sacrament, frequently, understandingly, and seriously.

For, 1. When we renew our covenant with Christ, then Christ reneweth his covenant with us; and that with great advantage to our faith. 1. In an appointed ordinance which he will bless. 2. By a special minister appointed to seal and deliver it to us as in his name. 3. By a solemn, sacramental investiture.

2. And our own renewing our covenant with him, is the renewed exercise of faith, which will tend to strengthen it, and to show us that we are indeed believers. And there is much in that sacrament to help the strengthening of faith: therefore the frequent and right using of it, is one of God's appointed means, to feed and maintain our spiritual life; which if we neglect, we wilfully starve our faith, 1 Cor. xi. 26, 28, &c.

Direct. 32. Keep all your own promises to God and man.

For, 1. Liars always suspect others. 2. Guilt breedeth suspiciousness. 3. God in justice may leave you to your distrust of him, when you will be perfidious yourselves. You can never be confident in God, while you deal falsely with him or with others. "The end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, a good conscience, and faith unfeigned," 1 Tim. i. 5.

Direct. 33. Labour to improve your belief of every promise, for the increase of holiness and obedience: and to get more upon your souls that true image of God in his power, wisdom, and goodness, which will make it easy to you to believe him.

1. The more the hypocrite seemeth to believe the promise, the more he boldly ventureth upon sin, and disobeyeth the precept; because it was but fear that restrained him; and his belief is but presumption abating fear. But the more a true christian believeth, the more he flieth from sin, and useth God's means, and studieth more exact obedience; and "having these promises, laboureth to cleanse himself from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God," 2 Cor. vii. 1. "And receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, we must serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear," Heb. xii. 28, 29.

2. The liker the soul is to God, the easier it will believe and trust him. As faith causeth holiness, so every part of holiness befriendeth faith. Now the three great impressions of the Trinity upon us are expressed distinctly by the apostle; "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, of love, and of a sound mind," 2 Tim. i. 7, *πνεῦμα δυνάμεως, καὶ ἀγάπης, καὶ σωφρονισμοῦ.* Power, love, and a sound mind or understanding, do answer God's nature as the face in the glass doth answer our face, and therefore cannot choose but trust him.

Direct. 34. Lay up in your memory, particular, pertinent, and clear promises, for every particular use of faith.

The number is not so much; but be sure that they be plain and well understood, that you may have no cause to doubt whether they mean any such thing indeed or not. Here some will expect that I should do this for them, and gather them such promises. Two things dissuade me from doing it at large. 1. So many books have done it already. 2. It will swell this book too big. But take these few.

1. For forgiveness of all sins, and justification to penitent believers.

"Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins," Acts v. 31.

"Be it known unto you, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses, Acts xiii. 38, 39.

"To open their eyes, and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified, by faith that is in me," Acts xxvi. 18.

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness," 1 John i. 9.

"I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities I will remember no more," Heb. viii. 12.

"To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name, whoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins," Acts x. 43.

"That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name to all nations," Luke xxiv. 47.

2. Promises of salvation from hell, and possession of heaven.

"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.—He that believeth on him is not condemned.—He that believ-

eth on the Son, hath everlasting life," John iii. 16, 18, 36. "And this is the record, that God hath given us eternal life; and this is in his Son. He that hath the Son, hath life," 1 John v. 11, 12.

Acts xxvi. 18, before cited. "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," 1 Tim. i. 15.

"He is able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him," Heb. vii. 25.

"And being made perfect, he became the Author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him," Heb. v. 9.

"He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved," Mark xvi. 16.

"By me if any man enter in, he shall be saved," John x. 9.

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I will give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish," John x. 27, 28.

"Being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.—Much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life," Rom. v. 9, 10. See Luke xviii. 30; John iv. 14; vi. 27, 40, 47; xii. 50; Rom. vi. 22; Gal. vi. 8; 1 Tim. i. 16.

3. Promises of reconciliation, adoption, and acceptance with God through Christ.

"God hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and hath committed to us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled unto God: for he hath made him to be a sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him," 2 Cor. v. 18—20.

"Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.—When we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, Rom. v. 1, 2, 10.

"I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. I will receive you, and be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty," 2 Cor. vi. 16—18.

"There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," Rom. viii. 1.

"As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God; even to them that believe on his name: which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," John i. 12.

"In every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him," Acts x. 35.

"He hath made us accepted in the beloved," Eph. i. 6; ii. 14, 16; Col. i. 20.

"The Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and believed that I came out from God," John xvi. 27.

4. Promises of renewed pardon of sins after conversion.

"If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world," 1 John ii. 1, 2.

"Forgive us our trespasses.—For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will forgive you,"—Matt. vi. 14.

"If he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him," James v. 15.

"I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Spirit," Matt. xii. 31.

"Who forgiveth all thine iniquities," Psal. ciii. 3.

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins," 1 John i. 9.

5. Promises of the Spirit of sanctification to believers; and of divine assistances of grace.

"How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him," Luke xi. 13.

"If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. This he spake of the Spirit, which they that believe on him shall receive,—" John vii. 37—39.

"If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is, —thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living waters,—" John iv. 10, 14.

"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh: and I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes,——" Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27.

"And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you,——" Ezek. xi. 19.

"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost: for the promise is to you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call," Acts ii. 38, 39.

"And because you are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father," Gal. iv. 6.

"Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you; I will make known my words unto you," Prov. i. 23.

"Likewise the Spirit helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered," Rom. viii. 26.

6. Promises of God's giving his grace to all that truly desire and seek it.

"Blessed are they which hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled," Matt. v. 6.

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money: come ye, buy and eat, yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Hearken diligently to me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you.——Seek ye the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near," Isa. lv. 1, 6.

"Let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely," Rev. xxii. 17.

7. Promises of God's giving us all that we pray for according to his promises and will.

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you: for every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.——If ye being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" Matt. vii. 7, 8, 11.

"Pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly," Matt. vi. 6.

"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you,

ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you," John xiv. 13, 14; xv. 16; xvi. 23; xv. 7.

"And this is the confidence which we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us. And if we know that he heareth us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions which we desired of him," 1 John v. 14, 15.

"And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things which are pleasing in his sight," 1 John iii. 22.

"The prayer of the upright is his delight.——He heareth the prayer of the righteous," Prov. xv. 8, 29.

"The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers," 1 Pet. iii. 12.

8. That God will accept weak prayers and groans, which want expressions, if they be sincere.

"The Spirit helpeth our infirmities.——The Spirit itself maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered: and he that searcheth the hearts, knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit," Rom. viii. 26, 27.

——"Crying, Abba, Father," Gal. iv. 6.

"I remembered God, and was troubled, and my spirit was overwhelmed," Psal. lxxvii. 3.

"Lord, all my desire is before thee, and my groaning is not hid from thee," Psal. xxxviii. 9.

"God be merciful unto me a sinner," Luke xviii. 14.

9. Promises of all things in general which we want, and which are truly for our good.

"For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly," Psal. lxxxiv. 11.

"O fear the Lord, ye his saints; for there is no want to them that fear him.——They that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing," Psal. xxxiv. 9, 10.

"All things work together for good to them that love God.——He that spared not his own Son, but gave him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Rom. viii. 28, 32.

"Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you," Matt. vi. 33.

"According as his divine power hath given us all things that pertain to life and godliness," 2 Pet. i. 3.

"But godliness is profitable to all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come," 1 Tim. iv. 8.

10. Promises of a blessing on them that sincerely hear and read God's word, and use his sacraments and other means.

"Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your souls shall live," Isa. lv. 3.

Read the eunuch's conversion, in Acts viii. who was reading the Scripture in his chariot.

"Laying aside all malice, and all guile and hypocrisy, and envies, and evil speakings, as new-born babes desire the milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby," 1 Pet. ii. 1.

"Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear, the words of this prophecy, and keep those things that are written therein," Rev. i. 3.

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly——But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night," Psal. i. 1, 2.

"Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doth them, I will liken him to a wise man, that built his house upon a rock," &c. Matt. vii. 24, 25.

"Rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God and do it," Luke viii. 21.

"Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken from her," Luke x. 42.

"If any man have ears to hear, let him hear—— And unto you that hear shall more be given,——" Mark iv. 23, 24.

"Who shall tell thee words whereby thou and all thy household shall be saved," Acts xi. 14.

"Take heed to thyself and unto the doctrine, and continue therein; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee," 1 Tim. iv. 16.

"Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound! they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance; in thy name shall they rejoice all the day,——" Psal. lxxxix. 15.

"The word of God is quick and powerful," &c. Heb. iv. 12.

"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" 1 Cor. x. 16.

"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them," Matt. xviii. 20.

"And the Lord will create upon every dwelling-place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all the glory shall be a defence," Isa. iv. 5.

11. Promises to the humble, meek, and lowly.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth," Matt. v. 3—5.

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls: for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light," Matt. xi. 28, 29.

"The Lord is nigh to them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit," Psal. xxxiv. 18.

"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise," Psal. li. 17.

"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy, I dwell in height and holiness, (or in the high and holy place,) with him also that is of a contrite spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones," Isa. lvii. 15.

"To this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word," Isa. lxvi. 2.

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me: he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor: he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, and to set at liberty them that are bruised,—" Luke iv. 18.

"He giveth grace to the humble," James iv. 6.

"Whosoever shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven," Matt. xviii. 4.

"He that shall humble himself shall be exalted," Matt. xxiii. 12.

"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up," James iv. 10.

"He giveth grace to the lowly," Prov. iii. 34.

12. Promises to the peaceable and peace-makers.

"Blessed are the peace-makers; for they shall be called the children of God," Matt. v. 9.

"The wisdom from above is first pure, then peace-

able, gentle, easy to be entreated.——And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace, of them that make peace," James iii. 17, 18.

"Be perfect; be of good comfort; be of one mind; live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you," 2 Cor. xiii. 11.

"To the counsellors of peace is joy," Prov. xii. 20.

"The God of peace shall be with you, &c.—shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.——Grace and peace are the blessing of saints," Rom. xv. 33; xvi. 20; Phil. iv. 9.

13. Promises to the diligent and laborious christian.

"He that cometh to God, must believe that God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him," Heb. xi. 6.

"The soul of the diligent shall be made fat," Prov. xiii. 4.

"Be stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord," 1 Cor. xv. 58.

"Give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things, ye shall never fail," 2 Pet. i. 10.

"Give all diligence; add to your faith virtue; and to virtue, knowledge, &c. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that you shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ," 2 Pet. i. 5, 8.

"Wherefore we labour, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him," 2 Cor. v. 9.

"Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you," Matt. vi. 33.

"Every man shall receive his own reward, according to his own labour," 1 Cor. iii. 8.

"The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force," Matt. xi. 12. See Prov. iii. 13, &c.; iv. to xiv.; vi. 20, &c.; vii. 1, &c.; viii. and ix. throughout.

14. Promises to the patient, waiting christian.

"And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence, to the full assurance of hope unto the end, that ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises," Heb. vi. 11, 12.

"Knowing that the trying of your faith worketh patience; but let patience have its perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing," James i. 3, 4.

"Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord," Psal. xxvii. 14.

"Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him.——Those that wait on the Lord shall inherit the earth. Wait on the Lord, and keep his way; he shall exalt thee to inherit the land," Psal. xxxvii. 7, 9, 34.

"Wait on the Lord, and he shall save thee," Prov. xx. 22.

"Blessed are all they that wait for him," Isa. xxx. 18.

"They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not be faint, Isa. xl. 31.

"They shall not be ashamed that wait for me," Isa. xlix. 23.

"The Lord is good to them that wait for him; to the soul that seeketh him. It is good that a man should both hope, and quietly wait, for the salvation of the Lord," Lam. iii. 25, 26.

"But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it," Rom. viii. 25.

"For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith," Gal. v. 5.

"The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ," 2 Thess. iii. 5.

"To them who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory, honour, and immortality, eternal life," Rom. ii. 7.

"Ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye may inherit the promise," Heb. x. 36.

15. Promises to sincere obedience.

"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city," Rev. xxii. 14.

"Whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight," 1 John iii. 22. "He that keepeth his commandments, dwelleth in him, and he in him," ver. 24.

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself," John xiv. 21.

"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love," John xv. 10.

"Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God," 1 Cor. vii. 19. See Psal. cxii. 1; cxix. 6; Prov. i. 20—22, &c.; Isa. xlviii. 18; Psal. xix. 8, 9, &c.

"He became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him," Heb. v. 9.

"Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus," Rev. xiv. 12.

"For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments," 1 John v. 3.

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man: for God shall bring every work into judgment," &c. Eccles. xii. 13, 14.

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God," Matt. v. 8.

"You see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only," James ii. 24.

"Who will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life—glory, honour, and peace to every man that worketh good,"——Rom. ii. 6, 7, 10.

"In every nation he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him," Acts x. 35.

"Of obedience unto righteousness," Rom. vi. 16.

"He that doth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous," 1 John iii. 7.

"The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace," James iii. 18.

"He that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting," Gal. vi. 8.

"If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live," Rom. viii. 13.

16. Promises to them that love God.

"All things work together for good to them that love God," Rom. viii. 28.

"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him," 1 Cor. ii. 9.

"He shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him," James i. 12.

"Rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which

God hath promised to them that love him," James ii. 5.

"He that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him," John xiv. 21.

"I love them that love me," Prov. viii. 17.

"If ye love me, keep my commandments; and I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever," John xiv. 15.

"The Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and believed,——" John xvi. 27.

17. Promises to them that love the godly, and that are merciful, and do the works of love.

"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another," John xiii. 35.

"In Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love.——By love serve one another; for all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness.——Against such there is no law," Gal. v. 6, 13, 14, 22.

"God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love," Heb. vi. 10.

"We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth: and hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him," 1 John iii. 14, 18, 19.

"Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.——God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us," 1 John iv. 7, 16, 12.

"God loveth a cheerful giver. He that soweth bountifully, shall reap bountifully,——" 2 Cor. ix. 7, 6.

"Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy," Matt. v. 7.

"He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward. And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones, a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward," Matt. x. 41, 42.

"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom.—Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.——The righteous shall go into life eternal," Matt. xxv. 34, 40, 46.

"But to do good, and to communicate, forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased," Heb. xiii. 16.

"I desire fruit that may abound to your account," Phil. iv. 17.

"As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever," 2 Cor. ix. 9.

18. Promises to the poor and needy christian.

"If God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you," Matt. vi. 30, 32, 33.

"Let your conversations be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never fail thee nor forsake thee," Heb. xiii. 5.

"Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom?" James ii. 5.

"They that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing," Psal. xxxiv. 10.

"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want," Psal. xxiii. 1.

"My God shall supply all your need," Psal. iv. 19.

"I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need," Phil. iv. 11—13.

"The needy shall not always be forgotten: the expectation of the poor shall not perish for ever," Psal. ix. 18.

19. Promises to the oppressed and wronged christian.

"For the oppression of the poor, and for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord: I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him.——Thou shalt keep them, O Lord, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever," Psal. xii. 5—7.

"All my bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto thee, which deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him; yea, the poor and needy from him that spoileth him," Psal. xxxv. 10.

"But I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh on me; thou art my helper and deliverer," Psal. xl. 17.

"He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment.——He shall judge the poor of the people; he shall save the children of the needy; and shall break in pieces the oppressor.—For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper. He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy: he shall redeem their souls from deceit and violence; and precious shall their blood be in his sight," Psal. lxxii. 2, 4, 12—14.

"He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill," Psal. cxiii. 7. See Isa. xxv. 3—5; xiv. 30; Zech. ix. 8; Isa. li. 13.

"If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province, marvel not at the matter: for he that is higher than the highest, regardeth; and there be higher than they," Eccles. v. 8.

20. Promises to the persecuted who suffer for righteousness.

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you," Matt. v. 10—12.

"Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul.——Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father: but the very hairs of your head are all numbered: fear ye not therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows. Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. He that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it," Matt. x. 28—32, 39.

"And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive

an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life," Matt. xix. 29.

"Your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure; which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer: seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled, rest with us—when Christ shall come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe,——" 2 Thess. i. 4—6.

"Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Acts ix. 4.

Read Rom. viii. 28, to the end; Rev. ii. iii.; Heb. xi. xii.

"There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it," 1 Cor. x. 13.

"I suffer trouble as an evil-doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound: I endure all things for the elect's sake.——It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: if we suffer, we shall also reign with him," 2 Tim. ii. 9—12.

"If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us," Rom. viii. 17, 18.

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," 2 Cor. iv. 17.

"But if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled," 1 Pet. iii. 14, 15. Read 1 Pet. iv. 12—16, 18, 19; Rom. v. 1—4.

"The God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered awhile, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you,—" 1 Pet. v. 10.

21. Promises to the faithful in dangers, daily and ordinary, or extraordinary.

"The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him; and delivereth them. The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles. Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord delivereth him out of them all. He keepeth all his bones, not one of them is broken. The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants; and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate," Psal. xxxiv. 7, 17, 19, 20, 22.

"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress; my God, in him will I trust.—Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night.—For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone," Psal. xci. 1—3, 5, 11, 12. Read the whole.

"My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved; he that keepeth thee will not slumber.—The Lord is thy keeper; the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand: the Lord shall preserve thee from all evil; he shall preserve thy soul. The Lord shall preserve thy going out, and thy coming in, from this time forth, and even for evermore," Psal. cxxi. 2—8.

"The Lord preserveth all them that love him,—" Psal. cxlv. 20.

"When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee,—" Isa. xliii. 2; Psal. xxxi. 23; xcvii. 10; cxvi. 6; Prov. ii. 8.

"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you," 1 Pet. v. 7.

22. Promises for help against temptations, to believers.

"The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations," 2 Pet. ii. 9; 1 Cor x. 13, before cited.

Compare Matt. iv. where Christ was tempted even to worship the devil, &c. with Heb. iv. 15; ii. 17, 18. "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.—Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest, in things God-ward for us.—For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations (that is, by sufferings for Christ). Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life," James i. 2, 12.

"My grace is sufficient for thee: my strength is made perfect in weakness," 2 Cor. xii. 9.

"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me," Phil. iv. 13.

"Whom resist, stedfast in the faith," 1 Pet. v. 9, 10.

"Resist the devil, and he will flee from you," James iv. 7; Eph. vi. 10, 11, &c.

"For sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace," Rom. vi. 14.

"Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world," John xvi. 33.

"This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith," 1 John v. 4.

23. Promises to them that overcome and persevere.

"To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God," Rev. ii. 7.

"He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death," ver. 11.

"To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, &c. Be faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life," ver. 17, 10.

"He that overcometh and keepeth my words unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron—even as I received of my Father: and I will give him the morning star," ver. 26, 28.

"He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment, and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life; but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God, and my new name," Rev. iii. 5, 12.

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit down with me in my throne, even as I overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne," ver. 21.

"If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," John viii. 31.

"To present you holy, and unblamable, and unreprovable in his sight; if ye continue in the faith,

grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel,—" Col. i. 22, 23.

"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you," John xv. 7.

"He that endureth to the end shall be saved," Matt. x. 22.

24. Promises to believers in sickness and at death.

"But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world," 1 Cor. xi. 32.

"For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he reeeiveth: if ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons. —Shall we not be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live.—But he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceful fruit of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby," Heb. xii. 6—8, 11.

"Is any sick, let them send for the elders of the church.—The prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him," James v. 14.

"He whom thou lovest is sick,—" John xi. 3.

"Blessed is the man that considereth the poor: the Lord shall deliver him in time of trouble. The Lord shall preserve him and keep him alive—The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness," Psal. xli. 1—3.

"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven.—For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality may be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God; who also hath given to us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (for we walk by faith, not by sight:) we are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord," 2 Cor. v. 1, &c.

"Now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.—I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better," Phil. i. 20, 21, 23.

"To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise," Luke xxiii. 43.

"I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them," Rev. xiv. 13.

"Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage," Heb. ii. 14.

"He that is our God, is the God of salvation, and to God the Lord belong the issues from death," Psal. lxviii. 20.

"Who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light by the gospel," 2 Tim. i. 10.

"O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law: but thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ," 1 Cor. xv. 54.

25. Promises to persevering believers, of the resurrection unto life, and of justification in judgment, and of glorification.

"He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death to life.—The hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, to the resurrection of damnation," John v. 22, 24, 28, 29; 1 Cor. xv. throughout.

"Because I live, ye shall live also," John xiv. 19.

"If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth: for ye are dead; and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory," Col. iii. 1, 3, 4.

"He shall come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe," 2 Thess. i. 10.

"Come, ye blessed, &c.—The righteous into life eternal," Matt. xxv. 34, 46.

"If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be. If any man serve me, him will my Father honour," John xii. 26.

"Let not your heart be troubled—In my Father's house are many mansions—I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to myself, that where I am there ye may be also," John xiv. 1—3.

"Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold the glory which thou hast given me," John xvii. 24.

"Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God," John xx. 17.

"Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world? Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3.

"Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the time of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ,——" Acts iii. 19.

"Thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just," Luke xiv. 14.

Let the reader here take notice of that most important observation of Dr. Hammond, that ἀνάστασις, the resurrection, doth often signify, in general, our living in the next world, or our next state of life, in the Scriptures; and not the last resurrection only, unless it be called, The resurrection of the flesh, or of the body, for distinction; or the context have before explained it otherwise. By which 1 Cor. xv. and Christ's answer to the Sadducees, may be better understood.

26. Promises to the godly for their children, supposing them to be faithful in dedicating them to God, and educating them in his holy ways.

"Showing mercy to thousands in them that love me, and keep my commandments," Exod. xx. commandment 2d.

"For the promise is made to you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off," &c. Acts ii. 39.

"His seed is blessed," Psal. xxxvii. 26.

"Else were your children unclean, but now are they holy," 1 Cor. vii. 14.

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how oft would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" Matt. xxiii. 37.

"Through their fall salvation is come unto the gentiles," Rom. xi. 11. Ver. 16—18, &c. show that they were broken off by unbelief, and we are grafted in, and are holy as they were.

"Go and disciple all nations, baptizing them," &c. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

"That the promise might be sure to all the seed. The children of the promise are counted for the seed," Rom. iv. 16; ix. 8.

"Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven," Matt. xix. 13, 14.

27. Promises to the church, of its increase, and preservation, and perfection.

"The kingdoms of the world are become the kingdoms of the Lord, and of his Christ," Rev. xi. 15.

"He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end," Luke i. 33.

"The kingdom of heaven is like unto a grain of mustard-seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: which is indeed the least of all seeds; but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree; so that the birds of the air lodge in the branches of it.——The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened," Matt. xiii. 31, 33.

"And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me," John xii. 32.

"In the days of these kings, shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever," Dan. ii. 44.

"Upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it," Matt. xvi. 18.

"For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that henceforth we may be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, who is the Head, Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body to the edifying of itself in love," Eph. iv. 12, 16.

"Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy, and without blemish," Eph. v. 25—27. Read Rev. xxi. xxii.

"Lo, I am with you to the end of the world," Matt. xxviii. 20.

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness to all nations; and then shall the end come," Matt. xxiv. 14.

"Whosoever shall fall on this stone, shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder," Matt. xxi. 44.

The obscure prophetic passages I pass by.
So much for living by faith on the promises of God.

CHAPTER VI.

How faith must be exercised on God's threatenings and judgments.

The exercise of faith upon God's threatenings and judgments, must be guided by such rules and helps as these:

Direct. 1. Think not either that Christ hath no threatening penal laws, or that there are none which are made for the use of believers.

If there were no penalties, or penal laws, there were no distinguishing government of the world. This antinomian fancy destroyeth religion. And if there be threats, or penal laws, none can be expected to make so much use of them as true believers. 1. Because he that most believeth them, must needs be most affected with them. 2. Because all things are for them, and for their benefit; and it is they that must be moved by them to the fear of God, and an escaping of the punishment.

And therefore they that object, that believers are passed already from death to life; and that there is no condemnation to them; and they are already justified, and therefore have no use of threats or fears; do contradict themselves: for it will rather follow, Therefore they, and they only, do and will faithfully use the threatenings in godly fears. For, 1. Though they are justified, and passed from death to life, they have ever faith in order of nature before their justification; and he that believeth not God's threatenings with fear, hath no true faith. And, 2. They have ever inherent righteousness or sanctification, with their justification: and this faith is part of that holiness, and of the life of grace, which they are passed into. "For this is life eternal, to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ," John xvii. 3. And he knoweth not God, who knoweth him not to be true. And this is part of our knowledge of Christ also, to know him as the infallible author of our faith, that is, of the gospel, which saith not only, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved;" but also, "He that believeth not shall be damned," Mark xvi. 16. And this is the record which God gave of his Son, which he that believeth not maketh him a liar; "that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son: he that hath the Son, hath life; and he that hath not the Son, hath not life," 1 John v. 11, 12. Yea, as "he that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life; so he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him," John iii. 36. And therefore, 3. The reason why there is no condemnation to us, is because believing, not part only, but all this word of Christ, we fly from sin and wrath, and are in Christ Jesus, as giving up ourselves to him, and "walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit;" being moved so to do both by the promises and threats of God. This is plain English, and plain and necessary truth; the greater is the pity, that many honest, well-meaning antinomians should fight against it, on an ignorant conceit of vindicating free grace: if the plain word of God were not through partiality overlooked by them, they might see enough to end the controversy in many and full expressions of Scripture. I will cite but three more. Matt. x. 28; Luke xii. 5, "But fear him who is able

to destroy both soul and body in hell; or when he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, fear him." Doth Christ thus iterate that it is he that saith it, and saith it to his disciples; and yet shall a christian say, it must not be preached to disciples as the word of Christ to them?

"Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it," Heb. iv. 1.

"By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, (that is, of the deluge,) moved with fear, prepared an ark, to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith," Heb. xi. 7.

Note here, how much the belief of God's threatenings doth to the constitution of that faith which is justifying and saving.

Direct. 2. Judge not of God's threatenings by the evil which is threatened, but by the obedience to which the threatenings should drive us, and the evil from which they would preserve us, and the order of the world which they preserve, and the wisdom, and holiness, and justice of God, which they demonstrate.

When men think how dreadful a misery hell is, they are ready to think hardly of God, both for his threatening and execution; as if it were long of him, and not of themselves, that they are miserable. And as it is a very hard thing to think of the punishment itself with approbation; so is it also to think of the threatening, or law which binds men over to it; or of the judgment which will pass the sentence on them. But think of the true nature, use, and benefits of these threats or penal laws, and true reason and faith will not only be reconciled to them; but see that they are to be loved and honoured, as well as feared. 1. They are of great use to drive us to obedience. And it is easier to see the amiableness of God's commands, than of his threats: and obedience to these commands, is the holy rectitude, health, and beauty of the soul. And therefore that which is a suitable and needful means to promote obedience, is amiable and beneficial to us. Though love must be the principle or chief spring of our obedience; yet he that knoweth not that fear must drive, as love must draw, and is necessary in its place to join with love, or to do that which the weaknesses of love leave undone, doth neither know what a man is, nor what God's word is, nor what his government is, nor what either magistracy or any civil or domestical government is; and therefore should spend many years at school before he turneth a disputer.

2. They are of use to keep up order in the world; which could not be expected if it were not for God's threatenings. If the world be so full of wickedness, rapine, and oppressions, notwithstanding all the threatenings of hell, what could we expect it should be, if there were none such, but even as the suburbs of hell itself. When princes, and lords, and rich men, and all those thieves and rebels that can but get strength enough to defend themselves, and all that can but hide their faults, would be under no restraints considerable, but would do all the evil that they have a mind to do; men would be worse to one another than bears and tigers.

3. God's threatenings, in their primary intention or use, are made to keep us from the punishment threatened. Punishment is naturally due to evildoers: and God declareth it, to give us warning, that we may take heed, avoid it, and escape.

4. That which doth so clearly demonstrate the holiness of God, in his righteous government, his wisdom, and his justice, is certainly good and amiable in itself. But we must not expect that the same thing should be good and amiable to the wicked, who run themselves into it; which is good to the world, or to the just about them, or to the honour of God. Assizes, prisons, and gallows are good to the country, and to all the innocent, to preserve their peace, and to the honour of the king and his government; but not to murderers, thieves, or rebels; Isa. xxvi. 7—9; Psal. xlviii. 11; ix. 16; lxxxix. 14; xcvii. 2; cxlix. 9; cxlvi. 7; xxxvii. 6, 28; Jude 6, 15; Rev. iv. 7; xv. 4; xvi. 7; xix. 2; Eccles. xii. 14.

Direct. 3. Judge of the severity of God's threatenings, partly by the greatness of himself whom we offend, and partly by the necessity of them for the government of the world.

1. Remember that sinning wilfully against the Infinite Majesty of heaven, and refusing his healing mercy to the last, deserveth worse than any thing against a man can do, 1 Sam. ii. 25.

2. And remember that even the threatening of hell doth not serve turn with most of the world, to keep them from sinning and despising God: and therefore you cannot say that they are too great. For that plaster draweth not too strongly, which will not draw out the thorn. If hell be not terrible enough to persuade you from sin, it is not too terrible to be threatened and executed. He that shall say, Why will God make so terrible a law? and withal should say, As terrible as it is I will venture at it, rather than leave my pleasures, and rather than live a holy life; doth contradict himself, and telleth us, that the law is not terrible enough to attain its chief and primary end, with such as he, that will not be moved by it from the most sordid, base, or brutish pleasure.

Direct. 4. Remember how Christ himself, even when he came to deliver us from God's law, did yet come to verify his threatening in the matter of it, and to be a sacrifice for sin, and public demonstration of God's justice.

For this end was Christ manifested, to destroy the works of the devil, 1 John iii. 5, 8. And the first and great work of the devil was, to represent God as a liar, and to persuade Eve not to believe his threatenings, and to tell her, that though she sinned, she should not die. And though God so far dispensed with it, as to forgive man the greatest part of the penalty, it was by laying it on his Redeemer; and making him a sacrifice to his justice: that his cross might openly confute the tempter, and assure the world, that God is just, and that "the wages of sin is death," Rom. vi. 23; though eternal life be the gift of God through Jesus Christ.

And he that well considereth this, that the Son of God would rather stoop to sufferings and death, than the devil's reproach of God's threatenings should be made true, and that the justice of God against sin should not be manifested, will sure never think, that this justice is any dishonour to the Almighty.

Direct. 5. Let this be your use of the threatenings of God, to drive you from sin to more careful obedience, and to help you against the defects of love, and to set them against every temptation when you are assaulted by it.

When a tempting bait is set before you, set hell against it, as well as heaven; and say, Can I take this cup, this whore, this preferment, this gain of Judas, with hell, for my part instead of heaven? If men threaten death, imprisonment, or any other penalty; or if losses or reproaches be like by men to be made your reward, remember that God threateneth hell, and ask whether this be not the most intolerable suffering.

And if any antinomian revile you for thus doing,

and say, you should set only free grace before you, to keep you from sinning, and not hell and damnation; tell him that it is Christ the Mediator of free grace, which hath set hell before you in the Scripture, and not you; and that you do but consider of that which Christ hath set there before you to be considered of. Ask them whether it be not God that prepared hell for the devil and his angels, and Christ himself that will adjudge all impenitent sinners to it, Matt. xxv. And ask them why Christ doth so often talk of it in the gospel, (Matt. xiii.) of the "worm that never dieth, and the fire that never shall be quenched," Luke xix. 27; Mark xvi. 16; John iii. 36; 2 Thess. i. 8, 9, &c. And whether they know why fear was given to man; and whether Christ mistook in all such commands, Luke xii. 4; Heb. xi. 7; iv. 1. And whether God hath made any part of his laws in vain.

If they say, that the "law was not made for a righteous man," 1 Tim. i. 9; tell them that the words are expounded, Gal. v. 23, "Against such there is no law." The law was not made to condemn and punish a righteous man; because he feared the threatening of it, and so fell not under the condemnation. If you speak of the law of Christ, or any law which supposeth the subject righteous: there is no law can be pleaded against such to their damnation. That there is no law against them is but as Rom. viii. 1, "There is no condemnation to them." And we grant also, that in that measure as men's souls are habituated with love to God and duty, and hatred of sin, they need no law to urge and threaten them, no more than a loving wife need to have a law to forbid her murdering her husband, or abusing him. But withal we know, that no man on earth is perfect in the degrees of love; and therefore all need laws and fear.

Use all God's penal laws to the ends that he appointed them, to quicken you in your obedience, and restrain you from yielding to temptations, and from sinning, and then your own benefit will reconcile you to the wisdom, holiness, and justice of the laws.

Direct. 6. Remember that all christians have solemnly professed their own consent to the threats and punishments of the gospel.

Though God will punish sinners whether they consent or not; and though none consent to the execution upon themselves, when it comes to it; yet all that profess christianity do profess their consent to the condemning, as well as to the justifying, part of God's word. For every christian professeth his consent to be governed by Christ, and therefore he professeth his consent to be governed by Christ's laws: for if Christ be a King, he must have laws: and if he govern us at all, he governeth us by laws. And this is Christ's law; "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; and he that believeth not, shall be damned," Mark xvi. 16. He that professeth to be governed by Christ, professeth his consent to be governed by this very law; and therefore he professeth his consent to be damned if he believe not. Christ told you that you must consent to both parts, or to neither: and will you grudge at the severity of that law which you have professed your consent to? The curses of the covenant (Deut. xxix. 21) were to be repeated to the people of Israel, and they were expressly to say Amen to each of them. For life and death were set before them; blessings and cursings, (Deut. xxx. 1, 19,) and not life and blessings alone. And so the gospel which we are to believe, containeth though principally and eminently the promises, yet secondarily also the threatenings of hell to impenitent unbelievers. And our consent doth speak our approbation.

Direct. 7. Observe that the belief of Christ's threatenings of damnation to impenitent unbelievers, is a real part of the christian saving faith, and that whenever it is joined with a true love and desire after holiness, it certainly proveth that the promises also are believed, though the party think that he doth not believe them.

Note here, 1. That I do not say, that all belief or fear of God's threatenings is saving faith. But, 2. That all saving faith containeth such a belief of the threatenings. 3. And that many times poor christians, who believe and tremble at the threatenings, do truly believe the promises, and yet mistake, and verily think that they do not believe them. 4. But their mistake may certainly be manifested, if their faith do but work by a love and desire after holiness, and the fruition of God.

For, 1. It is evident that the same gospel which saith, "He that believeth shall be saved," doth say, "He that believeth not shall be damned." Therefore the same faith believeth both. 2. It is plain that the same formal object of faith, which is God's veracity, will bring a man to believe one as well as the other, if he equally know it to be a divine revelation: he that believeth that all that God saith is true; and then believeth that God saith that all true believers shall be saved; must needs believe that this promise is true. And he that understandeth that Christ saith, Unbelievers shall be damned; cannot but find also that he saith, True believers shall be saved. And if he believe the one, because it is the word of Christ; he doth sure believe the other, because it is the word of Christ. 3. Yea, it is in many respects harder to believe God's threatenings than his promises; partly because sinners are more unwilling that they should be true, and they have more enmity to the threatening than to the promise; and partly because they commonly feign God to be such as they would have him be: "Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself," &c. Psal. l. And partly because God's goodness being known to be his very essence, and all men being apt to judge of goodness by the measure of their own interest, it is far more obvious and facile to man's understanding, to conclude that some are saved, than that some are damned; and that the penitent believers are saved, than that the impenitent unbelievers are damned. We hear daily how easily almost all men are brought to believe that God is merciful; and how hard it is to persuade them of his damning justice and severity. Therefore he that can do the harder, is not unlike to do the easier.

And indeed it is mere ignorance of the true nature of faith, which maketh those whom I am now describing to think that they do not believe God's promises, when they believe his threatenings. They think that because they believe not that they themselves are pardoned, justified, and shall be saved, that therefore they believe not the promise of God: but this is not the reason; but it is because you find not the condition of the promise yet in yourselves, and therefore think that you have no part in the benefits: but it is one thing to doubt of your own sincerity, and another thing to doubt whether the promise of God be true. Suppose that the law do pardon a felon if he can read as a clerk; and one that is a felon be in doubt whether his reading will serve or not; this is not to deny belief to the pardoning act of the law. Suppose one promise a yearly stipend to all that are of full one and twenty years of age, in the town or country: to doubt of my age, is not to doubt of the truth of the promise.

Object. But do not protestant divines conclude against the papists, that saving faith must be a par-

ticular application of Christ and the promise to ourselves, and not only a general assent?

Answ. It is very true; and the closer that application is the better. But the application which all sound divines (in this point) require as necessary in saving faith, is neither an assurance nor persuasion that your own sins are already pardoned, or that they ever will be: but it is, 1. A belief that the promise of pardon to all believers is so universal, as that it includeth you as well as others, and promiseth and offereth you pardon and life, if you will believe in Christ. 2. And it is a consent or willingness of heart that Christ be yours, and you be his, to the ends proposed in the gospel. 3. And it is a practical trust in his sufficiency, as choosing him for the only Mediator, resolving to venture your souls and all your hopes upon him: though yet through your ignorance of yourselves, you may think that you do not this thing in sincerity, which indeed you do; yea, and much fear (through melancholy or temptation) that you never shall do it, and consequently never shall be saved.

He that doubteth of his own salvation, not because he doubteth of the truth of the gospel, but because he doubteth of the sincerity of his own heart, may be mistaken in himself, but is not therefore an unbeliever (as is said before).

If you would know whether you believe the promises truly, answer me these particular questions: 1. Do you believe that God hath promised that all true believers shall be saved? 2. Do you believe that if you are or shall be a true believer, you shall be saved? 3. Do you choose or desire God as your only happiness and end, to be enjoyed in heaven; and Christ as the only Mediator to procure it; and his Holy Spirit as his Agent in your souls, to sanctify you fully to the image of God? Are you truly willing that thus it should be? And if God be willing, will not you refuse it? 4. Do you turn away from all other ways of felicity, and choose this alone, to venture all your hopes upon, and resolve to seek for none but this; and to venture all on God and Christ, though yet you are uncertain of your sincerity and salvation? Why this makes up true saving faith.

5. And I would further ask you; Do you fear damnation, and God's wrath, or not? If not, what troubleth you? and why complain you? If you do, tell me then whether you do believe God's threatening, that he that believeth not shall be damned, or not? If you do not, what maketh you fear damnation? Do you fear it, and not believe that there is any such thing? If you do believe it, how can you choose but believe also, that every true believer shall be saved? Is God true in his threatenings, and not in his promises? This must force you plainly to confess, that you do believe God's promises, but only doubt of your own sincerity, and consequently of your salvation; which is more a weakness in your hope, than in your faith, or rather chiefly in your acquaintance with yourself.

Direct. 8. Yet still dwell most upon God's promises in the exercise of love, desire, and thankfulness; and use all your fear about the threatenings, but in a second place, to further and not to hinder the work of love.

Direct. 9. Let faith interpret all God's judgments merely by the light of the threatenings of his word; and do not gather any conclusions from them, which the word affordeth not, or alloweth not; God's judgments may be dangerously misunderstood.

CHAPTER VII.

HOW TO EXERCISE FAITH ABOUT PARDON OF SIN AND JUSTIFICATION.

The practice of faith about our justification, is hindered by so many unhappy controversies and heresies, that what to do with them here in our way, is not very easy to determine. Should I omit the mention of them, I leave most that I write for, either under that disease itself, or the danger of it, which may frustrate all the rest which I must say: for the errors hereabout are swarming in most quarters of the land, and are like to come to the ears of most that are studious of these matters; so that an antidote to most, and a vomit to the rest, is become a matter of necessity, to the success of all our practical directions.

And yet many cannot endure to be troubled with difficulties, who are slothful, and must have nothing set before them that will cost them much study; and many peaceable christians love not any thing that soundeth like controversy or strife (as others that are sons of contention relish nothing else). But averseness must give place to necessity. If the leprosy arise, the priest must search it, and the physician must do his best to cure it, notwithstanding their natural averseness to it. Though I may be as averse to write against errors, as the reader is to read what I write, we must both blame that which causeth the necessity, but not therefore deny our necessary duty: but yet I will so far gratify them that need no more, as to put the more practical directions first, that they may pass by the heap of errors after, if their own judgments prevail not against their unwillingness.

Direct. 1. Understand well what need you have of pardon of sin, and justification, by reason of your guilt, and of God's law and justice, and the everlasting punishment which is legally your due.

1. It must be a sensible, awakening, practical knowledge of our own great necessity, which must teach us to value Christ as a Saviour, and to come to him in that empty, sick, and weary plight, as is necessary in those who will make use of him for their supply and cure, Matt. ix. 12; xi. 28, 29. A superficial, speculative knowledge of our sin and misery, will prepare us but for a superficial, opinionative faith in Christ, as the remedy; but a true sense of both, will teach us to think of him as a Saviour indeed.

2. Original sin, and actual, the wickedness both of the heart and life, even all our particular sins of omission and commission, and all their circumstances and aggravations, are the first reason of our great necessity of pardon: and therefore it cannot but be a duty to lay them to heart as particularly as we can, to make that necessity, and Christ's redemption, the better understood, Acts ii. 37; xxii. 8, 9, &c.

3. The wrath of God, and the miseries of this life, and the everlasting miseries of the damned in hell, being the due effects or punishment of sin, are the second cause of our necessity of pardon: and therefore these also must be thought on seriously, by him that will seriously believe in Christ.

4. The law of God which we have broken, maketh this punishment our due, Rom. iii.; v.; vii. And the justice of God is engaged to secure his own honour, in the honour of his law and government.

Direct. 2. Understand well what Christ is and doth, for the justification of a sinner, and how (not one only, but) all the parts of his office are exercised hereunto.

In the dignity of his person, and perfect original holiness of his natures, divine and human, he is fitly qualified for his work of our justification and salvation.

His undertaking (which is but the divine decree) did from eternity lay the foundation of all, but did not actually justify any.

His promise, Gen. iii. 15, and his new relation to man thereupon, did that to the fathers in some degree, which his after-incarnation and performance, and his relation thereupon, doth now to us.

His perfect obedience to the law, yea, to that law of mediation also peculiar to himself, (which he performed neither as priest, or prophet, or king, but as a subject), was the meritorious cause of that covenant and grace which justifieth us, and so of our justification. And that which is the meritorious cause here, is also usually called the material, as it is that matter or thing which meriteth our justification; and so is called our righteousness itself.

As he was a sacrifice for sin, he answered the ends of the law which we violated, and which condemned us, as well as if we had been all punished according to the sense of the law: and therefore did thereby satisfy the Lawgiver: and thereby also merited our pardon and justification; so that his obedience as such, and his sacrifice (or whole humiliation) as satisfactory by answering the ends of the law, are conjunctly the meritorious cause of our justification.

His new covenant (which in baptism is made mutual by our expressed consent) is a general gift or act of oblivion, or pardon, given freely to all mankind, on condition they will believe and consent to it, or accept it; so that it is God's pardoning and adopting instrument: and all are pardoned by it conditionally; and every penitent believer actually and really. And this covenant or gift is the effect of the foresaid merit of Christ, both founded and sealed by his blood.

As he merited this as a mediating subject and sacrifice, so as our High Priest he offered this sacrifice of himself to God.

And as our King, he being the Lawgiver to the church, did make this covenant as his law of grace, describing the terms of life and death: and being the Judge of the world, doth by his sentence justify and condemn men, as believers or unbelievers, according to this covenant: and also executeth his sentence accordingly (partly in this life, but fully in the life to come).

As our Teacher, and the Prophet or Angel of the covenant, he doth declare it as the Father's will, and promulgate and proclaim this covenant and conditional pardon and justification to the world; and send out his ambassadors with it to beseech men in his name to be reconciled to God, and to declare, yea, and, by sacramental investiture, to seal and deliver a pardon and actual justification to believers when they consent.

And as our mediating High Priest now in the heavens, he presenteth our necessity, and his own righteousness and sacrifice as his merits, for the continual communication of all this grace, by himself, as the Head of the church, and Administrator of the covenant.

So that Christ doth justify us both as a subject meriting, as a sacrifice meriting, as a Priest offering that sacrifice; as a King actually making the justifying law, or enacting a general pardon; as a King sententially and executively justifying; as a Prophet or Angel of the covenant promulgating it; as King, and Prophet, and Priest, delivering a sealed pardon by his messengers; and as the Priest, Head, and Administrator, communicating this with the rest of his benefits. By which you may see in what respects Christ must be believed in to justification, if justifying faith were (as it is not) only the receiving him as our justifier: it would not be the receiving him as in one part of his office only.

Direct. 3. Understand rightly how far it is that the righteousness of Christ himself is made ours, or imputed to us, and how far not.

There are most vehement controversies to this day about the imputation of Christ's righteousness; in which I know not well which of the extremes are in the greater error, those that plead for it in the mistaken sense, or those that plead against it in the sober and right sense: but I make no doubt but they are both of them damnable, as plainly subverting the foundation of our faith. And yet I do not think that they will prove actually damning to the authors, because I believe that they misunderstand their adversaries, and do not well understand themselves; and that they digest not and practise not what they plead for, but digest and practise that truth which they doctrinally subvert, not knowing the contrariety; which if they knew, they would renounce the error, and not the truth. And I think that many a one that thus contradicteth fundamentals, may be saved.

Some there be (besides the antinomians) that hold that Christ did perfectly obey and satisfy, (not in the natural, but) in the civil or legal person of each sinner that is elect, (representing and bearing as many distinct persons as are elect,) so fully as that God doth repute every elect person (or say others, every believer) to be one that in law sense, did perfectly obey and satisfy justice himself; and so imputeth Christ's righteousness and satisfaction to us, as that which was reputatively or legally of our own performance, and so is ours, not only in its effects, but in itself.

Others seeing the pernicious consequences of this opinion, deny all imputed righteousness of Christ to us, and write many reproachful volumes against it (as you may see in Thorndike's last Works, and Dr. Gell, and Parker, against the Assembly, and abundance more).

The truth is, Christ merited and satisfied for us in the person of a Mediator: but this Mediator was the Head and Root of all believers, and the second Adam, the Fountain of spiritual life; and the Surety of the new covenant, (Heb. vii. 22; 1 Cor. xv. 24, 25,) and did all this in the nature of man, and for the sake and benefit of man; suffering that we might not suffer damnation, but not obeying that we might not obey; but suffering and obeying that our sinful imperfection of obedience might not be our ruin, and our perfect obedience might not be necessary to our own justification or salvation, but that God might for the sake and merit of this his perfect obedience and satisfaction, forgive all our sins, and adopt us for his sons, and give us his Holy Spirit, and glorify us for ever; so that Christ's righteousness, both obediential and satisfactory, is ours in the effects of it in themselves, and ours relatively for these effects, so far as to be purposely given for us to that end; but not ours in itself simply, or as if we were reputed the legal performers ourselves, or might be said in law sense, or by divine estimation or imputation, to have ourselves in and by Christ fulfilled the law, and suffered for our not fulfilling it (which is a contradiction).

As he that both by a price, and by some meritorious act, doth redeem a captive, or purchase pardon for a traitor, doth give the money and merit in itself to the prince, and not to the captive or traitor himself. (He never saw it, nor ever had propriety in the thing itself.) But the deliverance is the pri-

soner's, and not the prince's; and therefore it is given to the prisoner, as to the effects, though not in itself; in that it was given for him.

And because Christ suffered what we should have suffered, (as to the value,) to save us from suffering, and our sins were the cause of our guilt or punishment, and so the remote cause of the sufferings of Christ, (his own sponsion being the nearer cause,) therefore it may be said truly, that Christ did not only suffer for our benefit, but in our stead or place; and in a larger and less strict and proper sense, that he suffered in the person of a sinner, and as one to whom our sins were imputed; meaning no more but that he suffered as one that by his own consent undertook to suffer for the persons of sinners, and that as such an undertaker only he suffered; and that thus our sins were imputed to him (not in themselves, as if he were in law sense the committer of them, or polluted by them, or by God esteemed so to have been, but) as to the effects, that is, his suffering; in that they were the occasion, and the remote or assumed cause, of his sufferings; as his righteousness is imputed to us, as the meritorious cause of our pardon and justification.

But he could not be said, no not in so large a sense as this, to have obeyed in our stead, (considering it as obedience or holiness, but only as merit,) because he did it not that we might not obey, but that we might not suffer for disobeying.

More of this will follow in the next chapter.

Direct. 4. Understand well what guilt it is that Christ doth remit in our justification; not the guilt of the fact, nor of the fault in itself, but the guilt of punishment; and of the fault only so far as it is the cause of wrath and punishment.

1. The guilt of fact is in the reality or truth of this charge, that such a fact we did or omitted: so far it is but physically considered, and would not come into legal consideration, were it not for the following relation of it.

2. The guilt of fault, *reatus culpæ*, is the reality of this charge, (or the foundation of it in us,) that we are the committers or omitters of such an action contrary to the law; or that our act or omission was really a crime or fault.

3. The guilt of punishment, *reatus pœnæ, vel ad pœnam*, is the foundation of this charge, that we are, by that law which must judge us, condemnable, or obliged to punishment (or it is our right) for the sins so committed.

Now Christ doth not by justifying us, or pardoning us, make us either to be such as really did not do the fact; or such as did not a culpable fact; no, nor such as did not deserve damnation, or to whom it was not due by the first law alone: but to be such who are not now at all condemnable for it, because the new law which we must be judged by, doth absolve us, by forgiving us; not making the fault no fault, nor causing God to think that Christ committed it, and not we; or to esteem us to be such as never did commit it; but remitting the punishment, and that dueness of punishment and obligation to it, which did before result from the fault and law together; and so the fault itself is remitted, as it is the foundation from whence that obligation to punishment resulteth, respectively, but not simply, nor as a fault in itself at all.

When I say the punishment, and the dueness of it to us, is forgiven, I mean not only the punishment of sense, but of loss also; nor only the outward part which is executed by creatures, but especially the first and great penalty, of God's own displeasure with the person, and the withdrawing of his Spirit and complacential love, and that which we may improperly call his obligation in justice to condemn the sinner. There was upon God, before Christ's satisfaction and our title to him, that which we may so call a legal or relative obligation on God to punish us, because else he should have done contrary to the due ends of government, and so contrary to the wisdom and justice of a governor, which is not consistent with his perfection. But now the ends of government are so answered and provided for, that there is no such obligation on God to punish us, but he may remit it without any dishonour at all; nay, with the honour of his wisdom and justice. We are now *non condemnandi*, not condemnable, though we are sinners. In judgment we must confess the latter, and deny the former only.

Direct. 5. Understand well what sins Christ justifieth men from, or forgiveth to them, and what not. All sins which consist with true faith and repentance, (or true conversion to God in love, by faith in Christ,) and all that went before: but he forgiveth no man in a state of impenitency and unbelief, nor any man's final impenitency and unbelief at all; nor any other sins, where those are final; except it be with the common conditional forgiveness before mentioned; or that absolute particular forgiveness of some present penalties, which saveth no man from damnation, Matt. xii. 31; Acts xxvi. 18; Rom. viii. 1, 30; Acts v. 31; ii. 38, 39; Mark xvi. 16; John iii. 16, 18, 36; 1 John v. 11, 12; Mark iv. 12; Matt. xviii. 27, 32.

Direct. 6. Understand well the true nature of that faith and repentance, which God hath made the condition of our justification. This is sufficiently opened before; and the confutation of all the cavils against it would be tedious and unsavoury here.

Direct. 7. Understand well the covenant and promise of justification; and measure your belief and expectations by that promise.

Expect no other pardon, nor on any other conditions or terms, than the promise doth contain: for it is God's pardoning act or instrument; and by it we must be justified or condemned; and we know not, but by it, whom God will justify.

Direct. 8. Keep always the assuring grounds of faith before your eyes, when you look after pardon, that your faith may be firm and powerful, and quieting; especially consider the following grounds:

1. God's gracious nature proclaimed even to Moses, as abundant in mercy, and forgiving iniquity, transgressions, and sins, (to those, and upon those terms that he promiseth forgiveness,) though he will by no means clear the guilty (that is, will neither take the unrighteous to be righteous; nor forgive them, or acquit them in judgment, whom his covenant did not first forgive).

2. The merciful nature also of our Redeemer, Heb. ii. 17.

3. How deeply Christ hath engaged himself to show mercy, when he assumed our nature, and done so much towards our salvation, as he hath done, Heb. viii. ix.

4. That it is his very office and undertaking, which therefore he cannot possibly neglect, Luke xix. 10; ii. 11; John iv. 42; Acts v. 31; xiii. 23.

5. That God the Father himself did give him to us, and appoint him to this saving office, John iii. 16, 18; Acts v. 31; xiii. 23. Yea, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them" 2 Cor. v. 18, 19. And God made "him sin (that is, a sacrifice for sin) for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him," (that is, might be the public instances of God's merciful justice, as Christ was of his penal justice); and this by a righteousness given us by God himself, and purchased or

merited for us by Christ, (2 Cor. v. 21,) yea, and be renewed in holiness and righteousness according to his image.

6. That now it is become the very interest of God, and of Jesus Christ himself, to justify us; as ever he would not lose either the glory of his grace, or the obedience and suffering which he hath performed, Isa. liii. 19; Rom. v. 12, 13, 18, 19, &c.; iv. throughout.

7. Consider the nearness of the person of Christ, both to the Father and to us, Heb. i. ii. iii.

8. Think of the perfection of his sacrifice and merit, set out throughout the epistle to the Hebrews.

9. Think of the word of promise or covenant, which he hath made, and sealed, and sworn, Heb. vi. 17, 18; Titus i. 2.

10. Think of the great seal of the Spirit, which is more than a promise, even an earnest, which is a certain degree of possession, and is an executive pardon, (as after shall be declared,) Rom. viii. 15, 16; Gal. iv. 6.

11. Remember that God's own justice is now engaged for our justification, in these two respects conjunct: 1. Because of the fulness of the merits and satisfaction of Christ: 2. And because of his veracity which must fulfil his promise, and his governing or distributive justice, which must judge men according to his own law of grace, and must give men that which he himself hath made their right, 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8; 1 John v. 9—12.

12. Lastly, Think of the many millions now in heaven, of whom many were greater sinners than you; and no one of them (save Christ) came thither by the way of innocency and legal justification. There are no saints in heaven that were not redeemed from the captivity of the devil, and justified by the way of pardoning grace, and were not once the heirs of death, John iii. 3, 5; Rom. iii. iv.

Upon these considerations trust yourselves confidently on the grace of Christ, and take all your sins but as the advantages of his grace.

Direct. 9. Remember that there is somewhat on your own parts to be done, for the continuing, as well as for the beginning, of your justification; yea, somewhat more than for the beginning; even the faithful keeping of your baptismal covenant, in the essentials of it; and also that you have continual need of Christ, to continue your justification.

Many take justification to be one instantaneous act of God, which is never afterwards to be done: and so it is, if we mean only the first making of him righteous who was unrighteous: (as the first making of the world, and not the continuance of it, is called creation:) but this is but about the name: for the thing itself, no doubt but that covenant which first justified us, doth continue to justify us; and if the cause should cease, the effect would cease. And he that requireth no actual obedience, as the condition of our begun justification, doth require both the continuance of faith, and actual sincere obedience, as the condition of continuing, or not losing, our justification (as Davenant, Bergius, Blank, &c. have well opened, and I have elsewhere proved at large). As matrimony giveth title to conjugal privileges to the wife; but conjugal fidelity and performance of the essentials of the contract is necessary to continue them. Therefore labour to keep up your faith, and to abide in Christ, and he in you, and to bring forth fruit, lest ye be branches withered, and for the fire, John xv. 2, 3, 7—9, &c.

And upon the former misapprehension, the same persons do look upon all the faith which they exercise through their lives; after the first instantaneous act, as no justifying faith at all, (but only a faith of the same kind,) but to what use they hardly know. Yea, they look upon Christ himself as if they had no more use for him, either as to continue their justification, or to forgive their after-sins; whenas our continued faith must be exercised all our lives on the same Christ, and trust on the same covenant, for the continuation and perfection of that which was begun at the time of our regeneration, Col. i. 23; 1 John ii. 24; Heb. iii. 6, 12, 13; vi. 11, 12; x. 22, 23.

Direct. 10. Understand that every sin which you commit, hath need of a renewed pardon in Christ: and that he doth not prevent your necessity of such pardon. And therefore you will have constant need of Christ, and must daily come to God for pardon by him; not only for the pardon of temporal chastisements, but of everlasting punishment.

Of the sense of this, I shall say more anon: the proof it is in the forecited promises; and in all those texts of Scripture which tell us that death is the wages of sin, and call us to ask pardon, and tell us on what terms it may be had.

Direct. 11. Yet do not think that every sin doth put you into a state of condemnation again; or nullify your former justification: for though the law of nature is so far still in force, as to make punishment by it your natural due; yet the covenant of grace is a continually pardoning act; and according to its proper terms, doth dissolve the aforesaid obligation and presently remit the punishment: and as its moral action is not interrupted; no more is our justified state.

"There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus," &c. Rom. viii. 1; John iii. 16, 18; 1 John v. 11, 12. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins," 1 John ii. 1, 2. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." If all need of pardon had been prevented by Christ, what use were there of his advocation for our future forgiveness?

Direct. 12. Remember, that though unknown infirmities, and unavoidable ones, have an immediate pardon, because the believer hath an habitual faith and repentance; yet great and known sins must have actual repentance, before the pardon will be plenary or perfect; though the person is not in the mean time an unregenerate nor justified person.

1. That great and known sins must have a particular repentance, appeareth, 1. In that it is utterly inconsistent with the sincerity of habitual repentance, not to be actual, when sins are known, and come into our deliberate remembrance. 2. By all those texts, which require such repentance, confession, and forsaking; 1 John ii. 1, 2; i. 9; Prov. xxviii. 13; Psal. xxxii.; li.; 2 Cor. vii. 11; Rev. ii. 5, 16; Luke xiii. 3, 5; James v. 14, 15; Luke vi. 37; xi. 4. Repentance consisteth chiefly in forsaking sin; and if men forsake not such known wilful sins, they are wicked men, and therefore are not pardoned.

2. That unavoidable frailties are mere infirmities, and unknown faults are pardoned immediately to them that are truly godly, and have a general and implicit repentance, is plain, because else no man in the world could be saved; because every man hath such infirmities and unknown sins, 1 John i. 10.

3. Yet David himself is not put by his sin into a mere graceless state, and as a person that hath no former justification; for he prayeth God not to take his Spirit from him, and he was not deprived of the true love to God, which is the character of God's children: but he had incurred heinous guilt, and put himself in the way towards utter damnation, and

caused a necessity of a more particular deep repentance before he could be fully pardoned, than else he needed.

Before the world had a Saviour, we were all so far unpardoned, that a satisfying sacrifice was necessary to our justification: but afterward, all men are so far pardoned, that only the acceptance of what is purchased and freely (though conditionally) given, is necessary to it. Before men are converted, they are yet so far unpardoned, that (though no more sacrifice be necessary, yet) a total conversion and renovation, by turning from a life of sin to God by faith in Christ, is necessary to their actual justification and forgiveness. When a man is turned from a life of sin to God, and liveth in the state of grace, all his followng sins, which consist with the loving of God and holiness above the world and sinful pleasures, are so far forgiven immediately upon the committing, that they need neither another sacrifiee, nor another regeneration, or justification, *(quoad statum,)* but only an acting of that faith and repentance, which habitually he hath already. But the unknown errors and faults of such godly persons, are pardoned even without that actual repentance: and infirmities, without forsaking of the sin overcomingly in practice. And so every one liveth and dieth in some degree of sinful defectiveness and omission, of his love to God, and trust, and hope, and zeal, and desire, and love to men, and care of his duty, and watchfulness, and fervency in prayer, meditation, &c.; and in some degree of sinful disorder in our ill-governed thoughts, and words, and affections, or passions, and actions: we are never sinless till we die.

Direct. 13. Remember that you must neither think that every sin which is a cause of repentance, is a sufficient reason for you to doubt of your present state of justification; nor yet that no sin can be so great as to be a necessary cause of doubting.

If every sin should make us doubt of our justification, then all men must always doubt: and then it must be because no sin is consistent with sincerity, and the knowledge of sincerity; which is apparently false.

If no sin should cause our doubting, then there is no sin which is not consistent both with sincerity, and with the knowledge of it; which is as false, and much more dangerous to hold. 1. There are many sins that are utterly inconsistent with true godliness; otherwise the godly were ungodly, and as bad as others: and if you say that no godly man committeth these, it is true; and therefore it is true that he that committeth them is not a godly man, or justified. And how shall a man know his godliness, but by his life as the product of his inward graces? It is arguing from an uncertainty against a certainty, to say, I am justified and godly, and therefore my wilful sins of drunkenness, fornication, oppression, lying, malice, &c. are consistent with justification: and it is arguing from a certain truth, against a doubted falsehood, to say I live in ordinary, wilful, heinous sin; therefore I am not justified or sincere. "For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words; for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience," Ephes. v. 5, 6. "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified," &c. 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die," &c. Rom. viii. 1, 13; Gal. v. 20—24.

2. And there are many sins which consist with true grace, which will not consist with the assurance of its sincerity. And that, 1. From the nature of the things; because the least degree of grace conjunct with, and clouded by, the greatest degree of sin, which may consist with it, is not discernible to him that hath it; he that is so very near a state of death, and so very like to an unjustified person, can never be sure, in that case, that he is justified. 2. And also God in wisdom and justice will have it so; that sin may not be encouraged, nor presumption cherished, nor the comforts which are the reward of an obedient child, be cast away on an uncapable child in his stubborn disobedience, Psal. li. xxxii. lxxvii.

Therefore for a man that liveth in gross sin, to say that he is sure that he is justified, and therefore no sin shall make him question it; is but to believe the antinomian devil transforming himself into an angel of light, and his ministers, when they call themselves the ministers of righteousness; and to deny belief to the Spirit of holiness and truth. And if a true believer should come very near such a state of death, common reason, and the due care of his own soul, obligeth him to be suspicious of himself, and to fear the worst, till he have made sure of better, Heb. vi.; iii. 10; iv. 1, 12—14; 1 Cor. x.; John xv. 2, 7, 8, &c.

Direct. 14. Let not the persuasion that you are justified, make you more secure and bold in sinning, but more to hate it, as contrary to the ends of justification, and to the love which freely justified you.

It is a great mark of difference between true assurance and blind presumption, that the one maketh men hate sin more, and more carefully to avoid it; and the other causeth men to sin with less reluctancy and remorse, because with less fear.

Direct. 15. When the abuse of the doctrine of justification by faith alone, and not by works, doth pervert your minds and lives, remember that all confess, that we shall be judged according to our works (as the covenant of grace is the law by which we shall be judged): and to be judged, is to be justified or condemned.

I need not recite all those Scriptures to you, that say, that we shall be judged, and shall receive according to what we have done in the body, whether it be good or evil: and this is all that we desire you to believe, and live accordingly.

Direct. 16. Remember still that faith in Christ is but a means to raise us to the love of God, and that perfect holiness is higher and more excellent than the pardon of sin: and therefore desire faith, and use it, for the kindling of love, and pardon of sin, to endear you to God, and that you may do so no more: and do not sin, that you may have the more to be pardoned.

"The end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned. Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall they that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" Rom. vi. 1, 2. See Titus iii. 5—7; Rom. v. 1, 4—6; viii. 1, 4, 9; Gal. iv. 6; v. 24, 26. So much for those practical directions, which are needful for them that love not controversy.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PERNICIOUS AND DANGEROUS ERRORS DETECTED, WHICH HINDER THE WORK OF FAITH ABOUT OUR JUSTIFICATION; AND THE CONTRARY TRUTHS ASSERTED.

There is so much dust and controversy raised here to blind the eyes of the weak, and to hinder the life of faith, and so much poison served up under the name of justification and free grace, that I should be unfaithful if I should not discover it, either through fear of offending the guilty, or of wearying them that had rather venture upon deceit, than upon controversy. And we are now so fortified against the popish and Socinian extremes, and those whom I am now directing to live by faith are so settled against them, that I think it more necessary (having not leisure for both, and having done it heretofore in my "Confession") to open at this time the method of false doctrines on the other extreme, which for the most part is it which constituteth antinomianism, though some of them are maintained by others.

And I will first name each error; and then, with it, the contrary truth.

Error 1. Christ's suffering was caused by the sins of none, as the assumed meritorious cause, or as they usually say, as imputed to him, or lying on him, save only of the elect that shall be saved.

Contr. The sins of fallen mankind in general, except those rejections of grace whose pardon is not offered in the conditional covenant, did lie on Christ as the assumed cause of his sufferings.

See John i. 29; 2 Cor. v. 18—20; John iii. 16—19; Heb. ii. 9; 1 Tim. ii. 4—6; 1 John ii. 2; 1 Tim. iv. 10; 2 Pet. ii. 2. See Paræus in his Irenicon; and Twisse vind. et alibi passim, saying as much; and Amyrald, Davenant, Dalleus, Testardus, Usher, &c. proving it.

Error 2. Christ did both perfectly obey, and also make satisfaction for sin by suffering, in the person of all the elect, in the sense of the law, or God's account; so that his righteousness of obedience and perfect holiness, and his satisfaction, is so imputed to us, as the proprietaries, as if we ourselves had done it, and suffered it: not by an after-donation in the effects, but by this strict imputation in itself.

Contr. The contrary truth is at large opened before, and in my "Confession."

Christ's satisfaction, and the merit of his whole obedience, is as effectual for our pardon, justification, and salvation, as if believers themselves had performed it; and it is imputed to them, in that it was done for their sakes, and suffered in their stead, and the fruits of it by a free covenant or donation given them. But, 1. God is not mistaken, to judge that we obeyed or suffered when we did not. 2. God is no liar, to say, we did it, when he knoweth that we did it not. 3. If we were not the actors and sufferers, it is not possible that we should be made the natural subjects of the accidents of another's body, by any putation, estimation, or misjudging whatsoever; no, nor by any donation either. It is a contradiction, and therefore an impossibility, that the same individual actions and passions, of which Christ's human nature was the agent and subject so many hundred years ago, and have themselves now no existence, should in themselves, I say, in themselves, be made yours now, and you be the subject of the same accidents. 4. Therefore they can no otherwise be given to us, but, 1. By a true estimation of the reasons why Christ underwent them, viz. for our sakes as aforesaid. 2. And by a donation of the effects or fruits of them, viz. pardoning, and justifying, and saving us by them (on the terms chosen by the Donor himself, and put into his testament or covenant) as certainly (but not in the same manner) as if we had done and suffered them ourselves. 5. If Christ had suffered in our person reputatively in all respects, his sufferings would not have redeemed us: because we are finite worms, and our suffering for so short a time, would not have been accepted instead of hell sufferings. But the person of the Mediator made them valuable. 6. God never made any such covenant with us, that he will justify us, and use us just as he would have done, if we had ourselves perfectly obeyed and satisfied. They that take on them to show such a promise, must see that no wise man examine it. 7. God hath, both by his covenant, and his works, ever since confuted that opinion; and hath not dealt with us as he would have done if we had been the reputed doers and sufferers of it all ourselves. For he hath made conveyance of the benefits, by a pardoning and justifying law, or promise; and he giveth us additional pardon of renewed sins as we act them, and he addeth threatenings in his law or covenant; and he inflicteth penalties; yea, some that are very grievous, even the withholding of much of his Spirit's help and grace; all which are inconsistent with that conceit; nor would he so have used us, if we had been perfectly innocent, and had fully satisfied for our sins ourselves. 8. All men would have had present possession of glory, if God had so reputed us the perfect meriters of it. For his justice would no more have delayed our reward, than denied it. 9. All that are saved would have equal degrees of holiness and happiness, as well as of righteousness, because all would equally be reputed the perfect fulfillers of the law. And as no penalty could ever be justly inflicted on them here; so no degree of glory could be denied them hereafter for their sin, or for want of perfect righteousness. 10. The opinion of this kind of imputation, is a most evident contradiction in itself. For he that is imputatively a satisfier for all his own sin, is therein supposed to be a sinner: and he that is imputatively a perfect innocent fulfiller of the law, is thereby supposed to need no satisfaction to justice for his sin, as being imputatively no sinner. 11. By this all Christ's sacrifice and satisfaction is made a work of needless supererogation; yea, unjust, or rather impossible. For if we perfectly obeyed in him, he could not suffer for our disobedience. 12. Hereby pardon of sin is utterly denied: for he that is reputatively no sinner hath no sin to pardon.

If they say that God did first impute the satisfaction for sin, then there was no room after for the imputation of perfect obedience. We cannot feign God to receive all the debt, or inflict all the penalty, and then to say, now I will esteem thee one that never didst deserve it.

If they say that he doth neither impute the obedience or the suffering to us simply, and to all effects, but *in tantum ad hoc* or *secundum quid* only; so that we shall be pardoned for his suffering, and then judged worthy of heaven for his obedience; this is but to come up towards the truth before you are aware, and to confess that neither of them is given us in itself, but in the effects, as being itself paid to God to procure those effects.

But withal, the matter must be vindicated from their unsound inventions, and it must be said, that Christ died not only for our sins of commission, but of omission also; and that he that is pardoned both his sins of commission and omission, is free from

the punishment both of sense and loss; yea, and is reputed as one that never culpably omitted any duty; and consequently fell short of no reward by such omission: so that there remaineth no more necessity of righteousness in order to a reward where the pardon is perfect, save only (N. B.) to procure us that degree of reward which must be superadded to what we forfeited by our sin; and which we never by any culpable omission deserved to be denied. And thus much we do not deny that somewhat, (even adoption,) which is more than mere pardon and justification, must confer on us. But withal, as we hold not that the sun must bring light, and somewhat else must first banish darkness; that one thing must cure death, and another cause life; that satisfaction must procure the pardon of sins of omission and commission, as to the *pœna damni et sensus*, and make us esteemed and used as no sinners, and then imputed obedience must give us right to that reward, which the *pœna damni* deprived us of: so (N. B.) we maintain that Christ's sufferings have merited our eternal salvation, and our justification and adoption; and that his obedience hath merited our forgiveness of sin; and that both go together, the merit of the one and of the other, to procure all that we receive; and that the effects are not parcelled out as they have devised: though yet we believe that Christ's sufferings were paid to God, as for our sins, to satisfy justice, and that in the passive obedience, it is first satisfactory, and then and therefore meritorious, and in the active it is merely meritorious.

13. And the maintainers of the contrary opinion, besides all the forementioned evils, could never agree how much of Christ's righteousness must be in their sense imputed: some holding only the passive; a second sort, the active and passive; a third sort, the habitual, active and passive; a fourth sort, the divine, the habitual, the active, and the passive.

But of all these things there is so much written against them, by Cargius, Ursinus, Olevian, Piscator, Paræus, Scultetus, Alstedius, Windeline, Camero, Bradshaw, Gataker, and many more, that I need not to add any more for confutation.

Error 3. That no one shall suffer whose sins lay on Christ, and were suffered for by him.

Contr. Many such shall suffer the sorer punishment, for sinning against the Lord that bought them, and treading under foot the blood of the covenant, wherewith they were so far sanctified, as to be a people by their own covenant separated to God, Heb. x. 25, 26; vi. 4—6; 2 Pet. ii. 2; Heb. iv. 1; ii. 3; xii. 29.

Error 4. That no godly man, (say some,) or elect person, though ungodly, (say others,) is ever punished by God, because Christ suffered all their punishment himself.

Contr. Every godly man is chastened of God, and all chastisement is a fatherly correcting punishment: and many justified persons are punished to their final loss, by the denial of forfeited degrees of grace, and consequently of glory, Heb. xii. 7—10; 1 Cor. xi. 32; 1 Thess. v. 19; Eph. iv. 30. But sad experience is too full a proof. See my "Confession."

Error 5. That God were unjust if he laid any degree of punishment on those that Christ died for; or (say others) on the justified; because he should punish one sin twice.

Contr. It is certain, that God punisheth the justified in some degree, (much more the elect before conversion,) and it is certain that God is not unjust. Therefore it is certain that the ground of this accusation is false; for it was not our deserved punishment itself, or the same which was due in the true sense of the law which Christ endured: but it was the punishment of a voluntary sponsor, which was the *equivalens*, and not the *idem*, that was due; and did answer the ends of the law, but not fulfil the meaning of the threatening; which threatened the sinner himself, and not another for him: seeing then it was a satisfaction, or sacrifice for sin, which God received for an atonement and propitiation, and not a solution or suffering of the sinner himself in the sense of the law, the charge of injustice on God is groundless.

And no man can have more right to Christ's sufferings or benefits, than he himself is willing to give: and it is not his own will (into whose hands all power and judgment is committed) that we should be subject to no punishment because he suffered for us.

Error 6. That the elect are justified from eternity, (say some,) or from Christ's death before they were born, (say others,) or before they believed (say others).

Against this I have said enough in many volumes heretofore.

Error 7. That faith justifieth only in the court of our own consciences, by making us to know that we were justified before.

Against this also I have said enough elsewhere.

Error 8. That sins to come, not yet committed, are pardoned in our first justification.

Contr. Sins to come are no sins: and no sins have no actual pardon; but only the certain remedy is provided, which will pardon their sins as soon as they are capable.

Error 9. Justification is not a making us just, but a sentence pronouncing us just.

Contr. Justification is a word of so many significations, that he that doth not first tell what he meaneth by it, will not be capable of giving or receiving satisfaction.

And here, once for all, I must entreat the reader that loveth not confusion and error, to distinguish of these several sorts of justification, as the chief which we are to note.

Justification is either public by a governor, or private by an equal or mere discerner; justification is by God, or by man. Justification by God is either as he is Lawgiver, and above laws, or as he is Judge according to his laws. In the first way God maketh us just, by his act of oblivion, or pardoning law, or covenant of grace. In the second respect God doth two ways justify and forgive: 1. As a determining Judge: 2. As the Executioner of his judgment. In the former respect God doth two ways justify us: 1. By esteeming us just: 2. By public sentencing us just. As executioner, he useth us as just, and as so is judged.

I pass by here purposely all Christ's justification of us by way of apology or plea, and all justification by witnesses and evidences, &c. and all the constitutive causes of our righteousness, lest I hinder them whom I would help, by using more distinctions than they are willing to learn. But these few are necessary.

1. It is one thing for God to make us righteous, by forgiving all our sins of commission and omission, for the sake of Christ's satisfaction and obedience.

2. It is another thing for God to esteem us to be so righteous when he hath first made us so.

3. It is another for God to sentence us righteous as the public Judge, by Jesus Christ.

4. And it is another thing for God to take off all penalties and evils, and to give us all the good which belong to the righteous; and so to execute his own laws and sentence. And he that will not distinguish of these senses or sorts of justification, shall not dispute with me.

And while I am upon this, I will give the reader these two remarks and counsels. 1. That he will not, in disputing about justification with any sect, begin the dispute of the thing till he hath first determined and agreed of their sense of the word. And that he will not confound the controversies *de nomine*, about the word, with those *de re*, about the matter. And that he will remember in citing texts of Scripture, that Beza, and many of our best expositors, do grant to the papists (as I heard Bishop Usher also do) that some texts of Scripture do take the word justify as they do, for pardon and sanctification conjunctly: as Titus iii. 7; 1 Cor. vi. 11; Rom. viii. 30, three famous texts; of which see Le Blanc at large in his *Thes. de nom. Justific.* If the controversy be only of the sense of a text, handle it accordingly: if of the matter, turn it not to words.

2. Note this observation, that sanctification itself, or the giving us the Spirit, is a great act (though I say not the only) of executive justification. The withholding of the Spirit, is the greatest punishment inflicted in this life; and therefore the giving of the Spirit is the removal or executive remitting of the greatest penalty; so that if pardon were only as Dr. Twisse thought, a *non-punire*, a not punishing, then this were the most proper as well as plenary pardon in this life. But the truth is, that our pardon and justification in right goeth first, which God effecteth by his covenant gift: and then God esteemeth us just or pardoned, when by pardon he hath made us just; and if there be any sentence, or any thing equivalent before the day of judgment or death; he next sentenceth us just; and lastly, he useth us as just, that is, as pardoned, (all sins of omission and commission,) which is by taking off all punishment both of pain (or sense) and loss; of which part the giving of his Spirit is the chief act on this side our glorification.

Note therefore, that thus far no protestant can deny to the papists, nor will do, that sanctification and justification are all one, that is, that God having pardoned us *de jure*, doth pardon us executively, by giving us his forfeited Spirit and grace; and by all the communion which we have after with him, and the comfort which we have from him.

And further let it be well noted, that the nature of this executive pardon or justification (of which read Mr Hotchkis at large) is far better known to us, than the nature of God's sentential pardon and justification; and therefore there is less controversy about it. For what it is to forbear or take off a punishment, is easily understood. But though most protestants say, that justification is a sentence of God, they are not agreed what that sentence is. Some think (truly) that our first justification by faith is but a virtual sentence of the law of grace, by which we must be judged. Others say, that by a sentence is meant God's secret mental estimation. Others say, that as angels are his executioners, so it is before them, (where joy is said to be for a sinner's conversion, Luke xv.) that doth declare and sentence us pardon and just. Others think that there is no sentence but God's notification of pardon to our consciences, or giving us the sense or knowledge of it. Others think that there is no sentence till death, or public judgment. Others say, that God doth sentence us just, though we know not where or how. And Mr. Lawson noteth, that (as all confess that God hath no voice but a created voice, and therefore useth not words as we; unless what Christ as man may do in that we know not; so) his sentence is nothing but his declaration that he esteemeth us pardoned and just in title, which is principally, if not only, by his execution, and taking off all penalties of sense and loss, and using us as pardoned in title: and so that the giving of his Spirit, is his very sentence of justification in this life, as it is his declaration as aforesaid.

And doubtless executive pardon is the most perfect and complete, as being the end and perfection of all the rest. Therefore God maketh us just in title by covenant pardon; and therefore he sentenceth us as just, that he may take off all penalty, and give us the felicity due to the righteous; and may use us as those that are made just.

There is much truth in most of the foresaid opinions inclusively, and much falsehood in their several exclusions of all the rest (unless their quarrel be only *de nomine*, which of all these is fitliest called justification). For, 1. There is no doubt but our pardon, or constituted justification in covenant title, is a virtual, sentential justification. 2. And there is no doubt but God doth esteem them just, that are first made just, and no other (because he erreth not): and that this estimation is *sententia concepta*, as distinct from *sententia prolata*. 3. And it is certain that those angels that must execute his sentence, must first know it: and it is probable that the joy ἐνώπιον τῶν ἀγγέλων τοῦ Θεοῦ, in the presence of the angels of God, doth intimate that God useth ordinarily to notify the conversion of a sinner to angels (whether the joy here be meant as Dr. Hammond and others think, God's joy signified to angels, or rather the angels' joy, by their presence being *in choro angelorum*, or among them, that is, in them; or both). 4. And it is granted that God doth usually give some notice of his pardon, at one time or other, more or less to a sinner's conscience (though that is too late, too uncertain, too low, and too unequal, and too unconstant, to be the great and famous justification by faith). 5. And it is clear, that till death or judgment, there is no such solemn plenary judicial sentence or declaration as there will be then. 6. And it is certain, that at death and judgment, Christ as man, a creature, can speak or express himself, as the blessed creatures do to one another. 7. And it is certain that God hath a way of expressing himself to creatures, which is beyond our present understandings: but we may conceive of it by the similitude of light, which in the same instant revealeth millions of things to millions of persons respectively. (Though that is nothing to his present justification of us by faith, unless as he revealeth it to angels.) 8. And it is certain, that at the day of death and judgment, God will thus, by an irresistible light, lay open every man to himself, and to the world, which may be called his sentence, differing from the execution; and that Christ in our nature will be our Judge, and may express that sentence as aforesaid. 9. And it is certain, that God's actual taking off punishment, and giving the blessing which sin had deprived us of, is a declaration of his mind, which may be called an executive sentence, and might serve the turn if there were no more: and that in Scripture, the terms of "God's judging the world" doth usually signify God's executive government, rewarding and punishing: and that God doth begin such execution in this life: and that his giving the Spirit is thus his principal pardoning and justifying act; and yet that this is but part, and not the whole of our present executive pardon: and that glorification in this sense is the highest and noblest justification or pardon; when God giveth us all that sin had forfeited. (But yet we deny not that glorification is somewhat more than an executive pardon, so far as any more is then given us, than we did forfeit by our sins.)

I must desire the reader not to forget all this explication of the nature of justification, because it will

be supposed to the understanding of all before and after.

Error 10. That the justified or regenerate never incur any guilt or obligation to any punishment, but only temporal corrections; and therefore need no pardon at all of any sin, at least, since regeneration, as to the everlasting punishment; because Christ died to prevent that guilt, and consequently the necessity of any such pardon.

Contr. This is before explained. Christ died to procure us that pardoning covenant, which (on its own terms) will pardon every sin of the justified when they are committed; but not to prevent the need of pardon. Otherwise Christ should not satisfy for any sins after regeneration, nor bear them in his sufferings at all; for his satisfaction is a bearing of a punishment, which in its dignity and usefulness is equivalent to our deserved (or to be deserved) punishment. Now if we never do deserve it, Christ cannot bear that in our stead which we never deserve: as the preventing of the sin, or *reatus culpæ*, proveth that Christ never suffered for that sin prevented, because it is *terminus diminuens*, and is no sin; so is it in preventing the desert of punishment. And as for correction, Christ doth inflict so much as is good for us; and therefore did not die to prevent it. But of this controversy I have said more at large elsewhere.

Error 11. That justification by faith is perfect at the first instant; though sanctification be imperfect.

Contr. Against this error read Mr. George Hopkins's book of "Salvation from Sin;" showing how justification and sanctification are equally carried on.

It is granted that at our first true faith, we are pardoned all the sins that ever we committed before, as to the eternal punishment; and so we are converted from them all; but (as our sanctification is imperfect, so) our pardon is yet imperfect in many respects: for, 1. We are still liable to death, which is the wages of sin, though it be so far conquered as not to hinder our salvation: Enoch and Elias went to heaven without it, Rom. v. 12, 14, 17, 21; Gen. iii. 16, 17, 19; 1 Cor. xv. 21, 26. 2. We are still liable to many penal chastisements in this life; which though they do us good by accident, are yet the fruits of sin, no father chastising a faultless child, but doing him good in another way. 3. There are many sins yet left uncured, which though as sins, they are our own only, yet as an evil not cured, are also penal: I am sure that the not giving of more of his Spirit and grace is penal. Therefore till our grace be perfect, we are not perfectly delivered from the penal fruits of sin, and therefore not perfectly justified and pardoned. 4. That pardon and justification is not perfect, which hath so many conditions, and of such a nature for its continuation, as ours now hath: as to say, you shall lose your justified state, unless you fight and overcome, in mortification, sufferings, perseverance, &c. He that hath a title to an estate, which is held by such a tenure, and would be lost if he should fail in such conditions, hath not so perfect a title, as he that is past all such conditions. 5. That pardon which is only of sins past, while there are thousands more hereafter to be pardoned, (or else we should yet perish,) is not so perfect as that pardon and justification in the conclusion of our lives, when all sin that ever will be committed is forgiven absolutely. 6. The kind of our present justification is imperfect; it being but in covenant title, and some part of execution; the full and perfect sentence and execution, being at the day of judgment.

I leave them therefore to say, Christ's righteousness imputed to us is imperfect; therefore we are as perfectly just and justified as Christ, who know not what imputation here is; nor that Christ's personal righteousness is not given to us as proprietors, in itself, but in the effects; and who know not the difference between believing and blaspheming, and making ourselves as so many Christs to ourselves; and that know not what need they have of Christ, or of faith, or prayer, or of any holy endeavour for any more pardon, and righteousness or justification, than they have already: or who think that David in his adultery and murder was as perfectly pardoned and justified as he will be in heaven at last: and in a word, who know not the difference between earth and heaven.

Error 12. That Christ justified us only as a Priest; or (say others) only as obeying and satisfying.

Contr. Christ merited our justification in his state of humiliation, as the Mediator subjected to the law, and perfectly obeying it, and as a sacrifice for sin; but this is not justifying us. Christ offered that sacrifice as the High Priest of the church or world: but this was not justifying us. Christ made us the new covenant as our King, and as the great Prophet of the Father or Angel of the covenant, Mal. iii. 1. And this covenant giveth us our pardon and title to impunity, and to life eternal; and Christ as our King and Judge doth justify us by a judiciary sentence, and also by the execution of that sentence: so that the relations which most eminently appear in our justification, are all excluded by the foresaid error.

Error 13. That we are justified only by the first act of faith; and all our believing afterwards to the end of our lives, are no justifying acts at all.

Contr. Indeed if the question be only about the name of justifying, if you will take it only for our first change into a state of righteousness by pardon, it is true. But the following acts of faith are of the same use and need to the continuing our justification, or state of righteousness, as the first act was for the beginning of it.

Error 14. That the continuance of our justification needeth no other conditions to be by us performed, than the continuance of that faith on which it was begun.

Contr. Where that first faith continueth, there our justification doth continue: but that faith never continueth without sincere obedience to Christ; and that obedience is part of the condition of the continuance, or not losing our justification (as is proved before, and at large elsewhere). The faith which in baptism we profess, and by which we have our first justification or covenant right, is an accepting of Christ as our Saviour and Lord to be obeyed by us in the use of his saving remedies; and we there vow and covenant future obedience. And as our marriage to Christ, or covenant making, is all the condition of our first right to him and his benefits, without any other good works or obedience; so our marriage-fidelity, or covenant keeping, is part of the condition of our continuance herein, or not losing it by a divorce, John xv.; Col. i. 23, &c.

Error 15. That faith is no condition of our part in Christ, and our justification, but only one of God's gifts of the covenant, given with Christ and justification.

Error 16. That the covenant of grace hath no conditions on our part, but only donatives on God's part.

Error 17. That if the covenant had any conditions, it were not free. And that every condition is a meritorious cause, or at least some cause.

Contr. All these I have confuted at large elsewhere, and proved, 1. That faith is a proper condition of

those benefits which God giveth us by the conditional covenant of grace; but not of all the benefits which he any other way giveth us. It was not the condition of his giving Christ to live and die for us; nor of his giving us the gospel, or this covenant itself; nor of his giving us preachers, or of the first motions of his Spirit; nor was faith the condition of the gift of faith itself; because all these are not given us in that way, by that covenant, but absolutely, as God shall please.

2. That some promises of God of the last-mentioned gifts, have no condition. The promises of giving a Saviour to the world; and the promise of giving and continuing the gospel in the world, and of converting many by it in the world, and of making them believers, and giving them new hearts, and bringing them to salvation, &c. have no conditions. But these are promises made, some of them to Christ only, and some of them to fallen mankind, or the world in general, or predictions what God will do by certain men unborn, unnamed, and not described, called the elect. But all this giveth no title to pardon, or justification, or salvation, to any one person at all.

Remember therefore once for all, that the covenant which I still mean, by the covenant of grace, is that which God offereth men in baptism, by the acceptance whereof we become christians.

3. That God's gift of a Saviour, and a new covenant to the world, are so free as to be without any condition: but God's gift of Christ, with all his benefits of justification, adoption, &c. to individual persons, is so free as to be without and contrary to our desert; but not so free as to be without any condition: and that he that will say to God, Thy grace of pardon is not free if thou wilt not give it me, but on condition that I accept it, yea, or desire it, or ask it, shall prove a contemner of grace, and a reproacher of his Saviour, and not an exalter of free grace. There is no inconsistency for God to be the giver of grace, to cause us to believe and accept of Christ, and yet to make a deed of gift of him to all on condition of that faith and acceptance; no more than it is inconsistent to give faith and repentance, and to command them: of both which the objectors themselves do not seem to doubt. For he maketh both his command, and his conditional form of promise, to be his chosen means (and most wisely chosen) of working in us the thing commanded.

4. That a condition as a condition is no cause at all, much less a meritorious cause: but only the non-performance of it suspendeth the donation of the covenant, by the will of the donor; or rather it is the donor's will that suspendeth it till the condition be done. And some conditions signify no more than a term of time: and some (in the matter of them, and not in the form) are a not-demeriting, or not-abusing the giver, or not-despising the gift: and some among men are meritorious. And with God every act that is chosen by him to be a condition of his gift, is pleasing to him, for some special aptitude which it hath to that office. This is the full truth and the plain truth about conditions.

Error 18. There is no degree of pardon given to any that are not perfectly justified, and that shall not be saved: but the giving of the Spirit, so far as to cause us to believe and repent, is some degree of executive pardon; therefore we are justified before we believe.

Contr. There is a great degree of pardon given to the world before conversion, which shall yet justify and save none but believers: God's giving a Saviour to the world, and a new covenant, and in that a universal conditional pardon; yea, his giving them teaching, exhortations, and offers of free grace; and his giving them life and time, and many mercies, which the full execution of the law would have deprived them of, is a very great degree of a pardon. God pardoned to mankind much of the penalty which sin deserved, even presently after the first transgression, in the promise made to Adam, Gen. iii. 15. Many texts of Scripture (which partial men for their opinions' sake do pervert) do speak magnificently of a common pardon, which must be sued out and made particular upon our believing. The world was before under so much impossibility of being saved by any thing that they could do, that they must have procured all to be done first which Christ hath done and suffered for them; which was utterly above their power. They that were actually obliged to bear the pains of death, both temporal, spiritual, and eternal, are now so far redeemed, pardoned, and delivered, that all the merit and satisfaction necessary to actual forgiveness, is made for them by another, and no one of them all shall perish for want of a sacrifice made and accepted for them; and a universal conditional pardon is enacted, sealed, and recorded, and offered and urged on all to whom the gospel cometh; and nothing but their obstinate, wilful refusal or neglect, can deprive them of it: and this is so great a degree of pardon, that it is called often by such absolute names, as if all were done; because all is done which concerneth God as Legislator or Covenant-maker to do, before our own acceptance of it.

Suppose a prince redeem all his captive subjects from the Turkish slavery, and one half of them so love their state of bondage, or some harlot or ill company there, (yea, if all of them do so, till half of them are persuaded from it,) that they will not come away. It is no improper nor unusual language to say that he hath redeemed them, and given them a release, though they would not have it. That may be given to a man, which he never hath, because he refuseth to accept it; when the donor hath done all that belongeth to him in that relation of a donor; though perhaps as a persuader he might do more.

This is the sense of Heb. i. 3, "When he had by himself purged our sins, (or made purgation of our sins,) he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;" that is, when he had become a sacrifice for sin, and sealed the covenant by his blood. For actual personal pardon was not given by him before our acceptance.

This is the plain sense of 2 Cor. v. 18—20, "God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself; not imputing to them their trespasses (that is, purchasing and giving them a pardoning covenant); and hath committed to us the word and ministry of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God."

John i. 29, 36, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" (that is, as a sacrifice for sin.) As Heb. ix. 26, "Once in the end of the world he hath appeared to put away sin, by the sacrifice of himself:" (though the sacrifice as offered only, doth not actually and fully pardon it). The same as Heb. x. 12, "After he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God."

So Matt. xviii. 27, 32, "He forgave him the debt ——I forgave thee all that debt——" viz. conditionally, and as David forgave Shimei.

Psal. lxxviii. 38, "He forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not;" that is, he forgave them the temporal punishment, and suspended the execution of eternal punishment, giving them yet more time

and offers of repentance and of further mercy. And so he forgave Ahab and Nineveh upon their humiliation. Numb. xiv. 19, "Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people, according to the greatness of thy mercy, and as thou hast forgiven this people from Egypt until now."

So Psal. lxxxv. 2, 3, "Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people; thou hast covered all their sins: thou hast taken away all thy wrath.——Turn us, O God of our salvation, and cause thine anger to cease. Wilt thou be angry with us for ever?" So that they are two palpable errors here asserted by the objectors; viz. that there is no degree of pardon to such as are not saved; and that we are justified whenever we have any degree of pardon. We may be so far pardoned as to have grace given us effectually to believe, and yet our justification, or the covenant forgiveness of eternal punishment, is in order of nature after our believing, and not before it.

Error 19. That our natures are as far from being able to believe in Christ, as from being able to fulfil the law of works, and to be justified by it; they being equally impossible to us; and as much help is necessary to one as to the other.

Contr. To be justified by the law of works, when we have once broken it, is a contradiction, and a natural impossibility; as it is to be at once a sinner, and no sinner. But so it is not for a sinner to believe in Christ: the impossibility is but moral at most; which consisteth not in a want of natural faculties or power, but in the want of a right disposition, or willingness of mind.

And to fulfil the law of God, and to be perfect for the future, is surely a far higher degree of spiritual grace and excellency, than to be a poor, weak, sinful believer, desiring to fulfil it. Therefore our sinful natures are much further off from perfection than from faith.

3. And though the same Omnipotency do all God's works, (for all God's power is Omnipotency,) yet it is not equally put forth and manifested in all his works: the moving of a feather, and the making of the world, are both works of Omnipotency; but not equal works or exertions of it.

4. And it is certain that *in rerum natura*, there is such a thing as a proper power given by God, to do many things that never are done; and that necessary grace (which some call sufficient) which is not eventually effectual: for such Adam had (such power, and such necessary grace or help) to have forborne his first sin, which he did not forbear. And no man can prove that no final unbelievers have had such power and help to have believed, as Adam had to have stood. But it is certain that we have not such power and necessary grace, to have perfectly fulfilled all the law.

Error 20. That faith justifieth as an instrument, and only so.

Of this I have written at large heretofore. An instrument properly so called, is an efficient cause: faith is no efficient cause of our justification; neither God's instrument, nor ours: for we justify not ourselves instrumentally: the known, undoubted instrument of our justification, is God's covenant or deed of gift; which is his pardoning act: they that say it is not a physical, but a moral instrument, either mean that it is morally called an instrument, that is, reputatively, and not really; or that it is indeed a moral instrument, that is, effecteth our justification morally. But the latter is false; for it effecteth it not at all: and the former is false; for as there is no reason, so there is no Scripture to prove that God reputeth it to be what it is not.

All that remaineth to be said is, that indeed faith in Christ is an act whose nature partly (that is, one act of it) consisteth in the acceptance of Christ himself, who is given to us for our justification and salvation, by a covenant which maketh this believing acceptance its condition. And so this accepting act, in the very essence of it, is such as some call a receiving instrument, (or a passive,) which is indeed no instrument, but an act metaphorically called an instrument (and in disputes, metaphors must not be used without necessity; and to understand them properly is to err). So that such an improper instrument of justification faith is, as my trusting my physician (and taking him for my physician) is the instrument of my cure; and as my trusting myself to the conduct of such a pilot, is the instrument of my safe voyage; or as my trusting my tutor is the instrument of my learning; or rather as a woman's marriage consent is the instrument of all the wealth and honour which she hath by her husband. Indeed marriage may be better called the instrument of it; that is, not her own consent, (which is properly the receiving condition,) but the consent and actual marriage by her husband: for he is the giver. And so the covenant is God's justifying instrument, as signifying his donative consent; and baptism is the instrument of it, by solemn investiture or tradition; as the delivering of a key is the instrumental delivery of the house.

The case then is very plain to him that is but willing to understand, viz. that faith in its essence, is, besides the assenting acts, an accepting of an offered Saviour for our justification, sanctification, and salvation, and a trusting in him: that this act of faith being its essence, is the most apt for the use that God in his covenant hath appointed it unto: because he will give us a Saviour freely, but yet not to be refused and neglected, but to be thankfully and honourably received and used: that this special aptitude of faith, or its very essence, is the reason why it is chosen to be the condition of the testament or gift: that this same essence and aptitude, is that which some call its receptive or passive instrumentality: that this essence and aptitude is not the nearest reason why we are justified by it; for then faith as faith, and as such an act or work of ours, should justify, and that *ex opere operato;* and that without or against God's will. For if God's will have interposed, the signifier of that will must needs be the chief and nearest reason: therefore this act so apt, being by God made the condition of the gift or covenant, its nearest and chief interest (I will not call it causality) in our justification, is this office of a condition. Therefore in a word, we are justified by faith directly as, or because it is, the *conditio præstita*, the performance of the condition of the justifying act; and it was by God made the condition, because it was in its nature most apt thereto; which aptitude may be metaphorically called its receptive instrumentality: and that thus as it accepteth Christ for justification, adoption, sanctification, and glorification; so it is first the metaphorical instrument of our part in Christ; and but consequently the metaphorical instrument of our title to pardon, the Spirit, and heaven; and in no tolerable sense at all (how figurative soever) is it any instrument of God's sentence of justification, (which yet is all the justification acknowledged by the usual defenders of instrumentality,) saving as it may be said to give us a right to it, by giving us constitutive justification in the pardon of our sins.

And the Scripture never saith that faith justifieth us, nor calleth it justifying faith; but that we are justified by faith, and most commonly [of faith], for

the usuallest phrase is ἐκ πίστεως, *ex fide*, as it is *ex operibus*, when justification by works is denied; which is not the mere instrumentality of works.

So that here is a double error; 1. That faith justifieth as a true and proper instrument: 2. And no other way.

Error 21. That faith causeth justification, as it causeth sanctification; as much and as properly.

Contr. Faith causeth not justification at all, but only is the condition of it; but faith causeth the acts of other graces by a proper efficiency; believing is a proper efficient cause of the will's volition, complacency, consent (though but a moral efficient, because the liberty of the will forbiddeth the intellect to move it *per modum naturæ*). And the will's consent produceth other acts, and physically exciteth other graces: because to love, and desire, and fear, and seek, and obey, are acts of our own souls, where one may properly cause another; but to justify or pardon is an act of God: and therefore faith equally procureth our right or title to justification, and to sanctification, and glorification; but it doth not equally affect them. "Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness," &c. 2 Cor. vii. 1; not, Let us pardon and justify ourselves. Cleanse your hearts, you sinners, &c. James iv. 8. "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings," Isa. i. 16. (not your guilt and punishment.) So only Christ cleanseth us from all sin and unrighteousness, 1 John i. 7, 9. "Keep yourselves in the love of God," Jude 21. "Abide in me," &c. John xv. 4. "He that is begotten of God, keepeth himself," &c. 1 John v. 18.

Error 22. That the faith by which we are justified, is not many physical acts of the soul only, but one.

Error 23. That it is only an act of one faculty of the soul.

Contr. The contrary is fully opened before; and proved at large elsewhere, and through the Scripture. Faith is (as Davenant well noteth) the act of the whole man: I was wont to say of both faculties, I now say of the three faculties, which constitute the soul of man, the potestative, the intellective, and the volitive. And the assent itself is many acts, (as acts are physically specified by their objects,) as is showed. It is one moral act or work of the soul: like trusting a man as my physician, which is a fiducial consent that he be my physician, in order to the use of his remedies; or as taking a man to be your prince, husband, tutor, master, &c. where he that will tell people that taking signifieth but one physical act, would be ridiculous. And he that will tell people that only one physical act of one faculty is it that they must look to be justified by, will be much worse than ridiculous.

Error 24. That we are justified by faith, not as it receiveth Christ's person, but his benefits or righteousness.

Contr. The contrary is before and after proved (and insisted on by Dr. Preston at large). Indeed we receive not Christ's person itself physically; but his person in the office and relation of our Saviour; as we must choose what person shall be our physician, before we take his medicines, or receive our health; but it is only a consent that he and no other be our physician, which we call the taking of his person. And so it is here.

Error 25. That it is one act of faith which giveth us right to Christ, and another to his righteousness, and another to his teaching, and another to his Spirit, and another to adoption, and to heaven, &c. and not the same.

Contr. This is, 1. Adding to the word of God, and that in a matter near our chiefest comfort and safety. Prove it, or affirm it not. 2. It is corrupting, and perverting, and contradicting the word and covenant of God, which unitedly maketh the same faith (without any such distinction) the condition of all the covenant gifts; Mark xvi. 16; John iii. 16, &c.

Error 26. That though the same faith which justifieth doth believe in him as a Teacher, as a King, and a Judge, &c. yet it justifieth us only *quatenus receptio justitiæ*, as it is the receiving of Christ's righteousness.

Contr. See in my "Dispute of Justification," my confutation of this assertion in Mr. Warner. Properly faith justifieth not at all; but we are justified of or by it as a condition by the tenor of God's deed of gift. And so far as it is the condition in that gift, so far we are justified by it. But it is one entire faith in Christ, which is the condition, without such distinction; therefore we are so justified by it. 2. According to that rule, there must be as many acts of faith, as there are benefits to be received, and the title to be ascribed to each one accordingly. 3. The natural relation of the act to the object, showeth no more but what the nature or essence of that faith is, and not how we come to be justified by it. 4. The sense containeth this false proposition, *Hæc fides qua talis*, or *qua fides justificat*: faith as faith, or as this faith is specie, justifieth (which some call the *To credere.*) For it is the essence of faith which they call its reception of Christ's righteousness. 5. The true passive reception of righteousness and pardon, is that of the person, as he is the *terminus* of the donative or justifying act of the covenant: to receive pardon properly, is to be pardoned; but our active receiving or consent, is but the condition of it; and there is no proof or reason that the condition should be so parcelled. 6. Yet if by your *quatenus* you intend no more than the description of the act of faith as essentially related to its subsequent benefit, and not at all to speak of its conditional nearest interest in our justification, the matter were less. 7. But the truth is, that if we might distinguish where God doth not distinguish, it were much more rational to say, that taking Christ for a true Messenger of God, and a Teacher, and Sanctifier, and King, hath a greater hand in our justification, than taking him to justify us (supposing that all be present). Because the common way and reason of conditions in covenants is, that somewhat which the party is willing of, is promised upon condition of something which he is unwilling of, that for the one he may be drawn to consent unto the other: as if the physician should say, If you will take me for your physician, and refuse none of my medicines, I will undertake to cure you. Here it is supposed that the patient is willing of health, and not willing of the medicines, but for health's sake; and therefore consenting to the medicines (or receiving this man to be his physician as a prescriber of the medicines) is more the condition of his cure, than his consenting to the cure itself, or receiving the physician as the cause of his health: so here it is supposed that condemned sinners are already willing to be justified, pardoned, and saved from punishment, but not willing to repent and follow the teaching and counsel of a Saviour; and therefore that pardon and justification is given and offered them, on condition that they accept of, and submit to, the teaching and government of Christ, and of salvation from their sins: but the truth is, we must not presume beyond his revelation, to give the reasons of God's institutions. We are sure that the entire belief in Christ, and accepting of himself as our perfect Saviour in order to all the ends of his relation, is made by God in his covenant, the condition of our title to the benefits of his covenant con-

junctly: and it is not only the believing in Christ for pardon that as such is the condition of pardon; nor is any one act the condition of any benefit, but as it is a part of that whole faith which is indeed the condition.

The occasion of their error is, that they consider only what it is in Christ the object of faith which justifieth, sanctifieth, &c. and they think that the act only which is exercised on that object must do it; which is a gross mistake: because faith is not like taking of money, jewels, books, &c. into one's hand, which is a physical act which taketh possession of them; but it is a *jus* or *debitum*, a right and relation which we are morally and passively to receive, as constituting our first justification and pardon; and as the condition of this we are to take Christ for our Saviour, which is but a physical, active, metaphorical receiving, in order to the attainment of the said passive proper receiving (for *recipere proprie est pati*).

If an act be passed, that all traitors and rebels, who will give up themselves to the king's son, as one that hath ransomed them, to be taught and ruled by him, and reduced to their obedience, and to be their general in the wars against his enemies, shall have pardon, and lands, and honours, and further rewards after this service; here the prince himself doth deliver them by his ransom, and enrich them by his lands, and honour them by his honour or power, &c. But their act of giving up themselves to him under the notion of a ransomer, doth no more to their deliverance, than their giving up themselves to him under the notion of a general or ruler, &c.; because it doth not free them as it is such an act, but as it is an act made the condition of his gift.

And note that I have before proved, that even as to the object Christ justifieth us in all the parts of his office.

Error 27. That believing in God as God and our Father in Christ, is not an act of justifying faith, but only a consequent or concomitant of it.

Contr. 1. No doubt but God must some way be believed in, in order of nature, before Christ can be believed in (as is proved). Who can believe that Christ is the Son and Messenger of God, who believeth not that there is a God? or that Christ reconcileth us to God, before he believe that he is our offended God and Governor? 2. But to believe in God as the end of our redemption, to whose love and favour we must be restored by faith in Christ, and who pardoneth by the Son, is as essential an act of justifying faith, as our belief in Christ.

Object. But not *quatenus justificantis*, not of faith as justifying.

Answ. If by as justifying, you mean, not as effecting justification, it is a false supposition: there is no such faith. If you mean, not as the condition of justification, it is false: it is as essential a part of it as the condition. If you mean, not as faith is denominated justifying from the consequent benefit, it is true, but impertinent; for the same may be said of faith in Christ; it is not called faith in Christ, as it is called (by you) justifying. And yet I may add, that in the very physical nature of it, belief in God as our God and end, is essential to it: as consenting to be healed, is essential to consenting to the physician; and consenting to be reconciled, is essential to our consenting to a mediation for that end; because the respect to the end is essential to the relation consented to.

All the faith described Heb. xi. in all those instances, hath special essential respect to God.

So hath Abraham's faith; Rom. iv. 3, "Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness." "To him that worketh not, but believeth on him (on God) that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness," ver. 5. "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin," ver. 8. "Before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead," ver. 17. "He staggered not at the promise of God——being fully persuaded that what he had promised, he was also able to perform," ver. 20, 21. "And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead," ver. 22—24.

Abundance such testimonies are obvious in Scripture; but this being as plain as can be spoken, he maketh his own faith, who refuseth to believe it. Our faith in God as God hath as much hand in our justification, as our faith in Christ as Mediator.

But the form of the baptismal covenant which the church ever used, fully proveth it as aforesaid, though to answer all ignorant cavils against it, as an unnecessary tediousness, I pass by.

Error 28. The belief of heaven, or the life to come, is no essential part of justifying faith as such.

Contr. The last answer to this error is sufficient. Heaven is the everlasting vision and love of God; and therefore we are justified by believing it, though not it alone: it is essential to our Saviour, to save and bring us to the fruition of God.

Error 29. That justifying faith is a believing that I am justified, or elect, and shall be saved by Christ.

Error 30. That this faith is a full assurance, or persuasion at least, excluding doubting.

Contr. 1. We are justified by believing and accepting God for our God, and Christ for our Saviour, that we may be justified; and not by believing that we are justified. 2. It is false, and ever will be, that any of the *præsciti* (as Austin and Prosper call them) or the non-elect, are elect, or justified, or will be saved; but the non-elect are commanded and bound to believe with that same kind of faith by which we are justified; therefore to believe that they themselves are elect, justified, and shall be saved, is not that kind of faith by which we are justified. No men are bound by God on pain of damnation to believe a lie, nor damned for not believing it. 3. Assurance of personal pardon, is the happiness but of few true christians in this life; and where it is, it is only an effect or consequent participating of faith. See Mr. Hickman on this subject.

Error 31. The meaning of that article of our creed, "I believe the remission of sins," is, I believe that my own sins are forgiven to me personally.

Contr. Though worthy Mr. Perkins, and other ancient divines, have too much countenanced this exposition, it is false. The meaning of that article is but this, I believe that a sufficient provision for pardon is made by Christ, both for sins before regeneration, and after-faults which shall be repented of; and that a pardoning covenant is made to all, if they will repent and believe; and to me as well as others, and I accept of that gracious offer, and trust in that covenant in Christ.

It is dangerous misexpounding articles of the creed.

Error 32. At least it is an act of divine belief to believe that I am elect, and justified, and shall be saved.

Contr. Many have been a great scandal or snare to harden the papists by asserting this. But the truth is, it is but a rational conclusion from two premises; the one of which is of divine revelation, and the other of inward experience; and all that is capable of being a controversy to the judicious, is only *de nomine*, whether logically the conclusion be to be

denominated from the more debile of the premises, or from both, by participation, as being both an act of faith, and of reason, *secundum quid*, and of neither *simpliciter*. But it is commonly concluded, that the more debile of the premises must denominate the conclusion: and it is certain *de re*, that the conclusion can be no more certain than it.

Object. But when the Scripture saith, "He that believeth shall be saved;" it is equipollent to this, I John believe, and therefore I shall be saved.

Answ. A gross deceit. That I believe, is no where in the Scripture: if it be, doth the Scripture say, that all men believe, or only some? If some, doth it name them, or notify them by any thing but the marks by which they must find it in themselves?

Object. But he that believeth may be as sure that he believeth, as that the Scripture is true.

Answ. But not that he is sincere, and exceedeth all hypocrites and common believers; at least there are but few that get so full an assurance hereof.

Object. The Spirit witnesseth that we are God's children; and to believe the Spirit, is to believe God.

Answ. The Spirit is oft called in Scripture, the Witness, and Pledge, and Earnest, in the same sense; that is, it is the evidence of our right to Christ and life. "If any man have not his Spirit, he is none of his," Rom. viii. 9. And hereby we know that he dwelleth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us. As the Spirit's miracles were the witness of Christ, (Heb. ii. 3, &c.) objectively, as evidence is called witness. 2. And withal the Spirit by illumination and excitation helpeth us to see itself as our evidence. 3. And to rejoice in this discovery. And thus the Spirit witnesseth our adoption. But none of these are the proper objects of a divine belief. 1. The objective evidence of holiness in us, is the object of our rational self-acquaintance, or conscience only. 2. The illuminating grace by which we see this, is not a new divine testimony, or proper revelation, or word of God; but the same help of grace by which all other divine things are known. And all the Spirit's grace for our understanding of divine revelations are not new objective revelations themselves; requiring a new act of faith for them. A word or proper revelation from God is the object of divine belief; otherwise every illuminating act of the Spirit for our understanding God's word, would be itself a new word, to be believed, and so *in infinitum*.

Error 33. Doubting of the life to come, or of the truth of the gospel, will not stand with saving faith.

Contr. It will not stand with a confirmed faith; but it will with a sincere faith. He that doubteth of the truth of the promise, so far as that he will not venture life and soul, and all his hopes and happiness, temporal and eternal, upon it, hath no true faith; but he that doubteth, but yet so far believeth the gospel, as to take God for his only God and portion, and Christ for his only Saviour, and the Spirit for his Sanctifier, and will cast away life, or all that stand in competition, hath a true and saving faith; as is before proved.

Error 34. That repentance is no condition of pardon or justification; for then it would be equal therein with faith.

Contr. I have elsewhere at large proved the contrary from Scripture. Repentance hath many acts as faith hath. To repent (as it is the change of the mind) of our atheism, idolatry, and not loving God, and obeying him, is the same motion of the soul denominated from the *terminus a quo*, as faith in God, and love to God, is denominated from the *terminus ad quem:* this is repentance towards God. Repenting of our infidelity against Christ, is the same motion of the soul as believing in Christ, only one is denominated from the object turned from, and the other from the object turned to. By which you may see that some repentance is the same with faith in Christ; and some is the same with faith in God; and some is the same with love to God; and some is but the same with the leaving of some particular sin, or turning to some particular fore-neglected duty. And so you may easily resolve the case how far it is the condition of pardon: repentance, as it is a return to the love of God, as he is our God, and end, and all, is made the final condition of further blessings, as necessary in and of itself as the end of faith in Christ; and repentance of infidelity, and faith in Christ, is made the mediate or medicinal condition. As consenting to be friends with your father or king after a rebellion, and consenting to the mediation of a friend to reconcile you, are both conditions, one (the more noble) *de fine*, and the other *de mediis:* or as consenting to be cured, and consenting to take physic. They that will or must live in the darkness of confusion, were best at least hold their tongues there, till they come into distinguishing light.

Error 35. That all other acts of faith in Christ, (as our Lord, or Teacher, or Judge,) or of faith in God, or the Holy Ghost, all confessing sin, and praying for pardon, and repenting and forgiving others, and receiving baptism, &c. are the works which Paul excludeth from justification; and one act of faith only being the justifying instrument, he that looketh to be justified by any of all these, besides that one act, doth look for justification by works, and consequently is fallen from grace.

Contr. This is not only an addition to God's word and covenant, (not to be used by them that judge it unlawful to add a form or ceremony in his worship,) but it is a most dangerous invention to wrack men's consciences, and keep all men under certain desperation. For whilst the world standeth, the subtlest of these inventors of new doctrines will never be able to tell the world, which is that one sole act of faith, by which they are justified, that they may escape looking for a legal justification by the rest: whether it be believing in Christ's divinity, or humanity, or both; or in his divine, or human, or habitual righteousness, or his obedience as a subject, or his sacrifice, or his priesthood offering that sacrifice, or his covenant and promise of pardon and justification, or in God that giveth him and them; or in his resurrection, or in God's present sentential or executive justification; or in his final sentential justification, &c. No man to the end of the world shall know which of these, or any other, is the sole justifying act; and so no man can escape being a legal adversary to grace. Unhappy papists, who by the contrary extreme, have frightened or disputed us into such wild and scandalous inventions. Of this see fully my "Dispute of Justification," against the worthy and excellent Mr. Anthony Burgess.

Error 36. That our own faith is not at all imputed to us for righteousness, but only Christ's righteousness received by it.

Contr. The Scripture no where saith, that Christ or his righteousness, or his obedience, or his satisfaction, is imputed to us; and yet we justly defend it, as is before explained, and as Mr. Bradshaw and Grotius de Satisfact. have explained it. And on the other side, the Scripture often saith, that faith is imputed for righteousness, and shall be so to all that believe in God that raised Christ, Rom. iv. And this these objectors peremptorily deny. But expounding Scripture amiss, is a much cleanlier pretence for error than a flat denial of its truth. And a true exposition is better than either.

The same God who hath given us a Saviour to satisfy legal justice, and to merit our justification against the charge that we are condemnable by the law of works; hath thought meet to convey our title to this Christ and justification, by the instrumentality of a new covenant, testament, or pardoning act; in which (though he absolutely gave many antecedent mercies, yet) he giveth these and other rights, by a conditional gift; that as the reward of glory should have invited man to keep the law of nature and his innocency, so the reward should be a moving means to draw men to believe. So that there is a condition to be performed by ourselves (through grace) before we can have the covenant right to justification. Now when that is performed, Christ then is our only righteousness (as aforesaid) by which we must answer the charge of breaking the first law, and being condemnable by it. But we can lay no claim to this righteousness of Christ, till we first prove that we are ourselves inherently righteous, against the charge of being impenitent unbelievers. This false accusation we must be justified against by our own faith and repentance; that we may be justified by Christ, against the true accusation of sinning against the law, and thereby being condemnable by it. Now as to our legal righteousness, or pro-legal rather, by which this last must be avoided, it is only the merits of Christ, given to us in its fruits, in the new covenant, even the merits of his obedience and sacrifice. But our faith itself is the other righteousness, which must be found in our persons to entitle us to this first: and this being it, and being all (in the sense aforesaid) that is made the condition of our pardon by the new covenant; therefore God is said to impute it itself to us for a righteousness, because that condition maketh it so; and to impute it to us for our righteousness, that is, as all that now by this covenant he requireth to be personally done by us, who had formerly been under a harder condition, even the fulfilling of the law by innocency, or suffering for sin; because he that doth not fulfil nor satisfy, as is said, yet if he believe, hath a right to the justification merited by Christ, who did fulfil and satisfy. This is easy to be understood as undoubted truth by the willing; and the rest will be most contentious where they are most erroneous.

Error 37. That sincere obedience, and all acts of love, repentance, and faith save one, do justify us only before men; and of that speaketh St. James, chap. ii.

Contr. I must refer the reader to other books, in which I have fully confuted this. How can men judge of the acts of repentance, faith, love, &c. which are in the heart? And James plainly speaketh of God's imputing righteousness to Abraham, James ii. 21, 23. And how should men justify Abraham for killing his only son? And how small a matter is justification by man, when we may be saved without it!

2. Sincere obedience to God in Christ, is the condition of the continuance, or not losing our justification here, and the secondary part of the condition of our final sentential and executive justification.

Error 38. That our inherent righteousness before described, hath no place of a condition in our justification in the day of judgment.

Contr. The Scriptures fully confuting this, I have elsewhere cited. All those that say, we shall be judged according to our works, &c. speak against it; for to be judged, is only to be justified or condemned. So Rev. xxii. 14; Matt. xxv. &c.

Error 39. That there is no justification at judgment to be expected, but only a declaration of it.

Contr. The decisive sentence and declaration of the Judge, is the most proper sense or sort of justification, and the perfection of all that went before. If we shall not be then justified, then there is no such thing as justification by sentence; nay, there is no such thing as a day of judgment; or else all men must be condemned. For it is most certain that we must be justified, or condemned, or not judged.

Error 40. That no man ought to believe that the conditional covenant, act, or gift of justification, belongeth to him as a member of the lost world; or as a sinner in Adam; because God hath made no such gift or promise to any but to the elect.

Contr. This is confuted on the by before.

Error 41. That though it be false that the non-elect are elect, and that Christ died for them, yet they are bound to believe it, every man of himself, to prove that they are elect.

Contr. This is confuted on the by before. God bindeth or biddeth no man to believe a lie.

Error 42. That we must believe God's election, and our justification, and the special love of God to us, before we can love him with a special love; because it will not cause in us a special love, to believe only a common love of God, and such as he hath to the wicked and his enemies.

Contr. No man can groundedly believe the special love of God to him, nor his own election or justification, before he hath (yea, before he find in himself) a special love to God. Because he that hath no special love to God, must believe a lie if he believe that he is justified, or that ever God revealed to him that he is elect, or specially beloved of God; and no man hath any evidence or proof at all of his election, and God's special love, till he have this evidence of his special love to God. Till he know this, he cannot know that any other is sincere.

2. They that deny or blaspheme God's common love to fallen man, and his universal pardoning covenant, do their worst to keep men from being moved to the special love of God by his common love; but when they have done their worst, it shall stand as a sure obligation. Is there not reason enough to bind men to love God above all, even as one that yet may be their happiness in his own infinite goodness, and all the revelations of it by Christ, and in his so "loving the world, as to give his only Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." And in his giving a free pardon of all sin to mankind, and offering life eternal to them, so that none but the final refusers shall lose it, and entreating them to accept it, &c. Is not all this sufficient in reason to move men to the love of God, if the Spirit help them to make use of reason, (as he must do, what reasons soever are presented to them,) unless men think that God doth not oblige them by any kindness they can possibly reject? or by any thing which many others do partake of?

Yet here note, that by God's common love to man, I do not mean, any which he hath to reprobates, under the consideration of final despisers of his antecedent love; but of that antecedent love itself, which he hath showed to lost mankind in Christ.

And note also, that I do not deny but that love of God in some men may be true, where their own presumption that God hath elected them, and loved them above others, before they had any proof of it, was an additional motive; but this is man's way, and not God's.

Error 43. That trusting to any thing, save God and Jesus Christ, for our salvation, is sin and damnable.

Contr. Confusion cheateth and choketh men's understanding. In a word, to trust to any thing but

God, and Christ, and the Holy Spirit, for any of that which is the proper part of God, of Christ, of the Spirit, is sin and damnable. But to trust to any thing or person, for that which is but his own part, is but our duty. And he that prayeth, and readeth, and heareth, and endeavoureth, and looketh to be never the better by them, nor trusteth them for their proper part, will be both heartless and formal in his work.

And I have showed before, that the Scripture, the promise, the apostle, the minister, and every christian and honest man, hath a certain trust due to them for that which is their part, even in order to our salvation. I may trust only to the skill of the physician, and yet trust his apothecary, and the boy that carrieth the medicine, for their part.

Error 44. That it is sinful, and contrary to free grace, to look at any thing in ourselves, or our own inherent righteousness, as the evidence of our justification.

Contr. Then no man can know his justification at all. The Spirit of holiness and adoption in ourselves, is our earnest of salvation, and the witness that we are God's children, and the pledge of God's love; as is proved before. This is God's seal, as God knoweth who are his; so he that will know it himself, must depart from iniquity, when he nameth Christ. If God sanctify none but those whom he justifieth, then may the sanctified know that they are justified. Hath God delivered in Scripture so many signs or characters of the justified in vain?

Object. The witness of the Spirit only can assure us.

Answ. You know not what the witness of the Spirit is; or else you would know that it is the Spirit making us holy, and possessing us with a filial love of God, and with a desire to please him, and a dependence on him, &c. which is the witness, even by way of an inherent evidence (and helping us to perceive that evidence, and take comfort in it). As a child-like love, and a pleasing obedience, and dependence, with a likeness to the father, is a witness, that is, an evidence, which is your child.

Error 45. That it is sinful to persuade wicked men to pray for justification, or any grace, or to do any thing for it; seeing their prayers and doings are abominable to God, and cannot please him.

Contr. Then it is sinful to persuade a wicked man from his wickedness: praying and obeying, is departing from wickedness. He that prayeth to be sanctified indeed, is repenting and turning from his sin to God. We never exhort wicked men to pray with the tongue, without the desire of the heart. Desire is the soul of prayer, and words are but the body. We persuade them not to dissemble; but as Peter did Simon, repent and pray for forgiveness, Acts viii. And if we may not exhort them to good desires, (and to excite and express the best desires they have,) we may not exhort them to conversion. "Seek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way," &c. Isa. lv. 6, 10. You see there that praying is a repenting act; and when we exhort them to pray, we exhort them to repent and seek God.

Object. But they have no ability to do it.

Answ. Thus the devil would excuse sinners and accuse God. Thus you may put by all God's commands, and say, God should not have commanded them to repent, believe, love him, obey him, nor love one another, nor forbear their sins; for they have no ability to do it. But they have their natural faculties or powers, and they have common grace; and God's way of giving them special grace, is by meeting them in the use of his appointed means; and not by meeting them in an ale-house, or in sinful courses. (However a soul may be met with in his persecuting, and God may be found of them that sought him not; yet that is not his usual, nor his appointed way.) Can any man of reason dream that it is not the duty of a wicked man to use any means for the obtaining of grace, or to be better; nor to do any thing towards his own recovery and salvation? Nature and Scripture teach men as soon as they see their sin and misery, to say, "What must I do to be saved?" As the repenting Jews, and Paul, and the gaoler did, Acts ii. 37; viii.; xvi.

The prayers of a wicked man as wicked, are abominable; that is, both his wicked prayers, and his praying to quiet and strengthen himself in his wickedness, or praying with the tongue without the heart. The prayers which come from a common faith, and common good desires, are better than none, but have no promise of justification. But the wicked must be exhorted both to this, and more, even to repent, desire, and pray sincerely.

Error 46. It is sinful, and against free grace, to think that any works or actions of our own, are rewardable; or to say, that they are meritorious, though it be nothing but rewardableness that is meant by it.

Cont. The papists have so much abused the word merit, by many dangerous opinions about it, that it is now become more unmeet to be used by us, than it was in ancient times, when the doctors and churches (even Austin himself) did commonly use it. But if nothing be meant by it, but rewardableness, or the relation of a duty to the reward as freely promised by God, (as many papists themselves understand it, and the ancient fathers generally did,) he that will charge a man with error in doctrine for the use of an inconvenient word, is uncharitable and perverse; especially when it is other men's abuse, which hath done most to make it inconvenient. The merit of the cause is a common phrase among all lawyers, when there is commutative meriting intended. I have fully showed in my "Confession," that the Scripture frequently useth the word *worthy*, which is the same or full as much: and a subject may be said to merit protection of his prince, and a scholar to merit praise of his master, and a child to deserve love and respect from his parents, and all this in no respect to commutative justice, wherein the rewarder is supposed to be a gainer at all; but only in governing distributive justice, which giveth every one that which (by gift or any way) is his due. And that every good man, and every good action, deserveth praise, that is, to be esteemed such as it is. And that there is also a comparative merit, and a not-meriting evil: as a believer may be said not to deserve damnation by the covenant of grace, but only by (or according to) the law of nature or works.

But to pass from the word merit, (which I had rather were quite disused, because the danger is greater than the benefit,) the thing signified thus by it, is past all dispute, viz. that whatever duty God hath promised a reward to, that duty or work is rewardable according to the tenor of that promise: and they that deny this, deny God's laws, and government, and judgment, and his covenant of grace, and leave not themselves one promise for faith to rest upon: so certainly would all these persons be damned, if God in mercy did not keep them from digesting their own errors, and bringing them into practice.

Error 47. God is pleased with us only for the righteousness of Christ, and not for any thing in ourselves.

Contr. This is sufficiently answered before. He blasphemeth God who thinketh that he is no better

pleased with holiness than with wickedness, with well doing than with ill doing. They that are in the flesh cannot please God, Rom. viii. 6, 7; but the spiritual and obedient may. Without faith it is impossible to please him, because unbelievers think not that he is a rewarder, and therefore will not seek his reward aright: but they that will please him, must believe that "he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him," Heb. xi. 6. They forget not to do good and distribute, because with such sacrifices God is well pleased, Heb. xiii. And in a word, it is the work of all their lives to labour, that whether living or dying they may be accepted of him, 2 Cor. v. 8, 9; and to be such, and to do those things, as are pleasing in his sight. Nay, I will add, that as the glory of God, that is, the glorious demonstration or appearance of himself in his works, is materially the ultimate end of man; so the pleasing of himself in this his glory shining in his image and works, is the very *apex*, or highest formal notion, of this ultimate end of God and of man, as far as is within our reach.

No man's works please God out of Christ, both because they are unsound and bad in the spring and end, and because their faultiness is not pardoned. But in Christ, the persons and duties of the godly are pleasing to God, because they have his image, and are sincerely good, and because their former sins and present imperfections are forgiven for the sake of Christ (who never reconciled God to wickedness).

Error 48. It is mercenary to work for a reward, and legal to set men on doing for salvation.

Contr. It is legal or foolish to think of working for any reward, by such meritorious works as make the reward to be not of grace, but of debt, Rom. iv. 4. But he that maketh God himself, and his everlasting love, to be his reward, and trusteth in Christ the only Reconciler, as knowing his guilt and enmity by sin; and laboureth for the food which perisheth not, but endureth to everlasting life; and layeth up a treasure in heaven, and maketh himself friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, and layeth up a good foundation for the time to come, laying hold upon eternal life; and striveth to enter in at the strait gate, and fighteth a good fight, and finisheth his course for the crown of righteousness, and suffereth persecution for a reward in heaven, and prayeth in secret that God may reward him, and always aboundeth in the work of the Lord, because his labour is not in vain in the Lord, and endureth to the end that he may be saved, and is faithful to the death, and overcometh, that he may receive the crown of life; this man taketh God's way, and the only way to heaven; and they that thus seek not the reward (being at the use of reason) are never like to have it.

Error 49. It is not lawful for the justified to pray for the pardon of any penalties, but temporal.

Contr. The ground of this is before overthrown.

Error 50. It is not lawful to pray twice for the pardon of the same sin; because it implieth unbelief, as if it were not pardoned already.

Contr. It is a duty to pray oft and continuedly for the pardon of former sins: 1. Because pardon once granted must be continued; and therefore the continuance must be prayed for. If you say, It is certain to be continued, I answer, then it is certain that you will continue to pray for it, and to live a holy life. 2. Because the evils deserved, are such as we are not perfectly delivered from, and are in danger of more daily. And therefore we must pray for daily executive pardon, that is, impunity; and that God will give us more of his Spirit, and save us from the fruit of former sin; because our right to future impunity is given before all the impunity itself. 3. And the complete justification from all past sins, is yet to come at the day of judgment. And all this (besides that some that have pardon know it not) may and must be daily prayed for.

Error 51. The justified must not pray again for the pardon of the sins before conversion.

Contr. What was last said confuteth this.

Error 52. No man at all may pray for pardon, but only for assurance: for the sins of the elect are all pardoned before they were born; and the non-elect have no satisfaction made for their sins, and therefore their pardon is impossible.

Cont. Matt. vi. "Forgive us our trespasses," &c.

These consequences do but show the falsehood of the antecedents.

Error 53. No man can know that he is under the guilt of any sin; because no man can know but that he is elect, and consequently justified already.

Cont. No infidel, or impenitent person, is justified.

Error 54. Christ only is covenanted with by the Father, and he is the only Promiser as for us, and not we for ourselves.

Contr. Christ only hath undertaken to do the work of Christ; but man must undertake, and promise, and covenant, even to Christ himself, that (by the help of his grace) he will do his own part. Or else no man should be baptized. What a baptism and sacramental communion do these men make! He that doth not covenant with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, hath no right to the benefits of God's part of the covenant. And no man (at age) can be saved that doth not both promise and perform.

Error 55. We are not only freed from the condemning sentence of the law, but freed also from its commands.

Contr. We are not under Moses's judaical law, which was proper to their nation, and their proselytes; nor are we under a necessity, or duty, of labouring after perfect obedience in ourselves, as the condition of our justification or salvation; but to renounce all such expectations. Nor will the law of works itself ever justify us, (as some affirm,) as having perfectly fulfilled it by another: but we are justified against its charge, and not by it, by the covenant of grace, and not of works. But perfect obedience to all the law of nature and all the commands of Christ, is still our duty, and sincere obedience is necessary to our salvation. All our duty is not supererogation.

Error 56. When a man doubteth whether he be a believer or penitent, he must believe that Christ repented and believed for him.

Contr. Christ never had sin to repent of, and it is not proper to say one repenteth of another's sin: Christ believed his Father; but had no use for that faith in a Mediator which we must have. He that repenteth not and believeth not himself, shall be damned; therefore you may see how Christ repented and believed for us.

Error 57. A man that trusteth to be justified at the day of judgment, against the charge of unbelief, impenitency, and hypocrisy, by his own faith, repentance, and sincerity, as his particular subordinate righteousness, and not by Christ's righteousness imputed only, sinneth against free grace.

Contr. Christ's righteousness is imputed or given to none, nor shall justify any that are true unbelievers, impenitent or hypocrites; therefore if any such person trust to be justified by Christ, he deceiveth him. If the charge be, Thou art an infidel or impenitent; it is frivolous to say, But Christ obeyed, suffered, or believed, or repented for me. But he

that will then be justified against that charge must say, and say truly, I truly believed, repented, and obeyed.

Error 58. There is no use for a justification against any such false accusation before God, who knoweth all men's hearts.

Contr. 1. You might as well say, there is no use of judging men according to what they have done, when God knoweth what they have done already. 2. We are to be justified by God before men and angels, that Christ may be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe, because the gospel was believed by them, 2 Thess. i. 10, 11. And not only the mouth of iniquity may be stopped, and open false accusations confuted; but that the prejudices and heart-slanders of the wicked may be refelled, and our righteousness be brought forth as the light, and our judgment as the noon-day: that all the false judgments and reproaches of the wicked against the just may be confounded; and they may answer for all their ungodly sayings, and hard speeches (as Enoch prophesied) against the godly; and that they that speak evil of us, because we run not with them to all excess of riot, may "give an account to him who is ready to judge the quick and the dead," 1 Pet. iv. 4, 5. And that all may be set straight which men made crooked, and hidden things be all brought to light.

3. And we must be better acquainted with the ingenuity of the great accuser of the brethren, before we can be sure that he who belied God to man, will not belie man to God; seeing he is the father of lies, and did so by Job, &c.

4. But we must not think of the day of judgment as a day of talk between God, and Satan, and man; but as a day of DECISIVE LIGHT or manifestation. And so the case is out of doubt. The faith, repentance, and sincerity of the just will be their manifest, against all former or latter, real or virtual, calumnies of men or devils to the contrary.

5. But above all let it be marked, that nothing else can be matter of controversy to be decided. That Christ hath obeyed, and suffered, and satisfied for believers' sins, and made a testament or covenant to pardon all true believers, will be known to the accuser, and past all doubt. The day of judgment is not to try Christ's obedience and sufferings, nor to decide the case whether he fulfilled the law, and satisfied for sin, or made a pardoning covenant to believers: but whether we have part in him or not, and so are to be justified by the gospel covenant, through his merits against the legal covenant; and whether we have fulfilled the conditions of the pardoning covenant or not. This is all that can then be made a controversy; this is the secrets of men's heart, and case that must be opened before the world by God. However, we doubt not but the glory of all will redound to Christ, whose merits are unquestioned.

6. Note also, that Christ will be the Judge on supposition of his merits, and not the party to be tried and judged.

7. Note also, that we are to be judged by the new covenant or law of liberty, and therefore it is the condition of that covenant (as made with us) which is to be inquired after.

8. Note also, that Christ himself in Matt. xxv. (and every where,) when he describeth the day of judgment, doth not at all speak of any decision of such a controversy, as whether he was the Lamb of God, who took away the sin of the world? or whether he did his part or not? but only whether men did their parts or not, and showed the sincerity of their love to God and him, by venturing all for him, and owning him in his servants, to their cost and hazard. And the fruit of Christ's part is only mentioned as a presupposed thing; "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you.—For I was hungry," &c. The preparation (in God's degree and Christ's merits) is unquestioned, and so is the donation to all true believers; therefore it is the case of their title to this gift, and of the condition or evidence of their title, which is here tried and decided.

Lastly, Note that upon the decision, in respect of both together, (Christ's merits and covenant as supposed, and their own true faith and love as manifested decisively,) they are called righteous, Matt. xxv. 46, "The righteous into life eternal."

So much to take the stumblingblocks out of the way of faith, about free grace and justification, which the weakness of many well-meaning erroneous men hath laid there of late times, to the great danger or impediment of weak believers.

"Take up the stumblingblock out of the way of my people," Isa. lvii. 14.

"Thou shalt not put a stumblingblock before the blind, but shalt fear thy God," Levit. xix. 14.

CHAPTER IX.

HOW TO LIVE BY FAITH, IN ORDER TO THE EXERCISE OF OTHER GRACES AND DUTIES OF SANCTIFICATION, AND OBEDIENCE TO GOD.

And first of the Doctrinal Directions.

We cannot by faith promote sanctification, unless we understand the nature and reasons of sanctification. This therefore must be our first endeavour.

The word *sanctified* doth signify that which is separated to God from common uses. And this separation is either by God himself (as, he hath sanctified the Lord's day, &c.) or by man's dedication: either of persons to a holy office; and so the ministers of Christ are sanctified in their ordination (which is a consecration) and their self-dedication to God: and it is high sacrilege in themselves, or any other, that shall alienate them unjustly from their sacred calling and work: or of things to holy uses (as places and utensils may be sanctified). Or it may be a dedication of persons to a holy state, relation, and use; as is that of every christian in his baptism. And this is either an external dedication, and so all the baptized are sanctified and holy; or an internal dedication, which if it be sincere, it is both actual and habitual, when we both give up ourselves to God in covenant, and are also disposed and inclined to him; and our hearts are set upon him; yea, and the life also consisteth of the exercise of this disposition, and performance of this covenant. This is the sanctification which here I speak of. And so much for the name.

The doctrinal propositions necessary to be understood about it are these, (more largely and plainly laid down in my "Confession," chap. 3.)

Prop. 1. So much of the appearance or image of God as there is upon any creature, so much it is good and amiable to God and man.

Object. God loveth us from eternity, and when we were his enemies; not because we were good, but to make us better than we were.

Answ. God's love (and all love) consisteth formal-

ly in complacency. God hath no complacency in any thing but in good; or according to the measure of its goodness. From eternity God foreseeing the good which would be in us, loved us as good in *esse cognito;* and not as actually good, when we were not. When we were his enemies, he had a double love to us (or complaeency): the one was for that natural good which remained in us as we were men, and repairable, and capable of being made saints. The other was for that foreseen good as in *esse cognito*, which he purposed in time to come to put upon us. This complacency exceeded not at all the good which was the object of it; but with it was joined a will and purpose to give us grace and glory hereafter; and thence it is called, a love of benevolence: not but that complacency is the true notion of love; and benevolence, or a purpose to give benefits, is but the fruit of it. But if any will needs call the benevolence alone by the name of love, we deny not in that sense that God loveth Saul, a persecutor, as well as Paul, an apostle; in that his purpose to do him good is the same.

Object. God loveth us in Christ, and for his righteousness, and not only for our own inherent holiness.

Answ. 1. The benevolence of God is exercised towards us in and by Christ; and the fruits of his love are Christ himself, and the mercies given us with Christ, and by Christ. And our pardon, and justification, and adoption, and acceptance is by his meritorious righteousness: and it is by him that we are possessed with God's Spirit, and renewed according to his image, in wisdom, and righteousness, and holiness. And all this relative and inherent mercy we have as in Christ, related to him, without whom we have nothing. And thus it is that we are accepted and beloved in him, and for his righteousness. But Christ did not die or merit to change God's nature, and make him more indifferent in his love to the holy and the unholy, or equally to the more holy and to the less holy. But his complacency is still in no man further than he is made truly amiable in his real holiness, and his relation to Christ, and to the Father. (The doctrine of imputation is opened before.) "The Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed," &c. John xvi. 27. "He that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father," John xiv. 21.——As God loved us with the love of benevolence, and so much complacence as is before described, before we loved him, (1 John iv. 10; Eph. ii. 4,) so he now loveth us complacentially for his image upon us, and so much of his grace as is found in us; and also for our relation to his Son, and to himself, which we stand in by this grace: but as he loveth not Saul, a persecutor, under the notion of a fulfiller of his law in Christ; so neither doth he love David in his sin, under the notion of one that is without sin and perfect, as having fulfilled the law in Christ: but so loveth him in Christ, as to pardon his sin, and make him more lovely in himself, by creating a clean heart, and renewing a right spirit within him, for the sake of the satisfaction and merits of Christ.

Prop. 2. Holiness is God's image upon us, and that which is our primitive amiableness, Col. iii. 10.

Prop. 3. The loss of holiness, was the loss of our amiableness, and our state of enmity to God.

Prop. 4. Holiness consisteth in, 1. Our resignation of ourselves to God as our owner, and submission to his providence: 2. And our subjection to God as our ruler; and obedience to his teaching and his laws: 3. And in thankfulness and love to God as our chief good, efficiently and finally.

Prop. 5. Love is that final perfective act, which implieth and comprehendeth all the rest; and so is the fulfilling of the law, and the true state of sanctification; Rom. xiii. 10; Matt. xxii. 37; Mark xii. 33; 1 John vii. 16.

Prop. 6. Heaven itself, as it is our ultimate end and perfection, is but our perfect love to God maintained by perfect vision of him, with the perfect reception of his love to us.

Prop. 7. Therefore it was Christ's great business in the world to destroy the works of the devil, and to bring us to this perfect love of God.

Prop. 8. Accordingly the greatest use of faith in Christ is to subserve and kindle our love to God.

Prop. 9. This it doth two special ways: 1. By procuring the pardon of sin, which forfeited the grace of the Spirit; that so the Spirit may kindle the love of God in us: 2. By actual beholding the love of God, which shineth to us most gloriously in Christ, by which our love must be excited, as the most suitable and effectual means, John iii. 1; iv. 10.

Prop. 10. Our whole religion, therefore, consisteth of two parts: 1. Primitive holiness, restored and perfected; 2. The restoring and perfecting means: or, 1. Love to God, the final and more excellent part; 2. Faith in Christ, the mediate part: faith causing love, and love caused by faith; 1 Cor. xii. 31; xiii.; Rom. viii. 35; Eph. vi. 23; 1 Tim. i. 5; 2 Thess. iii. 5; 1 Cor. ii. 9; viii. 3; Rom. viii. 28; James i. 12; ii. 5; 1 Pet. i. 8.

Prop. 11. Repentance towards God, is the soul's return to God in love; and regeneration by the Spirit, is the Spirit's begetting us to the image and nature of God our heavenly Father, in a heavenly love to him; so that the Holy Ghost is given us to work in us a love to God, which is our sanctification; Rom. v. 5; Titus iii. 4—7; 2 Cor. xiii. 14; 1 John iv. 16.

Prop. 12. When sanctification is mentioned as a gift consequent to faith, it is the love of God as our Father in Christ, and the Spirit of love, that is principally meant by that sanctification.

Prop. 13. The pardon of sin consisteth more in forgiving the *pœnam damni*, the forfeiture and loss of love, and the spirit of love, than in remitting any corporal pain of sense. And the restoring of love, and the spirit of love, and the perfecting hereof in heaven, is the most eminent part of our executive pardon, justification, and adoption. Thus far sanctification is pardon itself; Rom. viii. 15—17; Gal. iv. 6; 1 Cor. vi. 10, 11; Titus iii. 6, 7; ii. 13, 14; Rom. vi.; viii. 4, 10, 13.

Prop. 14. The pardon of the pain of sense, is given us as a means to the executive pardon of the pain of loss, that is, to put us in a capacity, with doubled obligations and advantages, to love God, Luke vii. 47.

Prop. 15. Sanctification therefore being better than all other pardon of sin, as being its end; we must value it more, and must make it our first desire to be as holy as may be, that we may need as little forgiveness as may be, and in the second place only desire the pardon of that which we had rather not have committed; and not make pardon our chief desire; Rom. vi. vii. viii. throughout; Gal. v. 17, to the end.

Prop. 16. Holiness is the true morality; and they that prefer the preaching and practice of faith in Christ, before the preaching and practice of holiness, and slight this as mere morality, do prefer the means before the end, and their physic before their health: and they that preach or think to practise holiness, without faith in Christ, do dream of a cure without the only Physician of souls. And they that preach up morality as consisting in mere justice, charity to men, and temperance, without the love of God in Christ, do take a branch, cut off and withered, for the tree.

Some ignorant sectaries cry down all preaching, as mere morality, which doth not frequently toss the name of Christ, and free grace.

And some ungodly preachers, who never felt the work of faith or love to God in their own souls, for want of holy experience, savour not, and understand not, holy preaching; and therefore spend almost all their time in declaiming against some particular vices, and speaking what they have learned of some virtues of sobriety, justice, or mercy. And when they have done, cover over their ungodly, unbelieving course, by reproaching the weaknesses of the former sort, who cry down preaching mere morality. But let such know, that those ministers and christians, who justly lament their lifeless kind of preaching, do mean by morality, that which you commonly call ethics in the schools, which leaveth out not only faith in Christ, but the love of God, and the sanctification of the Spirit, and the heavenly glory. And they do not cry down true morality, but these dead branches of it, which are all your morality. It is not morality itself inclusively that they blame, but mere morality, that is, so much only as Aristotle's ethics teach, as exclusive to the christian faith and love; and do you think with any wise men (or with your own consciences) long to find it a cloak to your infidel or unholy hearts and doctrine, to mistake them that blame you, or to take advantage of the ignorance of others? "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God the Father, and the communion of the Holy Ghost," do shut up your liturgy by way of benediction; but it is almost all shut out of your sermons, unless a few heartless, customary passages: and when there is nothing less in your preaching, than that which is the substance of your baptismal covenant and christianity, and your customary benediction, you do but tell the people what kind of christianity you have, and what benediction; that is, that you are neither truly christians, nor blessed.

True morality, or the christian ethics, is the love of God and man, stirred up by the Spirit of Christ, through faith; and exercised in works of piety, justice, charity, and temperance, in order to the attainment of everlasting happiness, in the perfect vision and fruition of God. And none but ignorant or brain-sick sectaries will be offended for the preaching of any of this morality. "Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue——and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone," Luke xi. 42.

CHAPTER X.

THE PRACTICAL DIRECTIONS TO LIVE BY FAITH, A LIFE OF HOLINESS OR LOVE.

Direct. 1. Take Jesus Christ as a Teacher sent from heaven; the best and surest revealer of God and his will unto mankind.

All the books of philosophers are sapless and empty, in comparison of the teaching of Jesus Christ; they are but inquiries into the nature of the creatures, and the lowest things, most impertinent to our happiness or duty; or if they rise up to God, it is but with dark and unpractical conjectures, for the most part of them; and the rest do but grope and fumble in obscurity. And their learning is mostly but useless speculations, and striving about words and sciences, falsely so called, which little tend to godly edifying. It is Christ who is made wisdom to us, as being himself the Wisdom of God. If you knew but where to hear an angel, you would all prefer him before Aristotle, or Plato, or Cartesius, or Gassendus; how much more the Son himself! He is the true light, to lighten every man that will not serve the prince of darkness. Christians were first called Christ's disciples; and therefore to learn of him the true knowledge of God, is the work of every true believer; John xvii. 3; Acts iii. 23; John viii. 43, 47; x. 3, 27; xii. 47; xiv. 24; Matt. xvii. 5.

Direct. 2. Remember that Christ's way of teaching is,—1. By his word; 2. His ministers; 3. And his Spirit conjunct; and the place for his disciples is in his church.

1. His gospel written is his book which must be taught us. 2. His ministers' office is to teach it us. 3. His Spirit is inwardly to illuminate us that we may understand it. And he that will despise or neglect either the Scripture ministry or Spirit, is never like to learn of Christ.

Direct. 3. Look on the Lord Jesus, and the work of man's redemption by him, as the great designed revelation of the Father's love and goodness; even as the fabric of the world is set up to be the glass or revelation (eminently) of his greatness.

Therefore as you choose your book for the sake of the science or subject which you would learn; so let this be the designed, studied, constant use which you make of Christ, to see and admire in him the Father's love. When you read your grammar, if one ask you why? you will say it is to learn the language which it teacheth; and he that readeth law-books, or philosophy, or medicine, it is to learn law, philosophy, or physic; so whenever you read the gospel, meditate on Christ, or hear his word: if you are asked, why you do it? be able to say, I do it to learn the love of God, which is no where else in the world to be learned so well. No wonder if hypocrites have learned to mortify Scripture, sermons, prayers, and all other means of grace; yea, all the world which should teach them God; and to learn the letters and not the sense: but it is most pitiful that they should thus mortify Christ himself to them; and should gaze on the glass, and never take much notice of the face even of the love of God which he is set up to declare.

Direct. 4. Therefore congest all the great discoveries of this love, and set them all together in order; and make them your daily study, and abhor all doctrines or suggestions from men or devils, which tend to disgrace, diminish, or hide this revealed love of God in Christ.

Think of the grand design itself; the reconciling and saving of lost mankind: think of the gracious nature of Christ; of his wonderful condescension in his incarnation; in his life and doctrine; in his sufferings and death; in his miracles and gifts: think of his merciful covenant and promises; of all his benefits given to his church; and all the privileges of his saints; of pardon and peace; of his Spirit of holiness; of preservation and provision; of resurrection and justification; and of the life of glory which we shall live for ever. And if the faith which looketh on all these cannot yet warm your hearts with love, nor engage them in thankful obedience to your Redeemer, certainly it is no true and lively faith.

But you must not think narrowly and seldom of these mercies; nor hearken to the devil or the doctrine of any mistaken teachers, that would represent God's love as veiled or eclipsed, or show you nothing but wrath and flames. That which Christ principally came to reveal, the devil principally

striveth to conceal, even the love of God to sinners; that so that which Christ principally came to work in us, the devil might principally labour to destroy; and that is, our love to him that hath so loved us.

Direct. 5. Take heed of all the antinomian doctrines before recited, which, to extol the empty name and image of free grace, do destroy the true principles and motives of holiness and obedience.

Direct. 6. Exercise your faith upon all the holy Scriptures, precepts, promises, and threatenings, and not on one of them alone. For when God hath appointed all conjunctly for this work, you are unlike to have his blessing, or the effect, if you will lay by most of his remedies.

Direct. 7. Take not that for holiness and good works, which is no such thing; but either man's inventions, or some common gifts of God.

It greatly deludeth the world, to take up a wrong description or character of holiness in their minds. As, 1. The papists take it for holiness, to be very observant in their adoration of the supposed transubstantiated hosts; to use their relics, pilgrimages, crossings, prayers to saints and angels, anointings, candles, images, observation of meats and days, penance, auricular confession, praying by numbers and hours on their beds, &c.; they think their idle ceremonies are holiness, and that their hurtful austerities, and self-afflictings, (by rising in the night, when they might pray as long before they go to bed, and by whipping themselves,) to be very meritorious parts of religion; and their vows of renouncing marriage and propriety, and of absolute obedience, to be a state of perfection.

2. Others think that holiness consisteth much in being rebaptized, and in censuring the parish churches and ministers as null, and in withdrawing from their communion; and in avoiding forms of prayer, &c.

3. And others (or the same) think that more of it consisteth in the gifts of utterance, in praying, and preaching, than indeed it doth; and that those only are godly, that can pray without book, (in their families, or at other times,) and that are most in private meetings; and none but they.

4. And some think that the greatest parts of godliness, are the spirit of bondage to fear; and the shedding of tears for sin; or finding that they were under terror, before they had any spiritual peace and comfort; or being able to tell at what sermon, or time, or in what order, and by what means they were converted.

It is of exceeding great consequence, to have a right apprehension of the nature of holiness, and to escape all false conceits thereof. But I shall not now stand further to describe it, because I have done it in many books, especially in my "Reasons of the Christian Religion," and in my "A Saint or a Brute," and in a treatise only of the subject, called "The Character of a Sound Christian."

Direct. 8. Let all God's attributes be orderly and deeply printed in your minds; (as I have directed in my book called "The Divine Life;") for it is that which must most immediately form his image on you. To know God in Christ is life eternal, John xvii. 3.

Direct. 9. Never separate reward from duty, but in every religious or obedient action, still see it as connext with heaven. The means is no means but for the end; and must never be used but with special respect unto the end. Remember in reading, hearing, praying, meditating, in the duties of your callings and relations, and in all acts of charity and obedience, that all this is for heaven. It will make you mend your pace, if you think believingly whither you are going, Heb. xi.

Direct. 10. Yet watch most carefully against all proud, self-esteeming thoughts of proper merit as obliging God; or as if you were better than indeed you are. For pride is the most pernicious vermin that can breed in gifts or in good works. And the better you are indeed, the more humble you will be, and apt to think others better than yourself.

Direct. 11. So also in every temptation to sin, let faith see heaven open, and take the temptation in its proper sense, q. d. [Take this pleasure instead of God: sell thy part in heaven for this preferment or commodity: cast away thy soul for this sensual delight.] This is the true meaning of every temptation to sin, and only faith can understand it. The devil easily prevaileth, when heaven is forgotten and out of sight; and pleasure, commodity, credit, and preferment, seem a great matter, and can do much, till heaven be set in the balance against them; and then they are nothing, and can do nothing; Phil. iii. 7—9; Heb. xii. 1—3; 2 Cor. iv. 16, 17.

Direct. 12. Let faith also see God always present. Men dare do any thing when they think they are behind his back; even truants and eye-servants will do well under the master's eye. Faith seeing him that is invisible (Heb. xi.) is it that sanctifieth heart and life. As the attributes of God are the seal which must make his image on us; so the apprehension of his presence setteth them on, and keepeth our faculties awake.

Direct. 13. Be sure that faith makes God's acceptance your full reward, and set you above the opinion of man.

Not in self-conceitedness, and pride of your self-sufficiency, to set light by the judgment of other men (that is a heinous sin of itself, and doubled when it is done upon pretence of living upon God alone). But that really you live so much to God alone, as that all men seem as nothing to you; and their opinion of you, as a blast of wind, in regard of any felicity of your own, which might be placed in their love or praise: though as a means to God's service, and their own good, you must please all men to their edification, and become all things to all men, to win them to God; Gal. i. 10, 11; Rom. xv. 1, 2; Prov. xi. 30; 1 Cor. ix. 22; x. 33. Yea, and study to please your governors as your duty, Titus ii. 9. But as man-pleasing is the hypocrite's work and wages; so must the pleasing of God be ours, though all the world should be displeased; Matt. vi. 1—3, 5, 6, &c.; 2 Tim. ii. 4; 1 Cor. vii. 32; 1 Thess. iv. 1; 2 Cor. v. 8, 9; 1 Thess. ii. 4; 1 John iii. 22.

Direct. 14. Let the constant work of faith be, to take you off from the life of sense, by mortifying all the concupiscence of the flesh, and overpowering all the objects of sense.

The nearness of things sensible, and the violence and unreasonableness of the senses and appetite, do necessitate faith to be a conflicting grace. Its use is to illuminate, elevate, and corroborate reason, and help it to maintain its authority and government. The life of a believer is but a conquering warfare between faith and sense, and between things unseen and the things that are seen. Therefore it is said, that they that are in the flesh cannot please God; because the flesh being the predominant principle in them, they most savour and mind the things of the flesh; and therefore they can do more with them, than the things of the Spirit can do, when both are set before them, Rom. viii. 5—8.

Direct. 15. Let faith set the example, first of Christ, and next of his holiest servants, still before you.

He that purposely lived among men in flesh, a life of holiness and patience, and contempt of the world, to be a pattern or example to us, doth expect that it be the daily work of faith to imitate him; and therefore that we have this copy still before our eyes. It will help us when we are sluggish, and sit down in low and common things, to see more noble things before us. It will help us when we are in doubt of the way of our duty; and when we are apt to favour our corruptions: it will guide our minds, and quicken our desires, with a holy ambition and covetousness to be more holy: it will serve us to answer all that the world or flesh can say, from the contrary examples of sinning men. If any tell us what great men or learned men think, or say, or do, against religion, and for a sinful life; it is enough, if faith do but tell us presently, what Christ, and his apostles, and saints, and martyrs, have thought, and said, and done to the contrary; Matt. xi. 28, 29; 1 Pet. ii. 21; John xiii. 15; Phil. iii. 17; 2 Thess. iii. 9; 1 Tim. iv. 12; Eph. v. 1; Heb. vi. 12; 1 Thess. i. 6; ii. 14.

Direct. 16. Let your faith set all graces on work in their proper order and proportion; and carry on the work of holiness and obedience in harmony; and not set one part against another, nor look at one while you forget or neglect another.

Every grace and duty is to be a help to all the rest; and the want or neglect of any one, is a hinderance to all: as the want of one wheel or smaller particle in a clock or watch, will make all stand still, or go out of order. The new creature consisteth of all due parts, as the body doth of all its members. The soul is as a musical instrument, which must neither want one string, nor have one out of tune, nor neglected, without spoiling all the melody. A fragment of the most excellent work, or one member of the comeliest body cut off, is not beautiful: the beauty of a holy soul and life, is not only in the quality of each grace and duty, but much in the proportion, feature, and harmony of all. Therefore every part hath its proper armour, Eph. vi. 11—14. And the whole armour of God must be put on; because all fulness dwelleth in Christ; we are complete in him, as being sufficient to communicate every grace. Epaphras laboured always fervently in prayers for the Colossians, that they might stand perfect and complete in all the will of God, Col. iv. 12. "Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing," James i. 4. We oft comfort ourselves, that though we want the perfection of degrees, yet we have the perfection of parts, or of integrity. But many are fain to prove this only by inferring, that he that hath one grace, hath all; but as to the discerning and orderly use of all, they are yet to seek.

CHAPTER XI.

OF THE ORDER OF GRACES AND DUTIES.

Because I find not this insisted on in any writers for the people's instruction, as it ought, I will not pass over so needful a point without some further advertisement about it. I will therefore show you, 1. What is the completeness and the harmony to be desired: 2. What are our contrary defects and distempers: 3. What are the causes of them, and what must be the cure: 4. Some useful inferences hence arising.

I. He that will be complete and entire, must have all these graces and duties following.

1. A solid and clear understanding of all the great, the needful, and practical matters of the sacred Scriptures, 2 Tim. iii. 16. (And if he have the understanding of the Scripture languages, and the customs of those times, and other such helps, his understanding of the Scripture will be the more complete, Acts xxvi. 3. If he have not, he must make use of other men's.)

2. A settled, well-grounded belief of all God's supernatural revelations (as well as the knowledge of natural verities).

3. Experience to make this knowledge and belief to be satisfactory, powerful, and firm. Especially the experience of the Spirit's effectual operations in ourselves, by the means of this word, Rom. v. 4; viii. 9; Gal. iv. 6.

4. The historical knowledge of the Scripture matters of fact, and how God in all ages (since Scripture times) hath fulfilled his word, both promises and threatenings, and what Christ and Satan, grace and sin, have been doing in the world. Therefore the Scripture is written so much by way of history; and therefore the Jews were so often charged to tell the history of God's works to their children; 1 Cor. x. 1, 2, 6, 7, 11; Exod. xii. 29; Deut. xxvi. 22; Josh. iv. 6, 21, 22; xxii. 24, 27. Therefore the writing of church history is the duty of all ages, because God's works are to be known, as well as his word: and as it is your forefathers' duty to write it, it is the children's duty to learn it (or else the writing it would be vain). He that knoweth not what state the church and world is in, and hath been in, in former ages, and what God hath been doing in the world, and how error and sin have been resisting him, and with what success, doth want much to the completing of his knowledge.

5. And he must have prudence to discern particular cases, and to consider of all circumstances, and to compare things with things, that he may discern his duty, and the seasons and manner of it; and may know among inconsistent seeming duties, which is to be preferred; and when and what circumstances or accidents do make any thing a duty, which else would be no duty or a sin; and what accidents make that a sin which without them would be a duty. This is the knowledge which must make a christian entire or complete.

2. And in his will there must be, 1. A full resignation and submission to the will of God his owner; and a full subjection and obedience to the will of God his governor; yielding readily, and constantly, and resolutely to the commands of God, as the scholar obeyeth his master, and as the second wheel in the clock is moved by the first: and a close adhering to God as his chief good, by a thankful reception of his benefits; and a desirous seeking to enjoy, and glorify him, and please his will: in a word, loving him as God, and taking our chiefest complacency in pleasing him; in loving him, and being loved of him.

2. And in the same will there must be a well-regulated love, to all God's works, according as he is manifested or glorified in them: to the humanity of our Redeemer; to the glory of heaven, as it is a created thing; to the blessed angels, and perfected spirits of the just; to the Scripture, to the church on earth, to the saints, the pastors, the rulers, the holy ordinances, to all mankind, even to our enemies; to ourselves, our souls, our bodies, our relations, our estates, and mercies of every rank.

3. And herewithal must be a hatred of every sin in ourselves and others: of former sin and present

corruption, with a penitential displacence and grief; and of possible sin, with a vigilancy and resistance to avoid it.

4. And in the affections there must be a vivacity and sober fervency, answering to all these motions of the will; in love, delight, desire, hope, hatred, sorrow, aversation, and anger; the complexion of all which is godly zeal.

5. In the vital and executive power of the soul, there must be a holy activity, promptitude, and fortitude, to be up and doing, and to set the sluggish faculties on work; and to bring all knowledge and volitions into practice, and to assault and conquer enemies and difficulties. There must be the Spirit of power, (though I know that word did chiefly then denote the Spirit of miracles, yet not only,) and of love, and of a sound mind.

6. In the outward members there must be by use a habit of ready, obedient execution of the soul's commands. As in the tongue a readiness to pray, and praise God, and declare his word, and edify others, and so in the rest.

7. In the senses and appetites, there must by use be a habit of yielding obedience to reason; that the senses do not rebel and rage, and bear down the commands of the mind and will.

8. Lastly, In the imagination there must be a clearness or purity from filthiness, malice, covetousness, pride, and vanity; and there must be the impressions of things that are good and useful; and a ready obedience to the superior faculties, that it may be the instrument of holiness, and not the shop of temptations and sin, nor a wild, unruly, disordered thing.

And the harmony of all these must be as well observed as the matter: as,

1. There must be a just order among them: every duty must keep its proper place and season.

2. There must be a just proportion and degree: some graces must not wither, whilst others alone are cherished; nor some duties take up all our heart and time, whilst others are almost laid by.

3. There must be a just activity and exercise of every grace.

4. And a just conjunction and respect to one another, that every one be used so as to be a help to all the rest.

1. The order—1. Of intellectual graces, and duties, must be this. 1. In order of time, the things which are sensible are known before the things which are beyond our sight, and other senses.

2. Beyond these the first thing known both for certainty and for excellency, is, that there is a God.

3. This God is to be known as one being in his three essential principles, vital power, intellect, and will.

4. And these as in their essential perfections, omnipotency, wisdom, and goodness (or love).

5. And also in his perfections called modal and negative, &c. (as immensity, eternity, independency, immutability, &c.)

6. God must be next known in his three personalities; as the Father, the Word or Son, and the Spirit.

7. And these in their three causalities; efficient, dirigent, and final.

8. And in their three great works, creation, redemption, sanctification (or perfection); producing nature, grace, and glory, or our persons, medicine, and health.

9. And God who created the world, is thereupon to be known in his relations to it; as our Creator in unity, and as our Owner, Ruler, and Chief Good (efficient, dirigent, and final) in a trinity of relations. You must know how the infinite vital power of the Father created all things by the infinite wisdom of the Word or Son, and by the infinite goodness and love of the Holy Spirit. (As the Son redeemed us as the Eternal Wisdom, and Word incarnate, sent by the eternal vital power of the Father, to reveal and communicate the eternal love in the Holy Ghost; and as the Holy Ghost doth sanctify and perfect us as proceeding and sent from the power of the Father, and the wisdom of the Son, to shed abroad the love of God upon our hearts, &c.)

10. Next to the knowledge of God as Creator, is to be considered the world which he created, and especially the intellectual creatures; angels, or heavenly spirits, and men. Man is to be known in his person or constitution first, and afterward in his appointed course, and in his end and perfection.

11. In his constitution is to be considered, 1. His being or essential parts: 2. His rectitude or qualities: 3. His relations, 1. To his Creator; and, 2. To his fellow-creatures.

12. His essential parts are his soul and body: his soul is to be known in the unity of its essence, and trinity of essential faculties (which is its natural image of God). Its essence is a living spirit: its essential faculties are, 1. A vital activity, or power: 2. An understanding: 3. A will.

13. His rectitude, which is God's moral image on him, consisteth, 1. In the promptitude and fortitude of his active power: 2. In the wisdom of his understanding: 3. In the moral goodness of his will, which is its inclination to its end, and readiness for its duty.

14. Being created such a creature, by a mere resultancy from his nature, and his Creator, he is related to him as his creature; and in that unity is the subsequent trinity of relations: 1. As we are God's propriety, or his own: 2. His subjects: 3. His beneficiaries and lovers: all comprised in the one title of his children. And at once with these relations of man to God, it is that God is as before related to man, as his Creator, and as his Owner, Ruler, and Chief Good.

15. Man is also related to his fellow-creatures below him, 1. As their owner, 2. Their ruler, 3. Their end, under God: which is God's dominative or honorary image upon man, and is called commonly our dominion over the creatures: so that by mere creation, and the nature of the creatures, there is constituted a state of communion between God and man, which is, 1. A dominion, 2. A kingdom, 3. A family or paternity. And the whole is sometimes called by one of these names, and sometimes by the other, still implying the rest.

16. God's kingdom being thus constituted, his attributes appropriate to these his relations follow: 1. His absoluteness as our Owner: 2. His holiness, truth, and justice as our Ruler: 3. And his kindness, benignity, and mercy as our Father or Benefactor.

17. And then the works of God as in these three relations follow; which are, 1. To dispose of us at his pleasure as our Owner: 2. To govern us as our King: 3. To love us, and do us good, and make us perfectly happy, as our Benefactor, and our End.

18. And here more particularly is to be considered, 1. How God disposed of Adam when he had newmade him: 2. How he began his government of him: and, 3. What benefits he gave him, and what he further offered or promised him.

19. And as to the second, we must, 1. Consider the antecedent part of God's government, which is legislation, and then (hereafter) the consequent part; which is, 1. Judgment, 2. Execution. And God's legislation is, 1. By making our natures such as, compared with objects, duty shall result from this nature so related: 2. Or else by precept or revelation from himself, besides our natures. 1. The law of

nature is fundamental and radical in our foresaid relations to God themselves, in which it is made our natural duty, 1. To submit ourselves wholly to God, and his disposal, as his own: 2. To obey his commands: 3. And to receive his mercies, and thankfully to return them, and to love him. But though (as God's essential principles, and his foresaid relations, are admirably conjunct in their operations *ad extra;* so) our relative obligations are conjunct, yet are they so far distinguishable, that we may say, that these which conjunctly make our moral duty, yet are not all the results of our relation to a governor, as such; but the second only; and therefore that only is to be called the radical law in the strict sense, the other two being the moral results of our rectitude. The duty of subjection and obedience in general, arising from our natures related to our Creator, is the radical governing law of God in us. But yet the same submission, and gratitude, and love, which are primarily our duty from their proper foundations, are secondarily made also the matter of our subjective duty, because they are also commanded of God. 2. The particular laws of nature are, 1. Of our particular duties to God; or of piety: 2. Or of our duties to ourselves and others: 1. Acts of justice, 2. And of charity. These laws of nature are, 1. Unalterable; and that is, where the nature of our persons, and of the objects, which are the foundations of them, are unalterable, or still the same: 2. Or mutable, when the nature of the things which are its foundation is mutable. As it is the immutable law of immutable nature, that we love God as God, and that we do all the good we can, &c. because the foundation of it is immutable: but, e. g. the law against incest was mutable in nature; for nature bound Adam's children to marry eaeh other; and nature bindeth us since (ordinarily) to the contrary: 2. The revealed law to Adam was superinduced. The parts of God's law must also here be considered. 1. The introductive, teaching part, (for God's teaching us, is part of his ruling us,) and that is, doctrines, history, and prophecy. 2. The imperative part, commands to do, and not to do. 3. And the sanctions or motive parts in law and execution, which are, 1. Promises of beneficial rewards; 2. Threatenings of hurtful penalties.

20. God's laws being thus described in general, and those made to Adam thus in particular, the next thing to be considered, is man's behaviour in breaking those laws; which must be considered in the causes, and the nature of it, and the immediate effects and consequents.

21. And next must be considered God's consequent part of government as to Adam, viz. his judging him according to his law.

22. And here cometh in the promise, or the first edition of the new covenant, or law of grace; which must be opened in its parts, original, and end.

23. And then must be considered God's execution of his sentence on Adam, so far as he was unpardoned; and so upon the world, till the end.

24. And next must be considered God's enlargements and explications of his covenant of grace, till Christ's incarnation.

25. And next, men's behaviour under that explained covenant.

26. And God's sentence and execution upon them thereupon.

27. Then we come to the fulness of time, and to explain the work of redemption distinctly. And, 1. Its original, the God of nature giving the world a Physician or a Saviour: 2. The ends: 3. The constitutive causes. Where, 1. Of the person of the Redeemer, in his essence, as God and man, and in his perfections, both essential, and modal, and accidental.

28. And, 2. Of the fundamental works of our redemption, (such as creation was to the first administration,) viz. (his first undertaking, interposition, and incarnation, being all presupposed,) 1. His perfect resignation of himself to his Father, and submission to his disposing will: 2. His perfect subjection and obedience to his governing will: 3. His perfect love to him: 4. And the suffering by which he expressed all these. The three first meriting of themselves; and the last meriting as a satisfactory sacrifice, not for itself, but for its usefulness to its proper ends.

29. From this offering once made to God, Christ acquired the perfecter title of a Saviour, or Redeemer, or Mediator; which one contained this trinity also of relations towards man: 1. Their Owner: 2. Their Ruler: 3. Their Benefactor. The Father also as the first principle of redemption, acquiring a second title (besides the first by creation) to all these: and towards God, Christ continueth the relation of a heavenly Priest.

30. In order to the works of these relations for the future, we must consider of Christ's exaltations: 1. Of his justification and resurrection: 2. Of his ascension and glorification: and, 3. Of the delivering of all power and all things into his hands.

31. The work of redemption thus fundamentally wrought, doth not of itself renew man's nature; and therefore putteth no law of nature into us of itself, as the creation did: and therefore we must next proceed to Christ's administration of this office, according to these relations; which is, 1. By legislation or donation; enacting the new covenant where this last and perfect edition of it is to be explained; the preceptive, the promissory, and the penal parts, with its effects, and its differences from the former edition, and from the law of nature and of works.

32. And, 2. By the promulgation or publication of this covenant or gospel to the world, by calling special officers for that work, and giving them their commission, and promising them his Spirit, his protection, and their reward.

33. And here we come to the special work of the Holy Ghost; who is, 1. To be known in his essence and person, as the third in Trinity, and the eternal love of God: 2. And as he is the grand Advocate or Agent of Christ in the world; where his works are to be considered, 1. Preparatory, on and by Christ himself: 2. Administratory: 1. Extraordinary, on the apostles and their helpers: 1. Being in them a Spirit of extraordinary power, by gifts and miracles; 2. Of extraordinary wisdom and infallibility, as far as their commission-work required; 3. And of extraordinary love and holiness. 2. By the apostles, 1. Extraordinarily convincing and bringing in the world: 2. Settling all church doctrines, officers, and orders which Christ had left unsettled (bringing all things to their remembrance which Christ had taught and commanded them, and guiding them in the rest): 3. Recording all this for posterity in the holy Scriptures. 2. His ordinary agency, 1. On ministers, 2. By sanctification on all true believers, is after to be opened.

34. And here is to be considered the nature of christianity *in fieri:* faith and repentance in our three great relations to our Redeemer, as we are his own, his (disciples and) subjects, and his beneficiaries; with all the special benefits of these relations as antecedent to our duty; and then all our duty in them as commanded: and then the benefits after to be expected (as in promise only).

35. Next must distinctly be considered, the preach

ing, and converting, and baptizing part of the ministerial office; 1. As in the apostles; 2. And in their successors to the end; with the nature of baptism, and the part of Christ, and of the minister, and of the baptized in that covenant.

36. And then the description of the universal church, which the baptized constitute.

37. Next is to be described the state of christians after baptism: 1. Relative, 1. In pardon, reconciliation, justification, 2. Adoption. 2. Physical, in the Spirit of sanctification.

38. Where is to be opened, 1. The first sanctifying work of the Spirit: 2. Its after-helps and their conditions: 3. All the duties of holiness, primitive and medicinal towards God, ourselves, and others.

39. Our special duties in secret; reading, meditation, prayer, &c.

40. Our duties in family relations and callings.

41. Our duties in church relations; where is to be described the nature of particular churches, their work and worship, their ministry, and their members, with the duties of each.

42. Our duties in our civil relations.

43. What temptations are against us, as be to be overcome.

44. Next is to be considered the state of christians and societies in the world; how far all these duties are performed; and what are their weaknesses and sins.

45. And what are the punishments which God useth in this life.

46. And what christians must do for pardon and reparation after falls, and to be delivered from those punishments.

47. Of death, and the change which it maketh, and of our special preparation for it.

48. Of the coming of Christ, and the judgment of the great day.

49. Of the punishment of the wicked impenitent in hell.

50. And of the blessedness of the saints in heaven, and the everlasting kingdom.

These are the heads, and this is the method of true divinity, and the order in which it should lie in the understanding of him that will be complete in knowledge.

II. And as this is the intellectual order of knowledge; so the order which all things must lie in at our hearts and wills, is much more necessary to be observed: 1. That nothing but God be loved as the infinite simple good, totally with all their heart, and finally for himself: and that nothing at all be loved with any love, which is not purely subordinate to the love of God, or which causeth us to love him ever the less.

2. That the blessed person of our Mediator, as in the human nature glorified, be loved above all creatures next to God; because there is most of the divine perfections appearing in him.

3. That the heavenly church or society of angels and saints be loved next to Jesus Christ, as being next in excellence.

4. That the universal church on earth be loved next to the perfect church in heaven.

5. That particular churches and kingdoms be next loved; and wherever there is more of God's interest and image than in ourselves, that our love be more there than on ourselves.

6. That we next love ourselves, with that peculiar kind of love which God hath made necessary to our duty, and our happiness and end; with a self-preserving, watchful, diligent love; preferring our souls before our bodies, and spiritual mercies before temporal, and greater before less.

7. That we love our christian relations with that double love which is due to them as christians and relations; and love all relations according to their places, with that kind of love which is proper for them, as fitting us to all the duties which we must perform to them.

8. That we love all good christians as the sanctified members of Christ, with a special love, according to the measure of God's image appearing on them.

9. That we love every visible christian (that we cannot prove hath unchristened himself by apostasy or ungodliness) with the special love also belonging to true christians, because he appeareth such to us; but yet according to the measure of that appearance, as being more confident of some, and more doubtful of others.

10. That we love our intimate suitable friends that are godly with a double love, as godly, and as friends.

11. That we love neighbours and civil relations, with a love which is suitable to our duty towards them (to do to them as we would have them do to us; which is partly meant by loving them as ourselves).

12. That we love all mankind, even God's enemies, much more our own, as they are men; for the dignity of human nature, and their capacity to become holy and truly amiable.

13. That all means be chosen according to the end, (which is to be preferred before other ends,) and their suitableness and fitness for that end (as they are to be preferred before other means).

III. And the order of practice is, 1. That we be sure to begin with God alone, and proceed to God in the creature, and end in God alone.

It is the principal thing to be known for finding out the true method of divinity and religion, that (as in the great frame of nature, so) in the frame of morality, the true motion is circular; from God, the efficient by God, the dirigent to God, the final cause of all: therefore as God is the first spring or cause of motion; so the creature is the recipient first, and the agent after, in returning all to God again.

Therefore mark, that our receiving graces are our first graces in exercise; and our receiving duties are our first duties; and then our returning graces and duties come next; in which we proceed from the lesser to the greater, till we come up to God himself.

Therefore in point of practice, the first thing that we have to do, is to learn to know God himself as God and our God, and to live as from him and upon him as our Benefactor, from our hearts confessing that we have nothing but from him, and shall never be at rest but with him, and in him, as our ultimate end; and therefore to set ourselves to seek him as our end accordingly; which is but to seek to love him, and be beloved by him, in the perfection of knowledge and delight.

2. The whole frame of means appointed by God for the attainment of this end, must be taken together, and not broken asunder; as they have all relation each to other. And, 1. The whole frame of nature must be looked on as the first great means appointed to man in innocency, for the preservation and exercise of his holiness and righteousness: 2. And the covenant or law-positive, as conjoined unto this: 3. And the Spirit of God, communicated only for such a mere sufficiency of necessary help, as God saw meet to one in that condition. And though these means (the creatures, and the Spirit of the Creator in that degree) be not now sufficient for lapsed man; yet they are still to be looked on as delivered into the hand of Christ the Mediator, to be

used by him on his terms, and in order to his blessed ends.

3. But it is the frame, of the recovering and perfecting means, which we are now to use. And in this frame, 1. Christ the Mediator is the first and principal; and the author of our faith, or religion; and therefore from his name it is called christianity. He is now the first means used on God's part for communicating mercy unto man; and the first in dignity to be received and used by man himself; but not the first in time, because the means of revealing him must go first.

2. The second means in dignity (under Christ) is the operation of the Holy Spirit as sent or given by the Redeemer; which Spirit being as the soul of outward means, (which are as the body,) is given variously in a suitableness to the several sorts of means (of which more anon).

3. The outward means for this Spirit to work by and with, have been in three degrees: 1. The lowest degree, is the world or creatures (called the Book of Nature) alone: 2. The second degree was the law and promises to the Jews and their forefathers (together with the law of nature). 3. The third and highest degree of outward means, is the whole frame of christian institutions, adjoined to the Book of Nature, and succeeding the foresaid promises and law.

Every one of these hath a sufficiency in its own kind, and to its proper use. 1. The law of nature is sufficient in its own kind, to reveal a God in his essential principles and relations; and to teach man the necessity now of some supernatural revelations and institutions; and so to direct him to inquire after them (what and where they be).

2. The promises and Jewish law (of types, &c.) was sufficient in its own kind, to acquaint men that a Saviour must be sent into the world, to reveal the will of God more fully, and to be a sacrifice for sin, and to make reconciliation between God and man, and to give a greater measure of the Spirit, and to renew men's souls, and bring them to full perfection, and to the blessed fruition of God. The Jewish Scriptures teach them all this, though it tell them not many of the articles of our christian belief.

3. The christian gospel is sufficient in its own kind, to teach men first to believe aright, in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and then to love and live aright.

When I say that each of these is sufficient in its own kind, the meaning is, not that these outward means are of themselves suffieient without the Holy Spirit; for that were to be sufficient not only *in suo genere,* but *in alieno vel in omni genere;* not only for its own part and work, but for the Spirit's part also: but other causes being supposed to concur, it is sufficient for its own part: as my pen is a sufficient pen, though it be not sufficient to write without my hand.

Now the measure of the Spirit's concourse with all these three degrees of means, is to be judged of by the nature of the means, and by God's ends in appointing them, and by the visible effects. And whereas the world is full of voluminous contentions about the doctrine of sufficient and effectual grace, I shall here add thus much in order to their agreement. 1. That certainly such a thing there is, or hath been, as is called sufficient not-effectual grace: by sufficient they mean so much as giveth man all that power which is necessary to the commanded act, (or forbearance,) so that man could do it without any other grace or help from God; which supposeth that man's will, in the nature of it, hath such a vital, free, self-determining power, that (sometimes at least) it can act, or not act, when such bare power is given to it, and sometimes doth, and sometimes doth not. But the word *necessary* is more proper than *sufficient:* the latter being applicable to several degrees; but *necessary* signifieth that degree, without which the act cannot be performed.

That there is such a thing, is evident in Adam's case, who had that grace which was necessary to his forbearing the first sin (or else farewell all religion). And there are few men will deny but that all men have still such a degree of help for many duties which they do not perform; and against many sins which they do not forbear (as to forbear an oath, or a lie, or a cup of drink, to go to church when they go to an ale-house, &c.) Such a thing therefore there is, and such a power man's will hath to do or not do, when such a degree only of help is given.

Therefore we have reason enough to suppose, 1. That such a degree of the Spirit's help is given under the bare teachings of the creature, or to them that have no outward light but natural revelation, as is necessary to the foresaid ends and uses of that light or means, that is, to convince man that there is a God, and what he is, as aforesaid, and that we are his subjects and beneficiaries, and owe him our chiefest love and service; and to convince them of the need of some further supernatural revelation. Not that every one hath this measure of spiritual help; for some by abusing the help which they have, to learn the alphabet of nature, or to practise it, do forfeit that help which should bring them into nature's higher forms. But so much as I have mentioned of the help of the Spirit is given to those that do not grossly forfeit it by abuse, among the pagans of the world: and so much multitudes have attained.

2. And so much of the Spirit was given ordinarily to the Jews, as was sufficient to have enabled them to believe in the Messiah to come, as aforesaid; if they did not wilfully reject this help.

3. And so much seemeth to be given to many that hear the gospel, and never believe it; or that believe it not with a justifying faith, is as sufficient to have made them true believers, as Adam's was to have kept him from his fall. For seeing it is certain that such a sufficient ineffectual grace there is, we have no reason to conceit that God doth any more desert his own means now, than he did then; or that he maketh believing a more impossible condition of justification under the gospel, to them that are in the nearest capacity of it, (before effectual grace,) than he made perfect obedience to be to Adam. The objections against this are to be answered in due place, and are already answered by the Dominicans at large.

4. The outward means of grace under Christ are all one frame, and must be used in harmony as followeth.

1. The witness and preaching of Christ and his apostles, was the first and chief part; together with their settling the churches, and recording so much as is to be our standing rule in the holy Scriptures, which are now to us the chief part of this means.

2. Next to the Scriptures, the pastoral office and gifts, to preserve them, and teach them to us, is the next principal part of this frame of means. In which I comprehend all their office. Preaching for conversion, baptizing, preaching for confirmation and edification of the faithful, praying and praising God before the church; administering the body and blood of Christ in the sacrament of communion; and watching over all the flock, by personal instruction, admonition, reproofs, censures, and absolutions.

3. The next part (conjunct with this) is the communion of the faithful in the churches.

4. The next is our holy society in christian fami-

lies, and family instructions, worship, and just discipline.

5. The next is our secret duties between God and us alone. As, 1. Reading. 2. Meditation, and self-examination. 3. Prayer and thanksgiving, and praise to God.

6. The next part is our improvement of godly men's intimate friendship, who may instruct, and warn, and reprove, and comfort us.

7. The next is the daily course of prospering providences and mercies, which express God's love, and call up ours (as provisions, protections, preservations, deliverances, &c.)

8. The next is God's castigations, (by what hand or means soever,) which are to make us partakers of his holiness, Heb. xii. 9, 10.

9. The next is the examples of others. 1. Their graces and duties. 2. Their faults and falls. 3. Their mercies. And, 4. Their sufferings and corrections, 1 Cor. x. 1, 10, 11.

10. And lastly, our own constant watchfulness against temptations, and stirring up God's graces in ourselves. These are the frame of the means of grace, and of our receiving duties.

2. The next in order to be considered, is the whole frame of our returning duties, in which we lay out the talents which we receive, which lie in the order following.

1. That we do what good we can to our own souls. That we first pluck the beam out of our own eyes, and set that motion on work at home, which must go further: therefore all the foregoing means were primarily for this effect (though not chiefly and ultimately for this end).

2. Next we must do good according to our power to our near relations.

3. And next to our whole families, and more remote relations.

4. And next them, to our neighbours.

5. And next, to strangers.

6. And lastly, to enemies of ourselves and Christ.

7. But our greatest duties must be for public societies; viz. 1. For the commonwealth (both governors and people). 2. And for the church.

8. And the next part (in intention and dignity) must be for the whole world (whose good by prayer and all just means we must endeavour).

9. And the next for the honour of Jesus Christ our Mediator.

10. And the highest ultimate termination of our returning duties, is the pure Deity alone.

For the further opening to you the order of christian practice, take these following notes or rules.

1. Though receiving duties (such as hearing, reading, praying, faith, &c.) go first in order of nature and time, before expending or returning duties; so that the motion is truly circular; yet we must not stay till we have received more, before we make returns to God of that which we have already. But every degree of received grace must presently work towards God our end: and as there is no intermission between my moving of my hand and pen, and its writing upon this paper; so must there be no intermission between God's beams of love and mercy to us, and our reflections of love and duty unto him. Even as the veins and arteries in the body lie much together, and one doth often empty itself into the other, for circulation, and not stay till the whole mass hath run through all the vessels of one sort (veins or arteries) before any pass into the other.

2. The internal returns of love are much quicker than the return of outward fruits. The love of God shed or streamed forth upon the soul, doth presently warm it to a return of love; but it may be some time before that love appear in any notable, useful benefits to the world, or in any thing that much glorifieth God and our profession. Even as the heat of the sun upon the earth or trees, is suddenly reflected; but doth not so suddenly bring forth herbs, and buds, and blossoms, and ripe fruits.

3. All truly good works must have one constant order of intention (which is before opened; God must be first intended, then Christ, then the universal church in heaven and earth, &c.) But in the order of operation and execution, there may be a great difference among our duties; as God appointeth us to lay out some one way, and some another. Yet ordinarily, as the emitted beams begin from God, and dart themselves on the soul of man; so the reflected beams begin upon or from our hearts, and pass towards God (though first beloved and intended) by several receptacles, before they bring us to the perfect fruition of him.

4. Therefore the order of loving (or complacency) and the order of doing good (or benevolence) is not the same. We must love the universal church better than ourselves; but we cannot do them sincere service, before we do good to ourselves. And our nearest relations must be preferred in act of beneficence before many whom we must love more.

5. When two goods come together, (either to be received, or to be done,) the greater is ever to be preferred; and the choosing or using of the lesser at that time, is to be taken for a sin. I lately read a denial of this, in a superficial satire; but the thing itself, if rightly understood, is past all doubt with a rational man. For, 1. Else good is not to be chosen and done as good, if the best be not to be preferred. 2. Else almost all wicked omissions might be excused. I may be excused for not giving a poor man a shilling (whatever his necessity be) because I give him a farthing. No doubt but Dives (Luke xvi.) did good at such a rate as this at least. And else a man might be excused from saving a drowned man, if he save his horse that while, &c. *A quatenus ad summum valet consequentia*, in the case of desiring and doing good. But then mark the following explications.

6. That is not always to be accounted the greatest good, which is so only in regard of the matter simply considered; but that is the greatest good, which is so *consideratis, considerandis*, all things considered and set together.

7. When God doth peremptorily tie men to certain duty, without any dispensation or liberty of choice, that duty at that time is a greater good and duty than many others which may be greater in their time and place. A duty materially less, is formally (and by accident materially) greater in its proper season. Reaping, and baking, and eating, are better than ploughing and weeding the corn, as they are nearer to the end; but ploughing and weeding are better in their season. To make pins or points, is not materially so good a work as to pray; but in its season (as then done) it is better: and he that is of this trade, may not be praying when he should be about his trade: not that he is to prefer the matter of it before praying; but praying is to keep its time, and may be a sin when it is out of time. He that would come at midnight to disturb his rest, to present his service to his lord or king, would have little thanks for such unseasonable service.

8. He that is restrained by a lower calling, or any true restraining reasons, from doing a good which is materially greater, yet doth that which is greatest unto him. Ruling and preaching are materially a greater good, than threshing or digging; and yet to

a man whose gifts and callings restrain him from the former to the latter, the latter is the greatest good.

9. Good is not to be measured principally by the will or benefit of ourselves, or any creature; but by, 1. The will of God in his laws; and, 2. By the interest of his pleasedness and glory: but secondarily, human interest is the measure of it.

10. It followeth not that because the greatest good is ever to be preferred, that therefore we must perplex and distract ourselves, in cases of difficulty, when the balance seemeth equal: for either there is a difference, or there is none; and if any, it is discernible, or not. If there be no difference, there is room for taking one, but not for choosing one. If there be no discernible difference, it is all one to us as if there were none at all. If it be discernible by a due proportion of inquiry, we must labour to know it, and choose accordingly. If it be not discernible in such time, and by such measure of inquiry as is our duty, we must still take it as undiscernible to us. If after just search, the weakness of our own understandings leave us doubting, we must go according to the best understanding which we have, and cheerfully go on in our duty, as well as we can know it, remembering that we have a gracious God and covenant, which taketh not advantage of involuntary weaknesses, but accepteth their endeavours, who sincerely do their best.

11. Mere spiritual or mental duties require most labour of the mind; but corporal duties (such as the labours of our calling) must have more labour of the body.

12. All corporal duties must be also spiritual (by doing them from a spiritual principle, to a spiritual end, in a spiritual manner); but it is not necessary that every spiritual duty be also corporal.

13. The duties immediately about God our end, are greater than those about any of the means, *cæteris paribus*. And yet those that are about lower objects, may be greater by accidents, and in their season: as to be saving a man's life is then greater than to be exciting the mind to the acting of divine love or fear: but yet it is God, the greatest object then, which putteth the greatness upon the latter duty; both by commanding it, and so making it an act more pleasing to him; and because that the love of God is supposed to be the concurring spring of that love to man, which we show in seeking their preservation.

14. Our great duty about God our ultimate end, can never be done too much, considered in itself, and in respect to the soul only; we cannot so love God too much. And this love so considered, hath no extreme; Matt. xxii. 37.

15. But yet even this may by accident, and in the circumstances, be too much: as, 1. In respect to the body's weaknesses; if a man should so fear God, or so love him, as that the intenseness of the act did stir the passions so much as to bring him to distraction, or to disorder his mind, and make it unfit for that or any other duty. 2. Or if he should be exciting the love of God, when he should be quenching a fire in the town, or relieving the poor that are ready to perish. But neither of these is properly called a loving God too much.

16. The duties of the heart are in themselves greater and nobler than the actions of the outward man, of themselves abstractedly considered; because the soul is more noble than the body.

17. Yet outward duties are frequently, yea most frequently, greater than heart duties only; because in the outward duty it is to be supposed that both parts concur (both soul and body); and the operations of both, is more than of one alone: and also because the nobler ends are attained by both together more than by one only: for God is loved, and man is benefited by them. As when the sun shineth upon a tree, or on the earth, it is a more noble effect, to have a return of its influences, in ripe and pleasant fruits, than in a mere sudden reflection of the heat alone.

18. All outward duties must begin at the heart, and it must animate them all; and they are valued in the sight of God, no further than they come from a rectified will, even from the love of God and goodness. However, without this, they are good works materially, in respect to the receiver. He may do good to the church, or commonwealth, or poor, who doth none to himself thereby.

19. As the motion is circular from God to man, and from man to God again, (mercies received, and duties and love returned,) so is the motion circular between the heart and the outward man; the heart moving the tongue, and hand, &c. and these moving the heart again; (partly of their own nature, and partly by divine reward). The love of God and goodness produceth holy thoughts, and words, and actions; and these again increase the love which did produce them; Gal. v. 6, 13; Heb. vi. 10; x. 24; 2 John 6; Jude 21.

20. The judgment must be well informed before the will resolve.

21. Yet when God hath given us plain instructions, it is a sin to cherish causeless doubts and scruples.

22. And when we see our duty before us, it is not every scruple that will excuse us from doing it; but when we have more conviction that it is a duty, than that it is none, or that it is a sin, we must do it, notwithstanding those mistaking doubts. As if in prayer or alms-deeds you should scruple the lawfulness of them, you ought not to forbear till your scruples be resolved, because you so long neglect a duty; else folly might justify men in ungodliness and disobedience.

23. But in things merely indifferent, it is a sin to do them doubtingly; because you may be sure it is no sin to forbear them; Rom. xiv. 23; 1 Cor. viii. 13, 14.

24. An erring judgment entangleth a man in a necessity of sinning, (till it be reformed,) whether he act or not according to it. Therefore if an erring person ask, What am I bound to? the true answer is, to lay by your error, or reform your judgment first, and then do accordingly: and if he ask a hundred times over, But what must I do in case I cannot change my judgment? the same answer must be given him, God still bindeth you to change your judgment, and hath given you the necessary means of information; and therefore he will not take up with your supposition, that you cannot: his law is a fixed rule, which telleth you what you must believe, and choose, and do; and this rule will not change, though you be blind, and say, I cannot change my mind. Your mind must come to the rule, for the rule will not come to your perverted mind. Say what you will, the law of God will be still the same, and will still bind you to believe according to its meaning.

25. Yet supposing that a man's error so entangleth him in a necessity of sinning, it is a double sin to prefer a greater sin before a lesser: for though no sin is an object of our choice, yet the greater sin is the object of our greater hatred and refusal; and must be with the greater fear and care avoided.

26. An erring conscience, then, is never the voice or messenger of God, nor are we ever bound to fol-

low it; because it is neither our God, nor his law, but only our own judgment which should discern his law. And misreading or misunderstanding the law, will not make a bad cause good, though it may excuse it from a greater degree of evil.

27. The judicious fixing of the wills, resolutions, and especially the increasing of its love, or complacency and delight in good, is the chief thing to be done in all our duties, as being the heart and life of all; Prov. xxiii. 26, 12; iv. 23; vii. 3; xxii. 17; iii. 1—3; iv. 4, 21; Deut. xxx. 6; Psal. xxxvii. 4; xl. 8; cxix. 16, 35, 70, 47; i. 2; Isa. lviii. 14.

28. The grand motives to duty must ever be before our eyes, and set upon our hearts, as the poise of all our motions and endeavours. (As the traveller's home and business, is deepest in his mind, as the cause of every step which he goeth.)

29. No price imaginable must seem great enough to hire us to commit the least known sin; Luke xii. 4; xiv. 26, 28, 33; Matt. x. 39; xvi. 26.

30. The second great means (next to the right forming of the heart) for the avoiding of sin, is to get away from the temptations, baits, and occasions of it. And he that hath most grace, must take himself to be still in great danger, while he is under strong temptations and allurements, and when sin is brought to his hands, and alluring objects are close to the appetite and senses.

31. The keeping clean our imaginations, and commanding our thoughts, is the next great means for the avoiding sin. And a polluted fantasy, and ungoverned thoughts, are the nest where all iniquity is hatched, and the instruments that bring it forth into act.

32. The governing of the senses is the first means to keep clean the imagination. When Achan seeth the wedge of gold, he desireth it, and then he taketh it. When men wilfully fill their eyes with the objects which entice them to lusts, to covetousness, to wrath, the impression is presently made upon the fantasy; and then the devil hath abundance more power to renew such imaginations a thousand times, than if such impressions had been never made. And it is a very hard thing to cleanse the fantasy which is once polluted.

33. And the next notable means of keeping out all evil imaginations, and curing lust and vanity of mind, is constant, laborious diligence in a lawful calling, which shall allow the mind no leisure for vain and sinful thoughts; as the great nourisher of all foul and wicked thoughts, is idleness and vacancy, which inviteth the tempter, and giveth him time and opportunity.

34. Watchfulness over ourselves, and thankful accepting the watchfulness, fault-findings, and reproofs of others, is a great part of the safety of our souls; Matt. xxvi. 41; xxv. 13; Mark xiii. 37; Luke xxi. 36; 1 Cor. xvi. 13; 1 Thess. v. 6; 2 Tim. iv. 5; Heb. xii. 17; 1 Pet. iv. 7.

35. Affirmative precepts bind not to all times; that is, no positive duty is a duty at all times. As to preach, to pray, to speak of God, to think of holy things, &c. it is not always a sin to intermit them.

36. All that God commandeth us to do, is both a duty and a means: it is called a duty in relation to God the efficient Lawgiver, first; and it is a means next in relation to God the End, whose work is done, and whose will is pleased by it. And we must always respect it in both these notions inseparably. No duty is not a means; and no true means is not a duty; but many seem to man to have the aptitude of a means, which are no duty but a sin; because we see not all things, and therefore are apt to think that fit which is pernicious.

37. Therefore nothing must be thought a true means to any good end, which God forbiddeth: for God knoweth better than we.

38. But we must see that the negative or prohibition be universal, or indeed extendeth to our particular case. And then (and not else) you may say that the negatives bind to all times.

39. Nothing which is certainly destructive to the end, and contrary to the nature of a means, is to be taken for a duty. For it is certain that God's commands are for edification, and not for destruction, for good, and not for evil.

40. Yet that may tend to present, inferior hurt, which ultimately tendeth to the greatest good. Therefore it is not some present or inferior incommodity that must cause us to reject such a means of greater future good.

41. Whatsoever we are certain God commandeth, we may be certain is a proper means, though we see not the aptitude, or may think it to be destructive; because God knoweth better than we: but then we must indeed be sure that it is commanded *hic et nunc*, in this case, and place, and time, and circumstances.

42. It is one of the most needful things to our innocency, to have christian wisdom to compare the various accidents of those duties and sins which are such by accident, and to judge which accidents do preponderate. For indeed the actions are very few which are absolutely and simply duties or sins in themselves considered, without those accidents which qualify them to be such. Accidental duties and sins are the most numerous by far; and in many cases the difficulty of comparing the various accidents, and contrary motives, is not small.

43. Therefore it is, that (as in physic and law cases, &c. the common people have greatest need of the advice of skilful artists, to help them to judge of particular cases, taking in all the circumstances, which their narrow understandings cannot comprehend; which is more of the use of physicians and lawyers, than to read a public lecture of physic, or of law; so) the office of the church guides, or bishops, is of so great necessity to the people, in every particular church. And that not only for public preaching, but also to be at hand, to help the people, who have recourse unto them in all such cases, to know in particular what is duty and what is sin.

44. And therefore it is (besides other reasons) that the office of the bishops or pastors of the churches, must in all the proper parts of it be done only by themselves, or men in that office, and not *per alios*, by men of another office: and therefore it is, that bare titles and authority will not serve the turn, without proportionable or necessary abilities or gifts; because the work is done by personal fitness; and cases and difficulties can no more be resolved, nor safe counsel given for the soul in matters of morality, by men unable, than for the body or estate, in points of physic, or of law. (As the Lord Verulam in his considerations of ecclesiastical government hath well observed.)

45. In such cases where duty or sin must be judged of by compared accidents, the nature of a means, or the interest of the end, is the principal thing to be considered; and that which will evidently do more harm than good, is not to be judged a duty (in those circumstances) but a sin, as if the question were whether preaching be at this time, in this place, to this number, to these individuals, a duty. If it appear to true christian prudence, that it would be like to do more hurt than good, it is a sin at that time, and not a duty: and yet preaching in due season is a great duty still. So if the question were,

Whether secret prayer be at this hour or day a duty; if true reason tell you, that it is like to hinder, either family prayer, or any other greater good, it is not at that time a duty. Or if the question be, Whether reproof or personal exhortation of a sinner be now a duty; if true reason tell me, that it is like to do more harm than good, it is not a duty then, but accidentally a sin: for we must not cast pearls before swine, nor give that which is holy unto dogs, lest they tread it underfoot, or turn again and all to rend us. And there is a time when preachers that are persecuted in one city, must fly to another; and when they must shake off the dust of their feet for a witness against the disobedient, and turn away from them. (The imprudent people can easily discern this when it is their own case, but not when it is the preacher's case; so powerful is self-love and partiality.) Matt. vii. 6, 7; x. 14; xxiii. 34; x. 23. The reason of all this is, 1. Because God appointeth all means for the end. 2. And because the law by which in such cases we must be ruled, is only general; as, "Let all things be done to edification;" as if he should say, Fit all your actions, which I have not given you a particular, peremptory law for, to that good which is their proper end; 1 Cor. xiv. 5, 12, 3, 26, 17; 2 Cor. x. 8; xii. 19; xiii. 10; 1 Cor. x. 23; Eph. iv. 12, 16, 29; 1 Tim. i. 4; Rom. xv. 2; 1 Cor. xii. 7.

46. Public duties, ordinarily, must be preferred before private; and that which is for the good of many, before that which is for the good of one only.

47. Yet when the private necessity is more pressing, and the public may be omitted at that time with less detriment, the case doth alter. As also when that one that we do good to is more worth than the many, in order to the honour of God, or the more public good of the whole society; or when it is one that by special precept we are obliged to prefer in our beneficence.

48. Civil power is to be obeyed before ecclesiastical, in things belonging to the office of the magistrate; and ecclesiastical before the civil, in things proper to the ecclesiastical governors only. And family power before both, in things proper to their cognizance only. But what it is that is proper to each power, I shall tell them when I think they are willing to know, and it will do more good than harm to tell it them.

49. The supreme magistrate is ever to be obeyed before his inferiors; because they have no power but from him; and therefore have none against him (unless he so give it them).

50. No human authority is above God's, nor can bind us against him; but it is all received from him, and subordinate to him.

51. No human power can bind us to the destruction of the society which it governeth; because the public or common good is the end of government.

52. The laws of kings, and the commands of parents, masters, and pastors, (in cases where they have true authority,) do bind the soul primarily, as well as the body secondarily; but not as the primary, but the secondary bond. It is a wonderful and pitiful thing, to read divines upon this point, Whether the laws of men do bind the conscience? what work they have made as in the dark, when the case is so very plain and easy! Some are peremptory that they do not bind the conscience; and some that they do; and some calling their adversaries the idolizers of men; and others again insinuating that they are guilty of treason against kings, who do gainsay them: when surely they cannot differ if they would.

1. The very phrase of their question is nonsense, or very unfit. Conscience is but a man's knowledge or judgment of himself as he is obliged to his duty and the effects; and consequently of the obligations which lie upon him.

It is a strange question, whether I am bound in knowledge of myself: but it were a reasonable question, whether I be bound to know; or whether I know that I am bound. It is the whole man, and most eminently the will, which is bound by laws, or any moral obligations. The man is bound.

But if by conscience they mean the soul, it is a ridiculous question; for no bonds can lie upon the body immediately, but cords or iron, or such like materials. The soul is the first obliged, or else the man is not morally obliged at all.

If the sense of the question be, whether it be a divine or a religious obligation, which men's commands do lay upon us? the answer is easy. 1. That man is not God; and therefore as human it is not divine. 2. That man's government is God's institution, and men are God's officers; and therefore the obligation is religious, and instrumentally or mediatcly divine. Either men's laws and commands do bind us or not: if not, they are no laws nor authoritative acts: if they do bind, either it is primarily by an authority originally in themselves that made them (and then they are all gods; and then there is no God); or else it is by derived authority. If so, God must be the original (or still the original must be God). And then is the highway any plainer than the true answer of this question, viz. That princes, parents, &c. have a governing or law-giving power from God, in subordination to him; and that they are his officers in governing; and that all those laws which he hath authorized them to make do bind the soul, that is, the man, immediately as human, and instrumentally or mediately as divine, or as the bonds of God. As my covenant binds myself to conscience, (if you will so speak, rather than that they bind my conscience,) so do men's laws also bind me. You may as well ask whether the writing of my pen be its action or mine; and be an animate or inanimate act; which is soon resolved.

53. To conclude these rules, as the just impress of the Spirit, and image of God upon the soul, is divine life, light, and love, communicated from God by Jesus Christ, by the Holy Spirit, to work in us and by us for God, (in the soul and in the world,) and by Christ to bring us up at last to the sight and fruition of God himself; so this trinity of divine principles must be inseparably used, in all our internal and external duties towards God or men; and all that we do must be the work of power, and of love, and of wisdom or a sound mind, 2 Tim. i. 7.

II. Having been so large in opening the order of our duties, I must be briefer than our case requireth, in telling you our disorders, or contrary disease. Oh! what a humbling sight it would be, if good christians did but see the pitiful confusions of their minds and lives! They find little melody in their religion, because there is little harmony in their apprehensions, affections, or conversations. If the displacing one wheel or pin in a clock, will so much frustrate the effect, it is a wonder that our tongues or lives do ever go true, which are moved by such disordered parts within; that were it not that the Spirit of grace doth keep an order where it is essential to our religion, (between the end and the means, &c.) we should be but like the parts of a watch pulled in pieces, and put up together in a bag. But such is God's mercy, that the body may live when many smaller veins are obstructed; so that the master vessels be kept clear.

1. There are so few christians that have a true method of faith or divinity in their understandings,

even in the great points which they know disorderly, that it is no wonder if there be lamentable defectiveness and deformity in those inward and outward duties, which should be harmoniously performed, by the light of this harmonious truth. And no divine in the world can give you a perfect scheme of divinity in all the parts; but he is the wisest that cometh nearest to it. Abundance of schemes and tables you may see, and all pretending to exactness: but every one palpably defective and confused; even those of the highest pretenders that ever I have seen. And one error or disorder usually introduceth, in such a seheme, a confusion in all that followeth as dependent on it.

Some confound God's attributes themselves (nay who doth not): they confound the three great essential principles, with all the attributes, by similitude called modal and negative; and they use to name over God's attributes, like as they put their money or chess-men into a bag, without any method at all.

Some confound God's primary attributes of being with his relations, which are subsequent to his works, and with his relation attributes.

Some confound his several relations to man, among themselves; and more do confound his works, as they flow from these various relations.

The great works of the Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, and their several designs, significations and effects, are opened obscurely and in much confusion.

The legislative will of God *de debito* institutive, (which is it that Damascene, Chrysostom, and the schoolmen mean by his antecedent will, if they speak properly,) which ever goeth before man's actions, (duties or sins, or as the fathers call them, merits or demerits,) is confounded by many with the acts of his judgment and execution (ealled his consequent will, because it ever presupposeth men's precedent actions): or, his works, as Lawgiver, Judge, and Executioner, are oft confounded.

And so are the orders of his precepts, promises, and penal threats, and the conditions of his promises; and the order of his precepts among themselves; and of his promises as one respecteth another.

And our relations to God, and the several respective duties of those relations, are ordinarily much confounded.

The work of the Holy Ghost (as we are baptized into the belief of him) is poorly, lamely, and disorderly opened, to the encouraging of the carnal on one hand, or the enthusiasts on the other.

Law and gospel, and covenant and covenant, words and works, the precepts of Christ and the operations of the Spirit, are seldom thought on in their proper place, and order, and differences.

In a word, consectaries are confounded with principles: nature, medicine, and health; the precepts and parts of primitive sanctity, with the precepts and means of medicinal grace; the end and the means; yea, nothing more usually than words and things are confounded and disordered by the most (that I say not by us all).

The circular motion of grace, from God, and by God, and to God, and in man the receiving duties as distinct from the improving duties; and these, as communicative and dispersing unto man, from those ascendant unto God, partly in the fruits, and partly in the exaltation of the mind itself, these are not to be found, nor abundance more which I pass by, in any just harmonious scheme.

II. And oh! what confusion is in our hearts or wills, and lameness and defect as well as confusion; which must needs be the consequent of a lame and confused understanding. It is so great, that I am not willing to be so tedious as to open it at large.

III. And the confusion in our practices, taking it in, and expressing it, will show you your heart-confusion of itself. But to open this also would be long; and the regular order before laid down, will show you our disorders without any further enumerations or instances.

Only some of our lameness and partialities, contrary to entire and complete religiousness, I shall briefly mention, because I think it to be of no small need to the most, even of the more zealous part of christians.

1. In our studies and meditations, we are partial and defective: we search hard perhaps for some few truths, with the neglect of many hundred more.

2. In our zeal for truth, we are oft as partial, greatly taken with some one or few, which we think we have suddenly and happily found out, and see more into than others do; or in which we think we have some singular or special interest; and in the mean time little affected with abundance of truths, of greater clearness and importance, and of more daily usefulness; because they are things that all men know, and common unto you with the most of christians.

3. In your love to the godly, and your charity, in expressions, and in your daily prayers, what lameness and partiality is there! Those that are near you, and conversant with you, you remember; and perhaps those in the kingdom or country where you dwell; or at least those of your own society, opinions, and party. But when it cometh to praying for the world, and all the church abroad, and when it cometh to the loving of those that differ from you, what partiality do you show!

4. In the course of duties to God and man, how rare is that person that doth not quite omit, or slubber over, some duty, as if it were nothing, while he doth with much earnestness prosecute another! One that is much in receiving duties for themselves, (as hearing, reading, meditating, praying,) can live all the week with quietness of conscience, without almost any improving duties, or doing any good to others; as if they were made for themselves alone. And some ministers lay out themselves in preaching, as if they were all for the good of others: but pray as little, and do as little about their own heart, as if they cared not for themselves at all; or else were good enough already.

Some are constant in chureh duties, perhaps with some superstitious strietness; but in family-duties how neglective are they! They are for very strict discipline in the church, and cannot communicate with any that wear not the same badge of sanctity which they affect; but in their families, what profaneness, carelessness, and confusion is there! They can have family communion with the most ungodly servants, that will but be profitable to them. Dumb ministers are their scorn; but to be dumb parents and masters to their children and servants, they can easily bear. Formal preaching and praying in the church they exclaim against; but how formally do they pray at home, and catechise and instruct their family! If a magistrate should forbid them to pray, or catechise, or instruct their families, they would account him an impious, odious persecutor; but they can neglect it ordinarily when none forbiddeth them, and never lay any such accusation on themselves.

Some are much for the duties of worship in private, but negligent of publie worship; and some are diligent in both, that make little scruple of living idly without a calling, or doing the works of their callings deceitfully and unprofitably. They are cen-

sorious of one that is negligent in God's worship; but censure not themselves (nor love to be censured by others) for being idle and negligent servants to their masters; and omitting many an hour's work, which was as truly their duty as the other. Yea, when they are told of such duties as they love not, (as obedience, labour, charity, paticnce, mortifying the flesh, &c.) their consciences are just as senseless, or as prejudiced, or quarrelsome, as the consciences of other men are against religious exercises.

5. And in our reformation and resisting sins of commission, such lameness and partiality is common with the most. He that is most tender of a sin which is in common disgrace among the godly, is little troubled at as great a one which hath got any reputation among them by the advantage of some errors. In England, through God's mercy, the profanation of the Lord's day is noted as a heinous sin. But beyond sea, where it is not so reputed, how ordinarily is it committed! Many would condemn Joseph, if they had heard him swear by the life of Pharaoh, because, through God's mercy, swearing is a disgraced sin. But how ordinarily do the dividing sort of christians, rashly or falsely, censure men behind their backs that differ from them, upon unproved hearsay, and gladly take up false reports, and never shed a tear for many such slanders, backbitings, and wrongs! Many a one that would take an oath or curse for a certain sign of an ungodly person, yet make little of a less disgraceful way of evil-speaking, and of a peevish, unpleasable disposition; and when they are impatient of a censure, or a foul word, are paticnt enough with their impatiency.

And it deserveth tcars of blood to think how little the sins of selfishness and pride are mortified in most of the forwardest christians (even in them that go in mean attire). How much they love and look to be esteemed, to be taken notice of, to be well thought of, and well spoken of! How ill they bear the least contempt, neglect, or disrespect! How abundantly they overvalue their own understandings! And how wise they are in their own conceits! And how hardly they will think ill of their most false or foolish apprehensions! And how proudly they disdain the judgments of wiser men, from whom, if they had humility, they might learn perhaps twenty years together, and yet not reach the measure of their knowledge! And what a strange differcnce there is in their judging of any case, when it is another's and when it is their own!

And among how few is the sin of flesh-pleasing sensuality mortified! Abundance take no notice of it, becausc it is hid, and can be daily exercised in a less disgraceful way. If they be rich, they can enjoy that which is their own; and they can cleanlily do as Dives did, (Luke xvi.) and take their good things here. Having enough laid up for many years, they think they may take their ease, and eat, drink, and be merry, without rebuke, Luke xii. 19, 20. They that are the most zealous in strict opinions, and modes of worship, can live as Sodom did, in pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness, and use meat for their lusts, and make provision for the flesh, to satisfy those lusts, and yet never seem to themsclves, nor those about them, to offend; much lcss to do any thing that is grossly evil; Ezek. xvi. 49; Psal. lxxviii. 18, 30; Rom. xiii. 13, 14. They drink not till they are drunk; they eat not more in quantity than others; they labour as far as need compels them; and this they think is very tolerable. And because the papists have turned the just subduing of the flcsh into hurtful austerities, or formal mockeries, therefore they are the more hardened in their flesh-plcasing way. They take but that which they love, and that which is their own, and then they think that the fault is not great; and what Christ meant by Dives's being "clothed in purple and silk, and faring sumptuously every day," they never truly understood: nor yet what hc meaneth by the poor in spirit, Matt. v. 3; which is not (at least only or chiefly) a sense of the want of grace, but a spirit suited to a life of poverty, contrary to the love of money, and of fulness, and luxury, and pride: when we are content with necessaries, and eat and drink for health more than for pleasure, or for that pleasure only which doth conduce to health; and when we will be at no needless, superfluous cost upon the flesh, but choose the cheapest food and raiment which is sufficient to our lawful ends; and use not our appetites, and sense, and fantasy to such delight and satisfaction as either increaseth lust, or corrupteth the mind, and hindereth it from spiritual duties and delights, by hurtful delectation or diversion; nor bestow that upon ourselves which the poor about us need to supply their great necessities. This is to be poor in spirit; and this is the life of abstinence and mortification which these sensual professors will not learn. Nay, rather than their throats shall not be pleased, if they be children in their parents' families, or servants, they will steal for it, and take that which their parents and masters (they know) do not consent to, nor allow them: and they are worse thieves than they that steal for hunger and mere necessity; because they steal to satisfy their appetites and carnal lusts; that they may fare better than their superiors would have them; and yet perhaps be really conscientious and religious in many other points, and never humbled for their fleshly minds, their gluttony and thievery; especially if they see others fare better than they: and they quiet their consciences, as the most ungodly do, with putting a handsome name upon their sin, and calling it taking, and not stealing; and eating and drinking, and not fulness of bread or carnal gulosity. Abundance of such instances of men's partiality in avoiding sin, I must omit, becausc it is so long a work.

6. Yea, in the inward exercise of graces, there are few that use them completely, entirely, and in order; but they neglect one, while they set themselves wholly about the exercise of another; or perhaps use one against another. Commonly they set themselves a great while upon nothing so much as labouring to affect their hearts with sorrow for sin, and meltingly to weep in their confessions (with some endeavours of a new life). But the love of God, and the thankful sense of the mercy of redemption, and the rejoicing hopes of endless glory, are things which they take but little care about: and when they are convinced of the error of this partiality, they next turn to some antinomian whimsey, under the pretence of valuing free grace; and begin to give over penitent confessions, and the care and watchfulness against sin, and diligence in a holy, fruitful life; and say that they were long enough legalists, and knew not free grace, but looked all after doing, and something in themselves; and then they could have no peace; but now they see their error, they will know nothing but Christ: and thus that narrow, foolish soul cannot use repentance without neglecting faith in Christ; and cannot use faith, but they must neglect repentance; yea, set faith and repentance, love and obedience in good works, like enemies or hinderances against each other: they cannot know themselves and their sinfulness, without forgetting Christ and his righteousness; and they cannot know Christ, and his love and grace, without laying by the knowledge or resistance of their sin. They cannot magnify free grace, unless they may have none

of it, but lay by the use of it as to all the works of holiness, because they must look at nothing in themselves. They cannot magnify pardon and justification, unless they may make light of the sin and punishment which they deserve, and which is pardoned, and the charge and condemnation from which they are justified: they cannot give God thanks for remitting their sin, unless they may forbear confessing it, and sorrowing for it. They cannot take the promise to be free, which giveth Christ and pardon of sin, if it have but this condition, that they shall not reject him: nor can they call it the gospel, unless it leave them masterless and lawless; whereas there is indeed no such thing as faith without repentance, nor repentance without faith: no love to Christ without the keeping of his commandments; nor no true keeping of the commandments without love; no free grace without a gracious, sanctified heart and life; nor no gift of Christ and justification, but on the condition of a believing acceptance of the gift; and yet no such believing but by free grace: no gospel without the law of Christ and nature; and no mercy and peace but in a way of duty. And yet such Bedlam christians are among us, that you may hear them in pangs of high conceited zeal, insulting over the folly of one another, and in no wiser language, than if you heard one lunatic person say, I am for health, and not for medicine; and another, I am for medicine, and not for the taking of it; and another, I am for the physic, and not for the physician; and another, I am for the physician, and not the physic; and another, I am for the physic, but not for health. Or as if they contended at their meats, I am for meat, but not for eating it; and I am for putting it into my mouth, but not for chewing it; or I am for chewing it, but not for swallowing it; or I am for swallowing it, but not for digesting it; or I am for digesting it, but not for eating it, &c.

Thus is Christ divided among a sort of ignorant, proud professors: and some are for his sacrifice, and some for his intercession; some for his teaching, and some for his commands, and some for his promises; some for his blood, and some for his Spirit; some for his word, and some for his ministers and his church: and when they have made this strange proficiency in wisdom, every party claims to be this church themselves; or if they cannot deny others to be parts with them of the mystical church, yet the true ordered, political disciplined church is among them the matter of their claim and competition; and one saith, it is we, and the other, no, but it is we; and the kitchen, and the coal-house, and the cellar, go to law, to try which of them is the house. Thus when they have divided Christ's garments among them, and pierced if not divided himself, they quarrel rather than cast lots for his coat.

7. I perceive this treatise swelleth too big, or else I might next show you, how partial men are in the sense of their dangers.

8. And in the resisting of temptations: he that escapeth sensuality, feareth not worldliness; or he that feareth both, yet falleth into heresy or schism; and he that escapeth errors, falleth into fleshly sins.

9. And what partial regard we have of God's mercies.

10. And how partial we are as to our teachers, and good books.

11. And also about all the ordinances of God, and all the helps and means of grace.

12. And how partial we are about good works, extolling one, and senseless of another; and about the opportunities of good. In a word, what lame apprehensions we have of religion, when men are so far from setting all the parts together in a well-ordered frame, that they can scarce forbear the dividing of every part into particles: and must take the food of their souls as physic, even like pills which they cannot get down, unless they are exceeding small.

III. The causes of this calamity I must for brevity but name.

1. The natural weakness of man's mind, doth make him like a narrow-mouthed bottle that can take in but a little at once, and so must be long in learning and receiving.

2. The natural laziness and impatience of men, will not give them leave to be at such long and painful studies as completeness of knowledge doth require.

3. The natural pride of men's hearts will not give them leave to continue so long in a humble sense of their emptiness and ignorance, nor to spend so many years in learning as disciples: but it presently persuadeth them that their first apprehensions are clear and right, and their knowledge very considerable already; and they are as ready to dispute and censure the ignorance of their teachers, if not to teach others themselves, as to learn.

4. The poverty and labours of many, allow them not leisure to search and study so long and seriously, as may bring them to any comprehensive knowledge.

5. The most are not so happy as to have judicious, methodical, and laborious teachers, who may possess them with right principles and methods, but deliver them some truths, with great defectiveness and disorder themselves; and perhaps by their weakness tempt the people into pride, when they see that they are almost as wise as they.

6. Most men are corrupted by company and converse with ignorant, erroneous, and self-conceited men; and hearing others (perhaps that are very zealous) make something of nothing, and make a great matter of a little one, and extolling their own poor and lame conceits, they learn also to think that they are something when they are nothing, deceiving themselves, Gal. vi. 3, 4.

7. Most christians have lost the sense of the need and use of the true ministerial office, as it consisteth in personal counsel and assistance, besides the public teaching; and most ministers by neglecting it, teach them to overlook it.

8. Every man hath some seeming interest in some one opinion, or duty, or way, above the rest; and selfishness causeth him to reel that way that interest leadeth him.

9. Education usually possesseth men with a greater regard of some one opinion, duty, way, or party, than of the rest.

10. The reputation of some good men doth fix others upon some particular ways or notions of theirs above others.

11. Present occasions and necessities sometimes do urge us harder to some means and studies, than to others; especially for the avoiding of some present evil, or easing of some present trouble; and then the rest are almost laid by.

12. Some doctrines deeplier affect us in the hearing, than others; and then the thoughts run more on that, to the neglect of many things as great.

13. Perhaps we have had special experience of some truths and duties, or sins, more than others; and then we set all our thoughts about those only.

14. Usually we live with such as talk most of some one duty, or against some one sin, more than all the rest, and this doth occasion our thoughts to run most in one stream, and confine them by hearing and custom to a narrow channel.

15. Some things in their own quality, are more easy and near to us, and more within the reach of sense. And therefore as corporal things, because of

their sensibility and nearness, do possess the minds of carnal men, instead of things spiritual and unseen; even so Paul, and Apollos, and Cephas, this good preacher and that good book, and this opinion, and that church society, and this or that ordinance, do possess the minds of the more carnal, narrow sort of christians, instead of the harmony of christian truth and holy duty.

16. Nature itself as corrupted, is much more against some truths, and against some duties, internal and external, than against others. And then when those that it is less averse to, are received, men dwell on them, and make a religion of them, wholly or too much, without the rest. As when some veins are stopped, all the blood is turned into the rest; or when one part of the mould is stopped up, the metal all runneth into the rest, and maketh a defective vessel; or when one part of the seal is filled up before, it maketh a defective impression on the wax. Therefore the duties of inward self-denial, humility, mortification, and heavenliness, are almost left out in the religion of the most.

17. Temptations are ever more strong and violent against some duties, than against others, and to some sins, than to others.

18. Most men have a memory, which more easily retaineth some things than others; especially those that are best understood, and which most affect them. And grace cannot live upon forgotten truths.

19. There is no man but in his calling hath more frequent occasion for some graces and duties, and useth them more, and hath more occasions to interrupt and divert his mind from others.

20. The very temperature of the body inclineth some all to fears and grief, and others to love and contentedness of mind: and it vehemently inclineth some to passion, some to their appetite, some to pride, and some to idleness, and some to lust; when others are far less inclined to any of them: and many other providential accidents, do give men more helps to one duty than to another, and putteth many upon the trials which others are never put upon: and all this set together is the reason that few christians are entire or complete, or escape the sin and misery of deformity; or ever use God's graces and their duties, in the order and harmony as they ought.

IV. I shall be brief also in telling you what inferences to raise from hence for your instruction.

1. You may learn hence how to answer the question, Whether all God's graces live and grow in an equal proportion in all true believers? I need to give you no further proof of the negative, than I have laid down before: I once thought otherwise, and was wont to say, as it is commonly said, that in the habit they are proportionable, but not in the act. But this was because I understood not the difference between the particular habits, and the first radical power, inclination, or habit (which I name that the reader may choose his title, that we may not quarrel about mere words). The first principle of holiness in us, is called in Scripture, The Spirit of Christ or of God: in the unity of this are three essential principles, life, light, and love; which are the immediate effects of the heavenly or divine influx upon the three natural faculties of the soul, to rectify them, viz. on the vital power, the intellect, and the will: and are called the Spirit, as the sunshine in the room is called the sun. Now as the sunshine on the earth and plants, is all one in itself as emitted from the sun, light, heat, and moving force concurring, and yet is not equally effective, because of the difference of recipients; and yet every vegetative receiveth a real effect of the heat and motion at least; and sensitives also of the light; but so that one may (by incapacity) have less of the heat, and another less of the motion, and another less of the light: so I conceive that wisdom, love, and life, (or power,) are given by the Spirit to every christian; but so that in the very first principle or effect of the Spirit, one may have more light, another more love, and another more life: but this is accidental from some obstruction in the receiver; otherwise the Spirit would be equally a Spirit of power, (or life,) and of love, and of a sound mind (or light).

But besides this new moral power, or inclination, or universal radical habit, there are abundance of particular habits of grace and duty, much more properly called habits, and less properly called the vital or potential principles of the new creature; there is a particular habit of humility, and another of peaceableness, of gentleness, of patience, of love to one another, of love to the word of God; and many habits of love to several truths and duties: a habit of desire, yea many, as there are many different objects desired; there is a habit of praying, of meditating, of thanksgiving, of mercy, of chastity, of temperance, of diligence, &c. The acts would not vary as they do, if there were not a variety and disposition in these habits; which appear to us only in their acts. We must go against Scripture, reason, and the manifold hourly experience of ourselves, and all the christians in the world, if we will say that all these graces and duties are equal in the habit in every christian. How impotent are some in bridling a passion, or bridling the tongue, or in controlling pride and self-esteem, or in denying the particular desires of their sense, who yet are ready at many other duties, and eminent in them. Great knowledge is too oft with too little charity or zeal; and great zeal and diligence often with as little knowledge. And so in many other instances.

So that if the potentiality of the radical graces of life, light, and love, be or were equal, yet certainly proper and particular habits are not.

But here note further, 1. That no grace is strong where the radical graces, faith and love, are weak: as no part of the body is strong, where the brain and heart are weak; yea, or the naturals, the stomach and liver.

2. The strength of faith and love is the principal means of strengthening all other graces; and of right performing all other duties.

3. Yet are they not alone a sufficient means, but other inferior graces and duties may be weak and neglected, where faith and love are strong; through particular obstructing causes. As some branches of the tree may perish when the root is sound; or some members may have an atrophy, though the brain and heart be not diseased.

4. That the three principles, life, light, and love, do most rarely keep any disproportion; and would never be disproportionable at all, if some things did not hinder the actings of one more than the other, or turn away the soul from the influences and impressions of the Spirit more as to one than to the rest.

2. Hence you may learn, That the image of God is much clearlier and perfectlier imprinted in the holy Scriptures, than in any of our hearts. And that our religion, objectively considered, is much more perfect, than subjectively in us. In Scripture, and in the true doctrinal method, our religion is entire, perfect, and complete; but in us, it is confused, lame, and lamentably imperfect. The sectaries that here say, None of the Spirit's works are imperfect, are not to be regarded: for so they may as well say, that there are none infants, diseased, lame, distracted, poor, or monsters in the world; because none of God's works are imperfect. All that is in God is

God, and therefore perfect; and all that is done by God is perfect as to his ends, and as it is a part in the frame of his own means to that end which man understandeth not: but many things are imperfect in the receiving subject. If not, why should any man ever seek to be wiser or better than he was in his infancy, or at the worst.

3. Therefore we here see that the Spirit in the Scripture is the rule by which we must try the Spirit in ourselves, or any other. The fanatics or enthusiasts, who rail against us, for trying the Spirit by the Scriptures, whenas the Spirit was the author of the Scriptures, do but rave in the dark, and know not what they say. For the essence of the Spirit is every where; and it is the effects of the Spirit in both which we must compare. The Spirit is never contrary to itself: and seeing it is the sunshine which we here call the sun, the question is but, where it shineth most? whether in the Scripture, or in our hearts? The Spirit in the apostles indited the Scriptures, to be the rule of our faith and life unto the end; the Spirit in us doth teach and help us to understand and to obey those Scriptures. Was not the Spirit in a greater measure in the apostles than in us? Did it not work more completely, and unto more infallibility in their writing the Scriptures, than it doth in our understanding and obeying them? Is not the seal perfect, when the impression is oft imperfect? Doth not the master write his copy more perfectly than his scholar's imitation is, though he teach him, yea, and hold his hand? He that knoweth not the religious distractions of this age, will blame me for troubling the reader with the confutation of such dreams; but so will not they that have seen and tasted their effects.

4. Hence we may learn that he that would know what the christian religion is indeed, (to the honour of God, or their own just information,) must rather look into the Scripture to know it, than into believers. For though in believers it be more discernible in the kind, (as men's lives are more conspicuous than laws and precepts, and the impress than the seal, &c.) yet it is in the laws or Scriptures more complete and perfect, when in the best of christians (much more in the most) it is broken, maimed, and confused.

5. This telleth us the reason why it is unsafe to make any men (popes, or councils, or the holiest pastors, or strictest people) the rule either of our faith or lives. Because they are all imperfect and discordant, when the Scripture is concordant and complete. He that is led by them, may err, whenas the Scripture hath no error. And yet it is certain, that even the imperfect knowledge and grace of faithful pastors and companions, is of great use to those that are more imperfect than they, to teach them the Scriptures, which are more perfect than they all.

6. Hence we see why it is, that religion bringeth so much trouble, and so little comfort to the most, or too many that are in part religious; because it is lame and confused in them. Is it any wonder that a displaced bone is painful? or that a disordered body is sick, and hath no great pleasure in life? or that a disordered or maimed watch or clock, doth not go right? Oh what a life of pleasure should we live, if we were but such as the Scripture doth require; and the religion in our hearts and lives were fully agreeable with the religion described in the word of God!

7. And hence we see why most true christians are so querulous, and have always somewhat to complain of and lament; which the senseless or self-justifying hypocrites overlook in themselves. No wonder if such diseased souls complain.

8. And hence we see why there is such diversity and divisions among believers, and such abundance of sects, and parties, and contentions, and so little unity, peace, and concord. And why all attempts for unity take so little in the church; because they have all such weakness, and distempers, and lameness, and confusedness, and great disproportions in their religion. Do you wonder why he liveth not in peace, and concord, and quietness with others, who hath no better agreement in himself? and no more composedness and true peace at home? Men's grace and parts are much unequal.

9. And hence we see why there are so many scandals among christians, to the great dishonour of true christianity, and the great hinderance of the conversion of the infidel, heathen, and ungodly world. What wonder if some disorder, falsehood, and confusion appear without, in words and deeds, when there is so much ever dwelling in the mind!

10. Lastly, Hence we may learn what to expect from particular persons, and what to look for also publicly, in the church and in the world. He that knoweth not what man is, and what godly men are, but as well as I do, will hardly expect a concordant, uniform building to be made of such discordant and uneven materials; or that a set of strings, which are all, or almost all, out of tune, should make any harmonious melody; or that a number of infants should constitute an army of valiant men; or that a company that can scarce spell or read, should constitute a learned academy. God must make a change upon individual persons, if ever he will make a great change in the church. They must be more wise, and charitable, and peaceable christians, who must make up that happy church state, and settle that amiable peace, and serve God in that concordant harmony, as all of us desire, and some expect.

CHAPTER XII.

How to use faith against particular sins.

The most that I have to say of this, is to be gathered from what went before, about sanctification in the general. And because I have been so much longer than I intended, you must bear with my necessary brevity in the rest.

Direct. 1. When temptation setteth actual sin before you, or inward sin keeps up within, look well on God and sin together. Let faith see God's holiness and justice, and all that wisdom, goodness, and power, which sin despiseth. And one such believing sight of God, is enough to make you look at sin, as at the devil himself; as the most ugly thing.

Direct. 2. Set sin and the law of God together; and then it will appear to be exceeding sinful; and to be the crooked fruit of the tempting serpent. You cannot know sin, but by the law, Rom. vii. 14, &c.

Direct. 3. Set sin before the cross of Christ: let faith sprinkle his blood upon it, and it will die and wither. See it still as that which killed your Lord; and that which pierced his side, and hanged him up in such contempt; and put the gall and vinegar to his mouth.

Direct. 4. Forget not the sorrows and fears of your conversion (if you are indeed converted); or (if not) at least the sorrows and fears which you must feel if ever you be converted. God doth purposely cast us into grief and terrors, for our former sins, that it may make us the more careful to sin no more, lest worse

befall us. If the pangs of the new birth were sharp and grievous to you, why will you again renew the cause, and drink of those bitter waters? Remember what a mad and sad condition you were in while you lived according to the flesh, and how plainly you saw it when your eyes were opened! And would you be in the same condition again? Would you be unsanctified, and unjustified, and unpardoned, and unsaved? Every wilful sin is a turning backward, toward the state of your former captivity and misery.

Direct. 5. When Satan sets the bait before you, let faith always set heaven and hell before you, and take all together, the end with the beginning. And think when you are tempted to lie, to steal, to deceive, to lust, to pride, to gulosity or drunkenness, &c. what men are now suffering for these same sins! and what all that are in hell and in heaven do think of them! Suppose a man offered you a cup of wine, and a friend telleth you, I saw him put poison into it, and therefore take heed what you do. If the offerer were an enemy, you would hardly take it. The world, and the flesh, and the devil, are enemies: when they offer you the delights of sin, hear faith, and it will tell you, there is poison in it; there is sin, and hell, and God's displeasure in it.

Direct. 6. Let faith keep you under the continual apprehensions of the divine authority and rule; that as a child, a servant, a scholar, a subject, doth still know that he is not masterless, but one that must be ruled by the will or law of his superior; so may you always live with the yoke of Christ upon your necks, and his bridle in your mouths; remembering also that you are still in your Master's eye.

Direct. 7. Remember still that it is the work of faith to overcome the world and the flesh, and to overrule your sense and appetite; and to make nothing of all that would stand up against your heavenly interest; and to crucify it by the cross of Christ, Gal. vi. 14; v. 24; Rom. viii. 1, 9, 10, 13. Set faith therefore upon its proper work; and when you live by faith, and walk after the Spirit, you will not live by sight, nor walk after the flesh, 2 Cor. v. 7.

Direct. 8. It is also the work of faith to take off all the masks of sin, and open its nakedness and shame, and cast by all shifts, pretences, and excuses. When Satan saith, It is a little one, and the danger is not great, and it will serve thy pleasure, profit, or preferment; faith should say, Doth not God forbid it? There is no dallying with the fire of God: "Be not deceived, man; God will not be mocked! Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. If you sow to the flesh, of the flesh you shall reap corruption," Gal. vi. When Satan saith, "Ye shall not die;" and when the sinner with Adam hideth himself, faith will call him out to judgment, and say, "What hast thou done? Hast thou eaten the fruit which God forbade?"

Direct. 9. Let faith still keep you busied in your Master's work. Nothing breedeth and feedeth sin so much as idleness of mind and life: sins of omission have this double mischief, that they are the first part of Satan's game themselves, and they also bring in sins of commission. When men are not taken up with good, they are at leisure for temptations to entice them; and they set open their doors to the tempter, and tell him he may speak with them when he will. Wanton thoughts, and covetous thoughts, may dwell there when better thoughts are absent. But when you are so wholly taken up with your duty, (spiritual or corporal,) and so constantly and industriously busy in your proper work, sin cannot enter, nor Satan find you at leisure for his service.

Direct. 10. Let faith make God's service pleasant to you, and lose not your delight in God and godliness, and then you will not relish sinful pleasures. You will find no need of such base delights, when you live on the foretaste of angelical pleasures. You will not be easily drawn to steal a morsel of dung or poison from the devil's table, while you daily feast your souls on Christ; or to steal the onions of Egypt, when you dwell in a land that floweth with milk and honey. But while you keep yourselves in the wilderness, you will be tempted to look back again to Egypt. The great cause of men's sinning, and yielding to the temptations of forbidden pleasures, is because they are negligent to live upon the pleasures of believers.

Direct. 11. Take heed of the beginnings, if ever you would escape the sin. No man becometh stark naught at the first step. He that beginneth to take one pleasing unprofitable cup or bit, intendeth not drunkenness and gluttony in the grossest sense; but he hath set fire in the thatch, though he did not intend to burn his house; and it will be harder to quench it, than to have forborne at first. He that beginneth but with lascivious dalliance, speeches, or embraces, thinketh not to proceed to filthy fornication; but he might better have secured his conscience, if he had never meddled so far with sin. Few ruinating, damning sins, began any otherwise than with such small approaches, as seemed to have little harm or danger.

Direct. 12. If ever you will escape sin, keep off from strong temptations and opportunities. He that will be still near the fire or water, may be burnt or drowned at last. No man is long safe in the midst of danger, and at the next step to ruin. He that liveth in a tavern or ale-house, had need to be very averse to tippling; and he that sitteth at Dives' table, had need to be very averse to gulosity; and he that is in the least danger of the fire of lust, must keep at a sufficient distance, not only from the bed, and from immodest actions, but from secret company and opportunities of sin, and from a licentious, ungoverned eye and imagination. This caused Christ to say, How hard it is for the rich to be saved! because they have a stronger fleshly interest to keep them from Christ and godliness, which must be denied; and because their sin hath plentiful provision, and the fire of concupiscence wanteth no fuel, and it is a very easy thing to them still to sin, and always a hard thing to avoid it: and man's sluggish nature will hardly long either hold on in that which is hardly done, or forbear that which is still hard to forbear. Good must be made sweet and easy to us, or else we shall never be constant in it.

Direct. 13. If you find any difficulty in forsaking any disgraceful sin, cherish it not by secrecy; but, 1. Plainly confess it to your bosom friend; and, 2. If that will not serve, to others also, that you may have the greater engagements to forbear.

I know wisdom must be used in such confessions, and they must be avoided when the hurt will prove greater than the good. But fleshly wisdom must be no counsellor, and fleshly interest must not prevail. Secrecy is the nest of sin, where it is kept warm, and hidden from disgrace; turn it out of this nest, and it will the sooner perish. God's eye and knowledge should serve turn; but when it will not, let man know it also, and turn one sin against another, and let the love of reputation help to subdue the love of lust. Opening a sin (yea, or a strong temptation to a sin) doth lay an engagement in point of common credit in the world, upon them that were before under the divine engagements only. It will be a double shame to sin when once it is known. And as Christ speaketh of a right hand, or eye, so may I of

your honour in this case; it is better to go to heaven with the shame of a penitent confession, than to keep your honour till you are in hell. The loss of men's good opinion is an easy price, to prevent the loss of your salvation. Prov. xxviii. 13, "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." So 1 John i. 9, 10; James v. 15, 16.

Direct. 14. Especially take heed of heinous sins, called mortal, because inconsistent with sincerity.

Direct. 15. And take heed of those sins which yourselves or others that fear God are in greatest danger of; of which I will speak a little more distinctly.

CHAPTER XIII.

WHAT SINS THE BEST SHOULD MOST WATCHFULLY AVOID. AND WHEREIN THE INFIRMITIES OF THE UPRIGHT DIFFER FROM THE MORTAL SINS.

Quest. What sins are religious people who fear sin most in danger of? And where must they set the strongest watch?

Answ. 1. They are much in danger of those sins, the temptations to which are near, and importunate, and constant, and for which they have the greatest opportunities: they have senses and appetites as well as others; and if the bait be great and always as at their very mouths, even a David, a Solomon, a Noah, is not safe.

2. They are in danger of those sins which they little think of; for it is a sign that they are not forewarned and fortified; nor have they overcome that sin; for victory here is never got at so cheap a rate: especially as to inward sins. If it have not cost you many a groan, and many a day's diligence, to conquer selfishness, pride, and appetite, it is twenty to one they are not conquered.

3. They are much in danger of those sins which they extenuate, and count to be smaller than they are. For indeed their hearts are infected already, by those false and favourable thoughts. And they are prepared to entertain a nearer familiarity with them. Men are easily tempted upon a danger which seemeth small.

4. They are much in danger of those sins, which their constitutions and temperature of body doth incline them to; and therefore must here keep a double watch. No small part of the punishment of our original sin (both as from Adam, and from our nearest parents) is found in the ill complexion of our bodies: the temperature of some inclineth them vehemently to passion; and of others unto lust; and of others to sloth and dulness; and of others to gulosity, &c. And grace doth not immediately change this distemper of the complexion; but only watch over it, and keep it under, and abate it consequently, by contrary actions and mental dispositions: therefore we shall have here incessant work, while we are in the body. Though yet the power of grace by long and faithful use, will bring the very sense, and imagination, and passions into so much calmness, as to be far less raging, and easily ruled: as a well-ridden horse will obey the rider; and even dogs and other brutes will strive but little against our government: and then our work will grow more easy. For, as Seneca saith, *Maxima pars libertatis est bene moratus venter*, A good-conditioned belly is a great part of a man's liberty; meaning, an ill-conditioned belly is a great part of men's slavery. And the same may be said of all the senses, fantasy, and passions in their respective places.

5. We are much in danger of the sins which our callings, trades, and worldly interest do most and constantly tempt us to. Every man hath a carnal interest, which is his great temptation; and every wise man will know it, and there set a double watch. The carnal interest of a preacher, is applause or preferment. The carnal interest of rulers and great men, I shall pass by; but they must not pass it by themselves. The carnal interest of lawyers and tradesmen, is their gain, &c. Here we must keep a constant watch.

6. We are much in danger of those sins, the matter of which is somewhat good and lawful, and the danger lieth only in the manner, circumstances, or degree. For there the lawfulness of the matter occasioneth men to forget the accidental evil. The whole kingdom feeleth the mischief of this, in instances which I will now pass by. If eating such or such a meat were not lawful itself, men would not be so easily drawn to gluttony. If drinking wine were not a lawful thing, the passage to drunkenness were not so open. The apprehension that a lusory lot is a lawful thing (as cards, dice, &c.) doth occasion the heinous sin of time-wasting and estate-wasting gamesters. If apparel were not lawful, excess would not be so easily endured. Yea, the goodness of God's own worship quieteth many in its great abuse.

7. We are much in danger of those sins, which are not in any great disgrace among those persons whom we most honour and esteem. It is a great mercy to have sin lie under a common odium and disgrace; as swearing, and drunkenness, and cursing, and fornication, and popish errors, and superstition, is now amongst the forwardest professors in England: for here conscience is most awakened, and helped by the opinion of men; or if there be some carnal respect to our reputation in it sometimes, yet it tendeth to suppress the sin: and it is a great plague to live where any great sin is in little disgrace (as the profanation of the Lord's day in most of the reformed churches beyond sea; and they say, tippling, if not drunkenness, in Germany; and as backbiting and evil-speaking against those that differ from them, is among the professors in England, for too great a part; and also many superstitions of their own; and dividing principles and practices).

8. But especially if the greater number of godly people live in such a sin, then is the temptation great indeed; and it is but few of the weaker sort, that are not carried down that stream. The Munster case, and the rebellion in which Munster perished in Germany, and many others; but especially abundance of schisms from the apostles' days till now; are too great evidences of men's sociableness in sinning. "We all like sheep have gone astray, and turned every one to his own way," Isa. liii. 6. And like sheep in this, that if one that is leading get over the hedge, all the rest will follow after; but especially if the greater part be gone. And do not think that our churches are infallible, and that the greater part of the godly cannot err, or be in the wrong; for that would be but to do as the papists, when we have sinned by fallibility, to keep off repentance by the conceit of infallibility.

9. We are in great danger of sinning, in cases where we are ignorant: for who can avoid the danger which he seeth not? and who can walk safely in the dark? Therefore we see that it is the ignoranter sort of christians, and such as Paul calleth

novices, that most err; especially when pride accompanieth ignorance, for then they fall into the special condemnation of the devil, 1 Tim. iii. 6. Study therefore painfully and patiently till you understand the truth.

10. But above all, we are in danger of those sins which are masked with a pretence of the greatest truths and duties, and use to be fathered on God and Scripture; and go under the specious titles of holiness and of free grace. For here it is the understanding chiefly that resisteth, while the very names and pretences secretly steal in, and bring them into love and reverence with the will. And the poor honest christian is afraid of resisting them, lest it should prove a resisting God. What can be so false that a man will not plead for, if he take it to be a necessary truth of God? And what can be so bad that a man will not do, if he take it once to be of God's commanding? The foresaid instances of the Munster and German actions, with those of the followers of David George in Holland, (who took himself to be the Holy Ghost, or the immediate prophet of his kingdom,) and Hacket and his Grundletonians; and the familists, the ranters, the seekers, the quakers, the church dividers, and the kingdom and state overturners in England, have given so great a demonstration of this, that it is not lawful to overlook it or forget it. "The time cometh, that they that kill you shall think that they do God service," John xvi. 2. And then who can expect that their consciences should avoid it? Why did Paul persecute the christians, and compel them to blaspheme? Because he verily thought that he ought to do many things against the name of Jesus, Acts xxvi. 9. Oh! it is religious sins which we are in danger of! such as come to us as in the name of God, and Christ, and the Spirit; such as pretend that we cannot be saved without them; and such as plead the holy Scriptures: such as James iii. is written against, when a wisdom from beneath, which is earthly, sensual, and devilish, working by envy and strife, unto confusion and every evil work, pretendeth to be the wisdom from above; when zeal consumeth love and unity, under pretence of consuming sin; which made Paul and John require us not to "believe every spirit, but to try the spirits whether they be of God," 1 John iv. 1—3; 2 Thess. ii. 2; 1 Thess. v. 20, 21. And made Paul say, "If an angel from heaven bring you another gospel, let him be accursed," Gal. i. 7, 8. And more plainly, 2 Cor. xi. 13, 14, "Such are false apostles; deceitful workers; transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ:" and no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light; therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works. And, Acts xx. 30, "Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." And what need any disciple of Christ greater warning, than to remember that their Saviour himself was thus assaulted by the devil in his temptation with "It is written."

Yet let no papist hence take occasion to vilify the Scripture, because it is made a plea for sin: for so he might as well vilify human reason, which is pleaded for all the errors in the world; and vilify the law, because lawyers plead it for ill causes; yea, and vilify God himself, because the same and other sinners plead his will and authority for their sins: when contrarily, it is a great proof of the Scripture authority and honour, that Satan himself, and his subtilest instruments, do place their greatest hope of prevailing, by perverting and misapplying it; which could be of no use to them, if its authority were not acknowledged.

11. We are in constant danger of those sins which we think we can conceal from men: therefore suppose still that all that you do will be made known; and do all as in the open streets. It is written (by two) in the life of holy Ephrem Syrus, that when a harlot tempted him to uncleanness, he desired but that he might choose the place; which she consenting to, he chose the open market-place, among all the people: and when she told him, that there they should be shamed, for all would see; he told her such a lesson of sinning in the sight of God, who is every where, as was the means of her conversion. Conceit of secrecy imboldeneth to sin.

12. We are in constant danger of sins of sudden passion and irruption, which allow us not season to deliberate, and surprise us before our reason can consider.

13. We are in danger of sins that come on by insensible degrees, and from small beginnings creep upon us, and come not by any sudden wakening assaults: thus pride, and covetousness, and ambition, do infect men: and thus our zeal and diligence for God, doth usually decay.

14. Lastly, We are in much danger of all sins which require a constant, vigorous diligence to resist them; and of omitting those duties, or that part or mode of duty, which must have a constant, vigorous diligence to perform it; because feeble souls are hardly kept (as is aforesaid) to constant, vigorous diligence.

Quest. 2. Wherein differeth the sins of the sanctified person from other men's that are unsanctified?

Answ. 1. In a sanctified man the habitual bent of his will is ever more against sin than for it; however he be tempted into that particular act.

2. And as to the act also, it is ever contrary to the scope and tenor of his life; which is for God and sincere obedience.

3. He hath no sin which is inconsistent with the true love of God, in the predominant habit: it never turneth his heart to another end, or happiness, or master.

4. Therefore it is more a sin of passion, than of settled interest and choice. He is more liable to a hasty passion, or word, or unruly thoughts, than to any prevalent covetousness or ambition, or any sin which is a possessing of the heart instead of God, 1 John ii. 15; James iii. 2. Though some remainders of these are in him, they prevail not so far as sudden passions.

5. There are some sins which are more easily in the power of the will, so that a man that is but truly willing, may forbear them; as a drunkard may pass by the tavern or ale-house, or forbear to touch the cup; and the fornicator to come near, or commit the sin, if they be truly willing: but there be other sins which a man can hardly forbear though he be willing; because they are the sins of those faculties over which the will hath not a despotical power: as a man may be truly willing to have no sluggishness, heaviness, sleepiness at prayer, no forgetfulness, no wandering thoughts, no inordinate appetite or lust at all stirring in him, no sudden passions of anger, grief, or fear; he may be willing to love God perfectly, to fear him and obey him perfectly, but cannot. These latter are the ordinary infirmities of the godly: the former sort are, if at all, his extraordinary falls; Rom. vii. 14, to the end.

6. Lastly, The true christian riseth by unfeigned repentance, when his conscience hath but leisure and helps to deliberate, and to bethink him what he hath done. And his repentance much better resolv-

eth and strengtheneth him against his sin for the time to come.

To sum up all; 1. Sin more loved than hated; 2. Sin wilfully lived in, which might be avoided by the sincerely willing; 3. Sin made light of, and not truly repented of when it is committed; 4. And any sin inconsistent with habitual love to God, in predominancy; is mortal, or a sign of spiritual death, and none of the sins of sanctified believers.

CHAPTER XIV.

HOW TO LIVE BY FAITH IN PROSPERITY.

The work of faith in respect of prosperity, is twofold: 1. To save us from the danger of it. 2. To help us to a sanctified improvement of it.

1. And for the first, that which faith doth, is especially, 1. To see deeper and further into the nature of all things in the world, than sense can do; 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18; 1 Cor. vii. 29—31. To see that they were never intended for our rest or portion, but to be our wilderness-provision in our way. To foresee just how the world will use us, and leave us at the last; and to have the very same thoughts of it now, as we foresee we shall have when the end is come, and when we have had all that ever the world will do for us. It is the work of faith, to cause a man to judge of the world, and all its glory, as we shall do when death and judgment come, and have taken off the mask of splendid names, and shows, and flatteries: that we may use the world as if we used it not, and possess it as if we possessed it not, because its fashion doth pass away. It is the work of faith to crucify the world to us, and us to the world by the cross of Christ, Gal. vi. 14; that we may look on it as disdainfully as the world looked upon Christ, when he hanged as forsaken on the cross. That when it is dead, it may have no power on us; and when we are dead to it, we may have no inordinate love, or care, or thoughts, or fears, or grief, or labour to lay out upon it. It is the work of faith to make all worldly pomp and glory to be to us but loss, and dross, and dung, in comparison of Christ, and the righteousness of faith, Phil. iii. 7—9. And then no man will part with heaven for dung, nor set God below his dung, nor further from his heart; nor will he feel any great power in temptations to honour, wealth, or pleasure, if really he count them all but dung; nor will he wound his conscience, or betray his peace, or cast away his innocency for them.

2. Faith showeth the soul those sure, and great, and glorious things, which are infinitely more worthy of our love and labour. And this is its highest and most proper work, Heb. xi. It conquereth earth by opening heaven; and showing it us as sure, and clear, and near. And no man will dote on this deceitful world, till he have turned away his eyes from God; and till heaven be out of his sight and heart. Faith saith, I must shortly be with Christ; and what then are these dying things to me? I have better things, which God that cannot lie hath promised me with Christ, Titus i. 2; Heb. vi. 18. I look every day when I am called in. "The Judge standeth before the door," James v. 9. "The Lord is at hand," Phil. iv. 5. And "the end of all these things is at hand," 1 Pet. iv. 7. And shall I set my heart on that which is not?

Therefore when the world doth smile and flatter, faith setteth heaven against all that it can say or offer. And what is the world when heaven stands by? Faith seeth what the blessed souls above possess, at the same time while the world is alluring us to forsake it; Luke xvi.; Heb. xi.; xii. 1, 2, &c. Faith setteth the heart upon the things above, as our concernment, our only hope and happiness: it kindleth that love of God in the soul, and that delight in higher things, which powerfully queneh worldly love, and mortifieth all our carnal pleasures; Matt. vi. 20, 21; Col. iii. 1—4; Rom. viii. 5—7; Phil. iii. 20, 21.

3. Faith showeth the soul those wants and miseries in itself, which nothing in the world is able to supply and cure. Nay, such as the world is apter to increase. It is not gold that will quench his thirst, who longs for pardon, grace, and glory. A guilty conscience, a sinful and condemned soul, will never be cured by riches, or high places, by pride, or fleshly sports and pleasures, James v. 1—3. This humbling work is not in vain.

3. Faith looketh to Christ, who hath overcome the world, and carefully treadeth in his steps, John xvi. 33; Heb. xii. 2—5. It looketh to his person, his birth, his life, his cross, his grave, and his resurrection: to all that strange example of contempt of worldly things which he gave us from his manger, to his shameful kind of death. And he that studieth the life of Christ, will either despise the world, or him. He will either vilify the world in imitation of his Lord, or vilify Christ for the pleasures of the world. Faith hath in this warfare the surest and most honourable Guide, the ablest Captain, and the most powerful example in all the world. And it hath with Christ an unerring rule, which furnisheth him with armour for every use. Yea, it hath through him a promise of victory before it be attained; so that in the beginning of the fight, it knows the end, Rom. xvi. 20; John xvi. 33. It goeth to Christ for that Spirit which is our strength, Ephes. vi. 10; Col. ii. 7. And by that it mortifieth the desires of the flesh; and when the flesh is mortified, the world is conquered; for it is loved only as it is the provision of the flesh.

5. Moreover, faith doth observe God's particular providence, who distributeth his talents to every man as he pleaseth, and disposeth of their estates and comforts; so that the "race is not to the swift, nor the victory to the strong, nor riches to men of understanding," Eccles. ix. 11.

Therefore it convinceth us, that our lives and all being in his hand, it is our wisdom to make it our chiefest care to use all so as is most pleasing unto him, 2 Cor. v. 8. It foreseeth also the day of judgment, and teacheth us to use our prosperity and wealth, as we desire to hear of it in the day of our accounts. Faith is a provident and a vigilant grace, and useth to ask when we have any thing in possession, Which way may I make the best advantage of it for my soul? Which way will be most comfortable to me in my last review? How shall I wish that I had used my time, my wealth, my power, when time is at an end, and all these transitory things are vanished?

6. And faith doth so absolutely devote and subject the soul to God, that it will suffer us to do nothing (so far as it prevaileth) but what is for him, and by his consent. It telleth us that we are not our own, but his; and that we have nothing but what we have received; and that we must be just in giving God his own: and therefore it first asketh, Which way may I best serve and honour God with all that he hath given me? Not only with my substance, and the first-fruits of mine increase, but with

all, 1 Cor. x. 31. When love and devotion hath delivered up ourselves entirely to God, it keeps nothing back, but delivereth him all things with ourselves; even as Christ with himself doth give us all things, Rom. viii. 32. And faith doth so much subject the soul to God, that it maketh us like servants and children, that use not their master's or parent's goods at their own pleasure; but ask him first, how he would have us use them. "Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do?" is one of the first words of a converted soul, Acts ix. 6. In a word, faith writeth out that charge upon the heart, "Love not the world nor the things that are in the world (the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life). For if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. Ye cannot serve God and mammon," 1 John ii. 15.

But on this subject Mr. Allcine hath said so much in his excellent book of the "Victory of Faith over the World," that I shall at this time say no more.

The directions which I would give you in general, for preservation from the danger of prosperity by faith, are these that follow.

Direct. 1. Remember still that the common cause of men's damnation is their love of this world more than God and heaven; and that the world cannot undo you any other way, but by tempting you to overlove it, and to undervalue higher things: and therefore that is the most dangerous condition, which maketh the world seem most pleasing and most lovely to us. And can you believe this, and yet be so eager to be humoured, and to have all things fitted to your pleasure and desires? Mark here what a task faith hath! and mark what the work of self-denial is! The worldling must be pleased; the believer must be saved. The worldling must have his flesh and fancy gratified; the believer must have heaven secured, and God obeyed. Men sell not their souls for sorrow, but for mirth; they forsake not heaven for poverty, but for riches; they turn not away from God for the love of sufferings and dishonour, but for the love of pleasure, preferments, dignities, and estimation in the world. And is that state better and more desirable, for which all that perish turn from God, and sell their souls, and are befooled and undone for ever? or that which no man ever sinned for, nor forsook God for, or was undone for? Read over this question once and again, and mark what answer your hearts give to it, if you would know whether you live by sense or faith. And mark what contrary answers the flesh and faith will give to it, when it comes to practice! I say, though many sin in poverty, and in sufferings, and in disgrace, yea, and by occasion of them, and by their temptations, yet no man ever sinned for them. They are none of the bait that stole away the heart from God. Set deep upon your heart the sense of the danger of a prosperous state, and fear and vigilancy will help to save you.

Direct. 2. Imprint upon your memory the characters of this deadly sin of worldliness, that so you may not perish by it, whilst you dream that you are free from it; but may always see how far it doth prevail. Here, therefore, to help you, I will set before you the characters of this sin; and I will but briefly name them, lest I be tedious because they are many.

1. The great mark of damning worldliness is, when God and heaven are not loved and preferred before the pleasures, and profits, and honours of the world.

2. Another is, when the world is esteemed and used more for the service and pleasure of the flesh, than to honour God, and to do good with, and to further our salvation. When men desire great places and riches, more to please their appetites and carnal minds with, than to benefit others, or to serve the Lord with; when they are not rich to God, but to themselves, Luke xii. 20, 21.

3. It is a mark of some degree of worldliness, to desire a greater measure of riches and honour, than our spiritual work, and ends, and benefit do require: for when we are convinced that less is as good or better to our highest ends, and yet we would have more, it is a sign that the rest is desired for the flesh; Rom. xiii. 14; viii. 8—10, 13.

4. When our desires after worldly things are too eager and violent; when we must needs have them, and cannot be without them; 1 Tim. vi. 9.

5. When our contrivances for the world are too solicitous, and our cares for it take up an undue proportion of our time; Matt. vi. 24, 25, to the end.

6. When we are impatient under want, dishonour, or disappointments, and live in trouble and discontent, if we want much, or have not our wills.

7. When the thoughts of the world are proportionably so many more than our thoughts of heaven, and our salvation, that they keep us in the neglect of the duty of meditation, and keep empty our minds of holy things; Matt. vi. 21.

8. When it turneth our talk all towards the world, or taketh up our freest, and our sweetest and most serious words, and leaveth us to the use of seldom, dull, or formal, or affected words, about the things which should profit the soul, and glorify our great Creator.

9. When the world encroacheth upon God's part in our families, and thrusts out prayer, or the reading of the Scriptures, or the due instruction of children or servants: when it cometh in upon the Lord's day: when it is intruding in God's worship, and at sermon, or prayer, our thoughts are more pleasingly running out after some worldly thing, than kept in attendance upon God; Ezek. xxxiii. 31.

10. When worldly prosperity is so sweet to you, that it can keep you quiet under the guilt of wilful sin, and in the midst of all the dangers of your souls. Because you have your heart's desire awhile, you can forget eternity, or bear those thoughts of it with security, which otherwise would amaze your souls; Luke xii. 19, 20.

11. When the peace and pleasure which you daily live upon, is fetched more from the world, than from God and heaven; so that if at any time you ask yourselves the true reason of your peace, and whence it is that you rise and lie down in quietness of mind, your consciences must tell you, it is not so much from your belief of the love of God in Christ, nor from your hope to live in heaven for ever, as because you feel yourself well in body, and live at ease and prosperity in the world: and when any mirth or joy possesseth you, you may easily feel, that it is more from something which is grateful to your flesh, than from the belief of everlasting glory.

12. When you think too highly and pleasingly of the condition of the rich, and too meanly of the state of poor believers: when you make too great a difference between the rich and the poor, and say to the man with the gold ring and the gay apparel, "Come up hither; and to the poor, Sit there at my footstool;" James iv. v. When you had rather be made like the rich and honourable in the world, than like the poor that are more holy; and think with more delight of being like lords or great men in the world, than of being more like to humble, heavenly believers.

13. When you are at the heart more thankful to one that giveth you lands or money, than to God for giving you Christ and the Scriptures, and the means of grace; and would be better pleased if you were

advanced or enriched by the king, than to think of being sanctified by the Spirit of Christ. And when you give God himself more hearty thanks for worldly than for spiritual things.

14. When you make too much ado for the things of the world; and labour for them with inordinate industry; or plunge yourselves into unnecessary business as one that can never have or do enough.

15. When you are too much in expecting liberality, kindnesses, and gifts from others; and are too much pleased in it; and grudge at all that goeth beside you; and think that it is men's duty to mind all your concernments, and further your commodity more than other men's.

16. When you are selfish and partial about worldly interest, and have little sense of your neighbours' concernments in comparison of your own. If one give never so liberally to many others, and give nothing to you, it doth never the more content you, nor reconcile your mind to the charity of the giver. If one give to you, and pass by many that have more need, you love and honour the bounty which satisfieth your own desires. If you sell dear you rejoice; and if you buy cheap, you are glad of your good bargain, though perhaps the seller be poorer than you. He that wrongeth you, or any way hindereth your commodity, is always a bad man in your esteem; no virtue will save him from your censures and reproach: but he that dealeth as hardly by your neighbour, and well with you, is a very honest man, and worthy of your praise.

17. When you are quarrelsome for worldly things, and the love of them can at any time break your charity and peace, and make an enemy of your nearest friend; or engage you in causeless lawsuits and contentions. What abundance doth the world set together by the ears!

18. When you can see your poor brother or neighbour in want, and shut up the bowels of your compassion from him; and do little good with what God hath given you, but the flesh and self devoureth all.

19. When you will venture upon unlawful ways of getting; or will sin for honour or commodity; or at least will let go your innocency and conscience, rather than lose your prosperity in the world; and will distinguish yourselves out of every danger, or costly duty, or suffering for righteousness' sake; and will prove every thing lawful, which seemeth necessary to the prosperity and safety of the flesh.

20. When you are more careful to provide riches and honours for your children after you, than to save them from worldliness, voluptuousness, and pride, and to bring them up to be the heirs of heaven; and had rather venture their souls in the most dangerous temptations, than abate any of their plenty or grandeur in the world.

These be the plain marks of worldly minds, whatever a blinded heart may devise to hide them.

Direct. 3. Take heed of those blinding pretences which worldly minds do commonly use, to flatter, deceive, and undo themselves. For instance,

1. The most common pretence is, That God's creatures are good, and prosperity is his blessing, and that our bodies must be cherished, and that cynical and eremitical extremes and austerities are far from the genius of true christianity.

There is truth in all this, or else it would not be so fit to be made a cloak for sin by misapplication. The world and all God's works are good; and to the pure they are pure; to the sanctified they are sanctified; that is, they are devoted to the service of God, and used for him from whom they come: God hath given us nothing which may not be used for his service, and our salvation. No doubt but you may make you friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, to further your reception into the everlasting habitations; you may lay up a good foundation for the time to come; and you may sow to the Spirit, and reap in the end everlasting life, Gal. vi. You may provide you bags that wax not old. You may please God by the sacrifices of distributing and communicating, Heb. xiii. But yet I must tell you, the world, and all God's creatures in it, are too good to be sacrificed to the flesh and to the devil; and not good enough to be loved and preferred before God, and your innocency and salvation.

The body must be cherished, but yet the flesh must be subdued; and if you live after it you shall die. Health and alacrity must be preserved, because they make you fit for duty; but wanton appetites must be restrained, and no provision must be made for the flesh, to satisfy its lusts, (or wills,) Rom. xiii. 14. It must be cherished as your horse or servant for his work; but it must not be pampered, and made unruly, or your master. You may seek food for your necessity and use; and ask of God your daily bread, Matt. vi.; Psal. cxlv.; but you may not, with the Israelites, ask meat for your lust, as being weary of eating manna so long, Psal. lxxviii. Hurting your health by useless austerities, is not pleasing unto God; but sensuality, and flesh-pleasing, and love of the world, is nevertheless abominable in his sight.

Object. 2. Necessity makes me mind the world. I have children to maintain, and am in debt, and cannot pay every one his own.

Answ. Whether you have necessity or not, you ought to labour faithfully in your callings; but no necessity will excuse your worldly love and cares. What will the love of the world do towards the supply of your necessities? or what will your eager desires and your cares do, more than the labours and quiet forecast of one that hath a contented mind? Surely in reason, the less you have in the world, and the harder your condition is, the less you should love it, and the more you should abound in care and diligence, to make sure of a better world hereafter.

Object. 3. I covet no man's but my own.

Answ. 1. Why then are you so glad of good bargains, or of gifts? 2. But what if you do not? You covet to have more to be your own than God allotteth you. Perhaps you have already as much as your flesh knoweth what to do with, and therefore need not covet more. But will this excuse you for loving your riches more than God? The question is not now, what you covet, but what you love. If the world hath your hearts, the devil hath your lives; for it is by the world that he deceiveth souls: and do you think then that you are fit to dwell with God? "Know ye not that the love of the world is enmity to God?" and that if "ye will be friends of the world, you are God's enemies?" James iv. 4.

Object. 4. It is not by any unlawful means that I desire to grow rich. I wait on God in my lawful labour, and crave his blessing.

Answ. It is not now your getting, but your loving the world that I am speaking of. If your hearts be more set on your riches or prosperity than on God, and the world by loving it be made your idol, you do but turn prayer and labour into sin, (though they be good in themselves,) while you abuse them to your ungodly, worldly ends.

What wretched muckworm would not pray, if he believed that praying would make him rich? I warrant you then their tune would be turned. They would not cry out, What needeth all this praying? If God would give them money for the asking, they would quickly learn to pray without book, and long

prayers would come into request, upon the Pharisees' old account. Can any thing in the world be more unlawful and abominable, than to love the flesh and the world above God and heaven? And yet do you say that you get not your wealth by any thing that is unlawful?

Object. 5. But I am contented with my condition, and desire no more.

Answ. So is a swine when his belly is full. But the question is, Whether heaven and holiness, or the worldly condition which you are in, seem more lovely to you?

Object. 6. I give God thanks for all I have.

Answ. So would every beggar in the country give God thanks if he would make them rich. Some drunkards and gluttons, and some malicious people, do give God thanks for satisfying their sinful lusts. This is but adding hypocrisy to your sin, and to aggravate it by profaning the name of God, by thanking him as a cherisher of your lusts. But the question is, Whether you love God for himself, and as your Sanctifier, better than you do the gratifying of your flesh?

Object. 7. But I give something to the poor, and I mean to leave them something at my death.

Answ. So it is like the miserable gentleman did, in Luke xvi. Or else why would Lazarus lie at his gates, if he used not to give something to the poor? What worldling or hypocrite is there that will not drop now and then an alms, while he pampereth his flesh, and satisfieth his desires? Do you look to be saved for doing as a swine will do, in leaving that which he can neither eat nor carry away with him? The question is, Whether God or the world have your hearts? and what it is you must delight in as your treasure?

Object. 8. I am fully satisfied that heaven is better than earth, and God than the creature, and holiness than the prosperity or pleasure of the flesh.

Answ. Thousands of miserable worldlings are satisfied in opinion that this is true. They can say the same words that a true believer doth; and in dispute they can defend them, and call the contrary opinion blasphemy. But all this is but a dreaming speculation: their hearts never practically preferred God, and holiness, and heaven, as most suitable and best for them. Mark what you love best, and most long after, and most delight in, and what it is that you are lothest to leave, and what it is that you most eagerly labour for, and there you may see what it is that hath your hearts.

Object. 9. Worldliness is indeed a heinous sin, and of all people, I most hate the covetous; and I use to preach or talk against it, more than against any sin.

Answ. So do many thousands that are slaves to it themselves, and shall be damned for it. It is easier to talk against it, than to forsake it. And it is easy to hate covetousness in another, because it will cost you nothing for another to forsake his sin; and perhaps the more covetous he is, the more he standeth in your way, and hindereth you from that which you would have yourselves. Of all the multitude of covetous preachers that be in the world, is there any one that will not preach against covetousness? Read but the lives of cardinals, and popes, and popish prelates, and you will see the most odious worldliness set forth without any kind of cloak or shame: how such a one laid his design at court, and among the great ones, for preferment: how studiously he prosecuted it, and conformed himself to the humours and interest of those from whom he did seek it: how they first got this living, and then got that prebendary, and then got that deanery, and then got such a bishopric, and then got a better, (that is, a richer,) and then got to be archbishops, and then to be cardinals, &c. O happy progress, if they might never die! They blush not openly before angels and men to own this worldly, ambitious course, as their design and trade of life. And the devil is grown so impudent, as if he were now the confessed master of the world, as to set divines themselves at work, to write the history of such cursed, ambitious, worldly lives, with open applause, and great commendations; yea, to make saints of them, that have a character far worse than Christ gave of him in Luke xvi. that wanted a drop of water to cool his tongue. He openly now saith, "All this will I give thee;" and they as impudently boast, All this I have gotten; but they forget or know not how much they have lost. A Judas's kiss is thought sufficient to prove him a true christian and pastor of the church, though it be but the fruit of "what will you give me?" Instead of a seourge to whip out these buyers and sellers from Christ's temple, their merchandise is exposed without shame, and their signs set forth, and the trade of getting preferments openly professed, and it is enough to wipe off all shame, to put some venerable titles upon this den of thieves. "But the Lord whom we wait for, will once more come and cleanse his temple. But who may abide the day of his coming? For he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap, and will throughly purge the sons of Levi," Mal. iii. 1—4.

If talking against worldliness would prove that the world is overcome, and that God is dearest to the soul, then preachers will be the happiest men on earth. But it is easier to commend God, than to love him above all; and easier to cry out against the world, than to have a heart that is truly weaned from it, and set upon a better world.

Object. 10. But all this belongeth only to them that are in prosperity; but I am poor, and therefore it is nothing to me.

Answ. Many a one loveth prosperity, that hath it not: and such are doubly sinful, that will love a world which loveth not them; even a world of poverty, misery, and distress. Something you would have done, if you had had a full estate, and honour, and fleshly delights to love. Nay, many poor men think better of riches and honour, than those that have them; because they never tried how vain and vexatious they are; and if they had tried them, perhaps would love them less. The world is but a painted strumpet, admired afar off; but the nearer you come to it, and the more it is known, the worse you will like it. Is it by your own desire that you are poor? Or is it against your wills? Had you not rather be as great and rich as others? Had you not rather live at ease and fulness? And do you think God will love you ever the better, for that which is against your wills? Will he count that man to be no worldling, that would fain have more of the world, and cannot? and that loveth God and heaven no better than the rich? nay, that will sin for a shilling, when great ones do it for greater sums? Who can be more unfit for heaven, than he that loveth a life of labour, and want, and misery better? Alas! it is but little that the greatest worldlings have for their salvation; but poor worldlings sell it for less than they, and therefore do despise it more.

Direct. 4. Let the true nature and aggravations of the sin of worldliness, be still in your eye to make it odious to you. As for instance:

1. It is true and odious idolatry, Eph. v. 5; Col. iii. 5. To have God for our God indeed, is to love him as our God, and to delight in him, and be ruled by him. Who then is an idolater, if he be not one who loveth the world, and delighteth in it more than

in God, or esteemeth it fitter to be the matter of his delight? and is ruled by it, and seeketh it more? Isa. lv. 1—3.

2. It is a blasphemous contempt of God and heaven, to prefer a dunghill world before him; to set more by the provisions and pleasures of the flesh, than by all the blessedness of heaven. It is called profaneness in Esau, to sell his birthright for one morsel, Heb. xii. 16. What profaneness is it then to say, as worldlings' hearts and lives do, The satisfying of my flesh and fancy for a time, is better than God and the joys of heaven to all eternity.

3. It is a sin of interest, and not only of passion; and therefore it possesseth the very heart and love, which is the principal faculty of the soul, and that which God most reserveth for himself. No actual sin which is but little loved, is so heinous and mortal as that which is most loved; because these do most exclude the love of God. Some other sins may do more hurt to others, but this is worst to the sinner himself. We justly pity poor heathenish idolaters, and pray for their conversion (and I would we did it more): but do not you think that our hypocrite worldlings do love their riches, and their honours and pleasures, better than the poor heathens love their idols? They bow the knee to a creature, and you entertain it in your heart.

4. It is a sin of deliberation and contrivance, which is much worse than a surprise by a sudden temptation. You plot how you may compass your voluptuous, covetous, and ambitious ends: therefore it is a sin that standeth at the furthest distance from repentance, and is both voluntary and a settled habit.

5. It is a continued sin. Men be not always lying, though they be never so great liars; nor always stealing, if they be the most notorious thieves; nor always swearing, if they be the profanest swearers. But a worldly mind is always worldly: he is always committing his idolatry with the world, and always denying his love to God.

6. It is not only a sin about the means to a right end, (as mischosen ways of religion may be,) but it is a sin against the end itself, and a mischoosing of a false, pernicious end. And so it is the perverting, not only of one particular action, but even of the bent and course of men's lives; and consequently a misspending all their time.

7. It is a perverting of God's creatures, to a use clean contrary to that which they are given us for; and an unthankful turning of all his gifts against himself. He gave us his creatures to lead us to him, and by their loveliness to show his greater loveliness; and to taste in their sweetness the greater sweetness of his love. And will you use them to turn your affections from him?

8. It is a great debasing of the soul itself, to fill that noble spirit with nothing but dirt and smoke, which was made to know and love its God.

9. It is an irrational vice, and signifieth not only much unbelief of the unseen things which should take up the soul; but also a sottish inconsiderateness of the vanity and brevity of the things below. It is an unmanning ourselves, and hiring out our reason to be a servant to our fleshly lusts.

10. Lastly, it is a pregnant, multiplying sin; which bringeth forth abundance more: "The love of money is the root of all evil," 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10. Therefore,

Direct. 5. Let the mischievous effects of this sin be still before your eyes. As for instance:

1. It keepeth the heart strange to God and heaven. The love of God and of the world are contrary, 1 John ii. 15; iii. 17; James iv. 4. So is an earthly and a heavenly conversation, Phil. iii. 18—20; and the laying up a treasure in heaven and upon earth, Matt. vi. 19—21; and the living after the flesh and after the Spirit, Rom. viii. 1, 5, 6, 13. Ye cannot possibly serve God and mammon; nor travel two contrary ways at once; nor have two contrary felicities, till you have two hearts.

2. It setteth you at enmity with God and holiness; because God controlleth and condemneth your beloved lusts; and because it is contrary to the carnal things which have your hearts.

3. By this means it maketh men malignant enemies of the godly, and persecutors of them; because they are of contrary minds and ways. "As then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now," Gal. iv. 29. "The world cannot love us, because we are not of the world," John xv. 19, 20. Pride, covetousness, and sensuality, are the matter which the burning fever lodgeth in, which hath consumed so much of the church of Christ.

4. It is the sin that hath corrupted the sacred office of the ministry throughout most of the christian churches in the world; and thereby caused both the schisms and cruelties, and the decay of serious godliness among them, which is their present deplorable case. Ignorant persons are like sick men in a fever: they lay the blame on this and that, and commonly on that which went next before the paroxysm; and know not the true cause of the disease. We are all troubled (or should be) to see the many minds, the many ways, the confused state of the christian churches, and to hear them cry out against each other; and one layeth the blame on this party or opinion, and another on that; but when we come to ourselves, we shall find that it is the worldly mind that causeth our calamity. Many well-meaning friends of the church do think how dishonourable it is to the ministry, to be poor and low, and consequently despicable; and what an advantage it is to their work, to be able to relieve the poor, and rather to oblige the people than to depend upon them, and to be above them rather than below them. And supposing the pastors to be mortified, holy, heavenly men, all this is true; and the zeal of these thoughts is worthy of commendation. But that which good men intend for good, hath become the church's bane. So certain is the common saying, that Constantine's zeal did poison the church, by lifting up the pastors of it too high, and occasioning those contentions for grandeur and precedency, which to this day separate the east and west. When well-meaning piety hath adorned the office with wealth and honour, it is as true as that the sun shineth, that the most proud, ambitious, worldly men, will be the most studious seekers of that office; and will make it their plot, and trade, and business, how by friends, and observances, and wills, to attain their ends: and usually he that seeks shall find. When in the mean time the godly, mortified, humble man, will not do so; but will serve God in the state to which he is clearly called. And consequently, except it be under the government of an admirably wise and holy ruler, a worthy pastor, in such a wealthy station, will be a singular thing, and a rarity of the age; whilst worldly men, whose hearts are habited with that which is utterly contrary to holiness, and contrary to the very ends and work of their own office, will be the men that must sit in Moses' chair; that must have the doing and ruling of the work which their hearts are set against. And how it will go with the church of Christ, when the gospel is to be preached, and preachers chosen, and godliness promoted by the secret enemies of it; and when ambitious, fleshly, worldly men, are they that must cure the people's souls (under Christ) of the

love of the flesh and the world, it were easy to prognosticate from the causes, if the christian world could not tell by the effects. So that, except by the wonderful piety of princes—there is no visible way in the eye of reason, to recover the miserable churches, but to retrieve the pastoral office into such a state, as that it may be no bait to a worldly mind, but may be desired and chosen purely upon heavenly accounts. And then the richer the pastors are the better; when they are the sons of nobles, whose piety bringeth with them their honour and their wealth to serve God and his church with, and they do not find it there to be their end or inducement to the work; but instead of invitations or encouragements to pride and carnal minds, there may be only so much as may not deter or drive away candidates from the sacred function.

5. Worldliness is a sin, which maketh the word of God unprofitable, (Matt. xiii. 22; John xii. 43; Ezek. xxxiii. 31,) prepossessing the heart, and resisting that gospel which would extirpate it.

6. It hindereth prayer, by corrupting men's desires, and by intruding worldly thoughts.

7. It hindereth all holy meditation, by turning both the heart and thoughts another way.

8. It drieth up all heavenly, profitable conference, whilst the world doth fill both mind and mouth.

9. It is a great profaner of the Lord's day, distracting men's minds, and alienating them from God.

10. It is a murderous enemy of love to one another: all worldly men being so much for themselves, that they are seldom hearty friends to any other.

11. Yea, it maketh men false and unrighteous in their dealings: there being no trust to be put in a worldly man any further than you are sure you suit his interest.

12. It is the great cause of discord and divisions in the world. It setteth families, neighbours, and kingdoms together by the ears; and setteth the nations of the earth in bloody wars, to the calamity and destruction of each other.

13. It causeth cheating, stealing, robbing, oppressions, cruelties, lying, false-witnessing, perjury, murders, and many such other sins.

14. It maketh men unfit to suffer for Christ, because they love the world above him; and consequently it maketh them as apostates to forsake him in a time of trial.

15. It is a great devourer of precious time. That short life which should be spent in preparing for eternity, is almost all spent in drudging for the world.

16. Lastly, it greatly unfitteth men to die; and maketh them loth to leave the world: and no wonder, when there is no entertainment for worldlings in any better place hereafter.

Direct. 6. If you would be saved from the world, and the snares of prosperity, foresee death, and judge of the world as it will appear and use you at the last. Dream not of long life: he that looks to stay but a little while in the world, will be the less careful of his provisions in it. A little will serve for a little time. The grave is a sufficient disgrace to all the vanities on earth, though there be more to raise the heart to heaven.

Direct. 7. Mortify the flesh, and you overcome the world. Cure the thirsty disease, and you will need none of the worldling's ways to satisfy it. When the flesh is mastered, there is no use for plenty, or pleasures, or honours, to satisfy its lusts: your daily bread to fit you for your work, will then suffice.

Direct. 8. But it is the lively belief of endless glory, and the love of God prevailing in the soul, that must work the cure. Nothing below a life of faith, and a heavenly mind and conversation, and the love of God, will ever well cure a sensual life, and an earthly mind and conversation, and the love of the world.

Direct. 9. Turn away from the bait; desire not to have your estate, your dwelling, &c. too pleasing to your flesh and fancy. Remember that it killeth by pleasing, rather than by seeming unlovely and displeasing.

Direct. 10. Turn Satan's temptations to worldliness against himself. When he tempteth you to covetousness, give more to the poor than else you would have done. When he tempteth you to pride and ambition, let your conversation show more aversation to pride than you did before. If he tempt you to waste your time in fleshly vanities, or sports, work harder in your calling, and spend more time in better things; and thus try to weary out the tempter.

Direct. 11. Take heed of the hypocrite's designs, which is to unite religion and worldliness, and to reconcile God and mammon; and to secure the flesh and its prosperity here, and yet to save the soul hereafter. For all such hopes are mere deceits.

Direct. 12. Improve your prosperity to its proper ends. Devote all entirely and absolutely to God; and so it will be saved from loss, and you from deceit and condemnation.

CHAPTER XV.

How to be poor in spirit. And how to escape the pride of prosperity.

Though no man is saved or condemned for being either rich or poor; yet it is not for nothing that Christ hath so often set before us the danger of the rich, and the extraordinary difficulty of their salvation: and that he began his sermon, Matt. v. 3, with, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." The sense of which words is not, as is commonly imagined, Blessed are they that find their want of grace. For, 1. So may a despairing person. 2. The text compared with Luke xvi. where simply the poor and rich are opposed, doth plainly show another sense; agreeing with the usual doctrine of Christ. And whereas expositors doubt whether Christ spake that sermon to his disciples, or to the multitude, the text maketh it plain that he spake it to both, viz. that he called his disciples to him, and as it were pointed the finger at them, and made them his text on which he preached to the multitude: and the sense is contained in these propositions; as if he had said, See you these followers of me: you take them to be contemptible or unhappy, because they are poor in the world; but I tell you, 1. That poverty maketh not believers miserable: 2. Yea, they are the truly blessed men, because they shall have the heavenly riches: 3. And the evidence of their right to that is, that they are poor in spirit, that is, their hearts are suited to a low estate, and are saved from the destructive vices of riches and prosperity: 4. And their outward poverty is better suited and conducible to this deliverance, and this poverty of spirit, than a state of wealth and prosperity is. All these four propositions are the true meaning of the text.

That we may see here what is the special work of faith, we must know which are the special sins of prosperity, which riches and honours occasion in the

world. And though the apostle tells us, (1 Tim. vi. 10,) that "the love of money is the root of all evil," I will confine my discourse to that narrower compass, in the enumeration of the sins of Sodom, in Ezek. xvi. 49, Pride, fulness of bread, idleness: and of these but briefly, because I have spoken more largely of them elsewhere (in my "Christian Directory").

And first of the pride of the rich and prosperous.

Pride is a sin of so deep radication, and so powerful in the hearts of carnal men, that it will take advantage of any condition; but riches and prosperity are its most notable advantage. As the boat riseth with the water; so do such hearts rise with their estates. Therefore saith the apostle, 1 Tim. vi. 17, "Charge the rich that they be not high-minded." High-mindedness is the sin that you are first here to avoid. In order whereunto I shall give you now but these three general directions.

Direct. 1. Observe the masks or covers of high-mindedness or pride, lest it reign in you unknown. For it hath many covers, by which it is concealed from the souls that are infected, if not undone and miserable by it.

For instance: 1. Some think that they are not proud, because that their parts and worth will bear out all the estimation which they have of themselves. And he that thinketh of himself but as he really is, being in the right, is not to be accounted proud.

But remember that the first act of pride is the overvaluing of ourselves; and he that is once guilty of this first act, will justify himself both in it and all that follow. So that pride is a sin which blindeth the understanding, and defendeth itself by itself, and powerfully keepeth off repentance. When once a man hath entertained a conceit, that he is wiser or better than indeed he is, he then thinketh that all his thoughts, and words, and actions, which are of that signification, are just, and sober, because the thing is so indeed. And for a man to deny God's graces, or gifts, and make himself seem worse than he is, is not true humility, but dissimulation or ingratitude.

But herein you have great cause to be very careful, lest you should prove mistaken. Therefore, 1. Judge not of yourselves by the by, as of self-love; but, if it be possible, lay by partiality, and judge of yourselves as you do by others, upon like evidences. 2. Hearken what other men judge of you, who are impartial and wise, and are near you, and thoroughly acquainted with your lives. It is possible they may think better or worse of you than you are; but if they judge worse of you than you do of yourselves, it should stop your confidence, and make you the more suspicious, and careful to try lest you should be mistaken.

2. And remember also that you are obliged to a greater modesty in judging of your own virtues, and to a greater severity in judging of your own faults, than of other men's; though you must not wilfully err about yourselves, or any others, yet you are not bound to search out the truth about the faults of another, as you are about your own. We are commanded to "prefer one another in honour," Rom. x. 21. And ver. 3, "For I say, through the grace given to me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith."

2. Another cloak for pride is, the reputation of our religion, profession, or party, which will seem to be disgraced by us, if we seem not to be somewhat better than we are. If we should not hide or extenuate our faults, and set out our graces and parts to the full, we should be a dishonour to Christ, and to his servants, and his cause.

But remember, 1. That the way by which God hath appointed you to honour him, is, by being good, and living well, and not by seeming to be good when you are not, or seeming better than you are: The God of truth, who hateth hypocrisy, hath not chosen lying and hypocrisy to be the means by which we must seek his honour. It is damnable to seek to glorify him by a lie, Rom. iii. 7, 8. We must indeed cause our light so to shine before men that they may see our good works, and glorify our heavenly Father, Matt. v. 16; but it is the light of sincerity and good works, and not of a dissembled profession, that must so shine.

2. And the goodness of the pretended end doth greatly aggravate the crime: as if the honour of God and our religion must be upheld, by so devilish a means as proud hypocrisy.

3. And, though it be true, that a man is not imprudently, without just cause, to open his sins before the world, when it is like to tend to the injury of religion, and any way to do more hurt than good; yet it is as true, that when there is no such impediment, true repentance is forward to confess, and when the fault is discovered, defending and extenuating it is then the greatest dishonour to religion. (As if you would father all on Christ, and make men believe that he will justify or extenuate sin as you do.) And then it is a free, self-abasing confession, and taking all the shame to yourselves, (with future reformation,) which is the reparation which you must make of the honour of religion. For what greater dishonour can be cast upon religion, than to make it seem a friend to sin? Or what greater honour can be given it, than to represent it as it is, as an enemy to all evil; and to take the blame, as is due, unto yourselves?

3. Another cloak for pride, is the reputation of our offices, dignities, and places. We must live according to our rank and quality: all men must not live alike. The grandeur of rulers must be maintained, or else the magistracy will fall into contempt. The pastor's office must not, by a mean estate, and low deportment, be exposed to the people's scorn. And so abundance of the most ambitious practices and hateful enormities of the proud must be veiled by these fair pretences.

Answ. 1. We grant that the honour of magistrates must be kept up by a convenient grandeur; and that a competent distance is necessary to a due reverence: but goodness is as necessary an ingredient in government as greatness is; and to be great in wisdom and goodness, is the principal greatness: and goodness is loving, and humble, and condescending, and suiteth all deportments to the common good, which is the end of government. See then that you keep up no other height, but that which really tendeth to the success of your endeavours, in order to the common good.

2. And look also to your hearts, lest it be your own exaltation which you indeed intend, while you thus pretend the honour of your office: for this is an ordinary trick of pride. To discover this, will you ask yourselves these questions following?

Quest. 1. How you came into your offices and honours? Did they seek you, or did you seek them? Did the place need you, or did you need the place? If pride brought you in, you have cause to fear, lest it govern you when you are there?

Quest. 2. What do you in the place of honour that you are in? Do you study to do all the good you can, and to make men happy by your government? And is this the labour of your lives? If it be, we

may hope that the means is suited to this end. But if you do no such thing you have no such end: and if you have no such end, you do but dissemble, in pretending that your grandeur is used but as a means to that end which really you never seek. It is then your own exaltation that you aim at, and it is your pride that playeth all your game.

Quest. 3. Are you more offended and grieved when you are crossed and hindered in doing good, or when you are crossed and hindered from your personal honour?

Quest. 4. Are you well contented that another should have your honour and preferment, if God and the sovereign power so dispose of it, so be it it be one that is like to do more good than you?

By these questions you may quickly see, if you are willing, whether your grandeur be desired by your pride for self-advancement, or by christian prudence to do good.

3. And I must tell you, that there is abundance of difference betwixt the case of the civil magistrates and the pastors of the church in this. Magistracy must have more fear and pomp; but pastors must govern by light and love: when his apostles strove for superiority, Christ left a decision of the controversy for the use of all following ages. It is the contempt of the world, and the mortifying of the flesh, and self-denial, that pastors have to teach the people, and withal to seek a heavenly treasure: and will not their own example further the success of their doctrine? The reverence that a pastor must expect, is not to be feared as one that can do hurt (for all coercion or corporal force is proper to the magistrate); but it is to be thought one that is above all the riches and pleasures of the world, and hath set his heart on higher things: such a one therefore he must both be and seem. A pastor will be but the sooner despised, if he look after that riches and worldly pomp, which is seemingly for a magistrate: if he have a sword in his hand, it is the way to be hated; if he have teeth that are bloody, or claws that can tear, he will be accounted a wolf, though he have the clothing of a sheep. When our divines give the reason of Christ's humiliation, they say, that if he had preached up heavenly-mindedness, self-denial, and mortification, and had himself lived in pomp and fulness, the people would not have regarded his words:[a] and surely the same reason holdeth in some measure as to all his ministers. Again, I say, that if ever the church be universally reformed, the pastoral office must be only encouraged with necessary support, to keep the pastors from despondency, and distracting cares; but it must not be made a bait of ambition, covetousness, or sloth; but must be stripped of that which makes it thus desirable to a carnal mind. Otherwise we must expect, that except when princes are very holy, the churches be ordinarily guided by carnal and ungodly men; who will do it according to their minds and interest. All the world cannot answer the reason of this: which is, honours and wealth will be certainly sought with greatest industry by the worldly, that is, the worst of men; and not by the heavenly, mortified persons: and they that seek shall usually find: and so while the humble, holy person stayeth till he is called, and the proud and worldly, who have the keenest appetite, use all their art and friends to rise, the conclusion is as sure as sad, and hath been so proved by woeful experience almost thirteen hundred years.

4. Another of pride's pretences is decency, and the avoiding of reproach and scorn: if we live not as high as others, we shall be derided and contemned; or thought to be sordid, beggarly, or base.

Answ. 1. This is one of the signs and effects of pride, that it maketh a greater matter of other men's thoughts of you, than you ought to make; it cannot bear contempt and scorn so easily as humility can do; too careful avoiding of contempt, is the proper work of pride. 2. It is granted that you should not be contemptuous of your just reputation; and also that you must not by any causeless, affected singularity, or by any practice which is indeed uncomely, make yourselves the scorn of others. But it is as true that you must not desire a higher estimation than is really your due; nor yet be over-solicitous for that which is your due indeed; nor must you follow the proud in any thing which is contrary to true humility, for the keeping of their good report, nor go above your rank to avoid contempt. 3. And forget not whose good word it is that you should especially regard: your truest honour is in the esteem of God, and all good men, and not in the opinion or praises of the proud. They that are addicted to this vice themselves, perhaps may deride those that go below them (and yet they will more envy those that go above them); but the humble will think much better of you for being humble, and nothing can make you viler in their eyes than pride. If you were humble yourselves, you would prefer your honour with humble, wise, and sober persons, above the opinions of the proud, who know not good from evil.

5. Another cloak of pride is opinionative and doctrinal humility. When we have heard and read much against pride, and can speak (or preach) against it as freely, and fluently, and vehemently, and movingly, as any others; and in all company and conference signify our dislike of it; when we are much in dissuading others from it, and in extolling humility, and lowliness of mind; this doth not only deceive others, but very often the speaker himself; and makes him think that he hath no great degree of pride.

But speculation, and opinion, and talk, are one thing, and a renewed, truly humble soul is another thing. If all this while you are as great, and wise, and good in your own esteem, and make as great a matter of men's opinion of you, as others do that speak less against pride, your speeches and preachings serve but to condemn yourselves. It is easy to talk against covetousness, gluttony, and other sins, whilst he that condemneth them, continueth in them, and condemneth himself. Talking against an enemy, obtaineth no victory; and talking against sin, may signify what you have learned to say, or perhaps what dislike you have to that sin at a distance, or in specie, or in another; when yet you may damnably love it in yourselves. It were well for preachers, if it were as easy or common to conquer sin, as to preach against it: but alas! it is not so.

6. Another cloak of pride is, the presence of a real partial humility, together with an outward humble garb. A man may be really humble in some, yea, in many respects, and yet be exceeding proud in others: he may be vile in his own eyes, because he is conscious of many great and odious sins, and because he knoweth that sin is a thing odious to God, and all that will be saved must be humbled for it; and because he knoweth that his body is earth, and must return by death to filth and dust: and he may go in sordid, poor apparel; and such may have a humble tone and manner of speech; and perhaps speak so self-abasingly, as if there were none so lowly as they: and yet they may be exceeding proud of their supposed wisdom, or spiritual understanding, and of a supposed extraordinary measure of holiness, or revelations, or interest in God, or of this humility

[a] See Dr. Stillingfleet of Satisfaction on this point.

itself: yea, their common natural pride may not be taken down, though there be frequent expressions of great humiliation.

And if the proudest gallants can, with their hat at your foot, profess themselves your humble servants, why may not religious pride go as far?

And note here, that this religious pride is of a higher and more aggravated strain than the other: 1. Because it is committed against more humbling means. 2. Because it is a sin against more knowledge. 3. Because it is accompanied with the profession of humility, and so is aggravated by more hypocrisy. 4. Because it is an abuse of more excellent things: it is more odious to turn the pretence of wisdom, revelations, humility, godliness, good works, &c. into pride, than to be proud as children are of their fine clothes; or as addle-brained women are of their precedencies. 5. Because it most odiously fathereth itself on God, as it were but the grateful magnifying of his graces: to put God's name into the boasts of pride, and say, "I thank thee, Lord, that I am not as other men, nor as this publican," Luke xviii. 11. To say, God hath revealed more to me than to you; or hath made me more holy and spiritual than you: "Stand by thyself; come not near me; for I am holier than thou," Isa. lxv. 5. This is, when pride speaketh it, most odious blasphemy; to father the firstborn of the devil upon God.

There are two sad instances of this kind of pride, which are now too familiarly seen among us.

The one is in the case of many convinced hypocrites, yea, and many passionate, feeble christians, who are affrighted with the terrors of the Lord, and partly disturbed by their guilt or passions, and partly take it to be an honourable sign of humility to condemn themselves; and therefore will fill the ears of ministers with sad complaints of their fears, and doubts, and sins, and wants, as if they would hardly be kept from desperation. And yet if they know that another doth believe them, and think and speak as bad of them as they speak of themselves; yea, if he do but slight them, and prefer others before them, or plainly reprove them for any disgraceful sin, they swell with the wrath of pride against him, and will not easily think or speak well of such a one: and they love him best that thinketh best of them, and praiseth them most, even when they most dispraise themselves; which showeth that a man may be really humbled in some respects, and seem to be humbled in more, and yet at the heart be dangerously proud.

The other instance is, in the common separating spirit of sectaries; and in particular, in those called quakers in these times, (for against commanded separation from sin, by self-preservation or discipline, I am far from speaking). Their great pretence of singularity is, to avoid and detest the pride of others; they cry out against pride as much as any. Their garb is plain; humility, and self-emptiness, and poverty of spirit, is their profession. And yet when they are so ignorant, that they can scarce speak sense; and when they understand not the catechism or creed, but have need to be taught which are the principles of the oracles of God; they think they are taken into the counsels of the Almighty; they think they abound in the Spirit, and in wisdom, in revelations, and in holiness; and the wisest and holiest of Christ's ministers and people, who are as far above them in knowledge and godliness, as the aged are above a stammering infant, are proudly despised by them, and openly and impenitently reviled and railed at, as ignorant fools, and ungodly, worldly, self-seeking men, and as the deceivers of the people, and as void of the Spirit; which could never proceed to the height that we have seen it, and which their words and writings utter at this day, without a very strange degree of pride, and such as either maketh men mad, or is made by madness, or little less.

And here note also, that it is no wonder if religious pride can despise the common applause of the world, and bear a great deal of ignominy from the vulgar; because they have learned so much as to know that wicked men are fools and base, and their judgment is no great honour or dishonour to any man; and that godly men only are truly wise, and their judgment most to be regarded. And therefore it is with them whom they think highliest of themselves, that they desire to be thought highliest of; and it is among the religious sort, that religious pride doth fish for honour: even as men that are proud of their learning, do hunt after the applause of learned men, and can despise the judgment of the unlearned vulgar, as quite below them.

I know that this last instance of pride is not always an attendant of prosperity; but oft it is a kind of wantonness thence arising, which is much restrained in suffering times: and being speaking of the rest, I thought not meet to pass it by.

Direct. 2. Understand which are the ordinary effects and characters of pride, that you may not live in it, and perish by it, whilst you thought you had overcome it. At this time (having said more of it elsewhere) I shall recite but these marks of prosperous pride, and show the contrary signs of lowliness.

1. The high-minded are self-willed, and much addicted to rule and domineer. They would have their own wills, in all their own matters, and are hardly brought to submit to the judgment and will of others. Obeying goeth quite against their grain, any further than they like the commands of their superiors: and if they are in any hope of reaching it, they aspire to be the governors of others, that they may still stand uppermost, and have their will in all the matters about them, as well as in their own. If there be a place of power and preferment void, the proud man is the forwardest expectant; and maketh no great question of his fitness; but thinketh that he is injured if he be put by, how worthy a man soever be preferred before him: he snuffs and scorns at inferiors that stick at his most sinful and unreasonable commands; and thunders out the charge of rebellion or schism against those that question his infallibility, or that will stick at obeying him before God, and against him; as if he had been born to rule, and other men to obey him; and all do him wrong, who fall not down and worship not his will, at the first intimation: though perhaps he be but a minister of Christ, who should be as a little child, and the servant of all, and should stoop to the feet of the poorest of the flock, and should receive the weak, and bear with their infirmities; yet pride will there lift up the head, and forget all the humbling examples and admonitions of Christ, and will either seek to draw disciples after it, by speaking perverse things, (Acts xx. 30,) or forget 1 Pet. v. 3, "Neither as being lords over God heritage, but examples to the flock."

But on the contrary, the poor in spirit are readier to obey than rule, as knowing that ruling requireth the greater parts and graces; and are inclined to think others to be fitter for places of teaching or authority than themselves (further than clear experience constraineth them to know the contrary): for in honour they prefer others, instead of striving to be preferred before others: they have a tractable, humble, yielding disposition, except when they are tempted to sin. They are gentle, and easy to be

entreated, (James iii. 17,) and can submit themselves to one another; yea, and be their voluntary subjects, 1 Pet. v. 5; Ephes. v. 21. (Yet not becoming unnecessarily the servants of men; but choosing it rather when they may be free.) They are as little children, in that they expect not rule, but to be ruled, Matt. xvii. 3. They have learned to serve one another in love, (Gal. v. 13,) and take it not for christian love, that can do good only upon terms of equality, and cannot stoop to voluntary service. They can go two miles with him that compelleth them to go one: no man more obedient when you command not sin. For as he affecteth not to be called Master, or Rabbi, or to have the highest seat or name, Matt. xxiii. 11, &c. so he hath learned not to please himself, but to please others for their good to edification, Rom. xv. 2. Especially if he be a pastor of the church, though he do by an excelling light, and love, and good life, keep up the true honour of his calling; yet is he the more averse to lord it over the flock, because he knoweth that he must be an example to them: and it is not an example of pride, but of lowliness, which Christ did give, and he must give; and therefore both are joined together, 1 Pet. v. 3, 5.

2. The proud do make too great a matter of that honour which perhaps may be their due: they plot for it: they set their hearts upon it. If they are slighted, or others preferred before them, their countenances are cast down, as Cain's; or they are troubled, as Haman; or they will revenge it, as Cain, and as Joab upon Abner. Touch their honour, and you touch their hearts: despise them, and you torment them, or make them your enemies.

But the poor in spirit regard their honour, as they do other matters of this world; that is, with moderation, and so far as it is conducible to the honour of religion, or their country, or to the service and business of their lives. They will not be prodigals of that which they may serve God by; and they will not be over-desirous of that which may be a bait to pride, and a snare to their souls, though it gratify the fleshly fancy. They will seek it, as if they sought it not; and possess it, as if they possessed it not; remembering how vain a thing man is, and how little his thoughts or breath can do, to make us happy. God is so great in a believer's eye, and man and worldly vanity is so small, that a lowly mind can scarce have room and time to regard the honour which is the proud man's portion; because he is taken up with honouring his God, and esteemeth the honour which consisteth in his approbation.

Therefore it is tolerable to him, to be made of no reputation, to be laden with reproaches, to be spit upon and buffeted; to be made as the scorn and offscouring of the world, and to have his name cast out as an evil-doer, so he be not an evil-doer indeed, 1 Cor. iv. 13; Luke vi. 22. Whatever you think of him, or whatever you say of him, he knoweth that it is little of his concernment: your favour is not his felicity; nor are you the judge, whose sentence must finally decide his cause. He humbleth himself, and therefore can endure to be humbled by others. He chooseth the lowest place himself, and therefore can endure to be low; 1 Cor. iv. 3—5; Luke xiv. 11; xviii. 14; xiv. 10.

3. The high-minded are ashamed to be thought to come of a low descent; or that their parents or ancestors were poor: and if their ancestors were rich and great, that little honour doth help to elevate their minds: because they want that personal worth which is honourable indeed, they are fain to adorn themselves with these borrowed feathers.

But the lowly know that if riches prove such a hinderance of salvation, and so few of the rich proportionably are saved, as Christ hath told us, it can be no great honour to be the offspring of the rich: it is a sad kind of boast to say, My ancestors are liker to be in hell than yours; or if any of them be in heaven, they came thither as a camel through a needle's eye. We know we are all of the common earth, and there our flesh will all be levelled, and our noblest blood will turn to the common putrefaction: we are all the seed of sinful Adam; our father was an Amorite, and our mother an Hittite, Ezek. xvi. 3. And good men have used humbly to lament their forefathers' pride and wickedness, instead of boasting of their worldly wealth; as you may read, Neh. ix. 16, 39; Dan. ix.

4. The high-minded are ashamed to be thought poor themselves: because wealth is the idol which they most honour, they think that it will most honour them. Because they see that most men admire and honour it in the world; therefore they being of the world, do judge as the world, and conform themselves to its opinion. Even the poor that is proud, is ashamed of his poverty, and would be fain accounted rich.

But the lowly are not ashamed to say with Peter, (Acts iii. 6,) "Silver and gold have I none," while they have better riches to rejoice in. They are glad, when with Paul they can say, We are poor, but making many rich, 2 Cor. vi. 10. They will not deny or cast away any riches, (which God doth lend them,) because as his stewards they must be accountable for them to their Lord. But they take it to be no shame to be liker Christ than Crœsus; or liker his apostles than the prelates and cardinals of Rome; or to be of those poor that are poor in spirit, who are rich in faith, and heirs of heaven, James ii. 5; Matt. v. 3. Nor is it any desirable honour to have our salvation so much hindered and hazarded, as the rich have. God, and angels, and wise men, do think never the worse of a good man for being poor.

5. The high-minded are therefore usually addicted to some excess in ornaments and apparel, because they would be taken to be rich and comely, (unless when their pride worketh some other way). Yea, if they be never so mean and poor, they would seem by their clothing to be somewhat richer than they are; or would be rich in hypocrisy, or outward appearance, except it hinder their relief. They that wear soft clothing were wont to dwell in the houses of kings, Matt. xi. 8; but now they dwell in the houses of most citizens, tradesmen, husbandmen; yea, of ministers themselves. Wives, children, and servants are commonly sick at once of this disease: and though it be one of the lowest and foolishest games, which pride hath to play, yet women, and children, and light-headed youths, do make up the greater number for this vanity; while the pride of the graver, wiser sort, doth turn itself to greater things.

But the lowly who are not ashamed to be poor, are not ashamed of poor apparel: though they are not for uncleanliness, nor for an affected singularity, for ostentation of humility; yet they had rather go below their rank, than above it, as taking pride to be a greater shame and hurt than poverty: if their clothing be convenient to their health and use, and not offensive to others, it sufficeth them; and a patch, or a rent, or a garment that is old, will not make them blush: they have learned, 1 Pet. iii. 3, "Whose adorning, let it not be that outward, of plaiting the hair, or of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."

6. The high-minded have high thoughts of worldly pomp, and wealth, and greatness; and think of such as excel in these, with great esteem and reverence: they bow to the man that hath the gold ring, and the gay apparel, while they slight the best and wisest that are poor: "They bless the covetous whom the Lord abhorreth," Psal. x. 3. And they think if they be poor and low themselves, how brave a thing is it to be high and rich: and had far rather be rich than gracious; and be higher in the world than to have a lowly mind.

But the humble have learned of Christ to be meek and lowly, Matt. xi. 29; and are still learning it of him more and more: they had rather have Paul's heart, that counted all things as loss and dung for Christ, and learned to abound and to suffer want, and in every state to be content, than to be lifted up with worldly vanity. They know that "it is better to be of a humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoils with the proud," Prov. xvi. 19. And as the brother of low degree (being a sanctified believer that can use all for God) must rejoice when he is exalted; so must the brother of high degree, when he is made low, James i. 9, 10. They pity a Dives in his purple and silk, more than a Lazarus at his gates in rags. They wish not too eagerly for so dangerous an exaltation, from which they see so many terribly cast down. They much more honour a poor believer, than a pompous sinner. For in "their eyes a vile person is contemned, but they honour them that fear the Lord," Psal. xv. 4.

7. The high-minded are ashamed of low employments: if they be seen doing such work as is accounted base, or proper to poor, inferior persons, they think they are dishonoured. If the proud sort of the pastors of the church had been sent as Paul and the apostles, to travel about the world on foot, and to preach the gospel in their humble, self-denying terms, they would have said that this was an unsufferable drudgery; and Christ must have provided more encouraging rewards of learning, or else he should have been no master of theirs. Yea, a servant that is proud, will disdain the lowest works of your service, as if it were a disgrace to stoop so low.

But the lowly do learn of Christ another lesson. He stooped to wash and wipe the feet of his disciples, to teach them what to do toward one another. Not as the pope doth once a year wash some poor men's feet, by a scenical ceremony (for piety and charity are both turned into imagery and ceremony by Satan, when he would destroy them); but seriously to instruct his ministers themselves, what lowliness they must use towards one another, and to all the flock. Christ went on foot to preach the gospel, and so did his apostles; not to oblige us to do so when weakness doth forbid us; nor to deny the benefit of a horse, when we may have it; but to teach us that neither pride should make us ashamed to go on foot, nor laziness make it seem intolerable, when we are called to it. When Christ would appear in state at Jerusalem, he rode upon a borrowed ass, to fulfil the prophecy, Zech. ix. 9, "Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass," Matt. xxi. 5. Paul refused not (with other preachers) to labour at the trade of a tent-maker, Acts xviii. 3. And Timothy was not ashamed to bring him his cloak and parchments so great a journey, 2 Tim. iv. 13. Nothing is avoided by the lowly as a shame, but that which is displeasing to God, and disagreeable to his christian duty; but not that which he can call the service of God, and which God accepteth and will reward.

8. The high-minded are ashamed of the company and familiarity of the poor (unless when they seek for applause by popularity): and they greatly affect the favour and company of the rich, James v. 4, 6. Therefore Solomon saith, that "the rich hath many friends, when the poor is hated of his neighbour," Prov. xiv. 20.

But the lowly choose to converse with the low. For so did Christ who was our pattern: and it is his law, (Rom. xii. 16,) "Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate." Christ was not ashamed to call us brethren, (Heb. iii. 11,) nor will he be ashamed so to call the least of his true disciples before God and angels at the dreadful day, Matt. xxv. 40; xxviii. 10; John xx. 17. They are the most honourable company, who are likest to Christ, and are the wisest and the holiest; and not those who are likest to his crucifiers and enemies, and have their portion in this world.

9. Pride is usually attended with vain curiosity: curiosity in ornaments, in fashions, in dressings, in attendance, in furniture, in rooms, and in abundance of small, inconsiderable circumstances. The proud (who go this lower way) do make a great matter of so many such trifles, that their minds have no room for the greatest things. They do not only trouble themselves "with many things," while the "one thing needful" is the more neglected, Luke x. 42; but all about them must be partakers of the trouble. What abundance of trades doth pride maintain! And how many are continually at work to serve it!

But the lowly who mind not vain ostentation, do save themselves all this unprofitable pains: they can avoid undecent sordidness at a cheaper rate than by proud curiosity. They are accurate and curious in greater matters, in doing good, in securing their salvation, in escaping sin, and in pleasing God: which will one day prove a wiser curiosity, than to be curious in courtship, and compliments, and dressings, and other impertinent, childish things; though the least just decency is not to be neglected in its place, it is foolish pride to prefer it before things of importance and necessity. Man's mind and time are not sufficient for all things. Somewhat must be omitted; and it is wisdom which chooseth to omit the least, and folly which chooseth to omit the greatest. As in learning, they prove the soundest scholars who spend their studies on the most excellent and useful parts of learning; whilst those that too much study things superfluous, are ever empty of necessary knowledge. It is so also in the actions of our lives. As Paul so vehemently condemneth vain jangling about unnecessary and unedifying questions, though yet truth was not contemptible in those matters: so also vain curiosity, and unedifying diligence, (though about things not altogether contemptible,) is but the perilous diversion of the mind from greater things, 1 Tim. i. 6, 7, &c.

10. The high-minded cannot endure to be beholden (unless necessity or covetousness prevail against their pride). But they would have all others beholden to them, that they may seem as petty deities in the world. Oh how it puffeth them up to have the people depend upon them, and acknowledge them for their benefactors, and to have crowded sacrifices of thanks and praise to be offered them as they go about the streets! If they were accounted such as the world could not live nor be happy without them, as being the most necessary parts or pillars thereof, nothing could more content their humour.

But the lowly mind desireth rather to do good, than to be known to do it. And it is not men's unthankfulness that will take him off, because it is not their thanks which is his reward. He would be as like God as he can in doing good, but not for his own glory, but for God's. As he is God's steward,

it is with God that he keepeth reckoning; and if his accounts will pass with him, he hath enough. And if God will have him to need the help of others, he is not too stout to seek and be beholden. Though every ingenuous man should value his freedom from the servitude of man, (1 Cor. vii. 23;) and if he can be free, "should choosc it rather," ver. 21. And "the borrower is a servant to the lender," Prov. xxii. 7. And we may say with him in Luke xvi. 3, "To beg I am ashamed." Yet here humility will make us stoop, when God requireth it. Christ himself refused not to be a receiver, Luke viii. 3; no, nor to ask a draught of water, John iv. And poverty is oft a great mercy to the proud, to take them down, and make them stoop. "The rich answereth roughly; but the poor useth entreaties," Prov. xviii. 23. So much of the marks of pride.

Direct. 3. Overlook not the odiousness and peril of pride. I will name you now but a few of its aggravations, because I have more largely mentioned them elsewhere.

1. It is the most direct opposition to God, to set up ourselves as idols in his place, and seek for some of his honour to ourselves.

2. It is the firstborn of the devil, and an imitation of him whom God in nature hath taught us to take for the greatest enemy of him and us; and the most odious of all the creatures of God.

3. It is madness to fall by that same sin, which we know was the overthrow of our first parents, and of the world.

4. And it is sottish impudency in such as we, who know that our bodies are going into rottenness and dust, and think in what a place and plight we must there lie, and that those days of darkness will be many; and who know that our souls are defiled with sin, and if we have any saving knowledge and grace, it is small, and mixed with abundance of ignorance and corruption; and the nature of it is contrary to pride.

5. It is contrary to the design of redeeming grace, which is to save the humble, contrite soul.

6. It betrayeth men to a multitude of other sins (as vanity of mind, loss of time, neglect of duty, striving for preferment, quarrelling with others, upon matters of reputation or precedency, &c.)

7. And it is a sin that God is especially engaged against, and the surest way to dejection and self-frustration; 1 Pet. v. 5; James iv. 6; Isa. ii. 12; Prov. xv. 22; xvi. 5; xxi. 4; Psal. cxxxviii. 6; xxxi. 23; Job xl. 11, 12; Luke xiv. 11; xviii. 14.

II. After these three general directions, I shall briefly name a few particular ones.

Direct. 1. Remember continually what you are, and what you were; what your bodies are, and will be; and what your souls are by the pollution of sin; and how close it still adhereth to you; and from how great a misery Christ redeemed you. He neither knoweth his body, nor his soul, his sin, or misery, nor Christ, nor grace, who is a servant unto pride.

Direct. 2. Remember the continual presence of the most holy, dreadful God: and can pride lift up the head before him?

Direct. 3. Look to the example of a humbled Saviour, and learn of God incarnate to be lowly, Matt. xi. 29. From his birth to his ascension, you may read the strangest lecture of lowliness, that ever was delivered to the haughty world.

Direct. 4. Turn all your desires to the glorifying of God; remembering that you were not made for your own glory, but for his.

Direct. 5. Think much of the heavenly glory, and it will cloud all the vain-glory of the world.

Direct. 6. Think what it is that is your honour among the angels in heaven, and what is most approved and honoured by God himself; and therein place your honour; and not in the conceits of foolish men.

Direct. 7. Lastly, Make use of humbling occasions to exercise your self-denial and lowliness of mind. I commend not to you the pious folly of those popish saints, who are magnified by them for making themselves purposely ridiculous to exercise their humility (as by going through the streets with their breeches on their heads, and other such foolerics); for God will give you humbling occasions enough, when he seeth good: but when he doth it, be sure that you improve them to the abasing of yourselves. And use yourselves to be above the esteem of man, and to bear contempt when it is cast upon you, (as Christ did for your sakes,) though not to draw it foolishly or wilfully upon yourselves. He that hath but once borne the contempt of men, is better able to bear it afterwards, than he that never underwent it, but thinketh that he hath an entire reputation to preserve: and he that is more solicitous of his duty, and most indifferent in point of honour, doth usually best secure his honour by such neglect, and always best undergo dishonour.

CHAPTER XVI.

HOW TO ESCAPE THE SIN OF FULNESS OR LUXURY BY FAITH.

The second sin of Sodom, and fruit of abused prosperity, is fulness of bread, Ezek. xvi. 49. Concerning which (having also handled it elsewhere more at large) I shall now briefly give you these general directions first, and then a few that are more particular.

Direct. 1. Understand well what sinful fulness is. It is sinful when it hath any one of these ill conditions.

1. When you eat or drink more in quantity than is consistent with the due preservation of your health; or so much as hurteth your health or reason. For the use of food is to fit us for our duty; and therefore that which disableth and unfitteth us, is too much. But here both the present and future must be considered.

2. When you have no higher end in eating and drinking, than the pleasure of your appetite. Be it little or much, it is to be judged of according to its end. A beast hath no other end, because he hath no reason, and so properly hath no end at all; but we are bound to eat and drink to the glory of God, and to do all to further us in his service, 1 Cor. x. 31. The appetite may be pleased in order to a higher end; that is, 1. So far as it is a true director what is for our health, and will be best digested. 2. So far as by moderate and seasonable exhilaration, it fitteth us by cheerful alacrity for our duty; and therefore it hath been good men's use to have holy feasts, as well as holy fasts. But the appetite must be restrained and denied, 1. When it is against health. And, 2. When it hindereth from duty. Or, 3. When it would be the ultimate end of our repast, and there is no higher reason for it, than the appetite's delight.

It is not said that the sensualist in Luke xvi. did eat too much; but that he "fared sumptuously every day," and that he had his good things here: that is, that he lived to the pleasing of his flesh. It is not

said of him in Luke xii. 19, 20, that he ate or drank too much; but that he said, "Soul, take thy ease, eat, drink, and be merry;" that is, that he preferred the pleasing of his appetite or flesh, before the everlasting pleasures. The sin of the Israelites was, that they were weary of eating manna only, so many years, and desired flesh only to please their appetite: and therefore it is said, that "they asked meat for their lust," Psal. lxxviii. 18, that is, to gratify their flesh or sense. And the terrible threatenings thundered out by James against the rich, are on such accounts; "Ye have lived in pleasure on earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter," James v. 4, 5. And we are commanded to make no provision for the flesh, to satisfy the wills or lusts thereof; that is, merely or chiefly to please our senses.

3. It is sinful fulness, when you needlessly strengthen either lustful or sluggish inclinations by the quantity or the quality of your food. I know nature must not be famished, nor our health and life destroyed, under pretence of conquering sin; but when necessity of life and health doth not require it, all that must be avoided which cherisheth any vicious disposition. And these two are the usual effects of fulness. (1.) Some, especially idle youths, abound with lustful thoughts and inclinations, which fulness greatly cherisheth; and pleasing their appetite is the fuel of their lust: whereas if they would drink water, and eat coarser food, and little of it, (and withal be laborious in some serious work,) their lusts would be more extinguished. These persons are guilty of sinful fulness, if they take but near as much as other men may do; because for the pleasing of one lust, they feed another.

(2.) Others that are phlegmatic and dull, can never feed fully, but they are heavy and drowsy, unfit for prayer, and unfit for work: usually the health, as well as the consciences, of these persons, doth require a spare kind of diet; and that which is but enough for others, is too much for them. Because the avoiding of sin, and the performance of our duties, is the measure of our food.

4. It is sinful fulness, when any of God's creatures are taken without any benefit, and in vain. It is a sin to take any more than we have cause to think is like to do us good; though we thought it were like to do no harm. That which is used only to gratify the appetite, or for any other unprofitable cause, and neither furthereth health nor duty, is sinfully cast away. And if vain words be forbidden, vain eating and drinking can be no better.

The evil of the sin is, 1. Because man being a rational creature, should do nothing in vain. 2. Because we are God's stewards, and must give an account of all our talents. 3. Because God's mercies are not to be contemned, nor cast away as nothing worth. 4. But especially because there are thousands in want, while you abound; and if you spend that in vain, which others need, you wrong God, and rob them, and show that you want love to your brethren, and prefer your appetites before their necessities. If you think any thing that you have is absolutely your own, you are but foolish pretenders against God; but if you know that God hath lent it you for his service, how dare you cast it away in vain? John vi. 12. When Christ had multiplied food (or satisfied men's appetite) by miracle, he saith, "Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost:" nothing then must be lost, on yourselves or others.

5. To bestow too much cost upon the belly, is a sinful fulness too, though the quantity of food be never so small. Cost is too much when it is more than is profitable; or when the cost exceedeth the profit. The reasons of this are the same as of the former; because we are God's stewards, and must give account of all that we have, and must improve it all to our Master's use; and because thousands want what we might spare, and superfluously expend. What are the occasions which will justify some extraordinary costliness, is too long now to explicate. In general, it must be for some end and benefit, which is better than any which might be procured otherwise by that expense: but pride or appetite are no justifying causes of it. It was faring sumptuously which was that carnal gentleman's sin, in Luke xvi. It is said of such, that their "belly is their god," Phil. iii. 18, for they daily sacrifice much more to it than they do to God. Many hundred pounds a year is little enough for many men to sacrifice to their throats. It is such a sacrifice which James calleth, the "cherishing of their hearts as in a day of slaughter," James v. 5. This is the hid treasure which their bellies are filled with, Psal. xvii. 14. The rich man's full barns (Luke xii. 20) were but to fill his belly, and please his flesh: "Thou hast enough laid up for many years." For what? Why for ease, and eating, and drinking, and mirth. They think it is their own, and that they may spend it on themselves; but oh the terrible account! As David would not offer that to God which cost him nothing, (2 Sam. xxiv. 24,) so neither will they offer too cheap a sacrifice to their bellies. But lust deserveth not much cost: he that is your God, is the God of others as well as of you; and careth for them as well as for you, even when he giveth them less than you: and he giveth it you, that you may have the trial, and the honour of giving it according to his will to them.

It is every man's duty to choose the cheapest diet (and other accommodations) which will but answer his lawful ends; that is, 1. His health and welfare. 2. And the meet entertainment of others, and the avoiding of those evils which are greater than the charge.

He that loveth his neighbour as himself, will not see multitudes cold and hungry, while he gratifieth his own sensuality with superfluities. Though all men are not to live at the same rates, yet all are to observe this common rule of charity and frugality. The rule given by Paul for apparel, must be used also for our food; that women adorn themselves with modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety, not with broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array, 1 Tim. ii. 9. So must we feed with moderation and sobriety, and not with too rich and costly food.

6. And it is a great aggravation of this sin, to bestow too much of our time upon it; when those precious hours are spent in needless eating and drinking, or sitting at it, which are given us for far greater work. Though no set time can be determined for all men, yet all must feed as those that have still necessary business upon their hand, which stayeth for them, and for which it is that they cherish themselves: and therefore let not time pass away in vain, but make haste to your work, and feed not idleness instead of diligence.

7. And the root of all this mischief is, when the hearts of men are set upon their bellies; and their fancies and wits are slaves unto their appetites: when they are not indifferent about things indifferent, but make a great matter of it, what they shall eat, and what they shall drink, beyond the necessity or real benefit of it. When they are troubled if their appetite be but crossed, and they are like crying children, or swine, that are discontented and complaining if they have not what they would have, and if their bellies are not full. When they are like the Israel-

ites, that wept for flesh, Numb. xi. 4. Because "they serve not the Lord Jesus, but their own bellies," Rom. xvi. 17, 18. But the poor in spirit can live upon a little, and mind the things of the Spirit so much, that they are more indifferent to their appetite. And custom maketh abstinence and temperance sweet and easy to them. For a well-used appetite is like well-taught children; not so unmannerly, nor craving, nor bawling, nor troublesome, as the glutton's ill-used appetite is. It troubles men's minds, and taketh up their thoughts, and commandeth their estates, and devoureth their time, and turneth out God and all that is holy; and like a thirst in a dropsy, it devoureth all, and is satisfied with nothing, but increaseth itself and the disease: as if such men did live to eat, when the temperate do eat to live.

8. Lastly, it is the height of sin, when you also cherish the gulosity and excess of others. When for the pride of great housekeeping, you cause others to waste God's creatures and their time; and waste your estates to satisfy their luxury, and to procure their vain applause. "Woe to him that giveth his neighbour drink; that puttest thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken also!" Hab. ii. 15. This is the fulness which is forbidden of God.

Object. But is it not said that Christ came eating and drinking, and the Pharisees quarrelled with him and his disciples, because they did not fast as John and his disciples did; and they called him a gluttonous person, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners?

Answ. 1. John lived in a wilderness, upon locusts and wild honey; and because Christ lived not such an austere, eremitical life, the quarrelsome Pharisees did thus calumniate him. But Christ never lived in the least excess. Mark that part of his life which they thus accused, and you will find it such as the sensual will be loth to imitate. 2. Christ was by office to converse with publicans and sinners for their cure: and this gave occasion to the calumnies of malice. 3. There was a difference of reasons for John's austerity, and Christ's: but when he, the Bridegroom, was taken away, he foretelleth that his followers should fast. 4. Christ fasted forty days at once, and drank water, and lived in perfect temperance. Imitate him, and we will not blame you for excess: his example preached poverty in spirit.

Direct. 2. Remember the reasons why fulness and gulosity are so much condemned by God: viz.

1. A pampered appetite is unruly; and feedeth your concupiscence. The flesh is now become our most dangerous enemy; and therefore it must be dangerous to pamper it, to the strengthening of its lusts: when even Paul was to buffet and tame it, and bring it into subjection, for fear of proving a castaway after all his wondrous labours.

2. The pleasing of the appetite too much, corrupteth the delight and relish of the soul. Delight in God, and heaven, and holiness, is the sum and life of true religion; and the delights of sense and fleshly appetite, turn away the soul from this, and are most mortal enemies to these true delights. "For they that are after the flesh, do mind or savour the things of the flesh; and they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit," Rom. viii. 6, 7. And "the carnal mind is enmity to God:" if it "cannot be subject to his law," certainly it is unfit to relish the sweetness of his love, and spiritual mercies.

3. And the thoughts themselves are corrupted and perverted by it. They that should be thinking and caring how to please God, are thinking and caring for their bellies. Even when all their powers should be employed on God, in meditation, or in prayer, their thoughts will be going after their fleshly appetite, as Ezekiel's hearers were after their covetousness, Ezek. xxxiii. 31; and as some of Christ's hearers were after the loaves.

4. The use of pleasing the fleshly appetite doth make men need riches; which is a misery, and a snare. Such must needs have their desires satisfied, and therefore cannot live on a little: and therefore if they have riches, their flesh devoureth almost all, and they have little to spare for any charitable uses; and if they have none, they are tempted to steal, or get by some unlawful means. And so it tempteth them to the love of money (which is the root of all evil) because they love the lust which needeth it.

5. And it maketh them utterly unfit for suffering (which Christ will have all his followers to expect). He that is used to please his appetite, will take that for a grievous life, which another man will feel no trouble in. If a full-fed gentleman or Dives were tied to fare as the poor labourer doth at the best, he would lament his case as if he were undone, and would take that for half a martyrdom (if it were on a pious pretence) which his neighbour would account no suffering, but a feast. And will God reward men for such self-made sufferings? How unfit is he to endure imprisonment, banishment and want, who hath always used to please his flesh! If God cast him into poverty, how impatient would he be! How plentifully and pleasantly would most poor countrymen think to live, if they had but a hundred pounds a year of their own! But if he that hath thousands, and is used to fulness, should be reduced to a hundred, how querulous or impatient would he be.

6. It maketh the body heavy and unfit for duty; both duties of piety, and the honest labours of your calling.

7. It maketh the body diseased; and so more unfit to serve the soul. It is to be noted, that the excess reproved by Paul at their love-feasts, was punished with sickness, and with death: and as that punishment had a moral suitableness to their sin; so it is not unlike that (according to God's ordinary way of punishing) it was also a natural effect of their excess.

8. It is a most unsuitable thing to such great sinners as we are, who have forfeited all our mercies, and are called so loud to penitent humiliation; when we should turn to the Lord with all our hearts, with fasting, weeping, and mourning, to be then pleasing our fleshly appetites with curiosities and excess, is a sin that God once threatened in a terrible sort, Isa. xxii. 12, 13. Fasting is in such cases a duty of God's appointment, Joel ii. 12; Luke ii. 37; 1 Cor. vii. 5. Cornelius's fasting and alms-deeds came up before God, Acts x. 30. Daniel was heard upon his fast, Dan. ix. 3. Christ fasted when he entered solemnly on his work, Matt. iv. And some devils would not be cast out without fasting and prayer: and is luxury fit in such a case?

9. Lastly, remember what was said before, that others are empty, while we are full. Thousands need all that we can spare: and they are members of Christ, and of the same body with us: and so much as we waste on our appetite or pride, so much the less we have to give. And "he that seeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, (when he cannot deny superfluities to himself,) how dwelleth the love of God in him!" When the "poor we shall have always with us," that we may always have exercise for our love: and he that glutteth his own flesh to the full, and giveth the poor but the leavings of his lust, if it were a thousand pounds a year that he giveth, must look for small reward from God, however he may do good to others.

More particular directions may be as followeth.

Direct. 1. Understand well how much the flesh in this lapsed state is our enemy; and how much gulosity doth strengthen it against us; and how much of the work of grace lieth in resisting and overcoming it; and what need we have to serve the Spirit, and not to be helpers of the flesh: and the true consideration of these things may do much; Gal. v. 17—19, 22, 23; Rom. viii. 6—10, 13.

Direct. 2. Set yourselves to the work of God according to your several places; and live not idly. And then mark what helpeth or hindereth you in your work. If you play not the loitering hypocrite, but make your duties the serious business of all your lives, you will quickly find how inconsistent a brutish appetite, and a full belly, and a curious, costly, and time-wasting pampering of the flesh, is with such a christian life.

Direct. 3. Study well the life of Christ, and the example of the ancient saints. Remember what diet was in use with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; with the apostles, and holiest servants of Christ. And that it was Solomon, the most voluptuous king of Israel, that was told by his mother, that "it is not for kings to drink wine, but for them that are of a sorrowful heart:" and that the description of the luxurious then was "riotous eaters of flesh," Prov. xxxi. 5; xxiii. 20. And that it was the mark of fleshly heretics, "to feast themselves without fear," Jude 12. And that they were destroyed by God's wrath, though they had their desire, who murmured for want of flesh, after many years' abstinence in a wilderness; and it is called, "Asking meat for their lust," Psal. lxxviii. 18. I doubt many of our servants now would be discontented, and think their bellies too hardly used, if they had no better than the milk and honey of the land of promise; yea, or the onions and flesh-pots of Egypt.

Direct. 4. Think what a base and swinish kind of sin it is, to be a slave to one's guts or appetite. And how far it is below, not only a christian, but a man, and what a shame to human nature.

Direct. 5. Look often to the grave, and observe those skulls into which once the pleasant meats and drinks were put; and those jaws that were so often employed in grinding for the belly; and remember how quickly this will be your case: and think then whether such a carcass deserve so much care, and cost, and curiosity, to the neglect and danger of an immortal soul.

Direct. 6. Lay a constant law upon your appetite, and use it not to be pleased without cause and benefit; but use it to a wholesome, but not a full, a costly, a curious, or a delicious food: and use will make intemperance to be loathsome to you, and temperance to be sweet.

Direct. 7. Learn so much reason as to know truly what is most conducible to your health, both for quantity and quality; and mark what diseases and deaths are usually caused by excess. It is more reasonable to be temperate for prevention of diseases, than under the power and feeling of them; when pain and sickness force you to it, whether you will or not. If you will not obey God so carefully as your physician; yet obey the preventing counsels of your physician, before you need his curing counsel.

Direct. 8. Neglect not the manly and the sacred delights which God alloweth. I mean, the pleasures of honest labours, and of your calling, and of reading and knowledge, of meditation and prayer, and of a well-ordered soul and life, and of the certain hopes of endless glory. Live upon these, and you will easily spare the fleshly pleasures of a swine.

CHAPTER XVII.

HOW TO CONQUER SLOTH AND IDLENESS BY THE LIFE OF FAITH.

The third sin of Sodom, and of abused prosperity, is idleness, Ezek. xvi. 49. Concerning which I shall first tell you the nature and signs of it, and then the evil of it; and then give you more particular directions against it. But this also but briefly, because I have done it more largely in my "Christian Directory."

I. That you may know who are guilty of this sin, and who not, I shall first premise these propositions.

1. Nothing but disability will excuse any one from the ordinary labours of a lawful calling. Riches or honours will excuse none. They are the subjects of God, as well as others that have less: and he that hath most, hath most to use, and most to answer for: to whom men commit much, of them they require the more, Luke xii. 48; xix. 23. Greatness and wealth is so far from excusing the forbearance of a calling, that it will not allow any one the omission of one hour's labour and diligence in his calling. If God give the rich more wages than others, it is unreasonable to think that therefore they may do less work.

2. Yet when mere necessity compelleth the poor to labour more than else they were obliged to do, even to the detriment of their health, or shortening of God's worship, the rich are not bound therefore to imitate them, and to incur the same inconveniences; because they have not the same necessities. As in their diet, the rich are not allowed to take any more for quantity or quality than is truly for their good, any more than the poor; but they are not bound to live as those poor do, who want that either for quantity or quality, which is truly for their good; so is it also in this case of labouring.

3. The labours of every one's calling must be the ordinary business of his life; and not a little now and then instead of a recreation. If it be a man's calling, he must be constant and laborious in it.

4. Yea, no interposed recreation or idleness is lawful, but that which either is necessitated by disability, or that which is needful to fit the mind or body for its work: as whetting to the mower.

5. All men's callings tie them not constantly to one kind of labour; but some may be put to vary their employments every day: as poor men that live by going on errands, and doing other men's business, under several masters, several ways: and as many rich people whose occasions of doing good may often vary.

6. The rich and honourable are not bound to the same kind of labour as the poor. A magistrate or pastor is not bound to follow the plough; nay, he is bound not to do it ordinarily, lest he neglect his proper and greater work. Some men's labours are with the hand, and some men's with the head.

7. Every man should choose that calling which is most agreeable to his mind and body. Some are strong, and some are weak. Some are of quick wits, and some are dull. All should be designed to that which they are fittest for.

8. Every one should choose that calling (if he be fit for it) in which he may be most serviceable to God, for the doing of the greatest good in the world; and not that in which he may have most ease, or wealth, or honour. God and the public good must be our chiefest ends in the choice.

9. And in the labours of our calling, the getting

of riches must never be our principal end; but we must labour to do the most public good, and to please God by living in obedience to his commands.

10. Yet every man must desire the success of his labour, and the blessing of God on it, and may continue his work as best tendeth to success. And though we may not labour to be rich, (Prov. xxiii. 4,) as our principal end; yet we must not be formal in our callings; nor think that God is delighted in our mere toil, to see men fill a bottomless vessel; but we must endeavour after the most successful way, and pray for a just prosperity of our labours. And when God doth prosper us with wealth, we must take it thankfully, (though with fear,) and use it to his service, and do all the good with it that we can. Lay by as God hath prospered every man, 1 Cor. xvi. 2. "Let him work with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth," Ephes. iv. 28. "Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted," James i. 9.

11. The lowness of a man's calling, or baseness of his employment, will not allow him to be negligent or weary of it, or uncomfortable in it: seeing God must be obeyed in the lowest service, as well as in the highest; and will reward men according to their faithful labour, and not according to the dignity of their place: and indeed no service should be accounted low and base, which is sincerely done for so great and high a Master, and hath the promise of so glorious a reward, Col. iii. 23, 24.

12. The greater and more excellent any man's work and calling is, his idleness and negligence is the greater sin. It is bad in a ploughman, or any day-labourer; but it is far worse in a minister of the gospel or a magistrate. Because they wrong many, and that in the greatest things, and violate the greatest trust from God. Christ biddeth us pray the "Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers into his harvest," Luke x. 27; and not proud, covetous, idle drones, that would have honour only for their wealth and titles: and he saith, that the labourer is worthy of his hire, but not the loiterer. Among the elders that rule the church, it is especially the labourers in the word and doctrine that are worthy of double honour. Dr. Hammond noteth on 1 Thess. v. 12, that the bishops whom they are required to know and honour, were those that laboured among them, and were over them in the Lord, and admonished them; and that it was "for their work's sake" that they were to esteem them very highly in love. The highest title that ever was put on pastors, was to be "labourers together with God," 1 Cor. iii. 9.

And the calling of magistrates also requireth no small diligence: Jethro persuadeth Moses to take helpers, not that he might himself be idle, but lest he should wear away himself with doing more than he could undergo, Exod. xviii. 18.

So the calling of a schoolmaster, and of parents and masters of families, who have rational souls to instruct and govern, requireth a special diligence: and negligence in such is a greater sin, than in him that neglecteth sheep or horses.

So also it is a great sin in a physician, because he doth neglect men's lives; and in a lawyer, when by sloth he destroyeth men's estates. The greatness of the trust must greaten men's care.

13. He that hath hired his labour to another, (as a servant, a lawyer, a physician,) is guilty of a thievish fraud, if he give him not that which he hath paid for. "Owe nothing to any man but love," Rom. xiii. Hired labour is a debt that must be paid.

14. Religious duties will not excuse idleness, nor negligence in our callings (but oblige us to it the more): nor will any bodily calling excuse us from religious duties; but both must take their place in their seasons and due proportions.

Quest. 1. But what if a man can live without labour; may not he forbear who needeth it not? *Answ.* No, because he is nevertheless a subject of God, who doth command it; and a member of the commonwealth, which needeth it.

Quest. 2. What if I were not brought up to labour; am I bound to use it? *Answ.* Yes, you must yet learn to do your duty, and repent, and ask pardon for living so long in sinful idleness. What if you had not been brought up to pray, or to read, or to any needful trade, or ornament of life? What if your parents had never taught you to speak? Is it not your duty therefore to learn it when you are at age, rather than not at all?

Quest. 3. But what if I find that it hurteth my body to labour; may I not forbear? *Answ.* If it so hurt you, that you are unable to do it, there is no remedy. Necessity hath no law. Or if one sort of labour hurt you, when you can take up another in which you may be as serviceable to the commonwealth, you may choose that to which your strength is suitable: but if you think that every sudden pain or weariness is a sufficient excuse; or that some real hurt will warrant you in an idle life; you may as well think that your servant, and your horse or ox, may cease all their labour for you when they are weary; or that your candle should not burn, nor your knife be used in cutting, because that use consumeth them.

Quest. 4. What if I find that worldly business doth hinder me in the service of God; I cannot pray, or read, or meditate so much? *Answ.* The labours of your callings are part of the service of God; he hath set you both to do, and you must do both; that is, both spiritual and corporal work: and to quarrel with either, is to quarrel against God who hath appointed them.

Quest. 5. But is it not worldliness when we follow worldly business without any need? *Answ.* 1. Yes, if you do it only from the love of the world, and with a worldly mind: but not when you do it in obedience to God, and with a heavenly mind. 2. He cannot be said to have no need, who hath a body that needeth it, or liveth in a commonwealth that needeth it, and is a subject to God who commandeth it.

Quest. 6. But what if I find by constant experience, that my soul is more worldly after worldly business, and more cold and alienated from God? *Answ.* What if you should find it so after giving to the poor, or visiting the sick, or providing for your family? What then must you do? You must lament the carnality of your minds, and beg of God for such grace as may fit you for your duties: and not cast off your duty, because you are so bad; but labour to be better and to do it better. And, 2. You must not judge of the benefit only by present feeling; but if God hath promised a blessing to you, believe it; and you shall certainly meet with it at the last. Many a one thinks that to forsake all bodily labour, and to do nothing but the duties of religion, doth benefit them more at the present; when perhaps in a little time, the sickness of their bodies, or the melancholy distraction of their minds, doth lose them more than they had gotten, and make them unfit for almost any duty at all. And many a one that think their spiritual benefit is interrupted by their callings, do find all God's promises fulfilled at last to their satisfaction.

Quest. 7. But is it not lawful to set one's self only to religion, as John Baptist, Anna, &c. did?

Answ. It is a duty to be as religious as you can: but it is also a duty to labour in your calling, and do all the good you can to others. The aged and impotent that cannot labour in a calling, are excused from it: and they that give up themselves to the magistracy, ministry, physic, &c. must meddle with no lower things, which would hinder them in the higher. But no man can be excused from doing all the good he can to others, by any pretences of looking to his soul: for he can no way more surely further his salvation; nor can he hinder it more, than by sinful negligence or sloth.

Quest. 8. But was not labour and toil a curse upon Adam after his sin? And any man that can may labour to escape a curse.

Answ. 1. Adam in innocency was set to dress and keep the garden. 2. The curse was in the toil and the frustration of his labour. 3. And even that is such a curse, as God will not take off, or remit.

Quest. 9. Doth not Paul say to servants, "If ye can be free, use it rather?"

Answ. True; but he saith not, If you can be idle, use it rather. A free-man may work as hard as a bond-man.

Quest. 10. May not a man that hath several callings before him, choose the easiest?

Answ. Not merely or chiefly because it is easy; but he must choose the most profitable to the common good, be it easy or hard, if it be such as he can undergo. Yet he may avoid such a calling, as by tiring his body indisposeth him to spiritual things; or by taking up all his time, will deprive him of convenient leisure for things spiritual. But he that, only to ease his flesh, doth put by more profitable employments because they will cost him labour, doth serve his flesh, and cast off his duty to his God.

II. The signs of wealthy idleness are these:

1. When men think it unnecessary for them to labour constantly and diligently, because they are rich, and can live without it; or because they are great, and it is below them. The confutation of which error I gave you before, and shall give you more of it anon. The poor in spirit think not a laborious life below them.

2. When men have time to spare. This is a most evident mark of idleness: for God hath given us no time in vain; but hath given us full work for all our time. They that have time to play away needlessly, to sleep away needlessly, to prate away needlessly, do tell the world that Sodom's idleness is their sin. Especially poor souls who are yet unsanctified, and are strangers to a renewed heart and life, and are utterly unfit to die. Oh what abundance of important work have these to do! And can they be idle, while all this lieth undone? Indeed if they are in despair of being saved, it is no wonder: and one would think by their lives that they did despair: for surely a man so near another world, that must be in heaven or hell for ever, would never live idly, if he had any good hope that his endeavours should not be all in vain. The poor in spirit have no time to spare: labour is their life: eternity is still before their eyes: necessity is upon them; and they know the woe that followeth idleness. Repentance for sin and negligence past, is a constant spur to future diligence. And their work is sweet, and incomparably more pleasant to them than idleness. If the devil be so diligent, because he knoweth that his time is short, (Rev. xii. 12,) it is a shame to them that are not so, who call themselves the servants of the Lord.

3. When men's labour hath but the time that is due to recreation; and recreation and idleness hath the great part of time that is due to labour. The labour of the idle Sodomite, is like the religion of the reserved hypocrite; it is but the leavings of the flesh, or somewhat that cometh in upon the by. But God is not unconstant in his mercies unto us: he is still preserving us, and maintaining us: the angels are still guarding us: the faithful ministers of Christ are constant in teaching us (and loth that Satan should hinder them, and save their labour.) Faithful magistrates also watch continually, to be a terror to evil-doers, and a praise to them that do well, as the ministers of God for our good. And can a short and idle kind of labour then excuse us? Christ said, "It was his meat to do his Father's will," when he was endeavouring man's salvation, John iv. 34. And that "he must do the work of him that sent him while it was day," John ix. 4. And shall idleness be excused in us? even in us who must be "judged according to our works," (Rev. xxii. 12; Mark xiii. 34,) by him that hath commanded every man his work? Yea, when we are redeemed and purified to be "zealous of good works," Titus ii. 14; and "are his workmanship created to good works in Christ, which God hath ordained, that we should walk in them," Ephes. ii. 10.

4. When men make a great matter of all their labour, and of that which to a diligent man is small. The sluggard hath his thorn hedge, and "a lion in the way," Prov. xxii. 13; xxvi. 13, 15, 16. But the diligent say, when they have done their best, "We are unprofitable servants." Nothing is so weary to them as unprofitable idleness (except hurtful wickedness). They think still, Oh how short is time! and how much work is yet undone! And as every faithful minister in his calling is never so well pleased as when he doth most for the good of souls, so it is with every faithful christian in his place. A candle if it be not burnt, is lost, and good for nothing.

5. The idle Sodomite hath a mind which followeth the affections of his body: and as soon as his body is a little weary, his mind is so too, and sufferreth the weariness of the body to prevail; because the flesh is king within them. Nay, a slothful mind doth often begin, and they are weary to look upon their work, or to think of it, before it hath wearied the body at all. And what they do, they do unwillingly; because they are in love with idleness, Mal. i. 13. But the lowly and laborious are in love with diligence and work: and therefore though they cannot avoid the weariness of the body, their willing minds will carry on the body as far as it can well go. The diligent woman "worketh willingly with her hands; her candle goeth not out by night," &c. Prov. xxxi. 13, &c. Servants must "do service with good will, as to the Lord," Ephes. vi. 7. If ministers preach and labour "willingly, they have a reward," 1 Cor. ix. 17. But not if they are only driven on by necessity, and the fear of woe, 1 Pet. v. 2. What shall we do willingly, if not our duties? He that sinneth willingly, and serveth God and followeth his labour unwillingly, shall be rewarded according to his will.

6. The idle Sodomite doth love and choose that kind of life which is easiest, and hath least work to be done. This is the chief provision by which he fulfilleth his fleshly lust. An idle servant thinketh that the best place, in which he shall have most ease and fulness. An idle parent will cast all the burden of his children's teaching, upon the schoolmaster and the pastor. An idle minister thinketh himself best, where he may have no more labour than what tendeth to his public applause; and when he hath the most wealth and honour, and least to do, he taketh that to be the flourishing prosperity of the church. And indeed if our calling were like the

soldier's, to kill men, and not like the surgeon's, to cure them, we might think it is the best time when we have least employment.

But the faithful servant will be most thankful for that state of life, in which he doth most good: and as he taketh doing good to be the surest way of getting and receiving, so he taketh the good of another as his own, and another's necessity is his necessity. He knoweth that he is best, who is likest unto God; and that is he that is the most abundant in love, and doing good: like the sun that never resteth from moving or giving light and heat. The running spring is pure, when the standing water is muddy and corrupt. The cessation of motion quickly mortifieth the blood. He that said as to works of charity, "Be not weary of well-doing; for in due time you shall reap, if you faint not," Gal. vi. 9; hath said so too as to our bodily labour in our common callings in the world, 2 Thess. iii. 13.

I know that a servant may be glad of a place where he is not oppressed with unreasonable labour, and where he hath competent time for the learning of God's word; and a poor man may be glad when he is freed from necessity of doing that which is to his hurt: but otherwise no man but a fleshly brute will wish or contrive for a life of idleness.

Object. Is it not said, "Blessed are the dead, for they rest from their labours?" Rev. xiv. 13. *Answ.* True; but mark that "their works follow them:" and what are the works which follow you? And note, that it is not work or duty that they shall rest from; (for "they rest not crying, Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty," &c.;) but it is only their labours; that is, the painful sort of work and suffering, proper to this sinful life. The blessed indeed are freed in heaven from this; because they were not freed from it on earth, as the ungodly and slothful servant are.

7. Lastly, idleness is seen by the work that is undone. The sluggard's vineyard is overgrown with weeds, Prov. xxiv. 30. If your souls be unrenewed, and your assurance of salvation and evidences yet to get, and few the better for you in the world, and you are yet unready for death and judgment, you give too full a proof of idleness. The diligent woman (Prov. xxxi. 16, &c.) could show her labours in her treasures, her vineyard, the clothing and provisions of her family, &c.; show yours by the good which you have done in the world, and by the preparation of your souls for a better world. "Let every man prove his own work, that he may have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another," Gal. vi. 3, 4. What case are your children in? Are they taught, or untaught? What case is your soul in? Your fruit must judge you.

III. The mischiefs of this Sodomitical idleness, and the reasons against it, are (briefly) these.

1. It is contrary to the active nature of man's soul; which in activity exceedeth the fire itself. It is as natural for a soul to be active, as for a stone or clod of earth to lie still. And this active nature animateth the passive body, to move it, and use it in its proper work. And should this heavenly fire be imprisoned in the body, which it should command and move? "Man goeth forth to his work and to his labour till the evening," Psal. civ. 23.

2. It is contrary to the common course of nature. Doth the sun shine for you as well as for others; or doth it not? Doth all the frame of nature continue in its course, (the air, the waters, summer and winter,) for you as well as for others, or not? If not, then you take not yourselves beholden to God for them: and if you have no use for the sun and other creatures, you have no use for life; for by them you live. But if yea, then what is it that they serve you for? Did God ever frame you so glorious a retinue, to attend you only to sleep, and laugh, and play, and to be idle? What! is all this for no higher an end? Or rather do you not by your idleness forfeit life, and all these helps and maintainers of your lives.

3. It is an unthankful reproach and blasphemy against the God of nature, yea, and against the Lord your Redeemer, to think that the wise Almighty God did make so noble a thing as a soul, and place it in so curious an engine as the body, where spirits, and blood, and heart, and lungs, are never idle, but in constant motion; and that he hath appointed us so glorious a retinue as aforesaid, and all this to do nothing with, or worse than nothing! to sleep, and rise, and dress yourselves, and talk, and eat, and drink; to tell men only that you are not dead, lest they should mistake, and bury you alive! What is it but to put a scorn on your Creator and Redeemer, to live as if he had created and redeemed you for no better and nobler ends than these?

4. You do as it were pray for death, or provoke God to take away your lives. For if they be good for nothing else but idleness and beastly pleasures, why should you expect to have them continued? Or at least, why should he not use you as Nebuchadnezzar, and take away your reason, and turn you into beasts, if the life and pleasure of a beast be all that you desire? Could not you eat, and drink, and sleep, and play, without an intellectual soul? Cannot the birds make their nests, and breed, and feed their young, and sit and sing, without an intellectual nature? Cannot a swine have his ease, and meat, and lust, without reason? What should you do with reason for such uses?

5. You show a stupid, senseless heart, that can live idly, and have so much to do, and have so many spurs to rouse you up. To live continually in the sight of God, to have a soul so ignorant, so unbelieving, so unholy, so unfurnished of faith and love, so unready for death, so uncertain of salvation; nay, in such apparent danger of damnation, and to be still uncertain of living one day or hour longer; and yet to live idly in such a case, as if all were well, and your work were done, and you had no more to fear or care for; oh what a mad, what a dead, what a sottish kind of soul is this! To see the graves before your eyes; to see your neighbours carried thither; to feel the tokens of mortality daily in yourselves; to be called on and warned to prepare, and yet under this to live as if you had nothing to do, but to show yourselves in the neatest dress, and as a peacock, to spread your plumes for yourselves and others to look upon, or to pamper a carcass for worms and rottenness; oh what a deplorable case is this! The Lord pity you, and awaken your understandings, and bring you to your wits, and you will then wonder at your own stupidity.

6. Idleness is a sin which is contrary to God's universal law; the law which extended to all times and places. Adam in innocency was to labour: he that had all things prepared for his sustenance by God, was yet himself to labour: he that was lord of all the world, and was richer than any of our proud ones whosoever, was yet to dress and keep the garden. Cain was a tiller of land, and Abel was a keeper of cattle, when they were heirs of all the earth. Noah also was lord of all the world, and richer than you, and yet he was a husbandman. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were princes, and yet keepers of sheep and cattle. It is not a bare permission, but a precept of diligence in the fourth commandment, "Six days shalt thou labour, and do all that thou hast to do." Christ himself did not live

idly, but before his ministry they said, "Is not this the carpenter?" Mark vi. 3. And afterwards how incessantly was he doing good to men's bodies and souls! And what laborious lives did his apostles live! See 2 Cor. vi. 5; xi. 23; Acts xviii. 3. And are you exempt from the universal law?

7. You show a base and fleshly mind. The noblest natures are the most active, and the basest the most dead and dull. The earth is not baser than the fire, in a greater degree than an idle soul is baser than one that is active, and spendeth himself in doing good. Methinks your pride itself should keep you from proclaiming such a dead and earthen disposition.

8. Idleness is of the same kind with fornication, gluttony, drunkenness, and other such beastly sins; for all is but sinful flesh-pleasing, or sensuality: the same fleshly nature which draweth them to the one, doth draw you to the other; and they do but gratify their flesh in one kind of vice, as you do in another. And it is pity that idleness should be in so much less disgrace than they. And truly if you cannot deny your flesh its ease, I cannot see if the temptation lay as strong that way, how you should deny it in any of those lusts; so that you seem to be virtually fornicators, gluttons, drunkards, &c. and ready to commit the acts.

9. And hereby you strengthen the flesh as it is your enemy for the time to come. When you have long used to please it by idleness, it will get the victory, and must be pleased still: and then you are undone for ever, if grace do not yet cause you to overcome it. "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live," Rom. viii. 13. None are freed from condemnation, nor are members of Christ, but they that "walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," Rom. viii. 1. For "the carnal mind is enmity against God," ver. 7.

10. Idleness is a sin much aggravated by its continuance. A drunkard is not always drunken, nor a swearer is not always swearing, nor a thief is not always stealing; but an idle person is almost always idle; whole hours and days, if not weeks and years together. Oh what a continual course of sin do our rich and gentle drones still live in! as if they were afraid to do any thing, which when death cometh, they could comfortably be found doing!

11. And oh what a time-wasting sin is idleness! O precious time, how art thou despised by these drowsy despisers of God and of their souls! Oh what would the despairing souls in hell give for some of that time which these bedlams prate away, and game and play away, and trifle and fool away, and sleep and loiter away! And what would they give for a little of it themselves, upon the same terms, when it is gone, and when wishing is too late!

12. Idleness is a self-contradicting sin: none are so much afraid of dying as the idle, (and I do not blame them if they knew all,) and yet none more cast away their lives: they die voluntarily continually: he that loseth the use and benefit of life, doth lose his life itself; for what is it good for, but as a means to its ends? What difference between a man asleep and dead, but only that one is more in expectation of usefulness when he awaketh? It is a pitiful sight to a man in his wits, to see the bedlam world afraid of dying, and trembling at every sign of death; and in the mean time setting as little by their lives, as if they were worth no more, than to spend at cards, or dice, or stage-plays, or dressings, or feastings, or ludicrous compliments.

13. You teach your servants that life which yet you will not endure in them: for why should they be more careful and diligent in the work which you command them, than you in the work which God commandeth you? Are you the better masters? or, will you find them better work? or, will you pay them better wages? I know God needeth not your service, as you do theirs; but he commandeth it, for other ends, though he need it not. And should any be more careful to please you, that are but worms and dust, than you should be to please your Maker? If an idle life be best, why do you blame it in your servants? If it be not, why do you live such lives yourselves?

14. By idleness you show that when you do labour, it is but for your carnal selves, and that it is not God whom you serve in your daily callings. He that will labour when he is poor, and feeleth the neeessity of it, and will give over all, and live idly and playfully, when he is rich, doth show that he laboureth not in obedience to God, (or else he would continue it,) but merely to supply his bodily wants. You have your reward then from yourselves, and you cannot in reason expect any from God. But true believers have another rule, by which they live: "Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not to men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance, for ye serve the Lord Christ," Col. iii. 23, 24.

15. Idleness is a forfeiture of your protection, and of your daily bread. God is not bound to keep you to play, and loiter, and do nothing. You have not a plenary right to your meat, if you live in wilful idleness. I showed you God's commands before. God's promise of prosperity is, "Thou shalt eat the labour of thy hands," Psal. cxxviii. 2. (And if many in England that have most, should eat no other than the labour of their hands, it would cure their fulness.) The diligent woman (Prov. xxxi. 27) doth "not eat the bread of idleness." And Paul maketh it a ehureh canon, (2 Thess. iii. 6, 10, 12,) and eommandeth and exhorteth us, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that all work with quietness, and eat their own bread; that the church withdraw themselves from every brother that walketh disorderly; and "that if any would not work, neither should he eat."

16. The idle rob themselves and others: you rob yourselves of the fruit of your own labours; and you rob your masters, or your families, or whomsoever you should labour for: "He that is slothful in his work, is brother to him that is a great waster," Prov. xviii. 9. "The desire of the slothful killeth him, beeause his hands refuse to labour," Prov. xxi. 25; that is, 1. The sluggishness of the wisher famisheth him; and, 2. The hunger of desire tormenteth him when he hath not the thing desired. "By much slothfulness the building decayeth; and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through," Eccles. x. 18. "Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul shall suffer hunger," Prov. xix. 15. And he that provideth not for his own, (kindred and relations,) but especially for those of his family, hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel, 1 Tim. v. 8. Hath no one need of you? Hath no one hired you? Hath no one any right to your labours, that you are so long idle? If none have need of you, what do you in the world?

17. The idle are drones and burdens of the commonwealth: and the best-ordered governments have made laws against them, as they did against other pernicious crimes. Paul laboured day and night that he might not be liable to any, 2 Thess. iii. 8. And you think because you have enough, that other men must labour for you, but you may live idly without any blame. You live then upon the labours of others, but who liveth upon yours? Yea, I have known

some lazy persons, that because they are professors of zeal in religion, or because they are ministers or scholars, live idly in their callings, and take their ease, and think that all others that have riches are bound to maintain them (like the popish begging friars); and they say, he is covetous that cherisheth not them in idleness; and he that giveth not to them, doth them wrong; when Paul commandeth that they should not eat: and when we ask them how they live, they say, Upon the providence of God: and when the tenderness of people eauseth them to contribute to relieve these drones, they hypocritically admire the providence of God, who provideth for them; and live in idleness, and call it living upon providence.

18. Idleness depriveth you of the great delight of doing good. There is no such pleasure in this world, as is found in successful doing good: no man knoweth it but he that trieth it (and that without any conceits of merit, in commutative justice). To do good in magistracy, for the piety, peace, and safety of the people; to do good as ministers, for the saving of souls; to do good as parents, to educate a holy seed; to do good as physicians, to save men's lives, &c. It is a pleasure exceeding all voluptuousness. And this the idle wilfully reject.

19. You lose all the reward of well-doing at the last, and fall under the doom of the unprofitable servant, (Matt. xxv.) who must be cast into outer darkness. You must answer for all the talents of time, and health, and strength, and parts, to Him who will judge all according to what they have done in the body: and where shall the idle then appear?

20. Idleness will destroy your health and lives: nothing but fulness (which is its companion) doth bring so many thousands unseasonably to the grave. And do you neither love your souls nor your lives? Are you only for your present ease?

21. Idleness breedeth melancholy, and corrupteth the fantasy and mind, and so unfitteth you for all that is good. Therefore the idle that will do no good, are fain to devise some vanity to do; some game, or play, or dress, or compliment, &c.; or else they would grow addle-brained, and a shame and burden to themselves. The constant labours of a lawful calling is one of the best cures of melancholy in the world, if it be done with willingness, success, and pleasure.

22. Lastly, Idleness is the nursery of a world of vices. It is the field of temptation, where Satan soweth his tares while men are sleeping. When they are idle, they are at leisure for lustful thoughts; for wanton dalliance; for idle talk; for needless sports, and plays, and visits; for gaming, and riotous feasting, drinking, and excess; for pride, and a hundred curiosities; yea, for contentions and mischievous designs: needless and sinful things must be done, when necessary duties are laid by.

And if they are poor, idleness prepareth them to murmur and be discontent, and fall out, and contend with one another; to defraud others, and to steal. These and more are the natural fruits of idleness.

But here I must annex two cautions.

1. That none make this a pretence for a worldly mind and life; nor think that religion is a fruit of idleness; nor say as Pharaoh did of the Israelites, when they would go to sacrifice to God, "Ye are idle," Exod. v. 17. It is idleness that maketh most men ungodly: they are convinced that it is better to meditate on God's word, and call upon his name, and give all diligence to make our calling and election sure; but they are idle, and say, There is a lion in the way; what a weariness is it! we shall never endure it. As if their souls and heaven were not worth their labour, and as if they would go to hell for ease; and as if the feast of joy and glory were not worth the labour of eating or receiving it.

2. Make not this a pretence to oppress your servants with unmerciful labours, beyond their strength; or such as so weary them, and take up all their time, that they have not leisure so much as to pray. It is God's great mercy to servants, that he hath separated the Lord's day for a holy rest; or else many would have little rest, or means of holiness. Some think that others can never labour enough for them, because they pay them wages; and yet that they are bound to do nothing themselves, even because God hath given them more wages and wealth than he hath given to others.

More particular directions are as followeth.

1. Give up yourselves by absolute subjection to God as his servants; and then you can never rest in an idle, unserviceable life.

2. Take all that you have, as God's talents, and from his trust; and then you dare not but prepare in the use of them, for your account.

3. Live as those that are certain to die, and still uncertain of time, and that know what an eternal weight of joy or misery dependeth upon the spending of your present time: and then you dare not live in idleness. Live but as men whose souls are awake, to look before them into another world; and you will say, (as I have long been forced to do,) Oh how short are the days! How long are the nights! How swift is time! How slow is work! How far am I behindhand! I am afraid lest my life will be finished before the work of life; and lest my time will be done, while much of my work remaineth undone.

4. Ask yourselves what you would be found doing if death now surprise you? And whether work or idleness will be best in the review?

5. Try a laborious life of well-doing awhile, and the experience will draw you on.

6. Try yourselves by a standing resolution, and engage yourselves in necessary business, and that in a set and stated course; that necessity and resolution may keep you from an idle life.

7. Forsake the company of the idle and voluptuous, and accompany the laborious and diligent.

8. Study well how to do the greatest good you can, that the worth of the work may draw you on. For they that are of little use, for want of parts, or skill, or opportunity, are more liable to be tempted into idleness, as thinking their work is to no purpose; when the well-furnished person doth long to be exercising his wisdom and virtue in profitable well-doing.

CHAPTER XVIII.

HOW BY FAITH TO OVERCOME UNMERCIFULNESS TO THE NEEDY.

IV. THE fourth sin of Sodom, and of prosperity, mentioned Ezek. xvi. 49, is, They did not "strengthen the hand of the poor and needy." Against which at the present I shall give you but these brief directions.

Direct. 1. Love God your Creator and Redeemer, and then you will love the poorest of your brethren for his sake. And love will easily persuade you to do them good.

Direct. 2. Labour most diligently to cure your inordinate self-love, which maketh men care little for

any but themselves, and such as are useful to themselves: and when once you love your neighbours as yourselves, it will be as easy to persuade you to do good to them as to yourselves, and more easy to dissuade you from hurting them than yourselves (because sensuality tempteth you stronglier to hurt yourselves, than any thing doth to hurt them).

Direct. 3. Overvalue not the things of the world; and then you will not make a great matter of parting with them, for another's good.

Direct. 4. Do as you would be done by; and ask yourselves how you would be judged of and used, if you were in their condition yourselves.

Direct. 5. Set the life of Christ and his apostles before you: and remember what a delight it was to them to do good; and at how much dearer a rate Christ showed mercy to you and others, than he requireth you to show mercy at to any.

Direct. 6. Read over Christ's precepts of charity and mercy, that a thing so frequently urged on you, may not be senselessly despised by you.

Direct. 7. Remember that mercy is a duty applauded by all the world: as human interest requireth it, so human nature approveth it in all. Good and bad, even all the world, do love the merciful: or if the partial interest of some proud and covetous persons, (as the popish clergy for instance,) do call for cruelty against those that are not of their mind, and for their profit; yet this goeth so much against the stream of the common interest, and the light of human nature, that mankind will still abhor their cruelty, though they may affright a few that are near them from uttering their detestation. All men speak well of a merciful man, and ill of the unmerciful.

Direct. 8. Believe Christ's promises which he hath made to the merciful, so fully and frequently in Scripture; as in Matt. v. 7; Luke vi. 36; Prov. xi. 17; Psal. xxxvii. 26, &c. And believe his threatenings against the unmerciful, that they shall find no mercy, Prov. xii. 10; James ii. 13. And remember how Christ hath described the last judgment, as passing upon this reckoning, Matt. xxv.

Direct. 9. Live not in fleshly sensuality yourselves: for else your flesh will devour all; and if you have hundreds and thousands a year, will leave you but little or nothing to do good with.

Direct. 10. Engage yourselves (not by rash vows, but by resolution and practice) in a stated way of doing good, and take not only such occasions as fall out unexpectedly. Set apart a convenient proportion of your estates, as God doth bless you; and let not needless occasions divert it, and defraud the poor, and you of the benefit.

Direct. 11. Remember still that nothing is absolutely your own, but God who lendeth it you hath the true propriety, and will certainly call you to an account. And ask yourselves daily, How shall I wish at the day of reckoning, that I had expended and used all my estate? and do accordingly.

Direct. 12. Forget not what need you stand in daily of the mercy of God; and what need you will shortly be in, when your health and wealth will fail you; and how earnestly then you will cry to God for mercy, mercy: "Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard," Prov. xxi. 13.

Direct. 13. Hearken not to an unbelieving heart, which will tell you that you may want yourselves, and therefore would restrain you from well-doing. If God be to be trusted with your souls, he is to be trusted with your bodies. God trieth whether indeed you take him for your God, by trying whether you can trust him. If you deal with him as with a bankrupt, or a deceitful man, whom you will trust no further than you have a present pawn or security, in case he should deceive you; you blaspheme him, instead of taking him for your God.

Direct. 14. Let your greatest mercy be showed in the greatest things; and let the good of men's souls be your end even in your mercy to their bodies. And therefore do all in such a manner as tendeth most to promote the highest end. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

CHAPTER XIX.

HOW TO LIVE BY FAITH IN ADVERSITY.

If I should give you distinct directions, for the several cases of poverty, wrongs, persecutions, unkindnesses, contempt, sickness, &c. it would swell this treatise yet bigger than I intended. I shall therefore take up with this general advice.

Direct. 1. In all adversity remember the evil of sin, which is the cause, and the holiness and justice of God which is exercised; and then the hatred of sin, and the love of God's holiness and justice, will make you quietly submit. You will then say, when repentance is serious, "I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him," Micah vii. 9. And, "why doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?" Lam. iii. 39. "Let us search and try our ways, and turn again unto the Lord; for he hath smitten, and he will heal," &c. ver. 40, 41.

Object. But doth not Job's case tell us, that some afflictions are only for trial, and not for sin?

Answ. No; it only telleth us that the reason why Job is chosen out at that time, to suffer more than other men, is not because he was worse than others, or as bad; but for his trial and good. But, 1. Affliction as it is now existent in the world upon mankind, is the fruit of Adam's sin at first, and contained in the peremptory unremitted sentence. 2. And this general state of suffering mankind, is now in the hand and power of Christ, who sometimes indeed doth let out more on the best than upon others, and that especially for their trial and good; but usually some sins of their own also have a hand in them, and procure the evil, though his mercy turn it to their benefit.

Direct. 2. Deal closely and faithfully with your hearts and lives in a suffering time, and rest not till your consciences are well assured that no special provocation is the cause, or else do testify that you have truly repented, and resolved against it.

Otherwise you may lengthen your distress, if you leave that thorn in your sore which causeth it: or else God may change it into a worse; or may give you over to impenitency, which is worst of all: or at least, you will want that assured peace with God, and solid peace of conscience, which must be your support and comfort in affliction; and so will sink under it, as unable to bear it.

Direct. 3. Remember that the sanctifying fruit of adversity is first and more to be looked after, than either the comfort or the deliverance. And therefore that all men, no nor all christians, must not use the same method, in the same affliction, whenas their spiritual cases differ.

A cleared conscience, and one that hath walked faithfully with God, and fruitfully in the world, and kept himself from his iniquity, may bend most of his

thoughts to the comforting promises, and happy end. But one man hath been bold with wilful sin, and his work must be first to renew repentance, and see that there be no root of bitterness left behind, and to set upon true reformation of life, and reparation of the hurt which he hath done.

Another is grown into love with the world, and hath let out his heart to pleasant thoughts and hopes of prosperity, and alienated his thoughts more than before from God. This man must first perceive his error, and hear God's voice which calleth him home, and see the characters of vanity and vexation written on the face of that which he overloved; and then think of comfort when he hath got a cure.

Another is grown dull and careless of his soul, and hath lost much of his sense of things eternal, and is cold in love, and cold in prayer, and liveth as if he were grown weary of God, and weary of well-doing. His work must be to feel the smart of God's displeasure, so far as to awaken him to repentance, and set him again, with former seriousness, upon his duty: and when he mendeth his pace, he may desire to be eased of the rod and spur. But to give unseasonable cordials to any one of these, is but to frustrate the affliction, and to hurt them, and prepare for worse. Nay, and when they are comforted in season, it must be with due caution: "Go thy way, and sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee." It is pernicious unskilfulness in those comforters of the afflicted, who have the same customary words of comfort for all; and by their improper cordials unseasonably applied, delude poor souls, and hinder that necessary repentance which God by so sharp a means doth call them to.

Direct. 4. Remember that your part in affliction is to do your duty, and to get the benefit of it; but to remove it is God's part. Therefore be you careful about that part which is your own, and then make no question but God will do his part. Let it be your first question therefore, What is it that I am obliged to in this condition? What is the special duty of one in this sickness, this poverty, imprisonment, restraint, contempt, or slander, which I undergo? Be careful daily to do that duty, and then never fear the issue of your suffering: nothing can go amiss to him that is found in the way of his duty.

And let it be your next question, What spiritual good may be got by this affliction? May not my repentance be renewed? My self-denial, humility, contempt of the world, patience, and confidence on God, be exercised and increased by it? And is not this the end of my heavenly Father? Is not his rod an act of love and kindness to me? Doth he not offer me by it all this good?

And let your next question be, Have I yet got that good which God doth offer me? Have I any considerable benefit to show, which I have received by this affliction since it came? If not, why should you desire it to be taken away? Play not the hypocrite in speaking that good of an afflicting God, which you do not seriously believe. If you believe that God is wiser than you, to know what is fittest for you; and that he is better than you, and therefore hath better ends than you can have; and that really he offereth you far greater good by your sufferings, than he taketh from you: let your affections then be agreeable to this belief. Are you afraid of your own commodity? Do you impatiently long to be delivered from your gain? Are you so childish as to pull off the plaster, if you believe that it is curing the sore; and that it cannot be well and safely done without it? Do you call it the fruit of God's wisdom and love, and yet be as weary of it, as if there were nothing in it but his wrath? Trust God with his work who never faileth; and be careful of your own, who are conscious of untrustiness.

Direct. 5. Look principally to your hearts, that they grow not to an overvaluing of the prosperity of the flesh; nor to an undervaluing of holiness and the prosperity of the soul. For this unhappy carnality doth both cause affliction, and make us unprofitable and impatient under it.

1. He that is a worldling, or a voluptuous flesh-pleaser, and savoureth nothing but the things of the flesh, will think himself undone, when his pleasure, and plenty, and honour with men, is taken away. Nothing maketh men grieve for the loss of any worldly commodity, so much as the overloving of it. It is love that seeketh it when you are in hope, and love that mourneth when you are in want, as well as love which delighteth in it when you possess it: as sick men use to love health better than those that never felt the want of it; so it is too common with poor men to love riches better than the rich that never needed (and yet, poor souls, they deceive themselves, and cry out against the rich, as if they were the only lovers of the world, when they love it more themselves, though they cannot get it). Never think of bearing affliction with a patient and submissive mind, as long as you overlove the things which affliction taketh from you; for the loss of them will tear those hearts which did stick so inordinately to them.

2. And if you grow to an undervaluing of holiness, you can never be reconciled to afflicting Providence. For it is for our profit that God correcteth us: but for what profit? That we "may be partakers of his holiness," Heb. xii. 10, 14. If therefore you undervalue that which is God's end, and goeth for your gain, you will never think that you are gainers or savers by his rod. In correction God doth as it were make a bargain with you; he will take away your riches, or your friends, or your health, and he will give you (if you refuse it not) increase of patience and mortification in the stead of them: he will exchange so much heavenly-mindedness, for so much of the treasures or pleasures of the world. And now, if you do not like the bargain, if really you had rather have more health, than more holiness; more of the world, than more heavenly-mindedness; more fleshly pleasure, than more mortification of fleshly desires; you will never then like the correcting hand of God, nor rightly profit by it: you will grudge at his dealing, and wish that you were out of his hand, and in your own; and that your estates, and health, and friends, were not at his disposal, but at yours; and you will lose the offered benefit, because you value it not, and accept it not as it is offered you.

3. And those that have some esteem of holiness, and yet neglect the duty which should procure the exercise and increase of grace, do make correction burdensome by making it unprofitable to them. For to hear that they may be gainers by affliction, and to find that they are not, will not reconcile them to it. Whereas if they had really got the benefit, it would quiet them, and comfort them, and make them patient, and thankful to their Father. What have you to show that you gained by your sufferings? Are you really more mortified, more penitent, more humble, more heavenly, more obedient, more patient than you were before? If you are so, you cannot possibly think that it hath been to your loss to be afflicted; for no one that hath these graces can so undervalue them, as to think that worldly prosperity or ease is better. But if you have not such gain to show, what wonder if you are weary of the medicine which healeth not; and if, when you have made it to do you no good, you complain of it, when it is

yourselves that you should complain of? If you could say, that before you were afflicted you went astray, but now you have learnt and kept God's precepts, you might then say by experience, "It is good for me that I was afflicted," Psal. cxix. 67, 71. And men are taught by natural self-love, not to think ill of that which doth them good, if by experience they know it. You will then confess that God in very faithfulness afflicteth you, Psal. cxix. 75.

Direct. 6. Remember that nothing can be amiss which is done by God: for where there is perfection of power, and wisdom, and goodness, no actions can be bad. And there is nothing done by any of your afflicters, which is not governed by the will of God: "Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?" Amos iii. 6. "So the king hearkened not to the people; for the cause was of God, that the Lord might perform his word," 2 Chron. x. 15. God, who would not cause the sin, is said to be the cause of the event as a punishment, because he wisely permitted it for that end: "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain," Acts ii. 23. "The people of Israel were gathered to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done," Acts iv. 28; that is, he willed by his antecedent will, that Christ should be a sacrifice for sin; and he willed by his consequent will, (as a Judge and punisher of man's sin,) that the rebellious Jews should be left to their malicious wills, to execute. And that God which moderateth the wills and actions of the most malicious men and devils, will restrain them from violating any of his promises for his servants' good.

Direct. 7. Always keep before your eyes the example of a crucified Christ, and of all his holy apostles and martyrs which have followed him. "Look still to Jesus the author and finisher of your faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, and despised the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest you be wearied and faint in your mind," Heb. xii. 2, 3. If you did determine to know nothing but Christ crucified, and by his cross had crucified the world, (1 Cor. ii. 2; Gal. vi. 14,) you would be able to say, "I am crucified with Christ, yet I live," that is, "not I, but Christ liveth in me," Gal. ii. 20; and to look on the pleasure and glory of the world, as the world did look on a crucified Christ, when they shook the head at him as he hanged on the cross. You would love the narrow suffering way, where you see before you the footsteps of your Lord, and of so many holy martyrs and believers: you would say, Sure this is the safe and blessed way, in which Christ, and all the heavenly army, have passed hence unto their crown: you would say, "Is the servant greater than his Lord?" If thus the innocent Lord of life, and Master of the house, was injured and afflicted, am I better than he? Though he suffered to save me from hell, yet not to save me from the purifying trials here on earth. Doubtless you would count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and count them but dung that you might win him—and that you might know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death, Phil. iii. 8, 10.

Direct. 8. Keep the eye of faith still fixed on the eternal glory; that you may understand what affliction is when you take it with its ends. Remember what eternal joys it leadeth to; and what thoughts you will have of all your pain, when you find yourselves in the everlasting rest. Remember where all tears shall be wiped from your eyes; and who dare blame that way as narrow or foul, which bringeth us to such an end? "They that sow in tears, shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him," Psal. cxxvi. 5, 6. "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted," Matt. v. 4. Is not eternal joy sufficient for you? When you are suffering with the church militant, look up to the church triumphant; and remember that they were lately as low, as sad, as sorrowful as you, and you shall shortly be as high, as glad, as joyful as they. Look into heaven, and see what you suffer for, and think whether that be not worthy of harder terms than any you can undergo. "If we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together: for I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us," Rom. viii. 17, 18. "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory: while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernaele were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," 2 Cor. iv. 16—18. Heaven well believed, will enable us patiently and cheerfully to bear all things. He will account the very reproach of Christ to be greater riches than the treasures of the world, who looketh believingly to the recompence of reward, Heb. xi. 26.

Direct. 9. Learn to die, and then you have learned to suffer. He that can bear death, by the power of faith, can bear almost any thing. And he that is well prepared to die, is prepared for any affliction; and he that is not, is unprepared for prosperity.

Direct. 10. Remember still that life being so very short, the afflictions of believers are as short. We have so little a time to live, that we have but a little while to suffer. And "if thou faint in the day of adversity," when it is so little a while to night, "thy strength is small," Prov. xxiv. 10.

Direct. 11. Remember that thou bearest but the common burden of the sons of Adam, who are born to sorrow as the sparks fly upward: and that thou art like to all the members of Christ, who must take up their cross, and suffer with him, if they will reign with him: and that thou art but going the common way to heaven, which that heavenly society hath trod before thee. And canst thou expect to be exempted both from the lot of human lapsed nature, and from the lot of all the saints? If thou wouldst be carried to heaven in the chariot of Elias, and couldst expect to escape the jaws of death, yet must thou endure the persecution, weariness, and hunger of Elias before such a change.

Direct. 12. Think also how unreasonable it is, for one that must have eternal glory, to grudge at a little suffering in the way; and for one that is saved from the torments of hell, to think it much to be duly chastened on earth; for a Lazarus that must be comforted in Abraham's bosom, to murmur that he waiteth awhile in poverty at the rich man's doors! Shall a wicked worldling venture into endless pains, and put himself out of the hopes of heaven, and all this for a short and foolish pleasure? And will you grudge to suffer so small and short a chastisement in the way to an endless rest and joy?

Direct. 13. Think why it is that Christ hath so

largely commended and blest a suffering state, and chosen such a life for those that he will save; and why he so often pronounceth a woe to the prosperous world: it is not for want of love to his disciples; nor for want of power to secure their peace. "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted. Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness' sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven," Matt. v. 3, 4, 10. "Woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation. Woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep. Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets," Luke vi. 24—26. "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations, (that is, trying afflictions,) knowing that the trying of your faith worketh patience," James i. 2, 3. "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for the miseries that shall come upon you," James v. 1, 2. All these words are not for nothing: and judge how he should think of adversity who believeth them.

Direct. 14. Mark well whether you find not that yourselves and others are usually much better in affliction, than in prosperity; and whether there be not something in the one to make you better, and in the other to delude men, and make them worse. O look and tremble at the dangers and doleful miseries of most that are lifted high! how they are blinded, flattered, and captivated in sin, and are the shame of nature, and the calamity of the world! and mark when they come to die, or lie in sickness, how enlightened, how penitent, how humble, how mortified and reformed they then seem to be, and how much they condemn all sin, and justify a holy life! and observe yourselves whether you be not wiser and better, more penitent, and less worldly, in an afflicted state: and will you think that intolerable, which so much bettereth almost all the world? Alas! were it not for affliction, there are some Nebuchadnezzars that would never be humbled, and some Pharaohs that would never confess their sins, and some Manassehs that would never be converted. Many in heaven are thankful for affliction, and so should we. "It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men, and the living will lay it to heart. Sorrow is better than laughter; for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better. The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth. It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools: for as the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of a fool," Eccles. vii. 2—6.

Do you not perceive that a merry, prosperous state inclineth to folly, levity, rashness, inconsiderateness, stupidity, forgetting the latter end, &c.? And that a sadder frame is more awakened, illuminated, fixed, sensible, considerate, and fit for great employments? Quarrel not then with your Physician, because he dieteth you as tendeth to your cure, and turneth you not over to the diet of desperate patients or of fools.

Direct. 15. If God afflict you, add not causeless affliction to yourselves. If he touch your friends, or body, or estate, do not you therefore touch and tear your hearts. If you have not enough, why do you complain of it? If you have enough, why do you make yourselves more? He that hath said, "Blessed are they that mourn," did never mean that those are blessed that mourn erroneously, for nothing, or for that which is their benefit, or that peevishly quarrel with God and man, or that wilfully by pride or impatiency torment themselves. He meant not to bless the sorrow of the covetous that grieveth because he is not rich, or because he is wronged, or is a loser in some commodity; nor to bless the sorrow of the proud, who is troubled because he is not observed, honoured, or preferred; nor the sorrow of the sensual, who grieve when their lusts and pleasures are restrained; nor the sorrows of the idle, who grieve if they are called to diligent labour; nor the sorrow of the envious, who grieveth to see another prosper; nor the sorrows of the cruel, who grieve when they cannot be as hurtful to God's servants, and their neighbours or enemies, as they desire. It is neither wicked sorrows, nor wilful self-vexation, which Christ doth bless; but it is the holy improving and patient enduring the sufferings laid upon us by God or man.

Direct. 16. Let patience have its perfect work. He that believeth, will not make haste, James i. 3; Isa. xxviii. 16. God's time is best; and eternity is long enough for our ease and comfort. It is by patient continuance in well-doing, that glory, honour, and immortality must be sought, Rom. ii. We shall reap in due season, if we faint not, Gal. vi. 9. "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient: stablish your hearts; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh," James v. 7—9. When others by impatience lose themselves, do you "in your patience possess your souls," Luke xxi. 19. "Patience worketh experience, and experience hope, which maketh not ashamed," Rom. v. 4. "If we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it," Rom. viii. 25. Through patience and comfort of the Scriptures it is that we have hope, Rom. xv. 4. Therefore we have need of patience, that when we have done the will of God, we may inherit the promise, Heb. x. 36, 11.

CHAPTER XX.

HOW TO LIVE BY FAITH, IN TROUBLES OF CONSCIENCE, AND DOUBTS OR TERRORS ABOUT OUR SPIRITUAL AND EVERLASTING STATE.

HAVING written a treatise called "The Right Method for Spiritual Peace and Comfort," &c. upon this subject already, I must refer the reader thither, and here only add these few directions.

Direct. 1. Distinguish of the several causes of these troubles; and take heed of those unskilful mountebanks, who have the same cure for every such disease, and speak present comfort to all that they hear complain: and that think every trouble of mind is some notable work of the Spirit of God; when it is often the fruit of the manifold weakness or wilfulness of the troubled complainers.

Direct. 2. When it is some heinous sin committed, or great corruption indulged, which doth cause the trouble, be sure that sound repentance be never omitted in the cure; and that a real reformation prove the truth of that repentance. For Christ never died to justify and save the impenitent sinner; and a deceitful repentance is the common self-deceit and undoing of the world. And how can that be true repentance, which changeth not the will and life? God will not give you peace and comfort, as long as you indulge your wilful sin.

Note here the difference between, 1. The grossly impenitent; 2. And the mock repentance of the

hypocrite; 3. And the true repentance of sound believers.

1. The grossly impenitent cannot bring his heart to a serious purpose to let go his sin, nor to a consent or willingness that God should cure him, and change his mind; but he had rather have his pride, and covetousness, and sensuality to be fully pleased, than to be mortified. Like a fool in a fever or a dropsy, that had rather have drink, than have the cure of his thirst.

2. The mock-repentance of the hypocrite hath some purposes, under an extraordinary conviction, to leave his sin; and for a time may seem to do it. But when the temptation is as strong again, he is the same, and returneth to his vomit; or else exchangeth his sin for a worse. And if you ask him whether he had rather have the mortifying of all his lusts, or the pleasing of them, his understanding and conviction may cause him truly to say at the present, that if God would presently mortify his sin, or offer him this in choice, he would rather consent to it, than take the pleasing of them. But mark it, 1. That though he consent that God should do this himself; yet he will not consent to use the means, and do his duty to attain it. If a cold wish or a bare consent would change his soul, and take away all sinful inclinations at once, that he might never more desire the pleasure of sin, nor be put to any conflict to overcome it, nor any great difficulty to deny it, and all this might be done without any labour of his own, I doubt not but the hypocrite would consent to be so mortified. But to watch, and pray, and read, and meditate, and use the means which God appointeth him, both to get mortification, and to use it for the conquering of every temptation; this the hypocrite will not consent to.

2. And what he doth consent to at the present, he consenteth not to when his sinful pleasure is revived by the next temptation.

3. But the true penitent christian is both willing to be changed, and had rather have his lusts to be killed than pleased; and also willing to use God's means both to mortify the inward lust, and to overcome the outward sin: and this in sincerity is his habitual state.

Direct. 3. Never forget that, 1. The gracious nature of God; 2. The sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice and merit; and, 3. The truth of the universal offer or promise of pardon to all, (if they will accept the offer), are the foundation of all our faith and comforts; and are that universal grace which is before our special grace or faith, and is presupposed to it. On this foundation all our faith and peace is to be built.

Direct. 4. The particular application of this to ourselves, is, 1. By believing; and then by knowing that we do believe; and then by discerning our privileges upon believing.

1. Our believing itself is, 1. Our assent to the truth of the gospel: 2. Our acceptance of the good (even Christ and life) which is offered in it, and consent to the baptismal covenant with God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: and, 3. Our affiance in Christ and his covenant.

2. To know that we do believe (somehow) is easy, when we do it: but to be sure that this belief is sincere and saving, is more difficult, because of the deceitfulness of the heart of man, and the mixtures of unbelief and other sins, and the weakness of grace where it is true, and the counterfeits of it, and the insufficient degrees which are in hypocrites; so that it is not easy to discern whether the faith which we have be sincere, and predominant above our sense and our unbelief (as it must be). But yet it may be known by such means as these:

1. By labouring to strengthen and increase our faith and grace, that it may not by the smallness be next to undiscernible. 2. By subduing all contrary inward corruptions, which obscure it. 3. By frequent exercising it; seeing habits are discerned only in their acts. 4. By resisting and conquering temptations, and doing all the good we can in the world, and living as wholly devoted to God, above all worldly, fleshly interest: that so, 1. Faith may be evidenced by its fruits; 2. And God may reward the faithful soul with his assuring seal, and light, and comfort. 5. By escaping all those lapses into heinous and wilful sin, which cause wounds, and fears, and hinder assurance, peace, and joy. 6. By a wise and constant examination of the heart, and observation of it in the time of trial, and finding the habits and strength of faith, and of unbelief, in their several actings and prevalencies in their conflicts. 7. And withal, escaping those ignorances and errors, about the nature, means, causes, and signs of grace and assurance, which keep many from it, who have justifying faith. These seven are the true and necessary means to get assurance of your own sincerity, and that indeed you have the true seal, and earnest, and witness of the Spirit of Christ.

3. When you have first truly believed, (or consented to the baptismal covenant of grace,) and next got assurance that you do this in sincerity, the last part is the easiest, which is to gather up the privileges or comfortable conclusions which follow hereupon: which are, your pardon and justification, your adoption and right to life eternal, and to all the benefits promised by God, in that covenant to which you do consent; which are all comprehended in the three great relations established by the covenant, viz. that God is your reconciled God and Father, Christ is your Head and Saviour, and the Holy Spirit is your Life and Sanctifier.

These three works which make up assurance, are contained in the three parts of this syllogism. 1. He that truly believeth, is justified, and adopted, and an heir of life. But I do truly believe: therefore I am justified, adopted, and am an heir of life.

Or thus to the same sense.

Every one who truly consenteth to the baptismal covenant, hath right to the blessings of the covenant; God is his Father, Christ is his Saviour, and the Holy Spirit is his Sanctifier. But I do truly consent to the baptismal covenant: therefore I have right to all the benefits of it; God is my Father, &c.

Direct. 5. Remember that when you have got assurance, and have truly gathered this conclusion, the continual and lively exercise of faith is still necessary to your actual joy.

For it is possible for a man to have no notable doubtings of his own sincerity or salvation, and yet to have such dulness of soul, and such diversions of his thoughts, as that he shall enjoy but little of the comforts of his own assurance. Therefore true joy requireth much more than bare self-examination, and discerning of our evidences, and right to life.

Direct. 6. When doubts and troubles are caused by ignorance or error, about the true nature and signs of grace, and the way of assurance, (which is very common,) nothing then is more necessary than a sound and skilful teacher; to work out those mistakes, and to help the ignorant christian to a clearer understanding of the terms of the covenant, and the sense of the promise, and the true methods of Christ in his gifts and operations. Otherwise the erring soul will be distracted and lost in a wilderness of doubts, and either sit down at last presumptuously on false grounds, or turn to one error to cure the troubles of another; or languish in despair: so

lamentable a thing is it to be possessed with false principles, and to attempt so great work in the dark.

Direct. 7. And here there are these two extremes to be carefully avoided: 1. That of the infidel and justiciary, who trusteth and teacheth others to trust to his own virtues and works without a Saviour, or ascribeth the part of a Saviour to them. 2. The antinomian and libertine, who teach men not to look at any thing in themselves at all, no not as an evidence, or condition, or means, much less as any cause of life; but to trust to Christ's blood, to be to you instead of faith, and repentance, and obedience, and all your use of means; and do ascribe the part of these duties of man to the blood of Christ; as if it did belong only to Christ to do that same thing which belongeth unto them.

Therefore here you must be sure to be well acquainted what is truly the office and part of Christ; and what is truly the office and part of faith, of repentance, of confession, of prayer, &c. And to be sure that you wholly trust Christ for his part, and join not faith, nor any of your own works or duties, in the least degree of that trust or honour which belongeth to Christ, and his office and work: and that you faithfully use (yea, I will say, trust too, though ignorance snarl at it) your faith, repentance, prayer, &c. in and for its own office and part; and do not foolishly blaspheme Christ, by ascribing the part and office of your duty unto him and his office, under pretence of giving him the honour of them. It is Christ's office and honour to be a sacrifice for sin, and a propitiation for us, and a perfect Saviour and Intercessor, and to give us the Spirit, by which we believe, repent, pray, obey, hope, love, &c. But not to be a penitent believing sinner, nor to accept of an offered Saviour, nor to be a consenting covenanter with God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, nor to be washed from sin in his blood, reconciled, adopted, nor to pray for pardon in the name of another, nor to trust upon a Saviour, nor to be a disciple, a subject, a member of a Saviour, &c. Nor yet that his blood, or merits, or righteousness, should be to you instead of these. No, these are to be done by you.

Direct. 8. In this case also take heed of those ignorant guides, who know not the errors of fancy, melancholy, or disturbed passions, from the proper works of the Spirit of God: for they wrong the Spirit, when they ascribe men's sinful weaknesses to him. And they greatly wrong the troubled sinner many ways. 1. They puff up men with conceits that they are under some great and excellent workings of the Spirit, when they are the works of Satan, and their own infirmity or sin. 2. They teach them hereby to magnify and cherish those distempers, and passions, and thoughts, which they should resist, and lament, and cast away. 3. And they set them in an enthusiastic, or truly fanatical, way of religion, to look for revelations, or live still upon their own fancies, and passions, and distempers, and Satan's temptations, conceiting that they live upon the incomes of God, and are actuated in all this by the Holy Ghost. And of what mischievous importance and consequence all this is, and how much hurt such zealous ignorance doth, both in the teachers and the people, the thing itself doth plainly show; and the sad experience of this age doth show it more plainly, in ranters, quakers, and other true fanatics, and in many women, and other weak persons, of better principles than theirs.

And it is an unsafe course which many such weak persons use, to think in their troubles that every text of Scripture which cometh into their mind, or every conceit of their own, is a special suggestion of the Spirit of God. You shall ordinarily hear them say, Such a text was brought to me, or was set upon my heart, and such a thing was set upon my mind; when two to one it was no otherwise brought unto them, nor set upon them, than any other ordinary thoughts are; and had no special or extraordinary operation of God in it at all. Though it is certain that every good thought which cometh into our minds, is some effect of the working of God's Spirit, as every good word and every good work is; and it is certain that sometimes God's Spirit doth guide and comfort christians as a remembrancer, by bringing informing and comforting texts and doctrines to their remembrance; yet it is a dangerous thing to think that all such suggestions or thoughts are from some special or extraordinary work of the Spirit, or that every text that cometh into our minds, is brought thither by the Spirit of God at all.

The reasons are these:

1. Satan can bring a text or truth to our remembrance for his own ends, as he did to Christ, (Matt. iv.) in his temptations.

2. Our own passions or running thoughts, may light upon some text or truth accidentally, as they do on other things which so come in.

3. When the Spirit doth in an ordinary way help us in remembering or meditating on any text or holy doctrine, he doth it according to our capacity and disposition, and not in the way of infallible inspiration, and therefore there is much of our weakness and error usually mixed with the Spirit's help, in the product: as when you hold the hand of a child in writing, you write not so well by his hand, as by your own alone, but your skill and his weakness and unskilfulness do both appear in the letters which are made; so is it in the ordinary assistance of the Spirit in our studies, meditations, prayers, &c.; otherwise all that we do would be perfect, in which we have the Spirit's help; which Scripture, and all christians' experience, do contradict.

4. And to ascribe that to the Spirit which is not at all his work, or that which is partly our own work, so far as it is our own, and savoureth of our weaknesses and error, is a heinous injury to the Spirit.

5. And it tosseth such mistaken christians up and down in uncertainties: while they think all such thoughts are the suggestions of the Spirit, they meet with many contrary thoughts, and so are carried like the waves of the sea, sometimes up, and sometimes down; and they have sometimes a humbling, terrible text, and the next day perhaps a comforting text cometh into their minds, and so are between terrors and comforts, distracted by their own fantasies, and think it is all done by the Spirit of God.

6. And it is a perverse abusing of the holy Scripture, to make such remembrances the rule of your application of it to yourselves: that text which you remember had the same sense before you remembered it; and your spiritual state was the same before. If that text agree with your state, and either the terror or the comfort of it belong to you, this must be proved by solid reason, drawn from the true meaning of the text, and the true state of your souls; and not supposed merely because it cometh into your thoughts, or because it is set upon your hearts. Do you think that your remembering it will prove that it especially belongs to you? Do not many comfortable texts come into the minds of hypocrites, who are unfit for comfort? and many terrible texts come into the minds of humble souls, that have right to comfort, and should not be more terrified? You may as well think that your money or estate is another man's, because he thinketh on it; or that another man's dangers and miseries are yours, because

you think of them; or that you are either kings, or lords, or beggars, or thieves, or whatever cometh into your minds; or that another man's leases or deeds by which he holdeth his lands, are all yours because they are put into your hands to read.

7. And if you go this way to work, you are in danger to be carried into many other errors and sins, and think that all is of the Spirit of God, because you feel it set upon your hearts. And so you will feign the sanctifying Spirit to be the author of sin, and the lying spirit shall be honoured and called by his name.

Mark well these following texts of Scripture. "We beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ—that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand: let no man deceive you," 2 Thess. ii. 1—3. You see here that spirit, word, and Scripture may be pretended for an untruth.

Satan often saith, "It is written," Matt. iv.

"False apostles and deceitful workers may transform themselves into the apostles of Christ, and ministers of righteousness; and no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light," 2 Cor. xi. 12—15.

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they be of God," 1 John iv. 1.

"If we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel to you, let him be accursed," Gal. i. 7, 8.

Quest. But how then shall I know when it is the Spirit which putteth any thing into my mind?

Answ. 1. The matter itself must be tried, whether it agree with the sacred Scripture, and must be proved true by the word of God. 2. The end to which that truth is brought, must be proved to be just and good; for Satan pleadeth truths to sinful ends. 3. The application of them to your own case must be such as will hold trial, and it must be proved by sound argument, that indeed they do thus and thus belong to you: for God's Spirit will not belie you, nor make you better or worse than you are; no more than he will belie the Scriptures.

Object. But is it not the same Spirit which spake to the apostles, which speaketh to us? If they were to believe him immediately, so must we; and seeing the Spirit is above the Scripture, we must try the Scriptures by the Spirit, and not the Spirit by the Scriptures.

Answ. Alas! how pitifully ignorance bewildereth men! 1. It is the same Spirit which was in the apostles, and is in the weakest christian; but he worketh not in the same degree. He inspired them to infallibility; being promised to "lead them into all truth, and to bring all things which Christ had spoken to their remembrance; and he enabled them to prove this by manifold miracles. Doth he do all this by you? Or had you the same promises?

2. The same Spirit in them was given to one end, and to you for another. To them it was given to cause them by his inspiration to deliver all that Christ had taught them, and to leave it on record to all generations, as his infallible word and law, to be the rule of doctrine and practice to the end of the world. But to you the same Spirit is given, to cause you to understand, and love, and obey this law which is already written, and not to write or know another.

3. The Spirit indited the Scriptures before you were born: and we are sure that that is the word of God; and we are sure that God's Spirit contradicteth not itself. Therefore your after-pretended revelations, must be tried by the certain ancient rule, which had the seal of miracles, which yours hath not.

Object. But how shall I know what application to make of Scripture to myself, but by the teaching of the Spirit of God?

Answ. But you must not take every thought and suggestion or remembrance, to be the Spirit's application. God's Spirit teacheth men by the light of sound evidence, which may be proved, and will hold good in trial. He teacheth you by exciting you to rational studies and argumentation, and by blessing you in such sober use of God's means: but he doth not teach you to know your state by the bare remembering of a text.

Direct. 9. Take heed also of misunderstanding what is the witness of the Spirit, that we are God's children.

Many think it is like some voice, or suggestion, or inspiration within them, saying, Thou art the child of God. And so many christians languish in terrors, that feel no such persuading Spirit in them. And many hypocrites are deluded by the persuasions of their own imaginations. But in Scripture the word *witness* is oft taken for *evidence*, or an objective testimony. And the Spirit's being a witness, and being a seal, an earnest, a pledge, a white stone, a new name, &c. are all of the like signification: and the meaning is, "By this we know that we are the children of God, or that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us," 1 John iii. 10, 24; iv. 13. And, "If any one have not the Spirit of Christ, the same is none of his," Rom. viii. 9. As if he should say, Have you the Spirit of Christ, or have you not? If you have, that is a seal, an earnest, a pledge of God's love, and of your heavenly inheritance, and a certain evidence or witness that you are his children, Gal. iv. 6. He that loveth God as his Father in Christ, and is sanctified to God, hath the Spirit, Show this love, and this sanctification, and you produce the true witness that you are the heirs of life. Holiness, and heavenliness, and love, is the witness, seal, and earnest; and not chiefly an inward persuasion that we are God's children.

2. Yet this much more the Spirit doth; when it hath sanctified us, and given us the witness or evidence in ourselves, (1 John v. 10, 11,) he also helpeth us to see and know that grace which he giveth and actuateth in us.

3. And also to conclude from that evidence, that we are God's children; and also to feel the inward comfort of that conclusion. But all this he doth by these means in a discursive or rational way, and by blessing such reasoning to our comfort.

4. Also he comforteth the soul in another way, distinct from the way of concluding from evidence; and that is by exciting the love of God and his praises in us, which are of themselves delighting acts. But of this anon.

Direct. 10. Take heed of heretical seducers, who use to fish in troubled waters, and to fall in with such perplexed consciences, to persuade them that all the cause of their trouble is their opinions, and unsound religion, and not in them; and that the only way to comfort, is to change their religion, and to come over unto them.

No person fitter for a quaker, a papist, or any sectary to work upon, than a troubled mind. For such are like the ignorant country people in their sickness, who will hearken to any one who putteth them in hope, and promiseth them ease, and most confidently tells them, that he can cure them, and saith, I was just in your case, and such or such a thing cured me: so will the formalist, and the fanatic, the papist, and the quaker say, I was just in your condition. I was troubled, and could get no peace of conscience, no joy in the Holy Ghost, but was

always held in fears and doubting, till I changed my religion; and ever since that I have been well, and oh what joys I have to boast of! And if it can be an unsound hypocrite that is thus tempted, perhaps God may give them over to find abundance of bedlam joy, in the sudden change of their opinion; and falsehood may comfort that man, whom the truth, which he was false to, would not comfort. But if it be a weak, sincere believer, if God show him not so much mercy as to rescue him from the temptation, he will do as the foresaid country patient; he will try one man's medicines, and another woman's medicines, and hearken to every one that can speak confidently, and promise him a cure, till he hath tried that their case and his were not the same, and that they were all but ignorant, deceived deceivers; and when all fail him, he will come back again, to the faithful, experienced directors of his soul.

Direct. 11. If weakness of grace be the cause of doubting, (which is, of all other, the commonest cause in the world,) the way to comfort is that same which is the way to strengthen grace.

Such a one, if ever he will have joy, must be taught how to live the life of faith, and to walk with God, and to mortify the flesh, and get loose from the world, and to live as entirely devoted to God; and especially how to keep every grace in exercise; and then grace will show itself, as the air doth in a windy season, or as the fire when it is blown up and flameth. There is no surer or readier way to comfort, than to get faith, repentance, love, hope, and obedience, in a vigorous activity, and great degree, and then to keep them much in action. Mountebanks and sectaries have other ways; but this is the constant, certain way.

Direct. 12. If you perceive that trouble is caused by misunderstanding the covenant of grace, and looking at legal works of merit, as the ground of peace, and overlooking the sufficiency of the sacrifice, merits, or intercession of Christ, the principal thing to be done with such a soul is, to convince him of the impossibility of being justified by works, on legal terms; and to show him the necessity of a Saviour, and the design of God in man's redemption, and that there is "but one Mediator between God and man, and one name by which we can be saved; and that Christ is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and no man cometh to the Father but by the Son; and that he was made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him; and that of God he is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; and that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son; and that he that hath the Son, hath life, and he that hath not the Son, hath not life; and that there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit; but he that believeth not is condemned already." Thus must Christ crucified, the propitiation for the sins of all the world, be preached to them, who are troubled as for want of a Saviour, or an atonement, a sacrifice, or ransom, or propitiation for sin; or because they are not instead of a Saviour to themselves.

But to tell a man only of the sacrifice and merits of Christ, who doubteth only of his interest in him, and of the truth of his own faith, repentance, and sanctification, is to prate impertinently, and to delude the sinner, and to deal injuriously with Christ.

Direct. 13. If melancholy be the cause of the trouble, (which is very ordinary,) it will be necessary, 1. Well to understand it: and, 2. To know the cure: of which having spoken more largely elsewhere, I shall now give you only this brief information.

1. The signs of this melancholy are, overstretched, confused, ungovernable thoughts; continual fear, and inclination to despair, and to cry out, Undone, undone; I am forsaken of God; the day of grace is past; I have sinned against the Holy Ghost; never any man's case was like mine! And usually their sleep is gone or broken, and they are inclined to be alone, and to be always musing with their confounded thoughts; and at last are tempted to blasphemous thoughts against the Scriptures and the life to come, and perhaps urged to utter some blasphemous words against God; and if it go to the highest, they are tempted to famish or make away with themselves.

2. The cure of it lieth, 1. In setting those truths before them which tend most to quiet and satisfy their minds. 2. In engaging them in the constant labours of a calling, in which both mind and body may be employed. 3. In keeping them in fit and cheerful company which they love, and suffering them to be very little alone. 4. In keeping them from musing, and that meditation or thoughtfulness which to others is most profitable, and a duty. 5. Keeping them from over-long secret prayer (because they are unable for it, and it doth but confound them, and disable them for other duties); and let them be the more in other duties which they can bear. 6. And if the state of their bodies require it, physic is necessary, and hath done good to many (if rightly chosen).

Direct. 14. Take heed of foolish, carnal, hasty expectations of comfort from the bare words of any man; but use men's advice only to direct you in that way, where, by patience and faithfulness, you may meet with it in due season.

Nothing is more usual with silly souls, than to go to this or that excellent minister, whom they deservedly admire, and to look that with an hour or two's discourse he should comfort them, and set all their bones in joint; and when they find that it is not done, they either despair, or turn to the next deceivers, and say, I tried the best of them; and if such a man cannot do it, none of them can do it. But, silly soul, do physicians use to charm men into health? Wilt thou go and talk an hour with the ablest physician, and say, that because his talk doth not cure thee, thou wilt never go to a physician more, but go to ignorant people that will kill thee? Thou hast then thy own deserving; even take the death that thou hast chosen, and drink as thou hast brewed. The work of a minister is not to cure thee always immediately, by comfortable words; (what words can cure an ignorant, melancholy, or uncapable soul?) but to direct thee in thy duty, and in the use of those means, which if thou wilt faithfully and patiently practise, thou shalt certainly be cured in due time: if thou wilt use the physic, diet, and exercise, which thy physician doth prescribe thee, it is that which must restore thy health and comfort, and not the saying over a few words to thee. If thou lazily look that other men's words or prayers should cure and comfort thee without thy own endeavours, thou mayst thank thyself when thou art deceived.

Direct. 15. The principal means of comfort is to live in the exercise of comfortable duties.

Faith, hope, and especially the love of God, are duties which are also man's felicity; and the exercise of these in praises and thanksgiving, are the proper pleasure of the soul. Give up thyself wholly to study the goodness and love of God in Jesus Christ, till thou feel thy heart inflamed with his love; and spend half thy godly conference in God's praises, and half thy daily prayers in that, and in thanksgiving; and this will comfort thee not only by the

reasoning way of evidence; but as a feast pleaseth thy taste, and as a fire warmeth thee, or as the loving of thy friend delighteth thee, or as health itself is the pleasure of thy flesh.

As the sins themselves of not knowing God, not loving him, nor delighting in him, are the greatest part of the penalty, or rather misery, of the sinner (which hath its peculiar way of remission); so the knowledge, and love, and praise of God, and delighting in him, is instead of a reward unto itself, and a beginning of heaven to the heavenly believer.

Direct. 16. Dwell much in heaven, if you would dwell in comfort. Comfort yourselves and one another with these words, that we shall for ever be with the Lord. Heaven is the place or state of our everlasting comfort; and all that we have here must come from thence: and faith, and hope, and love must fetch it. He that will have carnal joy, must go for it to pastime, or lust and pleasure, to an alehouse, or a whore, or to a gaming-house, or a playhouse, or to his wealthy and worldly honours: but he that will have heavenly joy, must go for it by faith to heaven; and dwell there every day by faith, where he hopes to dwell for ever. Heaven will not comfort either them that believe it not, or them that remember it not; but them whose conversation and hearts are there, Phil. iii. 20, 21.

Direct. 17. Set yourselves wholly to do good. Resolve that you will be faithful to Christ, and do all the good that you can in the world, and let him do with you what he will: and in this way you shall quickly find, that the soundest consolation will come into your souls, before you could expect it. Though no works of our own can add any thing to God, nor must be trusted to at all, in a legal sense; and though blind libertines tell you that all comfort is legal and unsound, which came by the thoughts of any thing in yourselves, or any of your own doings; yet God is no such enemy to godliness, but he that will hereafter judge you to heaven or hell according to your works, will now judge you to joy or sorrow of heart, usually according to your works: well-doing shall afford you peace, and ill-doing shall disquiet you, when all is said.

Direct. 18. Lastly, be sure, while you want the comforts of assurance, to hold fast those comforts which rationally belong to common grace, and to them that have the gospel offers of salvation. When the gospel came to Samaria, (Acts viii.) "there was great joy in that city." It is glad tidings in itself for guilty souls to have Christ and pardon freely offered to them. Can you not say, I am sure that I am regenerate, justified, and adopted? For all that, if you be not infidels, you can say, I am sure that Christ, and pardon, and heaven, are freely offered me, and ministers are commissioned to entreat me to accept it; and nothing but my wilful and final refusal can deprive me of it, and shut me out. This is certain; take but so much comfort as this much should rationally infer.

To which I might add, the comforts of your probability, when you are in some degree of hope, that your faith and repentance are sincere, though you are not certain: but this I have more largely spoken of (and the rest which is needful to be spoken on this subject) in the fore-named treatise long ago.

The ordinary and long troubles and unsettledness of honest christians, are caused most, 1. By unskilful guides, who are most confident where they are most ignorant, and revile those truths and methods which God hath appointed for the settling of men's peace: 2. And by their own lazy and unskilful course; who take up most with examining and complaining, instead of learning more understanding in God's methods, and diligent amending what is amiss, that the cause of their trouble might be taken away.

CHAPTER XXI.

HOW TO LIVE BY FAITH IN THE PUBLIC WORSHIPPING OF GOD.

I MAY not be so tedious (nor do that which is done elsewhere) as to direct you in the several parts of worship distinctly; but shall only give you some brief directions about public worship in general.

Direct. 1. Come not before God with Pharisaical conceits of the worthiness of yourselves, or worship, as if you offered him something which did oblige him: but come as humble receivers, that need him and his grace, who needeth not you; and as learners, that hope to be wiser and better by drawing near to God.

You know Christ's instance of the prayers of the Pharisee and the publican: and remember that many a one's heart saith, "I thank thee, Lord, that I am not as other men, or as this publican," whose tongue can spend an hour or more in sad confessions; yea, and that it is those very copious confessions of their badness, that puff them up as if they were so good.

Yea, many a one that in opinion is most vehement against all our works in our justification, or looking at any thing in ourselves at all, to make us acceptable with God, as being against free grace in Christ, do yet look so much at that which is (or is conceited to be) in themselves, that few churches on earth are thought worthy of their communion.

Note also, that it is sacrificing which is commonly the hypocrite's worship in the Old Testament, and hearing and obeying which he neglecteth, and God calls him to; as you may see at large in Isa. i. throughout, and many other places: "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not require; mine ears hast thou opened," &c. Psal. xl. 6. "I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices and burnt-offerings, to have been continually before me; I will take no bullock out of thy house.——For every beast of the forest is mine, &c. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee; for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof.——Offer to God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows to the Most High. And call upon me in the day of trouble.—— But to the wicked, saith God, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth, seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee,——" Psal. l. 8, 9, &c.

"Hath the Lord delight in burnt-offerings, and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken, than the fat of rams," 1 Sam. xv. 22, 23.

"Know, that the Lord hath chosen the man that is godly for himself.——Stand in awe and sin not. ——Offer the sacrifices of righteousness,——" Psal. iv. 3—5.

"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit," Psal. li. 17.

"Learn what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice,——" Matt. ix. 13; xii. 7.

"Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear than to offer the sacrifice of fools, for they know not that they do evil," Eccles. v. 1.

All this telleth us, that fools and hypocrites, while

they disobey God's law, do think to make up all with sacrifice, or to appease God with offering him something that is excellent: but the acceptable worshipper cometh to God as a penitent, a learner, resolving to obey; as a receiver of mercy, and not a meriter.

Direct. 2. Over-value not therefore the manner of your own worship, and over-vilify not other men's of a different mode: and make not men believe that God is of your childish humour, and valueth or vilifieth words, and orders, and forms, and ceremonies, as much as self-conceited people do.

If one man hear another pray only from the habits of his mind, and present desires, he reproacheth him as a rash, presumptuous speaker, that talketh that to God which he never fore-considered. As if a beggar did rashly ask an alms, or a corrected child, or a malefactor, did inconsiderately beg for pardon, unless they learn first the words by rote: or as if all men's converse, and the words of judges on the bench, were all rash; or the counsel of a physician to his patient, because they use not books and forms, or set not down their words long before.

And if another man hear a form of prayer, especially if it be read out of a book, and especially if it have any disorder or defect, he sticketh not to revile it, and call it false worship, and man's inventions, and perhaps idolatry, and to fly from it, and make the world believe, that it is an odious thing which God abhorreth. And why so? Are your words so much more excellent than the words of others? Or doth the book, or press, or pen, make them odious to God? Or are all words bad which are resolved on beforehand? Is the Lord's prayer and the Psalms all odious, because they are book-forms? Or doth the command of other men make God hate them? Let parents take heed then of commanding their children prescribed words. (Nay, rather let them take heed lest they omit such prescripts.) Or, is it the disorder or defects that makes them odious? Such are not to be justified indeed wherever we find them: but woe to us all, if God will not pardon disorders and defects, and accept the prayers that are guilty of them!

Many a time I have heard such forms of prayers, whose disorders and defects I have much lamented, (and done my part to have cured,) and yet I durst not so reproach them as to say, God will not accept and hear them, or that it is unlawful to join in communion with them. And many a time I have heard as sad disorder in extemporate prayers; sometimes by wrong methods, or no method at all; sometimes by vain repetitions; sometimes by omitting the chiefest parts of prayer; and sometimes in the whole strain, by turning a prayer into a sermon to the hearers, or a mere talk or narrative to God, that had little of a prayer in it, save very good matter, and honest zeal. And though this prayer was more disorderly than the forms which (perhaps in that prayer) were accused of disorder; yet durst I not run away from this neither, nor say, it is so bad, that God will not hear it, nor good men should have no communion in it.

It is easy (but abominable) to fall in love with our own, and to vilify that which is against our opinion, and to think that God is of our mind, and is as fond of our mode and way as we are, and as exceptious against the way or words of other men, as childish, peevish christians are. Look on your book, and read, or learn your prayer in words, saith one, or else God will not hear you: look off your book, and read not, or learn not the words, saith another, or God will not hear you. But oh lamentable! that both of them tremble not thus to abuse God, and add unto his word, and to prophesy or speak falsely against their brethren in his name; nor to reproach the prayers which Christ presenteth from his servants to the Father, and which (notwithstanding their defects) are his delight!

Direct. 3. Offer God nothing as worship, which is contrary to the perfection of his nature, as far as you can avoid it: and yet feign not that to be contrary to his nature which he commandeth. For then it is certain that you misunderstand either his nature or command.

Direct. 4. Never come to the Father but by the Son; and dream not of any immediate access of a sinner unto God, but wholly trust in Christ's mediation. Receive the Father's will from Christ your Teacher, and his commands from Christ your King, and all his mercies from Christ your Head, and the Treasury of the church, and your continual Intercessor with God in heaven. And put all your prayers, praises, duties, alms, into his hand; that through him alone they may be accepted of God.

Direct. 5. Understand well how far the Scripture is a particular rule, (as to the substance of God's worship,) and how far it is only a general rule (as to the circumstances); that so you may neither offer God a worship which he will not accept; nor yet reject or oppose all those circumstances as unlawful, which are warranted by his general commands. (Of which I have said enough elsewhere.)

Direct. 6. Look first and most to the exercise of inward grace, and to the spiritual part of worship: (for God will be worshipped in spirit and in truth, and hateth the hypocrite, who offereth him a carcass, or empty shell, and ceremony, and pomp, or length of words, instead of substance, and draweth near him with the lips, without the heart:) and yet, in the second place, look carefully also to your words, and order, and outward behaviour of the body; for God must be honoured with soul and body. And order and reverent solemnity is both a help to the affections of the soul, and a fit expression of them.

Never forget that hypocritical, dead formality, and ignorant, self-conceited, fanatical extravagances, are the two extremes by which the devil hath laboured in all ages, to turn Christ's worship against him, and to destroy the church and religion by such false religiousness.

The poor popish formalists on one side, mortify religion, and turn it into a carcass, and a comely image that hath any thing save life. And the fanatics on the other side, do call all the enormities of their proud and blustering fancies by the name of spiritual devotion; and do their worst to make christianity to seem a ridiculous fancy to the world. Escape both these extremes, as ever you will escape the dishonouring of God, and dividing, and disturbing, and corrupting of the church, the deluding of others, and the disappointing and deceiving of yourselves.

Direct. 7. Neglect not any helps which you can have, by the excellent gifts of any of Christ's ministers or flocks; and yet take heed that through prejudice, or for the faults of either, you vilify or reject nothing which is of God. But carefully distinguish between Christ's and theirs.

Communion with the holiest and purest assemblies, is more desirable than with the less pure. But yet all that is less desirable comparatively, is not simply unlawful, nor to be rejected. The labours of an abler and more faithful minister, are much to be preferred before theirs that are less able and faithful: for God worketh usually according to the aptitude of the means, and of the receiver. To the recovery and salvation of a soul it is necessary, 1. That the understanding be made wise. 2. That the heart or

will be sanctified by love. 3. That the life be holy and obedient.

To the first of these there are three things needful: 1. That the understanding be awakened: 2. That it be illuminated: 3. That it be preserved from the seduction of temptations to deceit.

Now an able and faithful pastor is suited to all these effects. 1. He is a lively preacher, to awaken the understanding: 2. He is a clear, intelligent, methodical, and convincing teacher, to illuminate it: 3. He can confute gainsayers, and refute objections, and shame the cavils of tempters and deceivers to preserve it.

And, 2. He speaketh all from the unfeigned love of God and men; and as all his words do breathe forth love, so they are apt to kindle such love in the hearers; for every active nature tendeth to propagation.

3. And the holiness of his life, as well as doctrine, tendeth to win the people to a holy life: so that he that loveth his own soul, must not be indifferent what pastor he chooseth for the help and conduct of his soul; but should most carefully seek to get the best or fittest for such necessary ends.

But yet it followeth not that a weaker or worse may not be heard, or may not be accepted or submitted to, in a case of necessity; when a better cannot be had, without more disturbance and hurt than the benefits are like to recompense. And when we live under such a weak, or cold, or faulty pastor, our care must be so much the greater, that we may make up that in the diligence of our attention, which is wanting in his manner of expression; and that we make up that in a care of our own souls, which is wanting in his care; and that our knowledge of his failings tempt us not to slight the truth which he delivereth; and that we reject not the matter for the manner. The sheep of Christ do know his voice, and they know his words, and reverence and love them, from what mouth soever they proceed. A religious, zealous man that preacheth false doctrine, is more to be avoided, than a cold or scandalous man who preacheth the truth. If you doubt of this, observe these texts.

"The scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not," Matt. xxiii. 2, 3.

"For he (Judas) was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry," Acts i. 17. Judas the thief and traitor was an apostle, called and sent out by Jesus Christ.

"Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will: the one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds.——What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I do therein rejoice, yea, and will rejoice,——" Phil. i. 15, &c.

"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them,——" Rom. xvi. 17.

"Of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them," Acts xx. 30.

"If we, or an angel from heaven, bring another gospel, let him be accursed,——" Gal. i. 7, 8.

Is not all this a plain decision of the case?

Direct. 8. While you prefer local communion with the purest churches, and best taught and ordered, for your own edification, take heed that you disown not a distant and mental communion with any part of the church of Christ on earth, which Christ himself disowneth not. But first remember that you are members of the universal church, and as such in mental communion with the whole present yourselves and services to Christ; and next as members of your particular church.

It is true, that you must not own the corruptions of any church, or of any of their worship; but you must own the church itself, and own all the substance of the worship which is good, and which God owneth. God doth not reject the matter for the manner, nor the whole for a faulty part, where the heart is sincere that offereth it: nor no more must you. And if they force you not to any actual sin, (as by false speaking, subscribing, or the like), you must sometimes also locally join with such churches, when occasion requireth it. (As when you have no better to go to, or when it is necessary to show your mental communion, or to avoid schism, scandal, or offence.) As you must not approve of your own failings in God's worship, (as in the manner of praying, preaching, &c.) and yet must not give over worshipping God, though you are always sure to fail; even so must you do by your communion with others.

And here I would earnestly entreat all those that are inclinable to sinful separation, to think but of these few things.

1. What is more contrary to christianity than pride? and what is a plainer sign of pride, than to separate from whole churches (and perhaps from most part of the christian world) for such faults as are no greater than others of our own? and to say, They are too bad for such as you to communicate with?

2. Whether it be not much contrary to the clemency of Jesus Christ, by which he pardoneth the failings of believers; and which we have need of ourselves as well as others? And whether it be not a horrid injury to our Lord, to ascribe his inheritance to the devil, and to cast those out of his church whom he himself receiveth, and to deny so many of his servants to be his?

3. How great a loss is it, to lose your part in all those prayers of the churches (how weak soever) which you disown? And how can you justly expect the benefit of such prayers?

I would not take all their riches for my part of the benefit of those prayers of the churches of Christ, which some reject because they are extemporate, and others because they are forms, or book-prayers, or imposed; nor would I take all their wealth and honour, for my part in all the prayers of the universal church, which are guilty of more disorders, tautologies, unmeet expressions, and manifold defects, than any that I ever yet heard from those ministers that pray either by habit or book.

Direct. 9. Take heed both of carelessness and curiosity in the worshipping of God. Avoid carelessness, because it is profaneness and contempt: therefore watch against idleness of mind, and wandering thoughts, and remember how great a work it is, to speak to God, or to hear from him about your everlasting state.

And yet curiosity is a heinous sin: when men are so nice, that unless there be quaint phrases, and fine cadences and jingles, or at least a very laudable style, they nauseate all, and are weary of hearing a homely style, or common things: when every unmeet expression, or tautology of the speaker, doth turn their stomachs against the wholesomest food. This curiosity cometh from a weak and an unhealthful state of soul.

Direct. 10. Lastly, let your eye of faith be all the while upon the heavenly host, or church triumphant: remember how they worship God; with what wis-

dom, and purity, and fervour of love, and sacred pleasure, and with what unity, and peace, and concord! and let your worship be as much composed to the imitation of them, as is agreeable to the likeness of our condition unto theirs.

There is no hypocrisy, dulness, darkness, errors, self-conceitedness, pride, division, faction, or uncharitable contention. Oh how they burn in love to God! and how sweet that love is to themselves! and how those souls work up in heavenly joys to the face of God, in all his praises! Labour as it were to join yourselves by faith with them, and as far as standeth with your different case, to imitate them. They are more imitable and amiable, than the purest churches upon earth. Their love and blessed concord is more lovely, than our uncharitable animosities and odious factions and divisions are.

And remember also the time when you must meet all those upright souls in heaven, whose manner of worship you vilified and spake reproachfully of on earth, and from whose communion you turned away: and only consider how far they should be disowned, who must be dear to Christ and you for ever.

The open disowning and avoiding the ungodly and scandalous, is a great duty in due season, when it is regularly done, and is necessary to cast shame on sin and sinners, and to vindicate the honour of christianity before the world. But otherwise it is but made an instrument of pernicious pride, and of divisions in the church, and of hindering the successes of the gospel of Christ.

CHAPTER XXII.

HOW TO PRAY IN FAITH.

Passing by all the other particular parts of worship as handled elsewhere, (in my "Christian Directory,") I shall only briefly touch the duty of prayer; especially as in private.

Direct. 1. Let your heart lead your tongue, and be the fountain of your words; and suffer not your tongues in a customary volubility to overrun your hearts. Desire first, and pray next; and remember that desire is the soul of prayer; and that the heart-searching God doth hate hypocrisy, and will not be mocked, Matt. vi. 1, 3, 4.

Direct. 2. Yet do not forbear prayer, because your desires are not so earnest as you would have them. For, 1. Even good desires are to be begged of God. 2. And such desires as you have towards God, must be exercised and expressed. 3. And this is the way of their usual increase. 4. And a profane turning away from God, will kill those weak desires which you have, when drawing near him in prayer may revive and cherish them.

Direct. 3. Remember still that you pray to a heavenly Father, who is readier to give, than you are to receive or ask. If you knew his fulness and goodness, how joyfully would you run to him, and cry, "Abba, Father!" John xx. 17; Luke xii. 30, 32; Mark xi. 25; Matt. vi. 8, 32.

Direct. 4. Go boldly to him in the name of Christ alone. Remember that he is the only Way and Mediator. When guilt and conscience would drive you back, believe the sufficiency of his sacrifice and atonement. When your weakness and unworthiness would discourage you, remember that no one is so worthy, as to be accepted by God on any other terms, than Christ's mediation. Come boldly then to the throne of grace, by the new and living way, and put your prayers into his hand, and remember that he still liveth to make intercession for you, and that he appeareth before God in the highest, in your cause; Heb. x. 19; Eph. iii. 12; Rom. v. 2; Heb. ix. 24; vii. 25, 26.

Direct. 5. Desire nothing in your hearts which you dare not pray for, or which is unmeet for prayer: let the rule of prayer be the rule of your desires. And undertake no business in the world, which you may not lawfully pray for a blessing on.

Direct. 6. Desire and pray to God, first, for God himself, and nothing lower; and next for all those spiritual blessings in Christ, which may fit you for communion with him. And lastly, for corporal mercies, as the means to these; Matt. vi. 33; Psal. xlii. 1—3, &c.; Psal. lxxiii. 25, 26.

Direct. 7. Pray only for what is promised you, or you are commanded to pray for: and make not promises to yourselves, and then look that God should fulfil them, because you confidently believe that he will do it; and do not so reproach God, as to call such self-conceits and expectations by the name of a particular faith; for where there is no word, there is no faith.

Direct. 8. What God hath promised, confidently expect; though you feel no answer at the present. For most of your prayers are to be granted (or the things desired to be given) at the harvest time, when we shall have all at once. Whether you find yourselves the better at present for prayer or not, believe that a word is not in vain, but you shall reap the fruit of all in season; Luke xviii. 1, 7, 8; James v. 7, 8.

Direct. 9. Let the Lord's prayer be the rule, for the matter and method of your desires and prayers. But with this difference: It must always be the rule which your desires must be formed to, both in matter and method. You must always first and most desire the hallowing of God's name, the coming of his kingdom, and the doing of his will on earth as it is in heaven, before your own being, or well-being: but this is only a rule for your general prayers (which take in all the parts); for when you either intend to pray only or chiefly for some one particular thing, you may begin with that, or be most upon it.

Therefore all christians should specially labour to understand the true sense and method of the Lord's prayer (which, God willing, I hope elsewhere to open).

Direct. 10. Be more careful in secret of your affections, than of the order of your words (yet choosing such as are aptest to the matter, and fittest to excite your hearts); but in your families, or with others, be very careful to speak to God in words which are apt, and orderly, and moving; and to do all with such skill, and reverence, and seriousness, as tendeth (not to increase, but) to cure the dulness, hypocrisy, and unreverence of others; Eccl. v. 1, 2; Matt. vi. 7—10, &c.

Direct. 11. Pray as earnestly as if God himself were to be moved with your prayers; yet so as to remember, that the change is not to be made upon him, but upon you. As when the boatman layeth hold upon the bank, he draweth the boat to it, and not the bank unto the boat. Prayer fitteth you to receive the mercy; both naturally as it exciteth your desires after it, and morally as it is a condition on which God hath promised to give it. When you pray you tell God nothing which before he knew not better than you; but you tell him that in confession and petition, which he will hear from your own mouths, before he will judge you meet for the mercies which you are to pray for.

In sum, pray, because you believe that praying believers shall have the promised blessing: and believe particularly and absolutely, that you shall have that promised blessing through Christ, because you are praying believers, and therefore the persons to whom it is promised.

CHAPTER XXIII.

HOW TO LIVE BY FAITH TOWARDS CHILDREN, AND OTHER RELATIONS.

Direct. 1. Believe God's promises made to believers and their seed (of which I have written at large in my "Treatise of Infant Baptism"). And labour to understand how far those promises extend, both as to the persons and the blessings. There was never an age in the world, in which God did not distinguish the holy seed, even believers and their children, from the rest of the world, and take them as those that were especially in his covenant.

Direct. 2. Let not your conceits of the bare birth-privilege, make you omit your serious, solemn, and believing dedication of them unto God, and entering them into his covenant.

For the reason why your seed is called holy, and in a better case than the seed of infidels, is not merely because they are the offspring of your bodies, and have their natures from you; much less as deriving any grace or virtue from you by generation: but because you are persons yourselves who have dedicated yourselves, with all that you have, absolutely to God by Christ: and they being your own, and therefore at your disposal, your wills are taken for their wills, so far as you act in their names, and on their behalf: and therefore when you dedicate them to God, you do but that which you have both power and command to do; and therefore God accepteth what you so dedicate to him. And baptism is the regular way in which this dedication should be solemnly made: but if through the want of a minister, or water, or time, this be not done, your believing dedication of your child to God, without baptism, shall be accepted. For it is the substance, and not the sign, the will, and not the water, which God requireth in this case.

Quest. But what then shall we think of the children of godly anabaptists, whose judgment is against such dedication?

Answ. Many whose judgment is against baptizing them, is not against an offering or dedicating them to God. And those who think that they are not allowed solemnly to enter them into covenant with God, yet really do that which is the same thing: for they cannot be imagined to be unwilling to dedicate them to God, to the utmost of that interest and power, which they understand that God hath given them: and doubtless they most earnestly desire that according to their capacity, they may be the children of God, and God will be their God in Christ. And this virtual dedication seemeth to be the principal requisite condition.

But yet as the unbaptized are (ordinarily) without the visible church and its privileges; so if any be so blind, as neither explicitly nor virtually to dedicate their seed to God, I know no promise of their children's salvation, any more than of the seed of infidels.

Direct. 3. If the children of true christians dedicated by the parents' will to God, through Christ, shall die before they come to the use of reason, the parents have no cause to doubt of their salvation.

It is the conclusion of the Synod of Dort in Artic. 1. And the reason is this:

If the parent and child be in the same covenant, then if that covenant pardon and adopt the parent, it doth pardon and adopt the child: but the parent and child are in the same covenant; therefore, &c.

God hath but one covenant on his part, which is sealed by baptism (as I have proved at large to Mr. Blake). Indeed some are only externally in covenant with him on their part, that is, they did covenant only with the tongue, and not the heart: and consequently God is no further in covenant with them, than to allow and command his ministers to receive them into the visible church, and give them its privileges; and is not as a promiser in covenant with them at all himself, either for inward or for outward blessings. He hath not one covenant which giveth outward, and another which giveth inward blessings.

And it is here supposed that the only condition prerequisite on the infant's part, that he may have right to this covenant, and its blessing, is that he be the seed of a true believer, and dedicated in covenant to God by the parent's will or act. Actual faith is not prerequired: seminal grace may be inherent, but, 1. Not known to the baptizer: 2. Nor prerequired as a condition; but liker to be given by virtue of the covenant. Nothing else therefore being prerequisite as a condition, it followeth that as the parents dedicating themselves to God, if baptized at age, is the condition of their certain title to the present blessings of the covenant, (viz. that God be their Father, Christ their Saviour, and the Spirit in covenant to operate in them to sanctification, and their sins are all pardoned, and they are heirs of heaven,) even so upon the parents' dedication of their children to God, they have right to the same blessings; else why do we baptize them, seeing baptism in the true nature and use of it, is a solemn dedicating them to God, in that same covenant, and a solemn investing them in the relations and rights of that same pardoning covenant, and not in any other.

I do not say that all baptized infants, so dying, are saved, be they the children of infidels, or heathens, and remaining their true propriety; nor those that are offered and baptized never so wrongfully, or hypocritically; nor will I stay to dispute for what I have asserted. But, 1. I exhort christians believingly to dedicate their children in covenant with God in Christ: and, 2. To believe that if they so die, that covenant of Christ forbiddeth them to doubt of their salvation.

Direct. 4. Let your duty be answerable to your hope; and do not only pray for your children's sanctification, but if they live, endeavour it by all possible care, in a wise and godly education.

Remember that nature, and your dedicating them to God, do both oblige you to this care for their salvation. And that the education of children is one of the greatest duties in the world, for the service of Christ, and the prosperity of church and state: and the neglect of it, not the smallest cause of the ruin of both, and of the world's calamity.

Many a poor, sottish, lazy professor have I known, who cry out against ignorant, dumb, and unfaithful ministers, as guilty of the blood of souls, and are so religious, as to separate from the assemblies that have ministers that are but partly such; whenas their own children are almost as ignorant as heathens, and they only use them to a few customary formal duties, (while they think they are enough against forms,)

and turn over the chief care of their instruction to the schoolmaster. And are themselves so ignorant, dumb, and idle, unfaithful and unnatural to their poor children's souls, as that it is a doubt whether in a well-ordered church they ought not to be denied communion themselves. They so little practise Deut. xi. 18, 19; vi. 7; Ephes. vi. 4, &c.

Direct. 5. If your children live to the flesh in an ungodly course of life, contrary to the covenant which by you they made, they forfeit all the benefits of the covenant: and you can have no assurance by any thing that you can do for them, that ever they shall be converted (though it is not past hope). And if they be converted at age, their pardon and adoption will be the effect of God's covenant, as then it was newly entered with themselves, and not as it was made before for them in infancy.

Direct. 6. Yet because that still while there is life there is hope, you ought not by despair or negligence to omit prayer, exhortation, or any other duty which you can perform in order to their recovery: and though now they have wills of their own, their salvation is not laid so much upon you, as it was in infancy, at their first covenanting with God; yet still God will show his love to his servants in their seed; and faithful endeavours are not vain or hopeless; and therefore it is still one of your greatest duties in the world, to seek their true recovery to Christ.

Direct. 7. If God make your children a scourge or a heart-breaking to you, bear and improve it as becomes believers: that is,

1. Repent of your own former sin; your own youthful lusts; your disobedience to your parents; your carnal fondness on your children; your loving them too much, and God too little; the evil examples you have given them; and your manifold neglect of a prudent, seasonable, earnest, unwearied instructing them in godliness; your bearing with their sin, and giving them their own wills, till they were masterless, &c. Renew your repentance, and you have got some benefit.

2. Think how unkindly and unthankfully you have dealt with a gracious Saviour and a heavenly Father.

3. Let it take off your affections from all things under the sun, and call them up the more to God: for who would love a world, where none are to be trusted, and where all things are vexatious, even the children of your love and bowels.

Direct. 8. If they die impenitently, and perish, mourn for them, but with the moderation of believers: that is, 1. Consider that God is more the owner of your children than you are; and may do with his own as he list. 2. And he is more wise and mereiful than you; and therefore not to be murmured at as wanting either. 3. And it is an invaluable mercy that your own soul is sanctified, and shall be saved. 4. And the most godly have had ungodly children before you. Adam had a Cain, Noah had a Ham, Isaac had an Esau, David had an Absalom, &c. 5. And if all the godly that pray for their children's salvation must be therein gratified, all the world would then have been saved. For Noah would have prayed for all his children, and they for theirs, and so to the world's end.

Object. Oh but my conscience telleth me, that it is my own sin which hath had a hand in their undoing.

Answ. Suppose it be so; it is certainly a pardonable sin. Do you then repent of it, or not? If you repent, as you mourn for your relations, so you should rejoice that God hath forgiven you. For repented sin is certainly pardoned to you, and pardoned sin to you is as great cause of joy, as unpardoned sin in your relations is cause of sorrow. Therefore mourn with such moderation, and mixed comfort and thanksgiving, as becometh one that liveth by faith. The affliction indeed is near and great, and heavier than any calamity that could have befallen their bodies, and is not to be slighted by an unnatural insensibility: but yet you have a God who is better to you than a thousand children; and your cross is but as a feather, if you set it in the balance against your blessings, even the love of God, and your part in Christ, and life eternal.

CHAPTER XXIV.

How by faith to order our affections to public societies, and the unconverted world.

Direct. 1. Take heed that you lose not that common love which you owe to mankind, nor that desire of the increase of the kingdom of Christ, which must keep up in you a constant compassion to the unconverted world, viz. idolaters, infidels, and ungodly hypocrites.

It is pitiful to observe the unchristian senselessness of most zealous professors of religion in this point. Though God hath purposely put the three public petitions first in the Lord's prayer, to tell them what they must first and most desire, that is, the hallowing of his name, and the coming of his kingdom, and the doing of his will on earth as it is in heaven; yet they seemed not to understand it, or to regard it: but their thoughts and desires are as selfish, and private, and narrow, as if they knew nothing what the world or the church is, or cared for neither. Their mind and talk is all of their own matters, for body or soul, or of their several parties, and particular churches; or if any extend his care as far as this spot of land in Britain and Ireland, or some of the reformed churches, they go further than their companions; themselves, and their side or party, is almost all that most regard: perhaps the poor scattered Jews have a few words in the prayers of some; but the miserable case of the vast nations of the earth, who seem to be forsaken of God, is neglected by them. Five parts in six of the earth are heathens and Mahometans: and of the sixth part, the protestants are but about a sixth, compared with the poor ignorant Abassines, Armenians, Syrians, the Greek churches, and the papists (to say nothing what the most of the protestants themselves are). Yet are almost all these put by with a word or two, or none at all, in the daily prayers of most professors: and it is rare to hear any to pray with any importunity for their conversion. Is this men's love to mankind? Is this their love to the kingdom of Christ? or to God and godliness? Is God of as narrow a mind as you? Are you and your party all the world, or all the church, or all that is to be regarded and prayed for?

Direct. 2. Do not only pray for them, but study what is within the reach of your power to do for their conversion. For though private men can do little in comparison of what christian princes might do (who must not be told their duty by such as I); yet somewhat might be done by merchants and their chaplains, if skill and zeal were well united; and somewhat might be done by writing and translating such books as are fittest for this use. "And greater matters might be done, by training up some scholars in the Persian, Indostan, Tartarian, and such other languages, who are for mind and body fitted for that

work, and willing with due encouragement to give up themselves thereto. Were such a college erected, natives might be got to teach the languages: and no doubt but God would put it into the hearts of many young men, to devote themselves to so excellent a service; and of many rich men, to settle lands sufficient to maintain them; and many merchants would help them in their expedition." But whether those that God will so much honour, be yet born, I know not.

Direct. 3. Pray and labour for the reformation and concord of all the christian churches; as the most probable means to win to Christ the world of heathens and unbelievers.

If the protestant churches were more pure and peaceable, more holy, and more unanimous and charitable to each other, it would do much to win the papists that are near them: and if the papists, and Greeks, and Armenians, and Abassines were more reformed, wise, and holy, it would do much to win the heathens and Mahometans round about them. They would be the salt of the earth, and the lights of the world, and the leaven which must leaven the whole lump: the neighbouring Mahometans, and heathens, would see their good works, and glorify God, Matt. v. 16. A holy, harmless, loving conversation, is a sermon which men of all languages can understand: thus as apostles we might preach to men of several tongues, though we have but one. Oh that the sanctifying Spirit would teach christians this art, and reform and unite the churches of Christ, that they might be no longer a scandal, to hinder the saving of the world about them! It is the sense of Christ's prayer before his death, (John xvii. 21—23, 25,) that "they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.——I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me; and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me."

Direct. 4. Be sure at least that your holy, loving, and blameless lives, be an example to those that are about you. If you cannot convert kingdoms, nor get other men to do their duty towards it, be sure that you do your part within your reach: and believe that your lives must be the best part of your labours, and that good works, and love, and good example must be the first part of your doctrine.

Direct. 5. When you see that the world lieth still in wickedness, and there seemeth to be no possibility of a cure, yet search the Scripture, and so far as you can find any prophecy or promise of their conversion, believe that God in his time will make it good.

Direct. 6. But take heed that on this pretence, you plunge not yourselves into any inordinate studies, or conceited expositions of the Revelation, and other Scripture prophecies, as many have done, to the great wrong of themselves, and the church of God.

By inordinate studies, I mean, 1. When you begin there where you should end; and before you have digested the necessary greater truths in theology, you go to those that should come after them. 2. When an undue proportion of your zeal, and time, and study, and talk, is bestowed upon these prophecies, in comparison of other things. 3. When you are proudly and causelessly conceited of your singular expositions: that when of ten of the learnedest and hardest studied expositors of the Revelation, perhaps in many things scarce two are of a mind; yet when you differ from them all, or all save one, you can be as peremptory and confident in your opinion, as if you were far wiser or more infallible than they. 4. When you place a greater necessity in it than there is; as if salvation, or church communion, lay upon your conceits. Whereas God hath made the points that are of necessity to salvation, to be few and plain.

Direct. 7. When you look on the sin and misery of the world, and see small hope of its recovery, look up by faith to that better world, where all is light, and love, and peace. And pray for the coming of Christ, when all this sin shall be brought to judgment, and wisdom and godliness be fully justified before all the world. Let the badness of this world drive up your hearts to that above, where all is better than you can wish.

Direct. 8. When you are ready to stumble at the consideration of God's desertion of so great a part of the world, quiet your minds in the implicit submission to his infinite wisdom and goodness. Dare you think that you are more gracious and merciful than God? or that it is meet you should know all the secrets of his providence, who must not know the mysteries of government, in the state or kingdom where you live? He that cannot rest in the wisdom, will, and mercies of Infinite goodness itself, but must have all his own expectations satisfied, shall have no rest.

And think withal, how little a spot of God's creation this earthly world is; and how incomprehensibly vast the superior regions are in comparison of it. And if all the upper parts of the world be possessed with none but holy spirits, and even this lower earth have also many millions of saints, prepared here for the things above, we have no more reason to judge God to be unmerciful, because this lower world is so bad, than we have to judge the king unmerciful, when we look into the comon gaol; nor to judge of his government by the rogues in a gaol, but by his court, and all the subjects of his kingdom.

If God should forsake no place but hell, of all his creation, you could not grudge at him as unmerciful. And it is a very hard question whether this earth, and the air about it, be not the place of hell; when you consider that the devils are cast down from heaven, and yet that they dwell and rule in the air, and compass the earth, and tempt the wicked, and "work in the children of disobedience," Ephes. ii. 1, 2; Job i.; 2 Tim. ii. 26. And that Satan is called, the god and "prince of this world," John xii. 31; xiv. 30; xvi. 11; 2 Cor. iv. 4; Ephes. vi. 12.

But if it be not the place of final execution, it is the place where they are kept in prison till the great assizes, and where they are reserved in chains of darkness, to the judgment of the great day, and where they are tormented before the time, 2 Pet. ii. 4; Jude 6; Matt. viii. 29.

Look then from their dungeon, to the glorious incomprehensible mansions of the holy ones; and judge by them, and not by this prison, of the goodness and infinite benignity of God. And if he will give so many obstinate despisers of his grace, a place with those devils that did seduce and rule them, think not God to be therefore unmerciful; but behold his mercy in the innumerable vessels of honour and mercy, that shall possess the higher mansions for ever.

CHAPTER XXV.

HOW TO LIVE BY FAITH IN THE LOVE OF ONE ANOTHER, AGAINST SELF-LOVE.

Direct. 1. Let faith first employ you in the knowledge of God: and when you know him who is love itself, you will best learn of him to love. You will see that that is best, which is likest unto God; and that is worst, which is most unlike him. And when you consider how universally, though variously, he loveth his creatures, and how he expresseth it, and how he loveth benevolently, because he is good, and loveth complacentially, because also the thing is good which he loveth, you will learn the art of love from God; Rom. ix. 13; Deut. iv. 37; vii. 8; xxiii. 5; xxxiii. 3; 1 John iii. 16, 17; iv. 7, 9, 11, 12, 19—21.

Direct. 2. Study Jesus Christ aright, and you will also learn to love him. There you will see self-denying love; which stooped to earth, to reproach, to sufferings, to labours, to death, and spared not life or any thing to do good. It is the chief lesson which you go to school to Christ to learn: and it is as proper to go to him to learn to love, as it is to go to the sun for light; Rom. v. 8; John xiii. 34; 1 Thess. iv. 9; John xi. 5, 36; xiii. 1; xv. 9; Ephes. v. 2, 25; John xv. 12.

Direct. 3. Know God in his works and image, and then you will see him in his natural image in all men as rational, and in his moral image in all his saints; and then you will see what to love, and why. He that cannot see God in a glass in this world, cannot see him at all, and cannot love him. Remember that it is in his servants and creatures, that he exposeth himself to be seen, and known, and loved; 1 John ii. 10; iii. 10, 14; iv. 7, 8, 20, 21; v. 1; Matt. xxv. 40.

Direct. 4. Abhor that proud, malignant censoriousness, which is apt to make the worst of others, and to deny, and extenuate, and overlook God's graces in them (as the devil did by Job); and which can see no goodness in them that are not eminently good. For this is but the devil's artifice, to kill men's love to one another. Though he pretend the honour of godliness, and the hatred of sin, when he telleth you, —Such a one is a hypocrite, and such a one hath nothing but a form, and no power of godliness; I can see nothing of God in him; alas, they are poor carnal people: all is but to destroy your love. And thus he mightily prospereth in the malignant spirit of separation; by which he can make you unchurch whole churches, and unchristian whole towns and parishes, and all because that you that are strangers to them, see not their godliness, or hear of nothing eminent in them. But the world of dividers will take no warning, any more than the world of the profane. Satan doth deceive them all.

Direct. 5. Abhor therefore the sin of backbiting and evil-speaking; and when you hear a malignant censurer thus unchristian and unchurch men without proof, behind their backs, if gentler reproofs will not serve the turn, frown them away, and say,—"Get thee behind me, Satan." The accuser of the brethren and the spirit of hatred, maketh it his work in the world to destroy men's love to one another; and he hath no such way to do it, as by making them seem unlovely to one another: and he that persuadeth me that my neighbour is not good, persuadeth me that he is not lovely, and so persuadeth me from loving him; Prov. xxv. 23; Rom. i. 30; Psal. xv. 3; 2 Cor. xii. 20; Rom. xiv. 3, 4, 10, 13; James iv. 11, 12; Matt. vii. 1, 2; 1 Cor. iv. 5.

Direct. 6. Above all, seek to mortify selfishness, which is the great enemy of love to God and man. A selfish man can faithfully love none but himself; for he loveth all others but for himself; his own opinions, interests, and ends, are the disposers of his love. Therefore he never heartily loveth his enemy; no nor the best, that do not honour him, but seem to slight him. If any should neglect him, or speak hardly of him, or do him any real or seeming wrong, or be of another side, against his party or his cause, no censures are too sharp, and no love too little, for such a one. And yet these that can love none heartily but themselves, will find that they had no greater enemies than themselves, and that hell and earth did not so much as themselves against them.

Direct. 7. Subject yourselves truly to God's authority, and his commands will further love: for it is the sum of them all, and the fulfilling of his law, both old and new; Gal. v. 14; Rom. xiii. 8—10; John xiii. 34; xv. 12, 17; Matt. xii. 30, 32, 33.

Direct. 8. Remember that love is the bond, and life, and interest of the church and of the world. Without love the world would have neither unity, peace, or safety: what were a family without it? Were it not for love, men that were not kept fettered in gaols or bedlams, would be as robbers, or wolves, or mad dogs, to one another. Were it not for love, the church would be crumbled into malicious sects, that would spend their time in prating and militating against each other; and preach and talk down love to one another; and would call this devilish work, —the preaching of the gospel, or the worshipping of God; while they blaspheme him by offering him a sacrifice of hatred and reviling, as they do that offer him a sacrifice of man's blood. "But speaking the truth in love, you may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ. From whom the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body to the edifying of itself in love," Eph. iv. 15, 16.

Yea, their own sects would turn to dust and atoms, if love, which is there confined, did not solder them together, when it is dead in them as to all others, or as to the most.

Direct. 9. Love is our spiritual health, and selfishness is our sickness, sin, and death. When we fell from the love of God to ourselves, we fell also from the love of others to ourselves: the individuate creature was contracted in himself, and altogether set upon propriety, and forgot his relations to God and man: and when grace destroyeth this selfish privateness of spirit, it setteth us again in love with God and man together; and the better any man is, the more public spirit he is of, and the less difference he maketh between his neighbour's interest and his own (when God and his interest make not a difference). And this is to love our neighbour as ourselves; that is, without the vice of partial selfishness; nor setting up our own interest against his, but equally measuring both by God's, and referring them thereunto; Lev. xix. 18, 34; Matt. xix. 19; Gal. v. 14.

Direct. 10. Remember that loving others as ourselves is our own interest and benefit, as well as our duty.

And a notable instance it is, how much our duty is our own interest and good, and how merciful God is in his strictest laws. As the love of God is heaven itself, and sinners that love him not do damn themselves, and put themselves from heaven and happiness, (and to pardon them is to sanctify them,) even so it is an unspeakable loss and misery which sinners

draw upon themselves, by not loving their neighbours as themselves, but only in a subordination to themselves, and for their proper private ends. I pray you mark but these few particular instances:

1. If I love my neighbour as myself, my very love is my delight and ease. The form of love consisteth in complacency or pleasedness; and therefore it must needs be pleasant to every one that useth it (however bad love hath bitter fruits). And whenever wrath, or envy, or hatred, comes instead of love, it is my sickness, I feel myself diseased by it.

2. If I love others, others will love me. They are scarce free to do otherwise. You may almost constrain any man to love you, if you love him heartily, and show it plainly, and were within his view to make him see it. All men love a loving nature; but especially if they be loved by such themselves.

3. If I love my neighbour as myself, to do good to him will be as easy and pleasant as to myself. I can ride, and run, and labour contentedly for myself; I can stoop to the most sordid employment for myself; and so I should as easily do for others: whereas want of love doth make all tedious that I do, and maketh my duty a continual burden, and too often tempts me to omit it. Love made both Christ and his apostles do so much for souls with ease and pleasure, which else they could not have undergone; John xv. 13, 9; 2 Cor. xii. 15; Eph. iii. 17; v. 2; Col. ii. 2.

4. If I love my neighbour as myself, I can as easily suffer any thing from him as from myself. I can easily bear that in myself, as to sight or smell, the loathsomest sores or ulcers, which others cannot bear. I am easily brought to forgive myself, and to forbear self-hurting and self-revenge; and so should I do to others, if I thus loved them. And then how easy would my life be among all the injuries of the world!

5. If I loved my neighbours as myself; if my flesh did want, my mind (which is myself) could never be in want: because all that my neighbours have is mine, as to my comfort and content. My house is homely, but my neighbour's is comely and convenient; and, to my mind, that is as comfortable as if it were my own: my land is small, but my neighbour's is large; my grounds are barren, but my neighbour's fruitful; my corn is bad, but his proves good; my cattle die, or prosper not, but his do well; I am low and despicable, and no man careth for me, but others are lords, and princes, and honourable; and if I love them as myself, their corn, their cattle, their houses and lands, their kingdoms and honours, are as much my comfort, as if they were my own. I know these are paradoxes to depraved, selfish nature; but thus it would be if love were perfect; and thus it is in that measure that we love. And should that duty be taken for a burden, which as to my comfort maketh all the wealth, and honour, and kingdoms of others to be my own?

Object. If you love your neighbours as yourselves, you must mourn with them that mourn; and all the calamities and sorrows of the world must be yours; which will overcome your joys.

Answ. 1. I am not to sorrow as much as they do sorrow, but as much as they rationally ought to do. And men are not to think, that a loving correction, which worketh for their good and salvation, is worse than the snares of prosperity. The brother of high degree must rejoice when he is made low, as well as the brother of low degree must rejoice when he is exalted, James i. 9, 10. And why should that be my sorrow, which is his benefit, and should be his joy? If Paul and Silas sing in the stocks, why should not I sing with them? Patience and rejoicing are the duty of all believers in affliction.

2. The mercies and happiness of every one that feareth God is far more than his misery: therefore his joy and gratitude should be more than his sorrows and complaints. If a man's tooth do ache, and all the rest of his body be well, should not he and I be more thankful for the health of all the rest, than troubled for a tooth? A believer hath always the Spirit of God, and a part in Christ, and the pardon of sin, and a right to heaven: and then how much greater should his joy be than his sorrows, and mine also on his behalf!

3. The goodness and love of God is manifested to the world more abundantly than his justice and severity. We know of no afflicted saints, but on this spot of earth; and we know of no damned ones but devils and wicked men: but we know that the worlds above us are incomparably more vast than this, and that the glory of the celestial spirits is far greater than our sufferings and sorrows here: therefore our joy which love procureth, should be a thousandfold greater than our sorrows.

4. And as for the wicked, as the consequent will of God layeth by compassion, so consequently, considering them as the obstinate final refusers of grace, they are not those neighbours whom we are bound to love as ourselves; for they are enemies to God and deprived of his image, and therefore our obligations to mourn for them are abated, as Samuel's for Saul, when he knew that God had rejected him, 1 Sam. xv. 35; xvi. 1; and we are obliged to rejoice in the declarations of the justice and holiness of God, and the universal benefit which redoundeth from his judgments; Rev. xviii. 20; xii. 12; Esther viii. 15. So that it still remaineth clear, that loving our neighbours as ourselves, doth entitle us to the comforts of all men's health, estates, prosperity, honours; yea, and their holiness and wisdom too; and this without any such participation of their sorrows, as should be any considerable eclipse of our delights; if we do it all regularly, as God requireth us.

5. If I love my neighbour as myself, I am freed from all the trouble of cross interests; in buying and selling, in trespassing, in lawsuits; it will comfort me as much if he get by me, as if I get by him; if his bargain prove the better, as if mine did; if he have the better at law, as if it were judged to myself. Yea, all his successes, prosperity, and whatever good befalleth any that I know of in the world, will all be mine.

6. And I shall never be loth by death to leave the world, (while I have no cause to fear the missing of salvation,) because whatever I leave behind me, will be possessed by such as I love as myself. They will have life, and time, and health, and comforts, and whatever my nature is loth to leave: therefore whilst I live, why should it not be as comforting to me to think that so many shall live and prosper, whom I love as myself, as if I were myself to live and prosper.

7. Yea, more than so, I have by love a part in the joys of heaven, before I am actually there. For the joys of all those blessed souls, and of those holy angels, are mine by participation, so far as to cause me to rejoice in their felicity, as if it were my own, as far as I can now apprehend it.

Yea, the glory of the Lord Jesus, and the eternal blessedness of God himself, would rejoice us more than our own felicity; if we loved him as much above ourselves, as we ought to do, we should partake of our Master's joy.

And now judge whether loving God as God, and

our neighbours sincerely as ourselves, would not cure almost all the calamities of our minds, and give us a kind of heaven, and be a cheap and certain way to have what we can wish in all the world, and even to make all the world our own? and whether it be not sin itself, which is the first part of all men's hell and misery?

Object. But my neighbour's meat will not fill my belly; nor his health doth not ease my pain, nor his fire keep me warm.

Answ. The flesh hath got the dominion indeed, when men cannot distinguish between soul and body, between the pain and pleasures of the body and of the mind. I do not say that love will change the pain or pleasure of your bodies, but of your minds. Your appetites will not be satisfied with your neighbour's food, but your minds may be comforted to see his welfare. Your pain is not eased by your neighbour's health, but your minds may be pleased by it, as much as if it were your own, if you loved him as much as you do yourself. And therefore many in a danger have saved the life of a prince, a captain, a parent, a child, a friend, with the voluntary loss of their own.

Object. This is all true; but who is there in the world that doth it, or findeth it possible to love another as himself? And how can that be a duty, which is to nature itself an impossibility? Therefore, let us first know what this duty is, of loving our neighbours as ourselves.

Answ. Doubtless if it be the sum of the law, all true christians do it in sincerity, though not in perfection. And as to the sense of it,—1. You must distinguish between that sensitive and passionate affection, which is in the soul as sensitive, and is common to beasts with men; and that rational appetite, which doth will, and choose, and is pleased, according to the conduct of pure reason. The first we doubt not will be still more to ourselves than others; and it is not the use of grace to destroy it, but to rule and moderate it.

2. You must distinguish between love, and outward actions, which are the expressions of it. When our love is due as much to one as to another, yet our outward actions may be under a particular law, which obligeth us to do that for one which we are not bound to do for others. As to maintain our own children, families, servants, and so ourselves, rather than others. And the reason is, because the difference of individuals maketh that fit for one, which is not fit for another; and so maketh every man the fittest chooser for himself, and those that are nearest to him; and nature instigateth him to the greatest care in doing it: and all good must be done in a regular order, or else confusion will destroy it. And nature maketh this most orderly, as every parish must keep their own poor, and yet must love other poor as well.

3. You must know that love is formally nothing but complacence, (as aforesaid,) but love joined with a will and purpose to do good to another, is called love of benevolence; when yet the love there is one thing, and the doing good, or purpose to do it, is another; and I may, in obedience to God, purpose and do more good to one whom I am bound to love, not more but less.

And now you may see what it is to love our neighbours as ourselves.

1. God must be loved above our neighbours and ourselves; and both must be loved purely as related and subordinate to him, and for his sake. There is a double respect which all things have to God:—1. As they contain that excellency which he hath put upon them, which is some likeness, representation, or signification of himself; and is called his glory shining in the creature; that is, its derived goodness. 2. As they conduce to his further service, and may honour him, and please him. Thus all creatures must be loved only as a means, even a means declaring God, being derivatively and significantly good and useful; and as a means to serve and please him.

2. Therefore this being the formal reason of our rational love, must also be the measure of it *(a quatenus ad quantum)*. As it is certain that I must love that best which is best, because I must love it only as good; so it is certain that that is best which hath most likeness to God, and most of his glory upon it, and that which is most pleasing to him, and useful to his service. Therefore if my neighbour be better than I am, I must judge him better, and love him better.

3. Though natural self-appetite, and self-preservation, by which all creatures are for themselves only, (not feeling the hunger, cold, or pain of others,) be not sinful, but the effect of creating individuation, yet reason was perfect, and the will could perfectly follow reason, in its complacency and choice, till sin corrupted it: reason could judge that best which was best, and the will could love that best which was best. Therefore wherever any of this is wanting it is sin.

4. The principal part or sum of positive sin, doth consist in selfishness. Man is fallen from the love of God and man, to himself; and grace recovereth him from this. Therefore it is, that this duty is not only unperformed, but hardly discerned by unrenewed men: so far as they are selfish, they hardly believe that they should love their neighbours as themselves.

5. To love our neighbours as ourselves, in point of duty, containeth these two things: First, To love them simply according to their goodness without any hinderance of selfishness or partiality: not to forbear loving them, because they are not ourselves, or because they are against any inordinate selfish interest or appetite of our own. And also comparatively, to love them in the same degree with ourselves, if they have the same degree of loveliness; so that it cannot extend to the kind, and the end, and reason of the love, but it must needs also extend to the degree. If I love him less than myself, who is better than myself, I love him not as myself, as to ends and reason.

6. Yea, I am bound by this law to love every man better or more than myself, who is really better, and is so manifest to me; or else I love him not as myself, that is, on the same true reason as I must love myself (for God and the goodness of the object).

7. But as all men fail in the degree of this love (and therefore none perfectly keep the law); so the sincerity which all God's servants have, doth consist in this; that, 1. Our love to others is for God's sake, and for the goodness which he hath endued them with, and the service they may do him. 2. That this God and his service, for whose sake we love them, be preferred before ourselves, and every creature, and loved better than all our sinful pleasures. 3. That our love to them for God's sake and grace's be such, as ordinarily in the exercise and effects will prevail against our love of sensual interest and delights; and will bring us effectually to succour, relieve, and do them good, though to our fleshly loss, when God requireth it. He that cannot love Christ in his servants, better than his carnal pleasures, loveth him not at all sincerely. God's image and interest in his servants, and in mankind,

must be practically more precious to us, and more beloved by us, than all our carnal sinful pleasures. (For as for our own spiritual good, it standeth in such a connexion with God's will and glory, and our neighbour's good, that I know not how to put them into comparison in the trial, much less in opposition.) 4. That all carnal self-love and uncharitableness contrary to this, be hated, resisted, repented of, and subdued, and be not predominant in us, against the love of God and man.

8. The meaning of the command is not that we shall love our neighbours as we inordinately and sinfully love ourselves; but as we ought to love ourselves; and as we regularly and justly do love ourselves. He that loveth himself too much and sinfully, must not therefore so love his neighbour.

9. He that loveth his neighbour as himself, (that is, without selfish partiality, and for the same reasons as he must love himself, viz. for the image and interest of God,) is obliged by this very rule to love himself more than his neighbour, when he is better, and more pleasing and serviceable to God. (Therefore he that would warrantably love himself most, must labour to be himself the best, and then he may lawfully do it, so far as his own goodness, and other men's defects, are truly known to him.)

10. As a father's love may consist with the correction of his children, and self-love with blood-letting, purging, labour, and other unpleasing things; so we may love our neighbours as ourselves, and yet correct and punish evil-doers: for sometimes their own good requireth it; and ordinarily the public good requireth it, *pœna debetur reipublicæ*, and also God's command requireth it; so that this is not loving ourselves more than our neighbour; but loving him more than his ease or his favour; and loving God, and the commonwealth, more than him.

11. Our love of our neighbours as ourselves, doth not at all make our natural selfish appetites and senses, or desire of food, health, ease, rest, &c. to be sinful: nor oblige us to have such natural senses and appetites for others; but only rationally to equal them in estimation and complacence, and to do them so much good as God requireth us.

12. And it doth not oblige us to do as much for them as for ourselves, for the reasons before alleged; but to do them good without the hinderance of self-interest: that selfishness be not to us as a bile or imposthume, which draweth the humours and spirits unequally and disorderly from the rest of the body to itself.

By all this it is evident, 1. That no man hath an inequality in his love to himself and his neighbour, beyond the inequality of goodness, but it is sinful (speaking of rational love).

2. That all love to our neighbour is not sincere. There is a real love to them, which bad men may have, which is not the sincere love which God requireth.

3. Every man that loveth another for his goodness and godliness, loveth him not sincerely: for he may have a love to goodness itself, which is not sincere; as if he love his lusts and pleasures more.

4. Every man that doth good to another in love, doth not therefore sincerely love him. A Dives may give Lazarus his scraps; and the very sensualist may give another some of the leavings of his fleshly lusts. And though the giving of a cup of cold water to a disciple, when we have no better to give, doth show sincerity, and shall have its reward (because God accepteth it, according to men's will, and to what they have, and not according to what they have not); yet it is certain that an unhappy worldling may give much more. And if Christ had bid him, Luke xviii. 23, sell part, instead of selling all, it is like he might not have gone away sorrowful.

5. It is not therefore the value or proportion of the gift, which is it that must try our love to others, in itself considered; for it may oft fall out that a widow's mite may signify truer charity, than the substance of some others. But it is the prevalency of the love of God in man, and of man for the sake of God, against our sinful self-love and carnal interest.

And now I will add a little more evidence, to the principal thing in question, viz. that in the very degree the rational appetite or will should love another equal with ourselves.

And, 1. The forementioned reason is undeniable, that the will should love that best which is best, and must measure that by the respect which things have to God, and not to our own commodity in the world.

2. No man can deny this principle but by setting up natural self-love or appetite, and making the rational stoop to that, which would infer as well, that we may love ourselves better than God himself; and that our sense is nobler than our reason, and must rule it.

3. We find our own reason tells us much more of our duty in this, than our corrupted wills do follow. The best way therefore to discern the truth, is to treat with reason alone, and leave out the will, till we have despatched with reason. And you will find that the common light of nature justifieth this law of God.

1. He that would not confess that it is better he had no being, than that there were no God, or no world besides him, is a monster of selfishness. And if a man say never so much, I cannot do so, yet while he confesseth that this should be his desire, it sufficeth to the decision of our present case.

2. He that will not confess that it is better that he himself should die, than all the church of Christ, or the whole kingdom die, is unreasonably selfish in the eyes of all impartial men. The gallant Romans and Athenians had learnt it, as one of their plainest, greatest lessons, to prefer their country before their lives: and is not that to love their countries better than themselves.

3. For the same reason many of them saw, that it was the duty of a good subject, or a gallant soldier, to save the life of his king or general, with the loss of his own; because their lives were of more public utility. And the ground of all this was these natural verities:

The best should be best loved.—Goodness must be measured by a higher rule than personal self-interest.—Multitudes are better than one, &c.

4. All men acknowledge that a man of eminent learning, piety, wisdom, and usefulness to the church or world, should be loved and preserved rather than a wicked, sottish, worthless child of our own. Yea, God himself requireth that parents procure the death of their own children, by public justice, if they be obstinately wicked, Deut. xxi.

5. The same reasons plainly infer, that I ought rather to desire the life of a much more worthy, useful instrument for the church and state than my own; and so to love a better man better than myself, if I be acquainted sufficiently with his goodness.

And if this be all so sure and plain, hence observe,—

1. How much human nature is corrupted.

Alas, how rare is this equal love!

2. How few true christians are; and how defective and imperfect grace is in the best. Alas! how strange are many christians to the extent of this duty, and how far are we all from practising it in any eminent degree!

3. Wherein it is that nature's corruption most consisteth; and what is the chief part of the nature and work of sanctifying grace and reformation.

4. Whence come all the oppressions, injuries, persecutions, frauds, and cruelties on the earth. For want of loving men's neighbours as themselves: otherwise how tenderly would they handle one another! How easily would they pardon wrongs! How patiently would they bear the dissent of honest, upright christians, who cannot force their judgments to be of other men's mould and size! How apt would men be to suspect their own understandings, of weakness, presumption, or error, rather than to rave with the fury of the dragon against all others, who think them to be mistaken! How safely and quietly might we live by them in the world, if they loved their neighbours as themselves! I do not say now, How plentiful would men be in doing good to others! I am but pleading a lower cause, How seldom they would be in doing hurt! But, alas, miserable Britain! it was in thee that one extraordinary emperor, Alexander Severus, was betrayed and murdered, who made that christian precept his motto, and wrote it on his doors, and books, and goods, "Do as you would be done by." In thee it is that love hath been beheaded, while nothing hath been more acknowledged and professed. If love be treacherous, hurtful, envious, scandalous, insnaring, and plotting for men's destruction; if love teach proud and vicious sots to take themselves for deities, and oracles, and all for vermin that must be hunted unto death, who bow not to their carnal, erroneous conceits, and do not with the readiest prostitute consciences, serve their carnal interests and ends; if love be known by reviling those that are much better than ourselves; and stigmatizing the faithfullest servants of Christ with the most odious character that lies can utter; if it was love that called Paul a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among the people, and represented Christ as an enemy to Cæsar and his followers, as the filth and off-scouring of the earth; then happy age in which we live; and happy they which are possessed with the proud and factious spirit. But if it be otherwise, alas, where be they, and how few, that love their neighbours, or betters, as themselves?

5. You see here what a plague sin is to the earth, and how great (a punishment may I call it, or rather) a misery to the sinner, and to the world.

6. And you see how joyful and heavenly a life we should live, if we did but follow God's commands: and what a felicity love itself is to the soul.

7. And you see by what measure to try men's spirits, and to know who are the best among all the pretenders to goodness in the world. Certainly not the most censorious, contemptuous, backbiters, and cruel, that seek to make all odious that are not for their interest; but those that most abound in love, which faith itself is given to produce.

Object. All this is true; but still we find it a thing impossible to love our neighbour equally with ourselves. Can you teach us how to do it?

Answ. It is that I have been teaching you in the ten directions before set down: but it is this which I have reserved to the close that must do the work indeed, and without it nothing else will do it.

Direct. 11. Make it the work of all your lives, by faith in Christ, to bring up your souls to the unfeigned love of God, and then it will be done. For then you will love God above all, and love God in all; and love yourselves and your neighbours principally for God: then God's image, and glory, and will, will be goodness or amiableness in your eyes; and not carnal pleasure, honour, or commodity. And then it will be easy to you to love that most, which hath most of God. You will then easily see the reason of this seeming paradox, and that the contrary is most unreasonable. You will then be as Timothy, who had a natural love to others, as others have to themselves, and who sought the things of Jesus Christ, when all others (even the best ministers too much) sought their own, Phil. ii. 20, 21. You will understand Paul's charge, Phil. ii. 3—5, "In lowliness of mind, let each esteem others better than themselves. Look not every man on his own, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." You will learn of Christ to take your nearest friend for a Satan, that would persuade you to save or spare yourself (yea, your life) when you ought to lay it down for the glory of God, and the good of many, Matt. xvi. 22, 23: SELF and OWN are words which would then be better understood, and be more suspected; and the reason of the great gospel duty of SELF-DENIAL would be better discerned.

Therefore set yourselves to the study of God, especially in his goodness; study him in his works, and in his word, and in his Son, and in the glory where you hope everlastingly to see him: and if you once love God as God indeed, it will teach you to love your brethren, and in what sort, and in what degree to do it. For many ways are we taught of God to love one another: even, 1. By the great and heavenly teacher of love, Jesus Christ. 2. And by God's own example, Matt. v. 44, 45. 3. And by the shedding abroad of his love in our hearts by the spirit of love, Rom. v. 5. 4. And by this actual loving God, and so loving all of God in the world.

Object. But by this doctrine you will prepare for the levellers and friars, to cast down, or cry down propriety.

Answ. 1. There is a propriety of food, raiment, &c. which individuation hath made necessary. 2. There is a propriety of stewardship, which God causeth by the various disposal of his talents, and which is the just reward of human industry, and the necessary encouragement of wit and labour in the world: none of these would we cast down, or preach down. 3. But there is a common abuse of propriety to the maintenance of men's own lusts, and to the hurt of others, and of all societies. This we would preach down if we could: but it is love only which must be the leveller. In the primitive church, love showed its power by such a voluntary community, Acts iv. And all politicians, who have drawn the idea of a perfect commonwealth, have been fumbling at other ways of accomplishing it: but it is christian love alone that must do it. Unfeignedly love God as God, and love your neighbours really as yourselves, and then keep your proprieties as far as this will give you leave.

I will conclude with this considerable observation; that though it is false which some affirm, that individuation is a punishment for some former sin (for how could a soul not individuate sin?) And though sensitive self-love, which is the principle of self-preservation, be no sin itself; nor doth grace destroy it; yet the inordinacy of it is the sum and root of all positive sin, and an increaser of privative sin: and this inseparable sensitive self-love, was made to be more under the power of reason, and to be ruled by it, than now we find it in any the most sanctified person; even as Abraham's love of the life of his only son, was to be subject to his faith.

And holiness lieth more in this subjection, than most men well understand. And the inordinacy of this personal self-love, hath so strangely perverted the mind itself, that it is not only very hard to con-

vince men of the evil of any selfish principles or sins; but it greatly blindeth them, as to all duties of public interest and social nature; yea, and maketh them afraid of heaven itself; where the union of souls will be as much nearer than now it is, as their love will be greater and more perfect. And though it will not be by any cessation of personal individuation, and by falling into one universal soul; yet perfect love will make the union nearer than we, who have no experience of it, can possibly now comprehend. (And when we feel the strongest love to a friend, desiring the nearest union, we have the best help to understand it.) But men that feel not the divine and holy love, are by inordinate self-love, and abuse of individuation, afraid of the life to come, lest the union should be so great as to lose their individuation, or prejudice their personal divided interests. Yea, true believers, so far as their holy love is weak, and their inordinate sensitive self-love is yet too strong, are from hence afraid of another world, when they scarce know why; but indeed it is much from this disease; which maketh men still desire their personal felicity, too partially, and in a divided way, and to be afraid of losing their personality or propriety, by too near a union and communion of souls.

CHAPTER XXVI.

HOW BY FAITH TO BE FOLLOWERS OF THE SAINTS, AND TO LOOK WITH PROFIT TO THEIR EXAMPLES, AND TO THEIR END.

The great work of living in heaven by faith, I have said so much of as to the principal part in my "Saints' Rest," that no more of that must be expected here. Only this subject which is not so usually and fully treated of to the people as it ought, (being one part of our heavenly conversation,) I think meet to speak to more distinctly at this time.

As we are commanded first to "look to Jesus the author and perfecter of our faith," (Heb. xii. 2, 3,) so are we commanded to remember our guides, and to follow their faith, and consider the end of their conversation, Heb. xiii. 7. And "not to be slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises," Heb. vi. 12. To which end we have a cloud of witnesses set before us, in Heb. xi. that next to Jesus whom they followed, we should look to them, and follow them, James v. 10. My brethren, take the prophets for an example—

The reasons of this duty are these.

1. God hath made them our examples two ways: 1. By his graces, making them holy and fit for our imitation. He gave them their gifts, not only for themselves, nor only for that present generation, but for us also, and all that must survive, to the end of the world. As it is said of Abraham's justification, Rom. iv. 23, 24. It was said that faith was imputed to him for righteousness, nor for his sake alone, but for us also to whom it shall be imputed if we believe—So I may say in this case; their faith, their piety, their patience was given them, and is recorded, not for their salvation, or their honour only; but also to further the salvation of their posterity, by encouragement and imitation. If "all things are for our sakes," (2 Cor. iv. 15,) then the graces of God's saints were for our sakes. For the church's edification it is that Christ giveth both offices, gifts, and graces to his ministers, (Eph. iv. 5, 12, 14—16,) yea, and sufferings too, Phil. i. 12, 20; 2 Cor. i. 4, 6. "I endure all things for the elect's sakes," 2 Tim. ii. 10.

2. By commanding us to follow them. For "yourselves know how ye ought to follow us.—To make ourselves an example for you to follow us," 2 Thess. iii. 7, 9. "Be followers together of me, and mark them that so walk, as ye have us for an ensample," Phil. iii. 17. "I beseech you, be ye followers of me," 1 Cor. iv. 16. "Ye became followers of us and of the Lord," 1 Thess. i. 6. So well are both examples consistent.

2. The likeness of other men's cases to ours, is greatly useful to our direction and encouragement. If we are to travel in dangerous ways, we will be glad to hear how others have sped before us; and if we were to deal with a crafty deceiver, we would willingly advise with others that have dealt with him. If we be to learn any trade or artifice, we would learn it of them who with best success have practised it before us. If we are sick of any disease, we are glad to talk with them that have had the same, and have been cured of it; to hear what means they used for their cure. In all such cases reason teacheth us, both to observe how others were affected; whether their case and our's were the same; what course they took; and how they sped; especially if they were persons known to us, and the likeness of their case well known; and if they were such as for wisdom and fidelity we could trust: so is it in this great business of our salvation. We have nothing to do, but what many thousands have done before us; nothing to suffer but what they have suffered; no temptation to resist, but what they have been assaulted with, and overcame, 1 Cor. x. 13; and we want no grace, or help, or comfort, but what they did attain: and the glory which we seek and hope for, they possess. To look to them therefore, must needs be useful to us in this our wilderness state.

3. And as experience is a powerful teacher; so to be the master of other men's experience, and so many, and so wise, and in such various cases, and in so many ages, must needs be very useful to us. We that are born in the last ages of the world, have the benefit of the experience of all the world that have gone before us: therefore is the Scripture written so much historically; that all who are there mentioned, may still be our instructors. Even the first brethren that were born into the world, were so plain a discovery of the nature of sin and grace, and of the difference of the woman's and the serpent's seed, that their history is useful to all generations. And Abel by his faith, and sacrifice, and righteousness, "being dead (by malignant cruelty) yet speaketh," Heb. xi. 4. He that will but soberly look back to all the world's experience, may quickly be resolved, whether wisdom or folly, labour or idleness, godliness or ungodliness, temperance or sensuality, furthering the gospel of Christ, or persecuting it, have sped better at the last, and have proved best to the actors upon full experience.

I shall therefore here give you some directions how you may believingly follow the saints. And first observe that the duty hath these parts, which you must distinctly mind; 1. To take them for your examples under Christ, and so to fix your eyes upon them, and look at them, and mind them as examples must be minded: 2. To improve these examples which you look upon. And that is, 1. For your direction in duty, and for your warning against sin: 2. To our encouragement and consolation.

Direct. 1. Look after them to their end, and consider, 1. Whither they are gone. We see nothing of them after death, but the corpse which we leave

in dust and darkness: but faith can attend their souls to glory, and see where they now are; even with Christ, according to his promise, (John xii. 26; Phil. i. 23; John xvii. 24,) with angels, and with one another, in the heavenly society, the city of God.

2. What they are doing. And faith can see that they are beholding God, and their glorified Redeemer, Matt. v. 8; Heb. xii. 14; 1 John iii. 2. They are loving God with perfect love, 1 Cor. xii.; xiii. 1, 2, &c. They are praising him with perfect alacrity and joy; saying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty," &c. Rev. iv. 8. They are so far minding the state of the world, as to cry, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on the inhabitants of the earth: and they are waiting in white robes, till their fellow-servants also, and their brethren that shall be killed as they were, shall be fulfilled," Rev. vi. 10, 11. They are rejoicing when the enemies of Christ and his church are subdued, Rev. xviii. 20. And they shall judge the malignant angels and the world, 1 Cor. iv. 2, 3. And this seemeth not to be only an approbation of Christ's final judgment: for, 1. Judging is very often put in Scripture for governing; as in the book of the Judges, it is said, such and such a one "judged Israel," that is, ruled them according to the laws of God. 2. And a kingdom and reign is often promised to the saints: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne," Rev. iii. 21. Which must needs signify some participation in power of government, and not only in splendour of glory. And so Christ expoundeth Matt. xix. 28; Luke xxii. 30, "Ye which have followed me, in the regeneration shall sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (And of God it is said, "Thou satest in the thrones judging right," Psal. ix. 4.) It is too jejune and forced an exposition of them that say this is spoken only of the power which the apostles had in their ministration on earth: and as absurd is the other, that it is spoken only of apostles, pastors, and saints, and martyrs in specie, that their successors shall be popes and prelates, and great men in the world, and the saints be uppermost after Constantine's conversion. As if the promise meant only to reward one man, because another suffered for Christ, and God had promised these great things, not to the persons mentioned, but to others that should be their successors; yea, as if that venom then poured into the church, were all the benediction. And though I know not what changes are yet to come before the final judgment, yet the millenaries' opinion, who restrain all this to an earthly temporal reign of some saints for a thousand years, doth seem as unsatisfactory on many accounts. It is most likely therefore that as the wicked (who are now very like them) must be hereafter of the same region and society with the devil and his angels, (Matt. xxv. 41,) and as the godly shall be like and equal to the angels, (Luke xx. 36,) so we shall be of the same society with the angels; and consequently shall have their employment. And as the angels have a ministerial stewardship or superintendency over men and their affairs, (as many Scriptures fully show), so also shall the saints: and it is not likely that this is wholly deferred till the resurrection; but as they have a glory before that with Christ and his angels, so they have now their part in this superintendency before; though both will be greater at the resurrection. If any say, what use will there be of our superiority, after the world is destroyed? I answer, 1. The apostle Peter plainly telleth us (though some would force his words into the dark) "that we, according to his promise, expect a new heaven and a new earth, in which dwelleth righteousness." And the creation "groaneth to be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God," Rom. viii. 21. And the "heavens must contain Christ, till the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets, since the world began," Acts iii. 21. 2. And he that said, "the saints shall judge the angels," seemeth to intimate, that the devils with the wicked, will be in a state of subjection or servitude to them hereafter. Certain it is that Michael and his angels shall be the conquerors of the dragon and his angels, Rev. xii. 7, 9. And that the serpent's head shall be bruised by all the woman's seed, though chiefly by the Captain of our salvation. But this shall now suffice concerning their employment.

3. Behold also by faith what the departed saints are now enjoying. And what is said of their place and work will tell you that. They enjoy the sight of their glorified Head, John xvii. 24. They are "with him in paradise," and therefore also enjoy the sight of the "glory of God: being absent from the body they are present with the Lord," 2 Cor. v. 8. They see not as in a glass, as here they did, but with open face. They enjoy the pleasures of a more perfect knowledge of God and all his wondrous works, than this world affords. They are happy in their works, in the perfect love and praises of God; and they are filled with the pleasures of his love to them. This is their fruition.

4. Let faith also behold what evils they are delivered from. 1. From a heavy, drossy body, which since the fall hath been an enemy, a prison, and fetters to the soul: and therefore they here groaned to be better clothed, 2 Cor. v. 4, 5; Rom. viii. 21. 2. From the world's temptations. 3. From wicked men's malice and persecutions. 4. From sickness, pain, necessities, labours, weariness, and all the troublesome effects of sin. 5. From all troublesome passions, desires, anger, discontent, disappointments, griefs, and cares, and fears of evil. 6. Specially from the fears of hell, and the doubts of their own sincerity and salvation; and from the desertions of God, and the terrible sense of his displeasure. 7. From the troubles and errors of ignorance, and all our natural imperfection. 8. From the fears of death, which now is more painful than death itself. 9. From the suggestions of Satan, and his malicious vexing, disquieting temptations, and from his flattering allurements, which are much worse. 10. From the company, and the tempting or grieving examples, of ungodly men. 11. From all sin itself, and all our moral imperfections and defects. 12. And finally from all danger, and fear of ever losing the felicity they possess. These are the immunities of the blessed.

Direct. 2. When faith hath seen the saints in glory, look back and think next what they were lately here on earth; that it may help you to compare your state and theirs. And here you will see, 1. That they were lately in flesh, as we now are. They had bodies as drossy, as vile, as frail, as burdensome as ours are. It cost them as dear (not as it doth the sensual, but) as it doth the temperate person now to keep them up awhile for the service to which they were appointed. 2. They had pains and sicknesses as we have. The souls in heaven have escaped thither from bodies which have lain as long tormented with the stone, with strangurics, colics, gripes, convulsions, consumptions, fevers, and other the most tedious, painful, and loathsome diseases, as sober men on earth now feel. 3. Satan was as malicious to them, as he is to us; and to many of them as troublesome: he haunted them with as

ugly temptations, to the greatest sins, to unbelief, and pride, and despair, and self-murder, and horrid blasphemy, as he doth any of us. (Yea, he did so by Christ himself, Matt. iv.) 4. They met with as many allurements to worldliness, sensuality, pride, and lust, in the world's deceiving baits, and flatteries, as now we do; and were fain to proceed every step towards heaven by conflict and conquest, as we must do. 5. They were in as many wants and straits, in as poor, and low, and despised a state, as we are now: they were tempted to cares, and murmurings, and discontents, through their wants and crosses, as well as we. 6. They have been in dangers, and in fears, and many a time at the brink of death, before it came; and put to cry to God for deliverance in the terrors and anguish of their hearts. Their flesh, and heart, and friends have failed them, and all the creatures cast them off. 7. They have gone through far greater persecutions for the sake of Christ and righteousness, than ever we did: "So persecuted they the prophets before you," Matt. v. 11, 12. Which of the prophets did not your fathers kill and persecute? even of them for whom their posterity erected monuments? Matt. xxiii. 36—38. We have not resisted unto blood, as many of them did, Heb. xi. The same and greater afflictions which we have undergone, were accomplished on our brethren in this world, 1 Pet. v. 9. We go through the same conflict as they did, Phil. i. 30. We are no more falsely nor odiously slandered in any of our sufferings than they were, Matt. v. 11, 12. 8. They were men of like passions as we are; for so James saith even of Elias, that was carried to heaven without our kind of death. They had their ignorances, uncertainties, doubts, mistakes; their dark thoughts of God, and that world where they now are. Many of them knew as little of it, till they saw it, as we do now. Many a fearful, trembling hour, many a thought that God had forsaken them, and that the day of grace was past, have many of them had as well as we. 9. Yea, they were imperfect in all their graces; they had an imperfect faith, an imperfect hope, an imperfect love to God and man, and many an hour in such groans as ours now are, Oh when shall we be saved from our darkness and unbelief? When shall we better love the Lord? 10. They had their actual sins also; (though none that were regnant after conversion;) their obedience was imperfect as ours now is. Many of their faults and falls are left on record for our warning. There is not one human soul in heaven besides our Saviour's, that was not once a sinner: they all came thither by a Redeemer as we must do. They had their too great selfishness, Phil. ii. 21. They had their pusillanimity and fears of men (as Peter and the apostles). They had their sinful controversies, as Paul and Barnabas; and sinful separations in compliance with the censorious, as Peter and Barnabas had, Gal. ii. 16, 17. They had their carnal sidings, factions, and divisions in the church, 1 Cor. i. iii. Many a time have they been put to groan, "O wretched man! who shall deliver me from this body of death?" Rom. vii. &c. 11. They had as difficult duties to go through as any of us: they were put upon as many tears and troubles, watchings and travels, fastings and self-denial, as the most laborious and suffering christians now. 12. They had as long delays of the accomplishment of their desires, as any of us. 13. And lastly, they passed through death itself, as we must do. They lay gasping on their beds of languishing, and death broke in upon every part, and they underwent that separation of soul and body, as we must do: their flesh was turned to rottenness and dust, and laid out of the sight of man in darkness, and remaineth to this day, as common earth.

All this the saints in heaven have undergone. This was their case awhile ago, who are now in glory. And this was not only the case of some few, but of thousands and millions, and that in the most of these particulars, even of all that are gone before us unto blessedness. It is not we that are tempted first, that are persecuted or afflicted first, that have sinned first, that must die first; but all this host broke the ice, and are safely past through this Red sea, and are now triumphing in felicity with their Saviour.

Direct. 3. Let faith next look back, and see by what way these saints have come to this felicity; I mean, by what means they did overcome, and win the crown. And briefly, you will find, 1. That they all came to heaven by the mediation, the sacrifice, the meritorious righteousness of a Redeemer, Jesus Christ (either as promised, or as incarnate); none of them were justified by the works of the law, or the covenant of innoceney.

2. That their common way was by faith, repentance, love, and obedience: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Christ," Titus iii. 5. Even by the triple image of the divine perfections, power, love, and wisdom, 2 Tim. i. 7. They lived soberly, righteously, and godly in the world, and were zealous of good works, looking for the blessed hope which they have attained, Titus ii. 14, 15. Knowing that repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, are the sum of saving doctrine and duty, Acts xx. 21. And that to fear God and keep his commandments, is the whole duty of man, Eccles. xii. 13. And that "the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned," 1 Tim. i. 5. And that love is the fulfilling of the law.

3. They studied the word of God, or such means of knowing him as God afforded them, in order to the attaining and maintaining of these graces, Psal. i. 2; and sought the Lord with all their hearts, while he might be found, and called upon him while he was near, Isa. lv. 6, 7; and did not presumptuously neglect God's helps, and despise his word, while they trusted for his mercy.

4. They lived in a continual conflict against the temptations of the devil, the world, and the flesh, and in the main did conquer as well as strive. They made it their work to mortify those fleshly lusts, which others make it their interest and work to please, Gal. v. 17, 21, 22; vi. 14.

5. They suffered afflictions and persecutions patiently; and being reviled, they did not revile: they "loved their enemies, and blessed those that cursed them, and prayed for those that despitefully used and persecuted them," Matt. v. 44, 45; 1 Cor. iv. 11—13; 2 Cor. i. 6, 7; Heb. xi. They would not accept of deliverance from imprisonment, torments, and death, upon sinning terms.

6. They endured to the end, and did not fall off and forsake the covenant of their God, Rev. ii. iii.

7. Lastly, they did all this by the motive of their hopes of heaven, and by a confidence in the promises of it, and in a heavenly mind and conversation, as knowing that they did not labour or suffer in vain, 1 Cor. xv. 58; 2 Cor. iv. 17; 1 Tim. iv. 10; Rom. viii. 18; Matt. v. 11; 2 Thess. i. 6, 7; Heb. xii. 2.

This was the way by which the saints have gone to heaven; the only true, successful way.

Direct. 4. Consider next what helps and means

God gave them for this work, and compare our own with them, and see whether ours be not as great.

1. We have the same natural capacity as they: we are intellectual, free agents, made for another world, and capable of all that they attained. There is no difference in our natural faculties.

2. We have the same God to show us mercy, 1 Cor. xii. 5. There are divers operations, but the same God, Ephes. iv. 4, 5. "There is one God, one Lord, &c. even the Lord over all, good to all that call upon him," Rom. x. 12. The same mercy which called them, and waited on them, calleth us, even a God who hath "no respect of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him," Acts x. 37. Though he be a free benefactor, he is a righteous Judge, and he is good to all, and the Father of every member of his Son.

3. They had the same Saviour as we have; the same sacrifice for their sins; the same Teacher, and the same example; the same Intercessor with the Father: for though "there be divers administrations, there is the same Lord," 1 Cor. xii. 5; Ephes. iv. 4. "For other foundation can no man lay, than Him who is the chief corner-stone," 1 Cor. iii. 11. "They all did eat of the same spiritual meat, and drank of the same rock as we do, which is Christ," 1 Cor. x. 3, 4. It was the reproach of Christ which Moses in Egypt esteemed better than their treasures, Heb. xi. 26. The same Physician of souls who hath us in cure, did cure all them: the same Captain who is conducting us to salvation, is he that saved them. The same Prince of the covenant, and Lord of life, who conquered death and all their enemies, hath conquered them for us, and is preparing us for life with them. They had no greater or better High Priest and Mediator with God than we have.

4. They had the same rule to walk by, and the same way to go, as all we have, Gal. i. 7, 8; vi. 16; Phil. iii. 14, 15. The same gospel and word of God in the main, though under various promulgations and administrations. Those before the flood were under the covenant of the promised Seed, made universally to mankind in Adam. Those after the flood were under the same covenant renewed universally to mankind in Noah. The Israelites were under the same covenant renewed to them especially in Abraham, with special additions; and after under that covenant seconded with the law which was given to Moses: and all christians after Christ's resurrection are under the perfected covenant of grace, and have the same word of salvation for their rule; even the "gospel of Christ, which is the power of God, to the salvation of every one that believeth," Rom. i. 16.

5. They had but the same promises in this covenant to believe, and to assure them of the salvation which they now possess. They had no other character from God to show, nor any but this universal act of oblivion to trust to for the pardon of all their sins, which we have to trust to for the pardon of ours, John iii. 16, 18; Mark xvi. 16. The promise which was made to the Jews, and to their children, was made also to them "that are afar off, and to as many as the Lord shall call," Acts ii. 39. "For the promise that he should be heir of the world, was not to Abraham or his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith," Rom. iv. 13. "And therefore it was of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to that which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the Father of us all," ver. 16. That it might appear that God justified not Abraham for any peculiar carnal privilege, but as a believer, which is a reason common to him with all believers. "To whom also their faith shall be imputed for righteousness," ver. 24. "Godliness still is profitable to all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come," 1 Tim. iv. 8.

Yea, what difference there is in both these forementioned respects, it is to our advantage. We have the most perfected rule, and the fullest promises; and we have many promises fulfilled to us, which were not fulfilled to them in their days, Heb. xi. 40. And we are near the final accomplishment of all the promises.

6. They had the same motives to faith, and patience, and godliness as we have. They could have no greater happiness offered them, nor any greater punishment threatened to drive them from sin by fear. They could have no higher ends than ours; nor any nobler reasons to be religious. The same reasons and ends did bring them through all temptations and difficulties, to everlasting life, which we have also to satisfy us, and to carry us on, 2 Tim. iv. 8.

7. The same Spirit did illuminate, sanctify, and quicken them, which is illuminating, sanctifying, and quickening us. All the most excellent and heavenly endowments and workings of their souls, were wrought by the same operator who is still at work in all the saints, Rom. viii. 9. "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit," 1 Cor. xii. 4. "We have the same Spirit of faith," 2 Cor. iv. 13. All that are sons have the same Spirit of the Son, even the Spirit of adoption, (Gal. iv. 6; Rom. viii. 16, 26,) which is the Spirit of power, of love, and of a sound mind, 2 Tim. i. 7. We have the same almighty power within us, to destroy our sins, to raise up our sluggish hearts to God, to keep us in his love, to overcome the flesh, which did all these excellent works in them. We are sealed with the same seal, and are known by the same mark, (1 John iii. 24,) and are actuated by the same heavenly principle as they were.

8. We are members of the same universal church, which is the body of Christ; for there is but one body, whatever diversity of the members there be, Ephes. iv. 4—7, 12; 1 Cor. xii. We are members of the same city and family of God, Ephes. ii. 19. We are in the same ship which conveyed them to the haven. We are disciples in the same school, where they learned the way to life eternal. We are workmen in the same vineyard, where they procured their reward.

9. They had the same work to do as we have; the same God to love and serve; the same Christ to believe in; the same Spirit to obey; the same things to believe (in the main); the same things to desire and pray for; the same things to love, and the same to hate; the same things (in the main) which are sin to us, were sin to them; and the same life of holiness, temperance, and righteousness, which is commanded us, was commanded them. They had the same temptations to resist, and the same fleshly mind to overcome, and the same senses, and appetites, and passions to rule; the same enemies to overcome; and the same or greater sufferings to bear, as is said before.

10. They had but the same means and helps as we have (except some prophets, and apostles, and extraordinary persons in one age). And what "they received of the Lord, they have delivered unto us," 1 Cor. xi. 23. We have the same gospel to teach us; the same sacraments to initiate and confirm us; the same pastors and teachers, for office, to instruct us, Ephes. iv. 12—14, 16; Matt. xxviii. 20. Fasting, and prayer, and thanksgiving, and church com-

munion, and mutual exhortation, which are our helps and means, were theirs.

11. The same method of providenee which earried them on, is still on foot for all the saints; Psal. cxlv. 9, 18; lxxxvi. 5. He broke them, and bound them up, he cast them down, and raised them, as he doth us now. He made them contrite, and then did comfort them. He led them through as rude a wilderness, and they had as many wild beasts to assault them, and as many dangers round about them, as we have. They had seasons of adversity, and seasons of prosperity; their stormy and their sunshine days; their troubles, which quickened their cries to God, and the gracious answer of those cries; and were led to heaven in the same course of providence as we are.

12. And, to conclude, the same heaven is prepared for us, and offered, yea given to us, which they possess. It is ours in right, though our title be not absolutely perfect, till we have finally persevered and overcome. We are heirs of God, and co-heirs with Christ, having his seal and earnest; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be glorified with him, Rom. xv. 16, 17. The kingdom is prepared for all them that love him. Christ prayed for all that the Father had given him, and for all that should believe by his word, (John xvii. 2, 20, 27,) even that they may have eternal life, and may be with him where he is, to see his glory. Whosoever believeth shall not perish, but have everlasting life, John iii. 16.

In all this you may see, how like their condition in this world was unto ours, and that our way is the same which all those have gone, that are now past all these snares and dangers, sins and miseries, in the presence of their Lord.

Direct. 5. When you have made these comparisons, think next what an excellent benefit it will be to you, to look thus believingly and frequently to the saints, that are gone before you into glory. All these unspeakable benefits will follow it.

1. It will much quicken and confirm our faith. As we do the more easily trust the boat, and boatman, when we see many thousand passengers safely landed by him; and we easily trust the physician, when we see many thousands cured by him, who were once in our case; so it will greatly satisfy the soul against the suspicions and fears of unbelief, when faith seeth all the glorified saints, that are actually saved by Christ already, and have obtained all that we believe and seek. Methinks I hear Enoch, Joshua, Abraham, Peter, Paul, John, Cyprian, Macarius, Augustine, Melancthon, Calvin, Zanchius, Rogers, Bradford, Hooper, Jewel, Grindal, Usher, Hildersham, Ames, Dod, Baincs, Bolton, Gataker, with thousands such, as men standing on the further side of the river, and ealling to us that must come after them, Fear not the depths, or storms, or streams; trust boldly that vessel, and that faithful pilot; we trusted him, and none of us have miscarried, but all of us are here landed safe. We were once in storms, and doubts, and fears, as you now are; but it is our diffidence, and not our confidence, which proved our infirmity and shame. Who would not boldly follow such a multitude of excellent persons, who have sped so well?

2. It will also much confirm our hope, (that is, our glad expectation of the crown,) when our apprehensions of it grow dull and slack, and our fears do grow upon us, and we are ready to question whether ever such a happiness will be our lot; the sight of these that are now triumphing in the actual possession, will banish despair, and much revive us. We cannot but think, they were once as low and bad as I, and had as many difficulties to overcome. And why may not I then be as holy and as happy as they?

3. Such a sight will greatly quicken our desires, to attain their happiness, and to go their way. As when worldlings see the grandeur, and honours, and power of great men, (as they are yet called,) it maketh them think, how brave a life is this! and as the sensual, when they see their companions in the tavern, or gaming-house, or play-house, or the merry fool-house, as Solomon accounteth it, (Eccles. vii. 4,) do long to be with them, and to partake of their beloved pleasure: so when by faith we see the departed saints in glory, and think where our old acquaintance are, and the multitudes of wise and holy souls, that are gone before, it will greatly stir up our sluggish desires, and make us long for the same felicity, and to be as near to God as they are.

4. And it will do much to direct us in the way: for we must follow them as they followed Christ. As the history of the wars of Alexander, Cæsar, Tamerlane, &c. will teach men how to fight for temporal, tyrannical domination; so the history of the saints does teach us how to fight against spiritual wickednesses and powers, and how to take the prospering way. It is easy there to find, whether laziness or labour, whether sensuality or spirituality, hath always been the way to heaven. Whether saints were gluttons, drunkards, whoremongers, riotous, licentious, and proud; or temperate, chaste, mortified, and humble. Whether the saints were the scorners, or the scorned; the oppressors, or the oppressed; the persecutors, or the persecuted; the burdens, or the blessings of the times they lived in. When the world is divided about matters of religion, and every party hath a several way, for the unity, and the reformation, and the communion of the churches, and the right government, discipline, and worshipping of God; how easy and safe is it (in the main, and in all things of necessity) to look back and see which way it was that Peter and Paul did go to heaven by; and what terms they were, on which their union, communion, government, discipline, and worship were performed.

5. The sight of blessed souls by faith, will also increase the resolution and fortitude of the mind. Faintness and pusillanimity seize upon us when we look only on the difficulties and dangers; but when we see the thousands that have overcome them all, by the same means which we are called to use, it steeleth our courage, and maketh us resolve to break through all: when we think only how mortal our diseases are, our hearts do fail us; but when all that were cured of the very same, do call to us, and say, Never fear; there is no disease too hard for your Physician; he hath cured us of the very same, and cureth all that ever trust him, and use his remedies; this will imbolden a fainting mind. Therefore in the forecited text, (Heb. vi. 12,) it is said, "Be not slothful, (which there meaneth, such as faint with despondency, despair, or fears,) but followers of them who by faith and patience inherit the promises." When we look on the saints' tribulations for the faith, we are apt to faint, (as some do that stand by another that is under the surgeon's hands,) Eph. iii. 13. But when we see them in triumph, it cureth our cowardice (and it is they only that labour and faint not, that are crowned, and that reap in due season, &c. (Rev. ii. 3; Gal. vi. 9,) that is, who faint not into cessation, or so as to be overcome). Do you think when the Israelites passed through the Red sea, that the leaders had not the greatest trial? and that it was not an exceeding increase of their courage, who came after in the rear, when they saw

most of their brethren safely passed through? Look believingly upon the souls in heaven, and you will do or suffer any thing to follow them.

6. And it will greatly provoke us to diligence in well-doing. Look up to your brethren, and you will mend your pace. If a horse be going towards his pasture, he will go cheerfully; especially when he sees his companions there. It will make us pray hard, and meditate studiously, and work laboriously, and watch diligently, that we may be with Christ, where our brethren are, and receive the end of our faith and labour.

7. And to see our brethren in heaven before us, will greatly help us to suffer for Christ, and to be patient in any tribulation which befalleth us. When we see them in glory, we shall scarce stay to complain of the foulness or narrowness of the way; but look before us, and go on through all. Or if the flesh do repine, and our hearts begin to fail us, it will make us "lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and make strait paths for our feet," (Heb. xii. 12, 13,) and "to gird up the loins of our minds, and be sober, and hope to the end," 1 Pet. i. 13. When we look forward to the end of former sufferers, it will cause us to possess our souls in patience, and to let it have its perfect work.

8. It will much overcome the fears of death. It is no small abatement of them that Cicero and such honest heathens had, to think of the thousands of their worthiest ancestors, and that they were to go the common way of all mankind: but how much more may it encourage a believer, to think that he is not only to go the way of all the world, through the gate of mortality, but the way also which all God's saints have gone (save Enoch and Elias) who are now in heaven! Thus died all the prophets, and the holy men of God, yea, Jesus Christ himself, before us; that death might be conquered when it seemed to have conquered, Heb. ii. 14.

9. It will do much to raise us from hypocritical reserves, and temporizings, and from lukewarmness, and resting in low degrees. When our conversation is with the holy ones above, we shall have upon our minds an ambition to attain to their degrees; and to do God's will on earth, as it is done in heaven. It will much incline us to the highest and noblest sort of duty, which the spirits of the just made perfect do perform. He that converseth only with his own sad, tempted, sinful heart, and with tempted, faulty, mourning christians, may learn to confess, and mourn, and weep, and pray: but he that also converseth with glorified spirits, will be so rapt up with their heavenly melody, that he will learn and long to love God more fervently, to praise him more chearfully, and to give him thanks more abundantly for his mercies. Heavenly work is learnt by a heavenly mind, in the use of a heavenly conversation.

10. And to look much at our brethren that are now in glory, will also fill our lives with pleasure, and make our religion our continual joy; and will help us to a foretaste of heaven on earth: for we shall as it were take ourselves to be almost with them; and their melodies will be our delight; and love to them will make their joys to be our own. And though it is the sight of God and our Mediator by faith, which must be our chiefest hope and joy; yet while we are here men in flesh, yea, more when we have laid by flesh and blood, the presence of all the blessed spirits, and heavenly host, will be a great though subordinate part of our heavenly felicity and delight.

Direct. 6. When you have gone thus far, consider what obligations lie upon you to converse by faith with your brethren in heaven, and to look up frequently to their state and work.

1. Your necessary love to God requireth it: for as your love to him must be showed by your loving his image in your brethren; so it requireth you to love them most that are likest God; or else you love them not for his likeness. And it requireth you to love them most whom God loveth most; and that is those that are likest him, and nearest him. And he that loveth God in his creatures, and loveth any one truly for God, must love the angels and perfected spirits best, because they love him best, and are nearest him, and likest to him, and are also most beloved by him.

2. The common nature of love and humanity requireth it; for it requireth us to love that best which is best (as is said): but the blessed ones in heaven are better than any here on earth; and therefore should be better loved.

3. The nature of our love to the saints requireth it: for if we love them as saints and godly, we shall love those most that are most holy; and that is, the blessed ones above. And if we love them most, we shall certainly mind them, and converse with them by faith, and not be voluntary strangers to them.

4. It is part of that heavenly conversation, which is commended to us, Phil. iii. 20, 21. When it is said, that our "conversation is in heaven," it signifieth that our burgeship is there, and our interest and great concerns are there, and our dwelling is there, and our trading and thriving business is there, and for it; and our friends and fellow-citizens, and those that we daily trade and converse with, in love and familiarity, are there; even as our God, and our Head, and our inheritance are there. He never knew a heavenly conversation, that pretending there to know God alone, hath no converse with his holy ones that attend him; and doth not live as a member of their society in the city of God; that doth not with some delight behold their holiness, unity, and order, &c.

5. The honouring of God and our Redeemer doth require it (that we daily converse with the saints in heaven): because it is in them that God is seen, in the greatest glory of his love; and it is in them that the power, and efficacy, and love of our dear Redeemer most appeareth. You judge now of the father by his children, and of the physician by his patients, and of the builder by the house, and of the captain by his victories. And if you see no better children of God, than such childish, crying, feeble, froward, diseased, burdensome ones as we are, you will rob him of the chief of this his honour. And if you look at none of the patients of our Saviour, but such lame and languid, pained, groaning, diseased, half-cured ones as we, you will rob him of the glory of his skill and cures. And if you look but to such an imperfect broken fabric, as the church on earth, you will dishonour the builder. And if you look to no other victories of Christ and his Spirit, but what is made in this confused, dark, and bedlam world, you will be tempted to dishonour his conduct and his conquests. But if you will look to his children in heaven, who are perfected in his love and likeness, and to Christ's patients which are there perfectly cured, and to his building in the heavenly unity and glory, and to all his victories as there complete, then you will give him the glory which is his due; Rev. xxi.; xxii.; 2 Thess. i. 10—12.

6. So also you will dishonour religion, and the church, if you converse not with the saints above. For the reasons last given: for you will judge of the church, and of religion, by such imperfect things

as here you see, where men turn religion to the service of their worldly interests and ends, and fight for ambition, faction, tyranny, usurpation, and worldly lusts, under the sacred names of religion and the church; and for the pretended love of Christ, and one another, do tear the church into shreds, and worry, and hunt, and devour one another. You will be tempted to be infidels, if you do not here converse with the sincere, humble, holy, charitable christians, and look up to heaven to perfect souls: and then you will see a church that is truly amiable, holy, unanimous, and glorious in perfect love.

7. If you look not up to those in heaven, you will quite misunderstand the providences of God, in the prosperity of the wicked, and the sufferings of the saints, and the changes that are usually made on earth. You will begin to think, that sin is safe, and the wicked are not so miserable as they are, nor godly diligence so profitable a thing; you will not know the reasons of providence, unless you can see unto the end: and the ultimate end is not on earth. But go into the sanctuary, and take the prospective of the promise, and look to the blessed souls with Christ, and all the riddle will be expounded to you, and you will be reconciled to all the providences of God: you are strange to truth, if you are strange to the triumphing saints in heaven.

8. The progressive nature of your faith and godliness requireth it. You are travelling to heaven, where the blessed are, and are nearer to them than when you first believed: and the nearer you are to them, the more you should mind them, and by faith and love be familiar with them: and when you are almost at home, you should be even ready to embrace your friends at the meeting.

9. Your relation to the blessed spirits doth require it; and your christian and ingenuous disposition towards them. 1. Are they not such as were lately near you in the flesh; some of them your dearest companions and friends; and should you causelessly forget them? 2. Are they not now your friends who love you better than they could do on earth? Doubtless their knowledge and memory is not grown less, to forget you, if once they knew you; but they are like to know much more: and their goodness being increased, their love is increased, and not diminished. 3. And you belong to the same society with them; even to the body or church of Christ, whose nobler part above, and inferior part on earth, do make up the whole. Is it not expressly said, Heb. xii. 22, 23, that "we are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, and to the general assembly, and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven?" (that is, to those which, as the first-born, are most noble and possessed of the heavenly inheritance, and are there entered inhabitants already:) "and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant," &c. And what is it to come to them, but to come or be joined to that society, of which they are the nobler part? Will you be fellow-citizens with them, and have no communion with them, nor seriously remember them? How can you remember God himself, and not remember those that are his courtiers, and nearer to him than you are? And how can you think of Christ, and not think of his body? Or how can you think of his body, and forget the most excellent and honourable parts? Or how can you remember yourselves, and forget your chiefest friends and lovers?

10. The very nature of the life of faith requireth us to look much to the departed saints. The life of faith consisteth in our conversing with the things unseen; as the life of sight or sense is our conversing with things seen. If you love and think on none of the saints, but those that are within your sight, you live (so far) but as by sight: though faith live not upon saints properly, but on God, and our Redeemer; yet it liveth and converseth with the saints: if it work aright, it will as it were set you among them, and make you live on earth as if you heard their songs of praise, and saw their thrones of glory.

11. The present necessities of your condition in this world, do require you to look much to the saints above (as is before showed in the benefits recited). We live here among such persons and things as are objects of continual sorrow to us: and have we not need of some more comfortable company? If you had nothing at home but chiding, and discontent, and poverty, you would be willing of so much recreation, as to be invited to feast sometimes, where there is plenty, pleasure, and content. If you lived among groaning, sick, or melancholy persons in an hospital, you would be glad sometimes of merrier company, a little to refresh your minds. Alas! what a deal of sin do we daily see or hear of! and what a deal of sorrow is round about us! What are our news-books filled with, or the daily reports which come to our ears, but sin and sorrow, vanity and vexation? What is the employment of most of the world? What is it that court and country, city, and all societies ring of, but vanity and vexation, sin and sorrow? And is not a walk in heaven with better company a pleasure desirable in such a case? What grief must needs dwell on the minds of sober catholic christians, to see the church on earth so torn, so worried, so reproached as it is throughout the earth; so torn in pieces by its zealous, ignorant, self-conceited pastors and members; so worried by its open and secret enemies; even by the usurping, tyrannizing "wolves in sheep's clothing, who spare not the flock," Matt. vii. 15; x. 16; Acts xx. 29; so reproached by the world of infidels and heathens, who fly from it as from an infected city, and say, christians are drunkards, and deceivers, and liars; they are all in pieces among themselves; they revile and persecute one another; we will therefore be no christians. How sad is it to see the one part of the world professing christianity, to make it odious by their wickedness, and their divisions; and the rest of the world abhorring it, because these have made it seem odious to them! How sad is it to hear all christians speak of love and concord, unity and peace, while few of them know the way of peace, or how to hold their own hands from tearing the church into more pieces, while these peaceable words are in their mouths! to see the pastors and people, as if it were for unity and peace, contriving the ruin of all that are not of their party and way, and studying how to extirpate one another; and multiplying snares and stumblingblocks, as necessary means to heal the church! How sad is it to see so great a faction as the Roman kingdom, (for it is more properly a kingdom than a church,) to lay the necessary unity and communion of all the churches upon so many forgeries of their own; upon the supposed certainty of the falseness of all men's senses, (in the point of transubstantiation,) and upon the subjection of the church to a universal usurper; and to keep up ignorance, lest knowledge (by reading the translated Scriptures, and such books as do detect their frauds) should mar their markets, and spoil their trade! To see their prelates take their own domination, wealth, and greatness, to be really the prosperity of the church, and the interest of the gospel and kingdom

of Christ; and to promote the gospel by silencing or prohibiting the most able, zealous, faithful preachers of it; and to go with a drawn sword among the people, and say, Love us, or we will kill you: love Christ and us, or the inquisition and rack shall teach you love! To see them take the terrifying of men by corporal penalties, to be their chiefest work, and the way of love to be but such popularity as destroyeth the church. Will not now and then a walk in heaven, be a great refreshing to the mind that hath been long haunted with such hideous and ugly spectres as all these? Will not some converse with the most wise, and holy, and peaceable society, whose life is love, be a great recreation to your minds, when such sights as these have made them sad?

Moreover, you have many burdens of your own to bear; your own ignorance, your own temptations, your passions, your wants, and worst of all, the relics of your sin, which you cannot bear with that hope and support which is needful to you, without oft looking to the happiness of those that have overcome all these, and are now at rest.

And you have many excellent duties to perform, which will not be so well done without looking oft on such a copy. Yea, you have the fears of death to overcome, which will not be so easily done, as by looking to all the world of souls, that have already gone that way before you.

Yea, in your converse with God himself, though you have one only sufficient Mediator, you will cast yourselves upon great disadvantages, if your thoughts leave out the blessed society of saints and angels, who are nearest to him: you cast away your stepping-stones, or stairs of ascent, and you will but tempt yourselves to look at God, as through the great interposing gulf; and hinder the needful familiarity of your thoughts above. Neglect not then a help so needful to you in your present state.

12. Lastly, The remembrance and observation of the heavenly inhabitants, is the way that is commended and commanded to all believers, and that as part of their ordinary duty, in their prayers to God. He hath not only minded us that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are still living, to prove the resurrection, (Matt. xii. 27,) but hath also comforted the expectants of heaven, by describing the joy of Lazarus as in Abraham's bosom, (Luke xvi. 22, 23,) and introduced Abraham as pleading Lazarus's cause, ver. 25, 26; and hath made it a part of the comfortable description of his kingdom, that we shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in it, Matt. viii. 11. And when he would appear transfigured in a glimpse of his glory, to Peter, James, and John, he would not do it alone, but with Moses and Elias talking with him, Matt. xvii. And the comfort which Paul giveth to the suffering Thessalonians is, "rest with us," 2 Thess. i. 7; not only rest with Christ, but with his servants. And when he describeth the glory of Christ's appearing, it is that "He shall come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that do believe," ver. 10; as himself describeth his appearing as with his glorious angels, Matt. xxv. 31. "All the holy angels with him." Whether it be all the blessed spirits of the higher worlds, or only all those of them who were deputed to the service of the church on earth, (Matt. xviii. 10,) and so were made angels to man, I pass over. And Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints," &c. Jude 14. Many other scriptures tell us, that we must not leave out the saints and angels, when we look towards heaven by faith, and when we converse and walk above.

But this is but as on the by: that which I intend for your special observation is, the third petition of the Lord's prayer, where the annexed clause (which seemeth to refer to all the three first petitions) doth set the heavenly church before us, as the pattern of that obedience to the will of God, which both we and all the world must imitate, and pray to God that we may imitate: "Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven." Here Christ requireth all christians in prayer to look up to the heavenly society, and to consider how they do the will of God, and to make it their pattern; and in their daily prayers, as men that long for their celestial perfection, to pray that they may become their imitators: even as the scholars in the lowest form in the school, must look at those in the highest form, and desire and endeavour to attain to their degree. You see then that this is a commanded ordinary duty.

Direct. 7. Consider next, wherein it is that your converse with angels, and the perfected spirits of the just, consisteth; that you may neither, by your mistake, neglect it nor carry it too far.

I. Negatively: 1. It is not a deifying them, as the heathens did their heroes and their *divi:* they are still but God's ministers, and must have nothing ascribed to them of the divine prerogative.

2. Nor doth it consist in building temples and altars to their honour, which savoureth at least of a compliance with idolatry.

3. Nor doth it at all consist in praying to them. 1. Because, as we know that they are not omnipresent or omniscient; so, 2. We know not at all when they are present, and when they do hear us, and when not. 3. Nor do we know which of them it is that is at any time present with us. 4. Nor have we any precept, precedent, promise, or other encouragement to such prayers in God's word, but rather much to keep us from it.

4. Nor yet is it in desiring them to pray for us: for that which is their duty they better know than we; and it is little that we know of their capacities or opportunities. And we have no word of God neither to encourage us to this.

5. Nor doth it consist in choosing any one of them above the rest for our guardian and protector; and so committing ourselves to their care. For we have no reason to be so presumptuous, as to think that we have the choice of our own protector; or that it is a matter at all referred to us; or that they will undertake it ever the more for our choice.

6. Nor yet may we pretend to know what particular saint or angel is deputed of God to our protection: for there is not the least discovery of it in nature or in the word of God; and he that pretendeth extraordinary revelation of it, must be sure to prove it.

7. Nor may we pray for them, as if they were in purgatory, or in any misery or danger which did need our prayers for them: for we have neither reason to believe the thing, nor any precept or encouragement to the work.

And as all these seven are unlawful things; so these also that follow must be meddled with very tenderly and cautelously.

1. Our praises of them must be sober and wary, and such as are in a plain tendency to the praises of God and godliness, lest before we are aware, we kindle superstition in the minds of the auditors. Praise them we may; but with a care of the manner, measure, and consequence, and with a due respect to the praise of God.

2. Our prayers for the resurrection of their bodies, and their solemn justification at the day of judgment, though lawful in itself, yet must be done with very great caution. And it is fitter that we pray together

in general for the resurrection of all the members of Christ, both those that are dead, and those that will be, than to fix upon the dead distinctly; because as we have no precept or example for it in the Scriptures, so the minds of the hearers (if it be public) may easily abuse our example to error and excess.

3. Our thankfulness to them for their love and benefits, must be very cautelously expressed: not by a verbal thanksgiving to them, of whom we are uncertain when they hear us; nor yet in any such language as tendeth to encroach upon the honour of our great Benefactor; nor to acknowledge any more as from them, than as the ministers of Christ.

4. And in our acknowledgments of their general prayers for the church, we must take heed of feigning them to be more particular than we can prove that they are.

5. And we must take heed of all such rhetorical prosopopœias as tend to delude the hearers or the readers; as if we would draw them to believe the presence and audience of those spirits which we intend not to express.

6. And our honouring of the memory of their martyrdom or holiness must be so cautelous, that it tend not to idolatry or superstition: it is lawful in itself to keep the relics of a saint or a friend, and to keep a solemn, thankful memorial of God's mercy to his church, in her most excellent helpers and successfullest instruments of her good; but in a time when these are commonly abused to superstition, the consequence may make that evil, which in other circumstances might be good. When the primitive pastors led their people, sometimes to the places where their neighbours suffered martyrdom for Christ, and there praised God for their praised constancy, to encourage the people, and engage themselves to be true to Christ, and die as constantly as others did; this then had good effects; and if it had been used more cautelously, had been laudable: but they did not foresee the great inconveniences of relics, pilgrimages, prayers to saints, &c. which in after-ages it introduced: and now, it must be with very great caution indeed, if we will imitate them.

7. To pray to God to hear their general prayers for the church, (such as those mentioned Rev. vi. 9, 10,) doth intimate no false doctrine that I know of. But it is a practice that hath danger, and no Scripture precept or example to encourage it, nor solid reason, that I remember: and if God would have had us use it, it is like he would have made it known.

II. Affirmatively: our converse with those in heaven consisteth in all these parts:

1. We must acknowledge our relation to them, and not think that they are nothing to us.

2. We must not forget them, but see them by faith, and take it as part of our daily business to have some daily conversation with them.

3. We must love them with a peculiar love; even better than we love the godly upon earth: because they are better, and liker unto God, and love him more, and are more beloved by him.

4. We must especially rejoice that God is glorified in and by them; and look often to them as the more illustrious representers of the divine perfections than any of the saints on earth.

5. We must greatly rejoice in their own felicity and glory; even as if it were our own. If we did see with our eyes our old dear friends, as Lazarus in Abraham's bosom, triumphing now in the glory of the blessed, we could not choose but be daily very glad on their behalf; to see and think, Oh what felicity do my friends enjoy! And faith should make it in some measure to you as if you saw it.

6. We must have a grateful sense in our minds of their love to us; and must give God thanks for his angels' ministrations for us. For doubtless, as they are wiser and better than any of our friends on earth; so they have a better, a purer, and diviner kind of love to us, than these below have. And the angels disdain not to be Christ's servants for our good, yea for our salvation. For "are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation," Heb. i. 14. "Their angels always behold the face of my Father in heaven," Matt. xviii. 10. "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them," Psal. xxxiv. 7. "He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone," Psal. xci. 11, 12. "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth," Luke xv. 10. "The beggar died, and was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom," Luke xvi. 22. Though the great love is that of God, our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, and our chiefest gratitude is due to him, even for the benefit which we have by any of his creatures; yet love and mental thankfulness is due to the rational creatures which are his voluntary instruments; because they do what they do out of real love to us; otherwise we should owe thankfulness to none, either benefactor, friend, or parents.

7. And our believing converse with the blessed spirits, must make us earnestly desire to be like them; even to be as like them here as possibly we may, and to be with them, that we may be perfect as they are perfect. We must long to be near God, as they are, and to know him, and love him, as they do; and this holy ambition is well pleasing to God: though we must not desire to be as God, we must desire to know and love him perfectly.

8. And hence we must proceed to a sober imitation of them as they are now employed in heaven: not in those particulars wherein their case and ours differ (as to thank God for that conquest which they have made, and that glory which they do possess, &c.) But in all these duties, which in some degree belong to us as well as them.

For instance, ask what kind of religion is likest to that which is in heaven? Is it studying bare words, and disputing about things unprofitable, or contending and quarrelling about precedency, pre-eminence, or domination? Or is it not rather the clearest knowledge, and the ferventest love of God and all his holy ones, and the fullest content, delight, and rest of the soul in God, and the highest praises and thanksgivings, with the readiest and most cheerful obedience?

And what kind of religious performances are most excellent which we must principally intend? Groans, and tears, and penitent confessions, and moans, are very suitable to our present state, while we have sin and suffering; but surely they are duties of the lower rank; for heaven more aboundeth with praises and thanksgiving; and therefore we must labour to be fitter for them, and more abundant in them: not casting off any needful humiliations, and penitent complaints; but growing as fast as we can above the necessity of them, by conquering the sin which is the cause.

So ask, what is it that would make the church on earth to be likest to that part which is in heaven? Is it striving what pastors shall be greatest, or have precedency, or be called gracious lords or benefactors? Luke xxii. 24—26; 1 Peter v. 3—5. Or is it in making the flock of Christ to dread the secular power of the shepherds, and tremble before them, as they do before the wolf? Or is it in a proud con-

ceit of the people's power to ordain their pastors, and to rule them and themselves by a major vote? Or in a supercilious condemning the members of Christ, and a proud contempt of others as too unholy for our communion, when we never had authority to try or judge them? Is it in the multitude of sects and divisions; every one saying, our party and our way is best? Surely all this is unlike to heaven. It is rather in the wisdom, and holiness, and unity of all the members: when they all know God, especially in his love and goodness, and when they fervently love him, and cheerfully and universally obey him; and when they love each other fervently, and with a pure heart, and without divisions do hold the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace; and with one heart, and mind, and mouth, do glorify God and our Redeemer. Leaving that church judgment to the pastors which Christ hath put into their hands; and leaving God's part of judgment unto himself. This is to be like to our heavenly Exemplar, and to do God's will on earth as it is done in heaven; Ephes. iv. 2—4, 11, 12, 16.

9. And we must also look back to the examples of their lives, while they were on earth; and see wherein they are to be imitated as the imitators of Jesus Christ: which way went they to heaven before us?

10. Lastly, We must give God thanks on their behalf; for making them so perfect, and bringing them so near him, and saving them from sin, and Satan, and the world, and bringing them safe to heaven, through so many temptations, difficulties, and sufferings; for making them such instruments of his glory, in their times, and showing his glory upon them and to them in the heavens. For making them such blessings to the world in their generations, and for giving us in them such patterns of faith, obedience, and patience, and making them so great encouragements to us, who may the more boldly follow them in faith, duty, and sufferings, who have conquered all, and sped so well: for showing us by faith their present state of glory with Christ, for our confirmation and consolation. Thus far in all these ten particulars we must have a heavenly conversation with the glorified by faith.

Direct. 8. Consider next, wherein your imitation of the example of their lives on earth consisteth.

And it is, 1. Not in committing any of their sins, nor indulging any such weaknesses in ourselves, as any of them were guilty of. 2. Nor in extenuating a sin, or thinking ever the better of it, because it was theirs. 3. Nor in doing as they did in exempted cases, wherein their law and ours differed (as in the marriage of Adam's children, in the Jews' polygamy, &c.) 4. Nor in imitating them in things indifferent, or accidental, that were never intended for imitation, nor done as morally good or evil. 5. Nor in pretending to or expecting of their extraordinary revelations, inspirations, or miracles. 6. Nor in pretending the high attainments of the more excellent, to be the necessary measure of all that shall be saved, or the rule of our church communion: our imitation of them consisteth in no such things as these.

But it consisteth in these:

1. That you fix upon the same ultimate ends as they did. That you aim at the same glory of God, and choose the same everlasting felicity.

2. That you choose the same Guide and Captain of your salvation; the same Mediator between God and man; the same Teacher and Ruler of the church, and the same Sacrifice for sin, and Intercessor with the Father.

3. That you believe the same gospel, and build upon the same promises, and live by the same rule, the word of God.

4. That you obey the same Spirit, and trust to the same Sanctifier, and Comforter, and Illuminator, to illuminate, sanctify, and comfort your souls.

5. That you exercise all the same graces of faith, hope, love, repentance, obedience, patience, as they did.

6. That you live upon the same truths, and be moved by the same motives, as they lived upon and were moved by.

7. That you avoid the same sins as they avoided; and see what they feared, and fled from, and made conscience of, that you may do the same.

8. That you choose and use the same kind of company, helps, and means of grace, (so far as yours and theirs are the same,) as they have done; and think not to find a nearer, or another way to that state of happiness which they are come to. "Walk by the same rule, and mind the same things; and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you," Phil. iii. 16. "If any preach another gospel, let him be accursed," Gal. i. 7, 8. "Mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which you have learned, and avoid them," Rom. xvi. 17. "We desire that every one of you do show the same diligence, to the full assurance of hope to the end, that you be not slothful, but followers of them," &c. Heb. vi. 11, 12.

9. That you avoid, resist, and overcome the same temptations, as they did, who now are crowned.

10. That you bear the same cross, and exercise the same faith, and hope, and patience, unto the end. "Arm yourselves with the same mind," &c. 1 Pet. iv. 1.

In brief, this is the true imitation of the saints.

Direct. 9. Never suffer your life of sense to engage you so deeply in sensible converse with men on earth, as to forget your heavenly relations and society; but live as men that unfeignedly believe, that you have a more high and noble converse every day to mind.

If you are believers indeed, let your faith go along with the souls of your departed friends into glory; and if you have forgot them by an unfriendly negligence, renew your acquaintance with them. Think not that those only that live on earth, are fit for our converse, and our comfort: will you converse with none but ignorant, selfish, worldly sinners? Are you more contemptuous of the heavenly inhabitants, than the gentleman in hell torments was, (Luke xvi. 26, 27,) that thought one from the dead, though it had been but a beggar, would have been reverenced even by his sensual brethren on earth, so far as to have persuaded them unto saving repentance. I tell you, a dead man's skull is ofttimes a more profitable companion than most that you shall converse with in the common world. The dust of your departed friends, and the clay that corpses are turned into, is a good medicine for those eyes that are blinded with the dust of worldly vanities. Much more should you keep your acquaintance with the soul, which may, for all the distance, be perhaps more useful to you than it was in the flesh. Alas! how carnally, and coldly, or seldom, do most professors look at their brethren, and at the angelical hosts that are above! They long for our conversion, and mind our great concernments, and rejoice in our felicity; and shall we be so swinishly ungrateful, as seldom to look up, and remember their high and blessed state?

Many think that they have no more business with their deceased friends, than to see them decently interred, and to mourn over them, as if their removal were their loss; or to grieve for our own loss, when

we perceive their places empty; but we scarce look up after them with an eye of faith, much less do we daily maintain our communion with them in heaven. When Christ was taken up, his disciples gazed after him, Acts i. 10. Stephen looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw Christ sitting at the right hand of God, Acts vii. 55. And how seldom, how slightly, do we look up, either to Jesus, his angels, or his saints!

I tell you, sirs, you have not done with your friends when you have buried their flesh. They have left you their holy examples: they are entered before you into rest: you are hastening after them, and must be quickly with them, if you are true believers: you must see them every day by faith. When you look to Christ, you must look to them, as his beloved friends, entertained by him in his family of glory. When you look up to heaven, remember that they are there: when you think of coming thither, remember that you must there meet them. You must honour their memories more than you did on earth, because they are more honourable, being more honoured of God. You must love them better than you did when they were on earth, because they are better, and so more lovely: you must rejoice much more for their felicity, than you did whilst they were on earth; because they are incomparably more happy than they were. Either you believe this, or you do not. If you do not believe that the dead are blessed that die in the Lord, and rest from their labours, and are with Christ in paradise, why do you seem christians? If you do believe it, why do you not more rejoice with your glorified friends, than you would have done if they had been advanced to the greatest honours in the world? It is the natural duty of friends to mourn with them that mourn, and to rejoice with them that rejoice; and if one member be honoured or dishonoured, the rest of the body are accordingly affected. Do not your sorrows then, instead of joys, tell all men that you believe that your friends are gone to sorrow, and not to joy? If not, you are very selfish or inconsiderate.

Direct. 10. Lastly, Let not your aversation to popery turn to a factious, partial forsaking of God's truth, and your own duty and consolation, in this point. Abundance of christians have taken up opinions in religion, upon the love and honour of the parties that they took them of; and being possessed with a just dislike of popery in the main, they suspect and cast away not a few great truths and duties, upon a false information that they are parts of popery. It hath grieved me more than once to hear religious persons come from hearing some ministers with disdain and censure, saying that they prayed for the dead; and all their proof was that, Thanksgiving is a part of prayer: but they gave God thanks for the glorification of the spirits of the just; therefore they prayed for them. And so have they argued, because they have read the 1 Cor. xv. at the grave; or because they have preached a funeral sermon while the corpse was present, or because they prayed then for themselves, or for the church. Alas, for the childish ignorance, and peevishness, and foolish wranglings of many christians, who think they are better than their neighbours! How much is Christ's family dishonoured by his silly, froward children! And they will not be instructed by their friends; and therefore they are posted up and openly reproached by their enemies. Have angels or heavenly saints deserved so ill of God or us, that we should be so shy of their communion? Are they nothing to us? Have we nothing to do with them? Have we cause to be ashamed of them? Is their honour any dishonour to God or us, if it be no more than what is their due? Can we give so much love, respect, and honour to magistrates, ministers, and friends on earth (imperfect, sinful, troublesome mortals); and shall we think that all is idolatrous or cast away, which is given to them that so far excel us? Is it your design to make heaven either contemptible or strange to men on earth? Or would you persuade the world, that the souls of the saints are not immortal, but perish as the brutes? Or that there is no heaven? Or that God is there alone without any company? Are so many fond of the opinion of a personal reign on earth, for Christ with his holy ones; and yet is it popery so much as to speak honourably and joyfully of the saints in heaven? My brethren, these things declare you yet to be too dark, too factious, and too carnal; and to hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, with respect to parties, sides, and persons. Christ taketh not his saints as strangers to him: he that judgeth men as they love and use him in the least of his brethren upon earth, will not so soon censure and quarrel with us as the sectary will do for loving and honouring him in his saints in heaven; for it is his will and prayer that they be with him where he is to behold his glory, John xii. 26; xvii. 24. And he will come with his holy angels to be glorified in his saints, (who shall judge the world and angels,) and to be admired in all them that do now believe, 2 Thess. i. 10—12.

CHAPTER XXVII.

HOW TO RECEIVE THE SENTENCE OF DEATH; AND HOW TO DIE BY FAITH.

Having said so much of this elsewhere, (in my books called, "A Believer's last Work;" "The last Enemy;" my "Christian Directory;" "Treatise of Self-Denial," &c.) I shall be here but very brief.

I. For the first case, before sickness cometh:

Direct. 1. Be sure that you settle your belief of the life to come, that your faith may not fail.

Direct. 2. Expect death as seriously all your life, as wise believers are obliged to do: that is, as men that are always sure to die; as men that are never sure to live a moment longer; as men that are sure that life will be short, and death is not far off; and as foreseeing what it is to die; of what eternal consequence; and what will then appear to be necessary to your safe and to your comfortable change.

Direct. 3. All your days habituate your souls to believing, sweet, enlarged thoughts of the infinite goodness and love of God, to whom you go, and with whom you hope to live for ever.

Direct. 4. Dwell in the studies of a crucified and glorified Christ, who is the way, the truth, and life; who must be your hope in life and death, Eph. iii. 17—19.

Direct. 5. Keep clear your evidences of your right to Christ and all his promises; by keeping grace or the heavenly nature, in life, activity, and increase; 2 Pet. i. 10; 2 Cor. xiii. 5; John xv. 1; 1 John iii.

Direct. 6. Consider often of the possession which your nature in Christ hath already of heaven; and how highly it is advanced, and how near his relation is, and how dear his love is to his weakest members upon earth: and that as souls in heaven have an inclination and desire to communicate their own felicity to their bodies; so hath Christ as to his body the church; John xvii. 24; Eph. v. 25, 27, &c.

Direct. 7. Look to the heavenly host, and those

who have lived before you, or with you in the flesh, to make the thoughts of heaven the more familiar to you (as in the former chapter).

Direct. 8. Improve all afflictions, yea, the plague of sin itself, to make you weary of this world, and willing to be gone to Christ, Rom. vii.

Direct. 9. Be much with God in prayer, meditation, and other heart-raising duties; that you may not by strangeness to him be dismayed.

Direct. 10. Live not in the guilt of any wilful sin, nor in any slothful neglect of duty, lest guilt breed terror, and make you fly from God your Judge. But especially study to redeem your time, and to do all the good you can in the world, and to live as totally devoted to God, as conscious that you live to no carnal interest, but desire to serve him with all you have; and your consciences' testimony of this will abundantly take off the terrors of death (whatever any erroneous ones may say to the contrary, for fear of being guilty of conceits of merit). A fruitful life is a great preparative for death; 2 Tim. iv. 8; 2 Cor. i. 12, &c.

Direct. 11. Fetch from heaven the comforts which you live upon through all your life. And when you have truly learned to live more upon the comforts of believed glory, than upon any pleasures or hopes below, then you will be able to die in and for those comforts; Matt. vi. 20, 21; Col. iii. 1, 4; Phil. iii. 20, 21; 1 Thess. iv. 18; Phil. i. 21, 23.

Direct. 12. The knowledge and love of God in Christ is the beginning or foretaste of heaven, (John xvii. 3; 1 Cor. xiii. &c.) and the foretastes are excellent preparations; therefore still remember that all that you do in the world, for the getting and exercising the true knowledge and love of God in Christ; so much you do for the foretastes (and best preparations) for heaven. "If any man love God, the same is known of him," (with approbation and love,) 1 Cor. viii. 3.

II. In the time of sickness, and near to death.

Direct. 1. Let your first work, when God seemeth to call you away, be, to renew a diligent search of your hearts and lives, and to see lest in either of them there should be any sin which is not truly hated and repented of.

Though this must be done through all your lives, yet with an extraordinary care and diligence when you are like to come so speedily to your trial: for it is only to repenting believers, that the covenant of grace doth pardon sin; and the impenitent have no right to pardon. Though for ordinary failings which are forgotten, and for sins which you are willing to know and remember, but cannot, a general repentance will be accepted, (as when you pray God to show you the sins which you see not, and to forgive those which you cannot remember or find out,) yet those which you know must be particularly repented of: and repentance is a remembering duty, and will hardly forget any great and heinous sins, which are known to be sins indeed. If your repentance be then to begin, alas, it is high time to begin it: and though if it be sound, it will be saving; (that is, if it be such as would settle you in a truly godly life, if you should recover;) yet you will hardly have any assurance of salvation, or such comfort in it as is desirable to a dying man: because you will very hardly know whether it come from true conversion, and contain a love to God and godliness; or whether it be only the fruit of fear, and would come to nothing if you were restored to health. But he that hath truly repented heretofore, and lived in uprightness towards God and man, and hath nothing to do, but to discern his sincerity, and to exercise a special repentance for some late or special sins, or to do that again which he hath done unfeignedly before, will much more easily get the assurance and comfort of his forgiveness and salvation.

Direct. 2. Renew your sense of the vanity of this world: which at such a time one would think should be very easy to do. When you see that you are near an end of all your pleasures, and have had all (except a grave to rot in) that ever this world will do for you, may you not easily then see, whether the godly or the worldly be the wiser and the happier man; and what it is that the life of man should be spent in seeking after? Matt. vi. 33; Isa. lv. 1—3; Eccles. vii. 3—6.

Direct. 3. Remember what flesh is, and what it hath been to you; that you may not be too loth to lay it down.

Of the dust it was made, and to the dust it must return. Corruption is your father, and the worm is your mother and your sister, Job xvii. 14. "Drought and heat consume the snow waters; so doth the grave those which have sinned: the womb shall forget him; the worm shall feed sweetly on him," Job xxiv. 19, 20. "Flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God; but this mortal must put on immortality," by being made a spiritual body, 1 Cor. xv.

And this flesh hath cost you so dear to carry it about; so much care and labour to provide it food, to repair that which daily vanisheth away; and so many weary, painful hours; and so many fearful thoughts of dying; that methinks you should quietly resign it to the grave, which hath been so long calling for it.

Especially considering what it hath done, by the temptations of a vitiated appetite and sense, against your souls; into how many sins it hath drawn you; and what grief and shame it hath procured you; and what assurance and heavenly pleasures it hath hindered; and how many repentings, and purposes, and promises it hath frustrated or undone: methinks we should conceive that we have long enough dwelt in such a habitation.

Direct. 4. Foresee by faith the resurrection of the body, when it shall be raised a spiritual body unto glory, and shall be no more an enemy to the soul.

Direct. 5. Renew your familiarity with the blessed ones above. Remember that the great army of God (the souls of the just from Adam till now) are all got safe through this Red sea, and are triumphing in heaven already; and that it is but a few stragglers in the end of the world that are left behind: and which part then should you desire to be with? And remember how ready those angels which rejoiced at your conversion, are to be your convoy unto Christ, Luke xvi. 23.

Direct. 6. But especially think with greatest confidence and delight, that Jesus your Head is entered into the heavens before you, and is making intercession for you, and is preparing you a place, and loveth your company, and will not lose it. You shall find him ready to receive your souls, and present them spotless unto God, as the fruit of his mediation: he will have you be with him to behold his glory; and none shall take you out of his hands. Let his love therefore draw up your desires, and establish your hearts in confidence and rest.

Direct. 7. Remember, that all that are living must come after you; and how quickly their turn will come: and would you wish to be exempt from death alone, which the whole world below must needs submit to?

Direct. 8. Think still of the resurrection of Christ your Head; that you may see that death is a con-

quered thing, and what a pledge you have of a life to come.

Direct. 9. Dwell still in the believing forethoughts of the blessedness of the life to which you go, as it is your personal perfection, and the perfect love and fruition of God, with his perfect joyous praise.

Remember still what it is to see and know the Lord (and all things else in him, which are fit for us to know); and labour to revive your love to God, and then you revive your desires and preparations.

Direct. 10. Give up yourselves wholly to the will of God; and think how much better it is for upright souls to be in God's hand than in your own. The will of God is the first and last, the original and end, of all the creatures. Besides the will of Infinite goodness, there is no final rest for human souls. But man's will is the *alpha* and *omega*, the beginning or first efficient, and the ultimate end, of all obliquity and sin: be bold then and thankful in your approach to God, remembering how much more safe and comfortable it is to be (for life and death) at God's disposal than our own.

Besides these, read the directions against the fear of death, in my book of "Self-Denial;" and what is said in my "Saints' Rest," and other the treatises before mentioned.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

HOW BY FAITH TO LOOK ARIGHT TO THE COMING OF JESUS CHRIST IN GLORY.

Because I have said so much of this also, in my "Saints' Rest," and in many other treatises, I will now pass it over with these brief directions.

Direct. 1. Delude not your souls, nor corrupt your faith and hope, by placing Christ's kingdom in things too low, or that are utterly uncertain.

Think not so earnally of the second coming of Christ, as the Jews did of the first, who looked for an earthly kingdom, and despised the spiritual and heavenly: and make not the unknown time or other circumstances of his coming, to be to you as the certain and necessary things; lest you do as many of those called millenaries or fifth-monarchy men among us, who have turned the doctrine of christian hope into an outrageous fury, to bring Christ down before his time, and to make themselves rulers in the world, that they might presently reign under the name of the reign of Christ; and have by seditious, rebellious railing at Christ's ministers, and hating those that are not of their mind, done much to promote the kingdom of Satan, while they cried up nothing but the kingdom of Christ.

Direct. 2. Do all that you can in this day of grace, to promote Christ's present kingdom in the world, and that will prove your best preparation for his glorious coming.

To that end labour with all your might, to set up life, and light, and love, abhorring hypocrisy, ignorance, and uncharitableness: turn not religion into a ceremony, carcass, or dead imagery or form; nor yet into darkness, error, or a human, wandering, distracting maze; nor into selfish, proud, censorious faction: build not Christ's kingdom as the devil would do, by hypocritical dead shows, or by putting out his lights, or by schism, division, hatred, and strife. Read James iii.

Direct. 3. Yet leave not out of your faith and hope, any certain part of Christ's glorious kingdom. We know that we shall for ever be with the Lord, and in the presence of the Father in heavenly glory; and withal, that we shall be in the new Jerusalem; and that there shall "be a new heaven, and a new earth, in which shall dwell righteousness; and that we shall judge the angels of the world." And if we know not the circumstances of all these parts, let not therefore any of them be denied; 1 Thess. iv. 11; 2 Cor. v. 1, 3, 8; Rev. xx.; xxii.; 2 Pet. iii. 13.

Direct. 4. Think what a day of glory it will be to Jesus Christ, Matt. xxv. 31. Oh how different from his state of humiliation! He will not come again to be despised, spit on and buffeted, blasphemed and crucified; Pilate and Herod must be arraigned at his bar: it is the marriage-day of the Lamb; a day appointed for his glory; Rev. xxi.; xxii.

Direct. 5. Think what a day of honour it will be to God the Father; how his truth will be vindicated, his love and justice gloriously demonstrated; Matt. xxv.; 2 Thess. i. 8, 9.

Direct. 6. Think what a day it will be to all the children of God; to see their Lord, when he purposely cometh to be "admired and glorified in them," 2 Thess. i. 11, 12. To see him in whom they have believed, whom they loved and longed for, 2 Pet. iii. 11—13; 1 Pet. i. 8. To see him who is their dearest Head and Lord; who will justify them before all the world, and sentence them to life eternal: to see the day in which they must receive the end of all their faith and hope; their prayers, labours, and patience to the full; 1 Pet. i. 8, 9; Rev. ii.; iii.; Matt. xxv.; 2 Pet. iv. 13.

Direct. 7. Think what a day it will be to the shame of sin, when it shall be the reproach and terror of the world; and to the honour of holiness, when faith, obedience, and love shall be the approved honour of all the saints: and what a day of admirable justice it will be, when all that seems crooked here, shall be set straight. Oh the difference that there will then be in the thoughts of sin and holiness, in comparison of those that men have of them now!

Direct. 8. Think what a confounding day it will be to the infernal serpent, and all his seed, Matt. xxv. 41, 16. When impudent boasters shall then be speechless, and all iniquity shall stop her mouth, Matt. xxv. 44; xxii. 12; Psal. cvii. 42. And when Lazarus shall be seen in Abraham's bosom; and the enemies of the saints shall see them advanced, (as Haman did Mordecai,) and rejoicing when the glory of Christ is revealed, 1 Pet. iv. 13. When every scorner's mouth shall be stopped, and all stand guilty before their Judge, (Rom. iii. 4, 19,) and the wretched unprepared souls must, for departing from God, be senteneed to depart into misery for ever! Matt. xxv. 41, 46; Jude 5, 6.

Direct. 9. And think what a change that day beginneth both with the saints and with the world: what a glory it is that we must immediately possess, in body and soul; and how we must partake of the kingdom of our Lord: saints shall be scorned and persecuted no more: the threatenings and promises of Christ shall be no more denied by unbelievers: sin will be no more in honour, nor pride and sensuality bear sway: the church will be no more eclipsed, either by its lamentable imperfections and diseased members, or by the divisions of sects, or the scatterings of the cruel, or the slanders of the lying tongue, Eph. v. 27. Satan will no more tempt or trouble us, Rev. xii. 9; Matt. xxv. 41. Sin and death will be excluded; and all the fears and horrors of both: for the face of Infinite love will per-

fectly and perpetually shine upon us, and shine us into perfect, perpetual glory, love, and joy; and will feed these, and the thankful and praiseful expressions of them, to all eternity; Matt. v. 46; 2 Cor. iv. 17; Rev. ii.; iii.

Direct. 10. Lastly, Think how near all this must needs be. If the day of the Lord was near in the times of the apostles, it cannot be far off to us. If the world's duration be to six thousand years, (the time which arrogant presumption most plausibly guesseth at,) it will be less than three hundred and fifty years to it. Though we know not the time, we know it cannot be long.

And let me conclude with a warning to both sorts of readers: and, 1. To the ungodly, unprepared sinner. Poor soul! dost thou believe this dreadful day or not? If not, why dost thou dissemble, by professing it in thy creed? If thou do, how canst thou live so merrily or quietly in a careless, unprepared state? Canst thou possibly forget so great, so sure, so near a day? Alas, it will be another kind of meeting than Christ had with sinners upon earth; when he came in meekness and humiliation, not to judge and condemn the world, but to be falsely judged and condemned by them, John iii. 17; xxii. 47. Nor will it be such a meeting as Christ had with thee, either by his ministers that called thee to repent, who were men whom thou couldst easily despise; or by his Spirit which thou couldst resist and quench; or by his afflicting rod, which did but say to thee, "Go, sin no more, lest worse befall thee," John v. 14; Heb. xii. 10, 12; 1 Tim. v. 24. Nor as the judgment of man's assize, which passeth sentence only against a temporal life, Luke xii. 4. Nor like the treaty of a Judas with his new-awakened conscience here. Oh no! it will be a more glorious, but more dreadful day: it will be the meeting, not only of a creature with his Creator, but of a sinner with a just and holy God, and of a despiser of grace with the God whom he despised. Oh terrible day to the unbelieving, ungodly, carnal, and impenitent! Heb. x. 31; ii. 3; x. 12; Luke xix. 27. There must thou appear to receive thy final doom; to hear the last word that ever thou must hear from Jesus Christ (unless his everlasting wrath be called his word); and oh, how different will it be from the words which thou wast wont to hear! Thou wast wont to hear the calls of grace; mercy did entreat thee to return to God; Christ by his ministers did beseech thee to be reconciled: but if thou entreat him for pardon and peace, with the loudest cries, it would be all in vain, Matt. vii. 21—23; Prov. i. 27, 28. Now the voice is, "Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world!" John i. 29. But then it will be, "Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him, and all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him," Rev. i. 7. And, "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him," Jude 14, 15. Now he entreateth you to "come to him that you may have life," John v. 40. But then you will cry to the mountains to fall upon you, and the hills to cover you from his presence, Luke xxiii. 30; Rev. vi. 16. Now he saith, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me," Rev. iii. 20. But when once you hear that midnight cry, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh, go ye forth and meet him; then they that are ready shall go in, and the door shall be shut against the rest," Matt. xxv. 9, 10. The door of mercy shall be shut: your reprobation will be then made sure, Rom. ix. 22; ii. 5. The day of thy visitation is then past, Luke xix. 41, 42. No more offers of Christ and mercy; no more entreaties to accept them; no more calls to turn and live. Ministers must no more preach, and persuade, and entreat in vain. Friends must no more warn thee, and pray for thee. All is done already that they can do for thy soul for ever. No more strivings of the Spirit with thy conscience; and no more patience, health, or time to be abused upon fleshly lusts and pleasures: all these things are past away, 1 Cor. vii. 31; 2 Cor. iv. 17. And the door of hope will be also shut: no more hope of a part in Christ; no more hope of the success of sermons, of prayers, or of any other means; no hopes of pardon, of justification, of salvation; or of any abatement of woe, Luke xvi. 25, 26. "Behold, this is the accepted time; behold, this is the day of salvation," 2 Cor. vi. 2; Heb. vi. 4—6, 8; Psal. v. 4, 5; ix. 7; James i. 15.

By this time, methinks, you should better know what the use and meaning of the gospel, and grace, and ministers are; and what is the design of preaching, and in what manner it should be done. Would you have us silent, or talk to you as in jest, while we see such a day as this before us! Every true preacher speaketh to you with judgment and eternity in his eye. Our work is to prepare you, or to help you to prepare to meet the Lord, and to be ready for your final sentence: oh then with what seriousness should we speak, and should you hear, and should both we and you prepare! It is pity to see people hear sermons many years, and not so much as know what a sermon is, and what is the use and nature of it. If our business were to draw away disciples after us, and to make ourselves the admired heads of factions, then we would speak those perverse things contrary to the doctrine which you have been taught, by which our ends might be carried on, Acts xx. 30; Rom. xvi. 17. Or if our design were to be high, and great, and rich, we would flatter the great ones of the world, that we might rule you with violence instead of love: or if we consulted our ease, we should spare much of this labour, and let you silently alone, at cheaper rates to the flesh, than now we speak to you. But oh, who can be silent, who is engaged in this sacred office, when he foreseeth what will shortly be the issue of our prevailing or not prevailing with you? Now as we love Christ, we must feed his sheep; and "necessity is laid upon us, and woe be unto us if we preach not the gospel," 1 Cor. ix. 16. Our preaching Christ is to "warn every man and teach every man, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus," Col. i. 22. And to "persuade men as knowing the terrors of the Lord," 2 Cor. ix. 10, 11; Heb. xii. 25, 29. If it were only that we loved so to hear ourselves talk, or to be cried up by many followers, we deserved to pay dear indeed for such preaching. But when our Lord loved and pitied souls at the rate of his sufferings and bloody death, surely our rates are not above the worth of souls. Oh what a doleful sight it is to us, to foresee by faith how loud, how earnestly you would knock and cry, when the door is shut, and hope is gone! and what you would then give for one of these days which you now are weary of; and for a drop of that mercy which now doth beg your entertainment!

What then remaineth, but as ever you believe that day; and as ever you care what becometh of your

souls and bodies for ever; and as ever you would not be charged and condemned, as final and obstinate refusers of mercy and salvation; yea, and for wronging the ministers of Christ, by making them study and preach in vain: that you harden not your hearts, but hear Christ's voice to-day, while it is called to-day, before the door of grace be shut. Oh cry, while crying and begging may do good: meet Christ now as may best prepare you to meet him then. Meet him now as the prodigal met his father, (Luke xv.) saying, "I have sinned, and am no more worthy to be called thy son, make me as one of thy hired servants."

Meet God as Abigail met David, (1 Sam. xxv. 32, 34,) with an offering of peace, (even Christ apprehended by an obedient faith,) when she heard from David, "Except thou hadst hasted and come to meet me, all had been destroyed."

Meet him to inquire of his sacred oracle, what is like to become of thy soul; as the king of Syria sent Hazael with a present to Elisha, to meet him, saying, "Shall I recover of this disease?" 2 Kings viii. 8. Or as Paul met with Christ when he humbled and converted him, saying, "Who art thou, Lord? and what wouldst thou have me do?" Acts ix.

Meet him as the men of Israel and Judah did David their king, (2 Sam. xix.) striving who should first own and honour him; Amos iv. 12. Meet God thus now when he calleth you by his word, when he persuadeth you by his ministers, when he moveth you by his Spirit, when he allureth and obligeth you by his mercies, while he driveth you by affliction, while he waiteth on you by his patience, and by all these calleth you to repent, to love him, and to obey; to set your hearts on heaven if ever you hope it should be your portion. Meet him thus now, and then you may joyfully meet him in his glory.

II. And O all you that are true believers, lift up your heads with hope and joy, for your final deliverance draweth nigh. The world hath but a little while longer to abuse you: Satan hath but a little while more to molest you: the blinded Sodomites shall not long be groping for your doors: you shall not long walk among snares and dangers; nor live with enemies, nor with troublesome, unsuitable friends: you have not long to bear the burden of that wearisome body, of that seducing flesh, of those unruly passions, or those disordered thoughts: you have not long to groan under the misery of that troubled and doubting conscience, that darkened mind, those dull affections, those remnants of unbelief, stupidity, and carnality; nor to cry out with weariness from day to day, Oh when shall I know God better and love him more! Death is coming, and quickly after, Christ is coming: one will begin, and the other perfect, your full deliverance, and put an end to these complaints.

And remember, that though death hath somewhat in it, which to nature is terrible, (God having made the love of life to be the *pondus*, or spring of motion, to the great engine of the sensitive world,) yet what is there in the second coming of Christ, that should seem unwelcome to you? You shall not meet an enemy, but a friend; your surest and your greatest friend; one that hath done more for you than all the world hath done; and one that is ready now to do much more, and show his love and friendship to the height. One that will be then your surest friend, when all the world shall cast you off. You go not to be condemned, but to be openly justified; yea, honoured before all the world, and sentenced to endless glory. You go not to be numbered with the enemies of holiness, or with the slothful and unprofitable servants; but to be perfectly incorporated into the heavenly society, and to see the glorified faces of Enoch, Moses, and Elias; of Peter, and John, and Paul, and Timothy, and all the saints that ever you knew, or whose writings you have ever read, or whose names you ever heard of, and millions more. You go to be better aequainted with those angels that rejoiced at your repentance, and that ministered for your good, and that bore you in their hands, and were your continual guard both night and day. You go to join in concert with all these, in those seraphic praises which are harmoniously sounded forth continually, through all the intellectual world, in the greatest fervours of perfect love, and the constant raptures of perfect joy, in the fullest intuition of the glory of the Eternal God and the glorified humanity of your Redeemer, and the glory of the celestial world and society, and under the streams of infinite life, and light, and love, poured forth upon you to feed all this, to all eternity. And all this is so near and sweet a union with the glorified ones, who are the body and spouse of Christ, that it shall be all as one praise, one love, one joy in all.

Oh for a more lively and quick-sighted faith, to foresee this day in some measure as affeetingly as we shall then see it! Alas! my Lord, is this dark prospect all that I must here hope for? Is this dull, and dreaming, and amazing apprehension, all that I shall reach to here? Is this senseless heart, this despondent mind, these drowsy desires, the best that I must here employ in the contemplation of so high a glory? Must I come in such a sleepy state to God? and go as in a dream to the beatifical vision? I am ashamed and confounded to find my soul, alas, so dark, so dead, so low, so unsuitable to such a day and state, even whilst I am daily looking towards it, and whilst I am daily talking of it, and persuading others to higher apprehensions than I can reach myself; and even whilst I am writing of it, and attempting to draw a map of heaven, for the consolation of myself and fellow-believers. Thou hast convinced my reason of the truth of the predictions, and of the certain futurity of that glorious day: and yet how little do my affections stir! and how unanswerable are my joys, and my desires, to those convictions! When the light of my understanding should cure the deadness of my heart, alas, this deadness rather extinguisheth that light, and cherisheth temptations to unbelief; and my faith, and reason, and knowledge, are as it were asleep, and useless, for want of that life which should awaken them unto exercise and use. Awakened reason serveth faith, and is always on thy side: but sleepy reason in the gleams of prosperity, is ready to give place to flesh and fancy, and hath a thousand distracted, incoherent dreams. O now reveal thy power, thy truth, thy love, and goodness effectually to my soul, and then I shall wait with love and longing for the revelation of thy glory. Thy inward, heavenly, powerful light, is kin to the glorious brightness of thy coming; and will show me that which books and talk only, without thy Spirit, cannot show. Thy kingdom in me, and my daily faithful subjection to thy government there, must prepare me for the glorious, endless kingdom. If now thou wouldst pour out thy love upon my soul, it would flame up towards thee, and long to meet thee, and think with daily pleasure on that day: and my perfect love would cast out that fear, which maketh the thoughts of thy coming to be a torment. O meet me now when my soul doth seek thee, and secretly cry after thee; that I may know thou wilt

meet me with love and pity at the last. O turn not now thine ears from my requests; for if thou receive me not now as thy humble supplicant, how shall I hope that thou wilt receive me then? And if thou wilt not hear me in the day of grace and visitation, and in this time when thou mayst be found, how can I hope that thou wilt hear me then, when the door is shut, and the seeking and finding time is past? If thou cast me out of thy presence now, and turn away thy face from my soul and my supplication, as a loathed thing, how can I then expect thy smiles, or the vital embracements of thy glorifying love? or to be owned by thee before all the world, with that cordial and consolatory justification, which may keep my conscience from becoming my hell? If thou wilt permit my flesh and sense to conquer my faith, and to turn away my love and desire from thee; how shall I then expect that joy, that heaven, which consisteth in thy love: and if thou suffer this unstedfast heart to depart from thee now, will it not be the forerunner of that dreadful doom, "Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, I know you not:" and if for the love of transitory vanity, I now deny thee, what can I then expect but to be finally denied by thee? Come, Lord, and dwell by thy Spirit in my soul, that I may have something in me to take my part, and may know that I shall dwell with thee for ever: if now thou wilt make me thy temple and habitation, and wilt dwell by faith and love within me; I shall know thee by more than the hearing of the ear, and thy last appearing will be less terrible to my thoughts. Thou wilt be health to my soul, when my body lieth languishing in pain: and when flesh and heart fail, my failing heart will find reviving strength in thee: and when the portion of worldlings is spent, and at an end, I shall find thee a never-ending portion. Why wouldst thou come down from heaven to earth in the days of thy voluntary humiliation, but to bring down grace to dwell where God himself hath dwelt? If the Eternal Word will dwell in flesh, the Eternal Spirit will not disdain it, whose dwelling is not by so close a union, but by sweet, unexpressible inoperations: this world hath had the pledge of thy bodily presence, when thou broughtest life and immortality to light; O let my dark and fearful soul have the pledge of thy illuminating, quickening, comforting Spirit, that life and immortality may be begun within me! Thy word of promise is certain in itself; but knowing our weakness, thou wilt give us more: thy seal, thy pledge, thy earnest, will not only confirm my faith, as settling my doubting mind; but it will also draw up my love and desire, as suited to my intellectual appetite; and will be a true foretaste of heaven. How oft have I gazed in the glass, and yet overlooked, or not been taken with, the beauty of thy face! But one drop of thy love, if it fall into my soul, will fill it with the most fragrant and delectable odour, and will be its life, and joy, and vigour. I shall never know effectually what heaven is, till I know what it is to love thee, and to be beloved by thee: for what but love will tell me what a life of love is? If I could love thee more ardently, more absolutely, more operatively, I should quickly know and feel thy love. And O, when I shall know that prosperous life, and live in the delicious entertainments of thy love, and in the sweet and vigorous exercise of mine, then I shall know the nature of heaven, the wisdom of believers, and the happiness of enjoyers! And then foretaste will do more than foresight alone, and will make me love the day of thy appearing, and long to see thy glorious love!

But alas, this feeble, sleeping love, doth threaten, if not the thrusting of me out of doors, (for none but friends and hearty lovers dwell with thee,) at least that I shall be set behind the door, and be one of the lowest in thy kingdom, as I was in thy love. For if I have the least degree of love, I must needs have the least degree of glory, seeing that blessedness is love itself: and if I have the least in this life, how can I hope to have, proportionably with others, the most in that? I know that it is better to be a door-keeper in thy house, than to reign in the palaces of earthly, sordid, and polluting pleasures; and that the least in thy kingdom, is greater than emperors in the kingdoms of darkness: but how can I have faith indeed, and not desire intuition? or grace, and not desire glory? Or who can love thee truly, and yet be contented to love thee but a little? or who ever tasted truly of thy love, that desired not the fulness of it? If sincerity consist in the desire of perfection, and if mutual love be heaven itself, I am not sincere then, if I desire not the highest place in heaven, which is suited to the measure of my natural capacity, and with the freedom and wisdom of thy bounteous will. Did I grudge at my natural capacity, and my rank among my fellow-creatures, and aspired after the divine prerogatives, or a greatness without goodness, or any prohibited station or degree, I might then expect the reward of pride, and to fall into Satan's condemnation for falling into his sin. But when wast thou ever offended at the ambition of loving thee with the most perfect love? Thou forbiddest our carnal pride, as our self-abasing folly: not thinking preferments, lordships, and domination to be things too high for us, but too low: thou allowest and commandest the poorest Lazarus to seek and hope for things ten thousand times more high; in comparison with which these pleasures are pain; these lordships are losses; this wealth is dung; these courts are dens of uncleanness, wild and ravenous beasts; and all this earthly pomp is shame. Thou forbiddest not the pleasures and glory of the world, as too good for thy servants, but as too bad, and base, and hurtful.

O therefore encourage in my drooping soul that holy ambition which thou commandest! Disappoint not the desires which thyself, by thy precept and thy Spirit, hast excited. I know thou hast promised to satisfy them that hunger and thirst after righteousness: and (if my soul be acquainted with itself) it is righteousness which I desire. Though the soliciting calls of vanity have drawn me too often to look aside, it is the knowledge and love of my Creator, and Redeemer, and Sanctifier, which I pursue; and my prayer is, that thou wilt turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity, and quicken me in thy way. But it is the dulness of my desires which I fear; lest they are not the hungering and thirsting which have thy promise; and lest they should prove but as the desires of the slothful which kill him, because his hands refuse to labour: but thou knowest I hate the sluggishness and indifferency of my soul, and the coldness and interruptions of my desires: and what is there in this world which I desire more, than more desires after thee; even more of that desiring, seeking love, which is the way to enjoying and delighting love. O breathe upon my soul, by thy quickening Spirit, that it may pant, and gasp, and breathe after thy presence! The most dolorous motions of life and love, have more contenting sweetness in them, than my dead insensibility and sleep. When I can but long to love thee, or when I lie in tears for want of love, or when I am hating

and reviling this sluggish, carnal, disaffected heart, even in my very doubts, and fears, and moans, I find myself nearer to content and pleasure, than when I neglect thee with a dead and drowsy heart. If therefore my vileness make me unfit to enjoy that pleasure in the daily prospect of thy kingdom, which reason itself adjudgeth to a serious, lively faith; O yet keep up the constant fervour of desire, that I may never grow in love with vanity and deceit, nor ever be indifferent whether I stay on earth or come to thee! and that in my greatest health I may never think of thee without desire; nor ever kneel in prayer to thee with such an unbelieving, and unprayer-like heart, which doth not unfeignedly say, "Let thy glorious kingdom come:" that so when, on the bed of languishing, I am waiting for the dissolution of this frame, I may not draw back, as flying from thy presence; nor look at heaven as less desirable than earth; nor be driven unwillingly from a more beloved habitation; but with that faith, hope, and love, which animateth all thy living members, I may in concert with thy saints to the last sincerely break forth, our common suit,

Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Amen.

THE DIVINE LIFE:

IN THREE TREATISES.

THE FIRST, OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.
THE SECOND, OF WALKING WITH GOD.
THE THIRD, OF CONVERSING WITH GOD IN SOLITUDE.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE AND EXEMPLARY

LADY ANNE, COUNTESS OF BALCARRES.

MADAM,

IN hope of the fuller pardon of my delay, I now present you with two other Treatises, besides the Sermon (enlarged) which at your desire I preached at your departure hence. I knew of many and great afflictions, which you had undergone in the removal of your dearest friends, which made this subject seem so suitable and seasonable to you at that time; but I knew not that God was about to make so great an addition to your trials in the same kind, by taking to himself the principal branch of your noble family (by a rare disease, the emblem of the mortal malady now reigning).[a] I hope this loss also shall promote your gain, by keeping you nearer to your heavenly Lord, who is so jealous of your affections, and resolved to have them entirely to himself: and then you will still find, that you are not alone, nor deprived of your dearest or most necessary Friend, while the Father, the Son, the sanctifying and comforting Spirit, is with you. And it should not be hard to reconcile us to the disposals of so sure a Friend. Nothing but good can come from God; however the blind may miscall it, who know no good or evil, but what is measured by the private standard of their selfish interest, and that as judged of by sense. Eternal love, engaged by covenant to make us happy, will do nothing but what we shall find at last will terminate in that blessed end. He envied you not your son, as too good for you, or too great a mercy, who hath given you his own Son, and with him the mercy of eternal life. Corporal sufferings with spiritual blessings are the ordinary lot of believers here on earth: as corporal prosperity with spiritual calamity is the lot of the ungodly. And I beseech you consider, that God knoweth better than you or I, what an ocean your son was ready to launch out into, and how tempestuous and terrible it might have proved, and whether the world that he is saved from, would have afforded him more of safety or seduction, of comfort or calamity? whether the protraction of the life of your noble husband, to have seen our sins and their effects and consequents, would have afforded him greater joy or sorrow? Undoubtedly as God had a better title to your husband, and children, and friends than you had, so it is much better to be with him, than to be with you, or with the best or greatest upon earth. The heavenly inhabitants fear not our fears, and feel not our afflictions. They are past our dangers, and out of the reach of all our enemies, and delivered from our pains and cares, and have the full possession of all those mercies which we pray and labour for. Can you think your children and friends that are with Christ, are not safer and better than those that yet remain with you? Do you think that earth is better than heaven for yourself? I take it for granted you cannot think so, and will not say so: and if it be worse for you, it is worse for them. The providence, which by hastening their glorification, doth promote your sanctification; which helpeth them to the end, and helpeth you in the way; must needs be good to them and you, however it appear to flesh and unbelief. O madam, when our Lord hath showed us (as he will shortly do) what a state it is to which he bringeth the spirits of the just, and how he doth there entertain and use them, we shall then be more competent judges of all those acts of providence, to which we are now so hardly reconciled! Then we shall censure our censurings of these works of God, and be offended with our offences at them, and call ourselves blind, unthankful sinners, for calling them so bad as we did in our misjudging unbelief and passion. We shall not wish ourselves or friends again on earth, among temptations and pains, and among uncharitable men, malicious enemies, deceitful flatterers, and untrusty friends! When we see that face which we long to see, and know the things which we long to

[a] Charles, Earl of Balcarres, who died of a stone in his heart, of a very great magnitude.

feel, and are full of the joys which now we can scarce attain a taste of, and have reached the end which now we seek, and for which we suffer, we shall no more take it for a judgment to be taken from ungodly men, and from a world of sin, and fear, and sorrow; nor shall we envy the wicked, nor ever desire to be partakers of their pleasures. Till then, let us congratulate our departed friends the felicity which they have attained, and which we desire; and let us rejoice with them that rejoice with Christ; and let us prefer the least believing thought of the everlasting joys, before all the defiled transitory pleasures of the deluded, dreaming, miserable world. And let us prefer such converse as we can here attain, with God in Christ, and with the heavenly society, before all the pomp and friendship of the world. We have no friend that is so able to supply all our wants, so sufficient to content us, so ready to relieve us, so willing to entertain us, so unwearied in hearing us, and conversing with us, as our blessed Lord. This is a Friend that will never prove untrusty; nor be changed by any change of interest, opinion, or fortune; nor give us cause to suspect his love; a Friend that we are sure will not forsake us, nor turn our enemy, nor abuse us for his own advantage, nor will ever die or be separated from us, but we shall be always with him, and see his glory, and be filled and transported with his love, and sing his praise to all eternity. With whom then should we so delightfully converse on earth? And till we can reach that sweet, delightful converse, whom should we seek with more ambition, or observe with greater devotedness and respect? Oh that we were less carnal and more spiritual, and lived less by sense and more by faith; that we knew better the difference between God and man, between visible temporals and invisible eternals! We should then have other thoughts and desires, and resolutions, and converse, and employments, and pleasures, than too many have.

Madam, it displeaseth me that it is no more elaborate a Treatise, to which the present opportunity inviteth me to prefix your name; but your own desire of the third, must be my excuse for all: but pardon the manner, and I dare commend the matter to you, as more worthy your serious contemplation, and your daily most delightful practice, than any other that was ever proposed unto mortal man. This is the manlike, noble life; the life which the rational soul was made for; to which, if our faculties be not by sanctifying grace restored, they fall below their proper dignity and use, and are worse than lost, like a prince or learned man that is employed only in sweeping dog-kennels or tending swine. To walk in holiness with the most holy God, is the improvement and advancement of the nature of man, towards its designed equality with angels; when earthliness and sensuality degrade humanity into (a voluntary, and therefore sinful) brutishness: this is the life which affordeth the soul a solid and durable pleasure and content; when carnal minds evaporate into air, and bubble into froth and vanity, wasted in a dream, and the violent, busy pursuit of a shadow; deceiving themselves with a mixture of some counterfeit religion; playing with God, and working for the world; living in jest, and dying, and despairing, and suffering in earnest; with unwearied labour building on the sand, and sinking at death for want of a foundation; hating the serious practice of their own professed religion, because it is not the profession, but the serious practice, which hath the greatest enmity to their sensual delights; yet wishing to be numbered with those hereafter, whom they hated here. This holy walking with the most holy God, is the only life which is best at last, and sweet in the review; which the godly live in, and most of the ungodly could wish to die in; like him that wished to be Cæsar in life, and Socrates at death: yea, this is the life which hath no end; which we are here but learning, and beginning to practise, and which we must hereafter live (in another manner and degree) with God for ever. O wondrous mercy! which thus ennobleth even the state of mortality! and honoureth earth with so much participation of and communion with heaven! that by God, and with God, we may walk in holy peace and safety unto God, and there be blessed in his perfect sight and love for ever! Madam, the greatest service I can do you for all your favours, is to pray that God will more acquaint you with himself, and lead you by this blessed way to that more blessed end; that when you see all worldly glory in the dust, you may bless him for ever, who taught you to make a wiser choice: which are the prayers of,

Madam,

Your very much obliged Servant,

RICHARD BAXTER.

Dec. 24, 1662.

TO THE READER.

Reader,

The embryo of this book was but one sermon, preached a little before the ending of my public ministry, upon the text of the third Treatise (upon the occasion intimated in the epistle to that truly honourable lady). Being obliged to communicate the notes, and unavoidably guilty of some delays, I made a compensation by enlargement; and (having reasons for the publication of them, with which I shall not trouble you) to make them more suitable to the designed end, I prefixed the two former Treatises: the first I had preached to my ancient flock: of the second I had preached but one sermon. If many of the materials in the second be the same as in the first, you must understand that my design required that it should be so: they being the same attributes of God, which the first part endeavoureth to imprint upon the mind; and which the second and third endeavour to improve into a constant course of holy affection and conversation: as it is the same food which the first concoction chylifieth, which the perfecting concoctions do work over again, and turn into blood, and spirits, and flesh. So far am I in such points from gratifying thy sickly desire of variety, and avoiding the displeasing of thee by the rehearsals of the same, that it is my very

business with thee to persuade thee to live continually upon these same attributes and relations of God, as upon thy daily air and bread; and to forsake that lean, consuming company, who feed on the shells of hard and barren controversies, or on the froth of compliments and affected shows, and run after novelty instead of substantial, solid nutriment: and to tell thee, that the primitive, pure, simple christianity, consisted in the daily serious use of the great materials of the *Creed, Lord's Prayer*, and *Ten Commandments*, contracted in the words of our baptismal covenant. Do thus, and thou wilt be like those examples of the succeeding church, in uprightness, purity, simplicity, charity, peaceableness, and holy communion with God, when the pretended subtleties and sublimities of wanton, uncharitable, contentious wits, will serve but to strangle or delude their souls. I have purposely been very brief on the several attributes and relations of God, in the first Treatise, because the copious handling of them would have made a very great volume of itself, and because it is my great design in that first part, to give you a sight of all God's attributes and relations conjunct, and in their order; that looking on them, not one by one, but all together in their proper places, the whole image of God may, by them, be rightly imprinted on your minds; the method being the first thing, and the necessary impressions on the soul the second, which I there desire you to observe and employ your minds about, if you desire to profit, and receive what I intend you.

Dec. 24, 1663.

OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

JOHN XVII. 3.

AND THIS IS LIFE ETERNAL, THAT THEY MIGHT KNOW THEE THE ONLY TRUE GOD, AND JESUS CHRIST, WHOM THOU HAST SENT.

CHAPTER I.

GOD is the Principal Efficient, the Supreme Directive, and the Ultimate Final Cause of man: "For OF him, and THROUGH him, and TO him, are all things, and to him shall be the glory for ever," Rom. xi. 36. The new life or nature in the saints is his image, Col. iii. 10. The principle of it is called the divine nature, 2 Pet. i. 4. The exercise of that principle (including the principle itself) is called the life of God, (Ephes. iv. 18,) from which the gentiles are said to be alienated by their ignorance. Therefore it is called holiness, which is a separation to God from common use; "God's dwelling in us," and "ours in him," 1 John iv. 12, 13; of whom we are said to be born and regenerate, 1 John iv. 7; John iii. 5. And our perfection in glory, is our living with God, and enjoying him for ever. GODLINESS then is the comprehensive name of all true religion. Jesus Christ himself came but to restore corrupted man to the love, and obedience, and fruition of his Creator, and at last will "give up the kingdom to the Father, that God may be all, and in all; and the Son himself shall be subject to this end," 1 Cor. xv. 24, 28. The end of Christ's sacrifice and intercession is to reconcile God and man. The end of his doctrine is to teach us to know God. The end of his government is to reduce us to the perfect obedience of our Maker. It is therefore the greatest duty of a christian to know God as revealed by his Son; and it is such a duty about our ultimate end as is also our greatest mercy and felicity. Therefore doth the Lord Jesus here in the text describe that life eternal which he was to give to those whom the Father had given him, to consist in "knowing the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he had sent." My purpose is in this treatise to speak only of the first part of the text, the knowledge of God. And first I shall very briefly explain the text.

THIS—That is, This which I am describing.

LIFE—Life is taken sometimes for the soul's abode in the body, which is the natural life of man; or the soul's continuation in its separated state, which is the natural life of the soul; and sometimes for the perfections of natural life. And that either its natural perfection, that is, its health and vivacity: or its moral perfection or rectitude; and that is either in the cause, and so God is our life, Christ is our life, the Holy Spirit is our life: or in itself; and so holiness is our life in the principle, seed, or habit. Sometimes life is taken for the work, employment, and exercise of life; and so a holy conversation is our moral, spiritual, or holy life. And sometimes it is taken for the felicity of the living: and so it containeth all the former in their highest perfection, that is, both natural life, and moral spiritual life, and the holy exercise thereof, together with the full attainment and fruition of God in glory, the End of all.

ETERNAL—That is, simply eternal, objectively, as to God the principal object: and eternal *ex parte post*, subjectively; that is, everlasting.

THIS IS LIFE ETERNAL—Not natural life in itself considered, as the devils and wicked men shall have it. But, 1. It is the same moral spiritual life which shall have no end, but endure to eternity. It is a living to God in love; but only initial, and very imperfect here, in comparison of what it will be in heaven. 2. It is the eternal felicity, (1.) Seminally; for grace is as it were the seed of glory. (2.) As it is the necessary way or means of attaining it; and that preparation which infallibly procureth it. The perfect holiness of the saints in heaven, will be one part of their perfect happiness: and this holiness imperfect they have here in this life. It is the same God that we know and love, here and there; and with a knowledge and love that is of the same nature seminally: as the egg is of the nature of the bird. (Whether it may be properly said to be formally and specifically the same *quoad actum*, as well as *quoad objectum*; yea, whether the *objectum clare visum*, and

the *objectum in speculo vel ænigmate visum*, make not the act specifically differ, I shall not trouble you to dispute.) And this imperfect holiness hath the promise of perfect holiness and happiness in the full fruition of God hereafter. So it is the seed and prognostic of life eternal.

TO KNOW—*Non semper et ubique eodem modo vel gradu:* Not to know God here and hereafter in the same manner or degree. But to know him here as in a glass, and hereafter in his glory, as face to face. To know him by an affective, partial knowledge: there is no text of Scripture of which the rule is more clearly true and necessary than of this, that words of knowledge do imply affection. It is the closure of the whole soul with God, which is here called the knowing of God. And because it is not meet to name every particular act of the soul, whenever this duty is mentioned, it is all denominated from knowledge, as the first act, which inferreth all the rest. 1. Knowledge of God in the habit, is spiritual life, as a principle. 2. Knowledge of God in the exercise, is spiritual life, as an employment. 3. The knowledge of God in perfection, with its effects, is life eternal, as it signifieth full felicity. What it containeth, I shall further show anon.

THEE—That is, the Father, called by some divines, *Fons vel fundamentum Trinitatis:* The fountain or foundation of the Trinity: and oft used in the same sense as the word *God*, to signify the pure Deity.

THE ONLY—He that believeth that there is more gods than one, believeth not in any. For though he may give many the name, yet the description of the true God can agree to none of them. He is not God indeed, if he be not one only.

This doth not at all exclude Jesus Christ, as the second person in the Trinity; but only distinguisheth the pure Deity, or the only true God, as such, from Jesus Christ, as Mediator between God and man.

TRUE—There are many that falsely and metaphorically are called gods. If we think of God but as one of these, it is not to know him, but deny him.

GOD—The word *God* doth not only signify the divine perfections in himself, but also his relation to the creatures. To be a God to us, is to be one to whom we must ascribe all that we are or have; and one whom we must love, and obey, and honour, with all the powers of soul and body; and one on whom we totally depend, and from whom we expect our judgment and reward, in whom alone we can be perfectly blessed.

AND JESUS CHRIST—That is, as Mediator, in his natures, (God and man,) and in his office and grace.

WHOM THOU HAST SENT—That is, whom thy love and wisdom designed and commissioned to this undertaking and performance.

The knowledge of the Holy Ghost seemeth here left out, as if it were no part of life eternal. But, 1. At that time the Holy Ghost in that eminent sort, as sent by the Father and Son on the apostles, after the resurrection and ascension of Christ, was not yet so manifested as afterwards, and therefore not so necessarily to be distinctly known and believed in as after; the having of the Spirit being of more necessity than the distinct knowledge of him. Certain it is that the disciples were at first very dark in this article of faith: and Scripture more fully revealeth the necessity to salvation of believing in the Father and Son, than in the Holy Ghost distinctly; yet telling us, that "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, the same is none of his," Rom. viii. 9. 2. But presently after, when the Spirit was to be sent, the necessity of believing in him is expressed; especially in the apostle's commission to baptize all nations (that were made disciples) in "the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

Doct. The knowledge of the only true God, and of Jesus Christ the Mediator, is the life of grace, and the necessary way to the life of glory.

As James distinguisheth between such a dead faith as devils and wicked men had, and such a living and working faith as was proper to the justified; so must we here of the knowledge of God. "Many profess that they know God, but in works they deny him, being abominable and disobedient, and to every good work reprobate," Titus i. 16. There is a form of knowledge which the unbelievers had, (Rom. ii. 22,) and a knowledge which puffeth up, and is void of love, which hypocrites have, 1 Cor. viii. 1, 13. But no man (spiritually) knoweth the things of God, but by the Spirit. And they that rightly "know his name will put their trust in him," Psal. ix. 10. Thus he giveth the regenerate "a heart to know him," Jer. xxiv. 7; and the new creature "is renewed in knowledge," Col. iii. 10. And vengeance shall be poured out "on them that know not God," 2 Thess. i. 8.

This saving knowledge of God which is eternal life, containeth and implieth in it all these acts: 1. The understanding's apprehension of God according to the necessary articles of faith. 2. A belief of the truth of these articles: that God is, and is such as he is therein described. 3. A high estimation of God accordingly. 4. A volition, complacency, or love to him as God, the chiefest good. 5. A desiring after him. 6. A choosing him, with the rejection of all competitors. 7. A consent that he be our God, and a giving up ourselves to him as his people. 8. An intending him as our ultimate end in the use of means, in the course of our conversations. 9. A seeking him in the choice and use of means. 10. An obeying him as our Sovereign Governor. 11. An honouring and praising him as God. 12. And an enjoying him and delighting in him (in some small foretaste here, as he is seen by faith; but perfectly hereafter, as beheld in glory). The affective, practical knowing of God, which is life eternal, containeth or implieth all these parts.

And every christian that hath any of this knowledge, desireth more: it is his great desire to know more of God, and to know him with a more affecting, powerful knowledge. He that groweth in grace, doth accordingly grow in this knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ. The vigour and alacrity of our souls liveth in it: the rectitude of our actions, and the holiness of them, floweth from it: God is the excellency of our hearts and lives: our advancement and our joy is here only to be found. All other knowledge is so far desirable, as it conduceth to the knowledge of God, or to the several duties which that knowledge doth require. All knowledge of words or things, of causes and effects, of any creatures, actions, customs, laws, or whatsoever may be known, is so far valuable as it is useful; and so far useful as it is holy, subserving the knowledge of God, in Christ. What the sun is to all men's eyes, that God is to their souls, and more. It is to know him that we have understandings given us; and our understandings enjoy him but so far as they know him; as the eye enjoyeth the light of the sun, by seeing it. The ignorance of God, is the blindness and part of the atheism of the soul, and inferreth the rest. They that know him not, desire not heartily to know him; nor can they love him, trust him, fear him, serve him, or call upon him, whom they do not know. "How shall they call upon him in whom they have not believed?" Rom. x. 14. The heart

of the ungodly saith to God, "Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. What is the Almighty, that we should serve him; and what profit shall we have if we pray unto him?" Job xxi. 14, 15; xxii. 17. All wickedness hath admission into that heart or land where the knowledge of God is not the watch to keep it out. Abraham inferred that the men of Gerar would kill him for his wife, when he saw that "the fear of God was not in that place," Gen. xx. 11. It was "God's controversy with Israel, because there was no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land; but by swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, they brake out, and blood touched blood," Hosea iv. 1, 2. They are called by God, "a foolish people, sottish children, of no understanding, that knew not God; though they were wise to do evil," Jer. iv. 22. He will "pour out his fury upon the heathen that know him not, and the families that call not on his name," Jer. x. 25. As the day differeth from the night, by the light of the sun, so the church differeth from the world, by the knowledge of God in Jesus Christ: "In Judah is God known; his name is great in Israel: in Salem also is his tabernacle, and his dwelling-place in Zion," Psal. lxxvi. 1, 2. The love, and unity, and peace, which shall succeed persecution and malice in the blessed times, shall be "because the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea," Isa. xi. 6—9. Hypocrites shall know him superficially and uneffectually: and his holy ones shall know him so as to love him, fear him, trust him, and obey him; with a knowledge effectual upon heart and life: and he will "continue his loving-kindness to them that know him," Psal. xxxvi. 10.

He is the best christian that hath the fullest impression made upon his soul by the knowledge of God in all his attributes. Thus it is our life eternal to know God in Christ. It is to reveal the Father that the Son was sent; and it is to reveal the Father and the Son, that the Holy Spirit is sent: God is the light, and the life, and the felicity of the soul. The work of its salvation is but the restoring it to him, and putting it in possession of him. The beginning of this is regeneration and reconciliation; the perfection of it is glorification, beatifical vision, and fruition. The mind that hath least of God is the darkest and most deluded mind; and the mind that hath most of him is the most lucid, pure, and serene. And how is God in the mind, but as the light and other visible objects are in the eye; and as pleasant melody is in the ear; and as delightful meats and drinks are in the taste? but that God maketh a more deep and durable impress on the soul, and such as is suitable to its spiritual, immaterial nature.

As your seal is to make a full impression on the wax, of the whole figure that is upon itself, so hath God been pleased in divers seals to engrave his image, and these must make their impress upon us. 1. There is the seal of the creation; for the world hath much of the image of God: it is engraven also on the seal of providential disposals (though there we are uncapable of reading it yet, so fully as in the rest). 2. It is engraven on the seal of the holy Scriptures. 3. And on the person of Jesus Christ, who is the purest, clearest image of the Father, as also on the holy example of his life. 4. And by the means of all these applied to the soul, in our sober consideration, by the working of the Holy Ghost, the image of God is made upon us.

Here note, 1. That *all* the revealed image of God must be made on the soul, and not a *part only;* and all is wrought where any is truly wrought. 2. That to the completeness of his image on us, it is necessary that each part of God's description be orderly made, and orderly make the impress on us, and that each part keep its proper place: for it is a monster that hath feet where the head should be, or the backside forward, or where there is any gross misplacing of the parts. 3. Note also, that all the three forementioned seals contain all God's image on them; but yet not all alike; but the first part is more clearly engraven upon the first of them, and the second part upon the second of them, and the third part most clearly on the third and last.

To open this more plainly to you; unity in trinity, and trinity in unity, is the sum of our holy faith. In the Deity there is revealed to us, one God in three persons, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; the essence is but one, the subsistences are three. And as we must conceive and speak of the divine nature according to its image, while we see it but in a glass; so we must say, that in this blessed Deity, in the unity of essence there is a trinity of essential properties and attributes; that is, power, wisdom, and goodness, life, light, and love; the measure of which is to have no measure, but to be infinite. And therefore this Being is eternal, and not measured by time, being without beginning or end: he is immense, as being not measured by place, but containeth all places, and is contained in none: he is perfect, as not measured by parts or by degrees, but quite above degrees and parts. This infiniteness of his being doth communicate itself, or also consist in the infiniteness of his essential properties. His power is omnipotency, that is, infinite power; his knowledge or wisdom is omniscience, that is, infinite wisdom; his goodness is felicity itself, or infinite goodness.

The first seal (to our cognizance) on which he engraved this his image, was the creation; that is, 1. The whole world in general. 2. The intellectual nature or man in special.

In the being of the creation and every particular creature, his infinite being is revealed; so wretched a fool is the atheist, that by denying God, he denieth all things! Could he prove that there is no God, I would quickly prove that there is no world, no man, no creature. If he know that he is himself, or that the world or any creature is, he may know that God is: for God is the original Being; and all being that is not eternal, must have some original: and that which hath no original is God, being eternal, infinite, and without cause.

The power of God is revealed in the being and powers of the creation. His wisdom is revealed in their nature, order, offices, effects, &c. His goodness is revealed in the creature's goodness, its beauty, usefulness, accomplishments. But though all his image thus appear upon the creation, yet is it his omnipotency that principally there appears. The beholding and consideration of the wonderful greatness, activity, and excellency of the sun, the moon, the stars, the fire, and other creatures, doth first and chiefly possess us with apprehensions of the infinite greatness or power of the Creator.

In the holy word or laws of God, which is the second glass or seal, (more clear and legible to us than the former,) there appeareth also all his image; his power in the narratives, predictions, &c.; his wisdom in the prophecies, precepts, and in all; his goodness in the promises and institutions, in a special manner. But yet it is his second property, his wisdom, that most eminently appeareth on this second seal, and is seen in the glass of the holy law. The discovery of such mysteries; the revelation of so many truths; the suitableness of all the instituted

means; and the admirable fitness of all the holy contrivances of God, and all his precepts, promises, and threatenings, for the government of mankind, and carrying him on for the attainment of his end, in a way agreeable to his nature; these show that wisdom that is most eminently here revealed, though power and goodness be revealed with it: so in the face of Jesus Christ, who is the third and most perfect seal and glass, there is the image of the power, and wisdom, and goodness of the Godhead; but yet it is the love or goodness of the Father that is most eminently revealed in the Son: his power appeared in the incarnation, the conquests over Satan and the world, the miracles, the resurrection, and the ascension of Christ; his wisdom appeareth in the admirable mystery of redemption, and in all the parts of the office, works, and law of Christ, and in the means appointed in subordination to him; but love and goodness shineth most clearly and amiably through the whole; it being the very end of Christ in this blessed work, to reveal God to man in the riches of his love, as giving us the greatest mercies, by the most precious means, in the meetest season and manner for our good; reconciling us to himself, and treating us as children, with fatherly compassions, and bringing us nearer him, and opening to us the everlasting treasure, having brought life and immortality to light in the gospel.

God being thus revealed to man from without, in the three glasses or seals of the creation, law, and Son himself, he is also revealed to us in ourselves, man being, as it were, a little world.

In the nature of man is revealed, as in a seal or glass, the nature of the blessed God, in some measure. In unity of essence, we have a trinity of faculties of soul, even the vegetative, sensitive, and rational, as our bodies have both parts and spirits, natural, vital, and animal; the rational power in unity, hath also its trinity of faculties, even power for execution, understanding for direction, and will for command: the measure of power is naturally sufficient to its use and end; the understanding is a faculty to reason, discern, and discourse; the will hath that freedom which beseemeth an undetermined, self-determining creature here in the way.

Besides this physical image of God, that is inseparable from our nature, we have also his law written in our hearts, and are ourselves objectively part of the law of nature; that is, the signifiers of the will of God. Had we not by sin obliterated somewhat of this image, it would have showed itself more clearly, and we should have been more capable of understanding it.

And then when we are regenerate and renewed by the grace and Spirit of Christ, and planted into him, as living members of his body, we have then the third impression upon our souls, and are made like our Head in wisdom, holiness, and in effectual strength.

Considered as creatures endued with power, understanding and will, we have the impress of all the foresaid attributes of God; but eminently of his power.

Considered as we were at first possessed with the light and law of works or nature, (of which we yet retain some part,) so we have the impress of all these attributes of God; but most eminently of his wisdom.

Considered as regenerate by the Spirit, and planted into Christ, so we have the impress of all his said attributes; but most eminently of his love and goodness, shining in the moral accomplishments or graces of the soul.

Man being thus made at first the natural and sapiential image of God, (with much of the image of his love,) the Lord did presently, by necessary resultancy and voluntary consent, stand related to us in such variety of relations as answer the foresaid properties and attributes. And these relations of God to us, are next to be known, as flowing from his attributes and works.

1. As we have our derived being from God, who is the primitive eternal Being; so from our being given by creation, God is related to us as our Maker: from this relation of a Creator in unity, there ariseth a trinity of relations; this trinity is in that unity, and that unity in this trinity. First, God having made us of nothing, is necessarily related to us as our Lord: by a Lord we mean strictly a proprietary or owner, as you are the owner of your goods, or any thing that is your own.

Secondly, He is related to us as our Ruler, our Governor, or King. This riseth from our nature, made to be ruled in order to our end, being rational, voluntary agents; and also from the dominion and blessed nature of God, who only hath right to the government of the world, and only is fit and capable of ruling it.

Thirdly, He is related also to us as our Benefactor or Father; freely and of his bounty giving us all the good that we do receive.

His first relation in this trinity, answereth his first property in the trinity: he is our Almighty Creator, and therefore is our Owner or our Lord.

The second of these relations answereth the second property of God. He is most wise, and made an impress of his wisdom on the rational creature, and therefore is our Governor.

The third relation answereth the third property of God. As he is most good, so is he our Benefactor; "Thou art good, and dost good," Psal. cxix. 68. Man's nature and disposition is known by his works, though he be a free agent; for "the tree is known by his fruit," Matt. vii. 17. And so God's nature is known by his works, (as far as is fit for us here to know,) though he be a free agent.

In each of these relations, God hath other special attributes, which are denominated from his relations, or his following works:

As he is our Lord or Owner, his proper attribute is to be absolute, having so full a title to us that he may do with us what he list, Matt. xx. 15; Rom. ix. 21.

As he is our Ruler, his proper attribute is to be our Sovereign or Supreme; there being none above him, nor co-ordinate with him, nor any power of government but what is derived from him.

As he is our Benefactor, it is his prerogative to be our Chief, or All; the Alpha and Omega; the Fountain, or first efficient cause of all that we receive or hope for; and the End, or ultimate final cause that can make us happy by fruition, and that we must still intend.

As these are the attributes of God in these his great relations, so in respect to the works of these relations, he hath other subordinate attributes. As he is our Owner, it is his work to dispose of us; and his proper attribute to be most free. As he is our Ruler, it is his work to govern us; which is, first, by making laws for us, and then by teaching and persuading us to keep them, and lastly by executing them; which is by judging, rewarding, and punishing. In respect to all these, his principal attribute is to be just or righteous; in which is comprehended his truth or faithfulness, his holiness, his mercy, and his terrible dreadfulness. As his attributes appear in the assertions of his word, he is true (his veracity being nothing but his power, wisdom, and goodness, expressing themselves in his word or re-

velations). For he that is able to do what he will, and so wise as to know all things, and so good as to will nothing but what is good, cannot possibly lie; for every lie is either for want of power, or knowledge, or goodness; he that is most able and knowing, need not deceive by lying; and he that is most good, will not do it without need. As his first properties appear in the word of promise, he is called faithful, which is his truth in making good a word of grace. As he commandeth holy duties, and condemneth sin as the most detestable thing, by a pure, righteous law, so he is called holy; and also as the fountain of this law, and the grace which sanctifieth his people. As he fulfilleth his promises, and rewardeth and defendeth men according to his word, so he is called merciful and gracious, as a governor (where his mercy is considered as limited or ordained by his laws). As he fulfilleth his threatenings, he is called angry, wrathful, terrible, dreadful, holy, jealous, &c. But he is just in all.

And as these are his attributes as our Sovereign Ruler; so as our Benefactor, his special attribute is to be gracious, or bountiful, or benign; or to be loving and inclined to do good. These are the attributes of God resulting from his nature as appearing in his image in the creation, laws, and the person of his Son; and resulting from his relations and the works of those relations; even as he is our Creator, in unity; and our Lord or Owner, our Ruler and Benefactor, in trinity.

Were it not my purpose to confine myself to this short discovery of the nature, attributes, and works of God, but to run deeper into the rest of the body of divinity, I should come down to the fall, and work of redemption, and show you in the gospel and all the ordinances, &c. the footsteps of this method of trinity in unity, which I have here begun; but that were to digress.

Besides what is said, we might name you many attributes of God, that are commonly called negative, and do but distinguish him from the imperfect creature, by setting him above us infinitely in his perfections. Man hath a body, but God is not a body, but a Spirit: man is mutable, but God immutable: man is mortal, but God immortal, &c. And now as I have showed you these properties, relations, and attributes of God, so I must next tell you that we also stand in answerable counter-relations to him; and must have the qualities and do the works that answer those relations.

1. As God is our Almighty Creator, so we are his creatures, impotent and insufficient for ourselves. We owe him therefore all that a creature that hath but our receivings can owe his Maker. 2. In this relation is contained a trinity of relations. 1. We are his own, as he is our Lord. 2. We are his subjects, as he is our Ruler. 3. We are his children, as he is our Father; or his obliged beneficiaries, as he is our Benefactor. And now having opened to your observation the image of God, and the extrinsic seals, I have ripened the discourse so far, that I may fitlier show you how the impression of this image of God is to be made upon the soul of the believer.

CHAPTER II.

Of the Knowledge of God's Being.

1. "He that cometh to God, must believe that God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him," Heb. xi. 6. The first thing to be imprinted on the soul is, that there is a God; that he is a real most transcendent Being. As sure as the sun that shineth hath a being, and the earth that beareth us hath a being, so sure hath God that made them a being infinitely more excellent than theirs. As sure as the streams come from the fountain, and as sure as earth, and stones, and beasts, and men did never make themselves, nor do uphold themselves, or continue the course of nature in themselves and others, nor govern the world, so sure is there an infinite Eternal Being that doth this. Every atheist that is not mad, must confess that there is an Eternal Being, that had no beginning or cause; the question is only, Which this is? Whichever it is, it is this that is the true God. What now would the atheist have it to be? Certainly it is that Being that hath being itself from none, that is the first cause of all other beings: and if it causeth them, it must necessarily be every way more excellent than they, and contain all the good that it hath caused; for none can give that which he hath not to give; nor make that which is better than itself; that Being that hath made so glorious a creature as the sun, must needs itself be much more glorious. It could not have put strength and power into the creatures, if it had not itself more strength and power. It could not have put wisdom and goodness into the creatures, if it had not more wisdom and goodness than all they. Whatever it is therefore that hath more power, wisdom, and goodness than all the world besides, that is it which we call God. That cause that hath communicated to all things else, the being, power, and all perfections which they have, is the God whom we acknowledge and adore; if Democratists will ascribe all this to atoms, and think that the motes did make the sun; or if others will think that the sun is God, because it participateth of so much of his excellency; let them be mad awhile, till judgment shall convince them. So clear beyond all question to my soul, is the being of the Godhead, that the devil hath much lost the rest of his more subtle temptations, when he hath foolishly and maliciously adjoined this, to draw me to question the being of my God; which is more than to question, whether there be a sun in the firmament.

But what is the impress that the being of God must make upon the soul?

I answer, From hence the holy soul discerneth that the beginning and the end of his religion, the substance of his hope, is the Being of beings, and not a shadow; and that his faith is not a fancy. The object is as it were the matter of the act. If our faith, and hope, and love, and fear, be exercised in a delusory work, God is to the atheist but an empty name; he feels no life or being in him; and accordingly he offereth him a shadow of devotion, and a nominal service. But to the holy soul there is nothing that hath life and being but God, and that which doth receive a being from him, and leadeth to him. This real object putteth a reality into all the devotions of a holy soul. They look upon the vanities of the world as nothing; and therefore they look on worldly men as on idle dreamers that are doing nothing. This puts a seriousness and life into the faith and holy affections of the believer. He knows whom he trusteth, 2 Tim. i. 12. He knows whom he loveth, and in whom he hopeth. Atheists, and all ungodly men, do practically judge of God as the true believer judgeth of the world. The atheist takes the pleasures of the world to be the only substance; and God to be but as a shadow, a notion, or a dream. The godly take the world to be as nothing, and know it is but a fancy and dream, and shadow of pleasures, and honour, and profit, and felicity, that men talk of and seek so eagerly below; but that God is the substantial object and portion of

the soul. If you put into the mouth of a hungry man, a little froth, or breath, or air, and bid him eat it, and feed upon it, he will tell you, he finds no substance in it; so judgeth the graceless soul of God, and so judgeth the gracious soul of the creature, as separate from God.

Let this be the impression on thy soul, from the consideration of God's transcendent being. O look upon thyself and all things as nothing without him! and as nothing in comparison of him! and therefore let thy love to them be as nothing, and thy desires after them, and care for them, as nothing! But let the being of thy love, desire, and endeavours, be let out upon the transcendent Being. The creature hath its kind of being; but if it would be to us instead of God, it will be as nothing. The air hath its being, but we cannot dwell in it, nor rest upon it to support us as the earth doth. The water hath its being, but it will not bear us if we would walk upon it. The name of the great Jehovah is "I AM," Exod. iii. 14. Try any creature in thy need, and it will say, as Jacob to Rachel, "Am I in God's stead, that hath withheld thy desire from thee?" Gen. xxx. 2. Send to it and it will say as John Baptist, that confessed, "I am not the Christ," John i. 20. Let none of all the affections of thy soul have so much life and being in them, as those that are exercised upon God. Worms and motes are not regarded in comparison with mountains; a drop is not regarded in comparison of the ocean. Let the being of God take up thy soul, and draw off thy observation from deluding vanities, as if there were no such things before thee. When thou rememberest that there is a God, kings and nobles, riches and honours, and all the world, should be forgotten in comparison of him; and thou shouldst live as if there were no such things, if God appear not to thee in them. See them as if thou didst not see them, as thou seest a candle before the sun; or a pile of grass, or single dust, in comparison with the earth. Hear them as if thou didst not hear them; as thou hearest the leaves of the shaken tree, at the same time with a clap of thunder. As greatest things obscure the least, so let the being of the Infinite God so take up all the powers of thy soul, as if there were nothing else but he, when any thing would draw thee from him. Oh! if the being of this God were seen by thee, thy seducing friend would scarce be seen, thy tempting baits would scarce be seen, thy riches and honours would be forgotten; all things would be as nothing to thee in comparison of him.

CHAPTER III.

2. As the being of God should make this impression on thee, so the attributes that speak the perfection of that being, must each one have their work; as his unity or indivisibility, his immensity, and eternity.

And first, the thought of God's unity should contract and unite thy straggling affections, and call them home from multifarious vanity. It should possess thy mind with deep apprehensions of the excellency of holy unity in the soul, and in the church; and of the evil of division, and misery of distracting multiplicity. "The Lord our God is one God," 1 Cor. viii. 6. Perfection hath unity and simplicity. We fell into divisions and miserable distraction when we departed from God unto the creatures, for the creatures are many, and of contrary qualities, dispositions, and affections; and the heart that is set on such an object, must needs be a divided heart; and the heart that is divided among so many and contrary or discordant objects, must needs be a distracted heart. The confusions of the world confound the heart that is set upon the world. He that maketh the world his god, hath so many gods, and so discordant, that he will never please them all; and all of them together will never fully content and please him. And who would have a god that can neither please us, nor be pleased? He that maketh himself his god, hath a compounded god (and now corrupted) of multifarious, and now of contrary desires, as hard to please as any without us. There is no rest or happiness but in unity. And therefore none in ourselves or any other creature; but in God the only centre of the soul. The further from the centre, the further from unity. It is only in God that differing minds can be well united. Therefore is the world so divided, because it is departed so far from God. Therefore have we so many minds and ways, and such diversity of opinions, and contrariety of affections, because men forsake the centre of unity. There is no uniting in any worldly, carnal, self-devised principles or practices. When holiness brings these distracted, scattered souls to God, in him they will be one. While they bark at holiness, and cry up unity, they show themselves distracted men. For holiness is the only way to unity, because it is the closure of the soul with God. All countries, and persons, cannot meet in any one interest or creature, but each hath a several interest of his own; but they might all meet in God. If the pope were God, and had his perfections, he would be fit for all the church to centre in; but being man, and yet pretending to this prerogative of God, he is the grand divider and distracter of the church. The proverb is too true, So many men, so many minds; because that every man will be a god to himself, having a self-mind, and self-will, and all men will not yield to be one in God. God is the common interest of the saints; and therefore all that are truly saints, are truly united in him. And if all the visible church, and all the world, would heartily make him their common interest, we should quickly have a common unity and peace, and the temple of double-faced Janus would be shut up. They that sincerely have one God, have also one Lord, (and Saviour,) one faith, one spirit, one baptism, (or holy covenant with God,) even because they have "one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in them all." And therefore they must "keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace," Eph. iv. 3—6. Though yet they have different degrees of gifts, (ver. 7,) and therefore differences in opinion about abundance of inferior things. The further we go from the trunk or stock, the more numerous and small we shall find the branches. They are one in God, that are divided in many doubtful controversies. The weakest therefore in the faith must be received into this union and communion of the church; but not to doubtful disputations, Rom. xiv. 1. As the ancient baptism contained no more but our engagement to God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, so the ancient profession of saving faith was of the same extent. God is sufficient for the church to unite in. A union in other articles of faith is so far necessary to the unity of the church, as it is necessary to prove our faith and unity in God, and the sincerity of this ancient, simple belief in God the Father, Son, and Spirit.

The unity of God is the attribute to be first handled, and imprinted on the mind, even next unto his essence, "The Lord our God is one Lord," Deut. vi. 4; and the unity of the church is its excellency and attribute, that is first and most to be esteemed and preserved next unto its essence: if it be not a church, it cannot be one church; and if we be not saints, we cannot be united saints. If we be not members, we

cannot make one body. But when once we have the essence of saints and of a church, we must next be solicitous for its unity: nothing below an essential point of faith will allow us to depart from the catholic unity, love, and peace that is due to saints; and because such essentials are never wanting in the catholic church, or any true member of it, therefore we are never allowed to divide from the catholic church, or any true and visible member. It is first necessary that the church be a church, that is, a people separated from the world to Christ; and that the christian be a christian in covenant with the Lord. But the next point of necessity is that the church be one, and christians be one. And he that for the sake of lower points, how true soever, will break this holy bond of unity, shall find at last, to his shame and sorrow, that he understood not the excellency or necessity of unity. The prayer of Christ for the perfection of his saints is, "That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me: and the glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me." Here it appeareth that the unity of the church or saints is necessary, to convince the world of the truth of christianity, and of the love of God to his people, and necessary to the glory and perfection of the saints. The nearer any churches, or members, are to the divine perfections, and the more strictly conformable to the mind of God, the more they are one, and replenished with catholic love to all saints, and desirous of unity and communion with them. It is a most lamentable delusion of some christians, that think their ascending to higher degrees of holiness doth partly consist in their withdrawing from the catholic church, or from the communion of most of the saints on earth, upon the account of some smaller differing opinions; and they think that they should become more loose and leave their strictness, if they should hold a catholic communion, and leave their state of separation and division! Is there any strictness amiable or desirable, except a strict conformity to God? Surely a strict way of sin and wickedness is not desirable to a saint. And is not God one, and his church one; and hath he not commanded all his servants to be one; and is not love the new and great commandment, by which they must be known to all men to be his disciples? Which then is the stricter servant of the Lord; he that loveth much, or he that loveth little; he that loveth all christians, or he that loveth but a few, with the special love; he that loveth a christian as a christian, or he that loveth him but as one of his party or opinion; he that is one in the catholic body, or he that disowneth communion with the far greatest part of the body? Will you say that Christ was loose, and Pharisees strict, because Christ ate and drank with publicans and sinners, and the Pharisees condemned him for it? It was Christ that was stricter in holiness than they; for he abounded more in love and good works: but they were stricter than he in a proud, self-conceited morosity and separation. Certainly he that is highest in love, is highest in grace, and not he that confineth his love to few. Was it not the weak christian that was the stricter, in point of meats, and drinks, and days? Rom. xiv.; xv. But the stronger that were censured by them, did more strictly keep the commandment of God.

Christian reader, let the unity of God have this effect upon thy soul: 1. To draw thee from the distracting multitude of creatures, and make thee long to be all in God; that thy soul may be still working toward him, till thou find nothing but God alone within thee. In the multitude of thy thoughts within thee, let his comforts delight thy soul, Psal. xciv. 19. The multitude distracteth thee; retire into unity, that thy soul may be composed, quieted, and delighted.

2. And let it make thee long for the unity of saints, and endeavour it to the utmost of thy power, that the church in unity may be more like the Head.

3. And let it cause thee to admire the happiness of the saints, that are freed from the bondage of the distracting creature, and have but one to love, and fear, and trust, and serve, and seek, and know; one thing is needful, which should be chosen, but it is many that we are troubled about, Luke xi. 42.

CHAPTER IV.

3. THE immensity of God (which is the next attribute to be considered) must have this effect upon thy soul: 1. The infinite God that is every where, comprehending all places and things, and comprehended by none, must raise admiring, reverent thoughts in the soul of the believer. We wonder at the magnitude of the sun, and the heavens, and the whole creation; but when we begin to think what is beyond the heavens, and all created being, we are at a kind of loss. Why it is God that is in all, and above all, and beyond all, and beneath all; and where there is no place, because no creature, there is God: and if thy thoughts should imagine millions of millions of miles beyond all place and measure, all is but God; and go as far as thou canst in thy thoughts and thou canst not go beyond him. Reverently admire the immensity of God. The world and all the creatures in it, are not to God so much as a sand or atom is to all the world. The point of a needle is more to all the world, than the world to God. For between that which is finite, and that which is infinite, there is no comparison. "Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure; and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?—Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing.—All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity," Isa. xl. 12, 15, 17.

2. From this greatness and immensity of God also thy soul must reverently stay all its busy, bold inquiries, and know that God is to us, and to every creature, incomprehensible. If thou couldst fathom or measure him, and know his greatness by a comprehensive knowledge, he were not God. A creature can comprehend nothing but a creature. You may know God, but not comprehend him; as your foot treadeth on the earth, but doth not cover all the earth. The sea is not the sea, if you can hold it in a spoon. Thou canst not comprehend the sun which thou seest, and by which thou seest all things else, nor the sea, or earth, no nor a worm, or pile of grass; thy understanding knoweth not all that God hath put into any the least of these; thou art a stranger to thyself, and to somewhat in every part of thyself, both body and soul. And thinkest thou to comprehend God, that perfectly comprehendest nothing! Stop then thy over-bold inquiries, and remember that thou art a shallow, finite worm, and God is infinite. First reach to comprehend the heaven and earth and

whole creation, before thou think of comprehending Him, to whom the world is nothing, or vanity; or so small a dust, or drop, or point. Saith Elihu, "At this my heart trembleth, and is moved out of its place: hear attentively the noise of his voice.—God thundereth marvellously with his voice; great things doth he which we cannot comprehend," Job xxxvii. 1, 5. How then should we comprehend himself? When God pleadeth his cause with Job himself, what doth he but convince him of his infiniteness and absoluteness, even from the greatness of his works, which are beyond our reach, and yet are as nothing to himself? Should he take the busy inquirer in hand, but as he did begin with Job, (xxxviii. 1, 2, &c.) "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up thy loins like a man, for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me," &c.; alas, how soon would he nonplus and confound us, and make us say as Job, (xl. 4,) "Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth: once have I spoken, but I will not answer; yea twice, but I will proceed no further." Indeed there is mentioned Eph. iii. 11, the saints comprehending the dimensions of the love of Christ; but as the next verse saith, it passeth knowledge: so *comprehending* there, signifieth no more but a knowing according to our measure; an attainment of what we are capable to attain; nay, nor all that neither, but such a prevalent knowledge of the love of Christ as is common to all the saints. As there is nothing more visible than the sun, and yet no visible being less comprehended by the sight; so is there nothing more intelligible than God, (for he is all in all things,) and yet nothing so incomprehensible to the mind that knoweth him. It satisfieth me not to be ignorant of God, nor to know so little as I know, nor to be short of the measure that I am capable of; but it satisfieth me to be uncapable of comprehending him; or else I must be unsatisfied because I am not God. Oh the presumptuous arrogancy of those men, if I may call them men, that dare prate about the infinite God such things as never were revealed to them in his works or word! and dare pretend to measure him by their shallow understandings, and question, if not deny and censure, that of God which they cannot reach! and sooner suspect the word that doth reveal him than their muddy brains, that should better conceive of him! Saith Elihu, "Behold, God is great, and we know him not; neither can the number of his years be searched out," Job xxxvi. 26. Though the knowledge of him be our life eternal, yet we know him not by any full and adequate conception. We know an infinite God, and therefore with an excellent knowledge objectively considered; but with a poor degree and kind of knowledge next to none, as to the act; and it is a thousand thousandfold more that we know not of him, than that we know: for indeed there is no comparison to be here made.

3. The immensity of God, as it proveth him incomprehensible, so it containeth his omnipresence, and therefore should continually affect us, as men that believe that God stands by them. As we would compose our thoughts, and minds, and passions, if we saw (were it possible) the Lord stand over us, so should we now labour to compose them. As we would restrain and use our tongues, and order our behaviour, if we saw his Majesty, so should we do now, when we know that he is with us. An eye-servant will work hard in his master's presence, whatever he doth behind his back. Bestir thee then, christian, for God stands by, "In him we live, and move, and have our being," Acts xvii. 28. Loiter not till thou canst truly say that God is gone, or absent from thee; sin not by wilfulness or negligence, till thou canst say, thou art behind his back. Alas, that we should have no more awakened, serious souls, and no more fervent, lively prayers, and no more serious, holy speech, and no more careful, heavenly lives, when we stand before the living God, and do all in his sight, and speak all in his hearing! O why should sense so much affect us, and faith and knowledge work no more? We can be awed with the presence of a man, and would not do before a prince what most men do before the Lord. Yea, other things affect us when we see them not; and shall not God? But of this more anon.

4. The immensity of God assureth us much of his all-sufficiency. He that is every where, is easily able to hear all prayers, to help us in all straits, to supply all wants, to punish all sins. A blasphemous conceit of God as finite, and as absent from us, is one of the causes of our distrust. He that doth distrust an absent friend, as thinking he may forget him, or neglect him, will trust him when he is with him: cannot he hear thee, and pity thee, and help thee, that is still with thee? Oh what an awe is this to the careless! what a support to faith! what a quickener to duty! what a comfort to the afflicted, troubled soul! God is in thy poor cottage, christian, and well acquainted with thy wants: God is at thy bedside when thou art sick, and nearer thee than the nearest of thy friends. What wouldst thou do in want or pain if God stood by? Wouldst thou not pray and trust him if thou sawest him? So do though thou see him not, for he is surely there.

5. The immensity and infinite greatness of God assureth us of his particular providence. Some blasphemous infidels imagine that he hath only a general providence, and hath left all to some inferior powers, and meddleth not with particular things himself. They think that as he hath left it to the sun to illuminate the world, so hath he left all other inferior things and events to nature or inferior causes; and that he doth not himself regard, observe, reward, or punish the thoughts, and words, and ways of men. And all this is, because they consider not the immensity or infinite greatness of the Lord. It is true, that God hath framed the nature of all things, and delighteth to maintain and use the frame of second causes which he hath made; and will not easily and ordinarily work against or without this order of causes; but it is as true and certain, both that sometimes he maketh use of miracles, and that in the very course of natural causes he is able to exercise a particular providence as well as without them, by himself alone. The creature doth nothing but by him. All things move as he first moveth them, in their natural agency. His wisdom guideth, his will intendeth and commandeth, his power moveth and disposeth all. The sun would not shine, if he were not the light of it; and he is no less himself the light of the world, than if he did illuminate it without a sun. God is never the further off, because the creatures are near us; nor ever the less in the effect, because he useth a second cause, than if there were no second cause at all. What influence second causes have upon the souls of men, he hath for the most part kept unknown to us; but that himself disposeth of us and all things after the counsel of his own will, is beyond all question. Can he that is most nearly present with thy thoughts, be regardless of them? Can he be regardless of thy words and ways that is with thee, and seeth and heareth all? If thou believe not that he is as verily with thee as thou art there thyself, thou art then an atheist. If thou believe him not to be infinite, thou believest him not to be God. It is not God that can be absent,

limited, or finite. And if thou be not such a senseless atheist, but knowest that God is every where, how is it possible thou shouldst doubt of his care or observance, or particular providence about every thing? No child is scarce so foolish that will think his father cares not what he saith or doth, when he stands before him. Wouldst thou doubt of God's particular providence, whether he regard thy heart, and talk, and practice, if thou didst see him with thee? Sure it is scarce possible. Why then dost thou question it when thou knowest that he is with thee? If thou be an atheist and knowest not, look about thee on the world, and bethink thee whether stones, and trees, and earth, whether beasts, or birds, or men, do make themselves: if they do, thou wert best uphold thyself, and be not sick, and do not die. If thou madest thyself, thou canst sure preserve thyself; but if any thing else made thee and all these lower things, either it was somewhat greater or less than they; either something better or worse than they. If less, or worse, how could it make them greater or better than itself? Can any thing give that which it hath not? If it must needs be greater and better than the creatures, then as it must be wiser than they, and more holy, gracious, and just than they, so must it be more comprehensive than all they. Whoever made this earth, is certainly greater than the earth, or else he should give it more than he had to give. And if he be greater, he must be present. If thou shouldst be so vain as to account any other higher thing the maker of this world, that is not God, thou must ascribe also a sufficiency to that maker, to exercise a particular providence, and moreover be put to consider who did make that maker. Nothing therefore is more certain even to reason itself, than that the Maker of the world must be greater than the world, and therefore present with all the world; and therefore must observe and regard all the world. When thou canst find out a thought, or word, or deed that was not done in the presence of God, or any creature that is not in his presence, then believe and spare not that he seeth it not, or regardeth it not; yea, and that it hath no being. O blind atheists! you see the sun before your eyes, which enlighteneth all the upper part of the earth at once; even millions of millions see all by its light; and yet do you doubt whether God beholds, and regards, and provides for all at once? Tell me, if God had never a creature to look to in all the world but thee, wouldst thou believe that he would regard thy heart, and words, and ways, or not? If he would, why not now as well as then? Is he not as sufficient for thee, and as really present with thee, as if he had no other creature else? If all men in the world were dead save one, would the sun any more illuminate that one than now it doth? Mayst thou not see as well by the light of it now, as if it had never another to enlighten? And dost thou see a creature do so much, and wilt thou not believe as much of the Creator? If thou think us worms too low for God so exactly to observe, thou mayst as well think that we are too low for him to create, or preserve; and then who made us and preserveth us? Doth not the sun enlighten the smallest bird, and crawling vermin, as well as the greatest prince on earth? Doth it withhold its light from any creature that can see, and say, I will not shine on things so base? And wilt thou more restrain the infinite God that is the Maker, Light, and Life of all? It is he that "filleth all in all," Eph. i. 23. "The heaven of heavens cannot contain him," 1 Kings viii. 27; and is he absent from thee? "He doth beset thee before and behind, and layeth his hand upon thee: whither wilt thou go from his Spirit, or whither wilt thou flee from his presence? If thou ascend up into heaven, he is there; if thou make thy bed in hell, thou wilt feel him there; if thou take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shalt thou find him to be to thee as thou art," Psal. cxxxix. 5, 7—10. Thou mayst think with sinful Adam and Eve, (Gen. iii. 8,) to hide thyself from the presence of the Lord; but thou wilt quickly find that he observeth thee; and "be sure thy sin will find thee out," Numb. xxxii. 23. Thou mayst with Cain be turned out of the "gracious presence of God," (Gen. iv. 16,) and cast out of his church and mercy; and with the damned thou mayst be turned out of the presence of his blessedness and glory: but thou shalt never be out of his essential presence, nor so escape the presence of his justice, Job i. 12; ii. 7. It is the presence of his grace where the upright are promised here to dwell, (Psal. cxl. 13,) and out of which they fear lest they be cast. "Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me," Psal. li. 11. And it is the "presence where is fulness of joy," which they aspire after, Psal. xvi. 11. But there is also a presence that the "earth shall tremble at," (Psal. cxiv. 7,) and that the "wicked shall perish at," Psal. lxviii. 2: so that a particular providence must be remembered by them that believe and remember the immensity of God.

CHAPTER V.

4. THE eternity of God is the next attribute to be known, which also must have its work upon the soul. And, 1. This also showeth us that God is incomprehensible; for man cannot comprehend eternity. When we go about to think of that which hath no beginning or end, it is to our mind, as a place a thousand miles off is to our eye; even beyond our reach: we cannot say there is no such place, yea, we know there is, but we cannot see it; so we know there is an Eternal Being, but our knowledge of his eternity is not intuitive, or comprehensive. Eternity therefore is the object of our faith, and reverence, and admiration, but forbids our busy, bold inquiries. Oh the arrogancy of those ignorantly-learned, and foolishly-wise disputing men, that have so long perplexed, if not torn in pieces the church, about the priority and posteriority of the knowledge and decrees of God, when they confess them all to be eternal! As if they knew not that terms of priority and presentiality, and posteriority, have not that significancy in or about eternity, as they have with us.

2. The eternity of God must draw the soul from transitory to eternal things. It is an everlasting blessedness, even the eternal God, that our souls are made for; the brutes are made for a mortal happiness; the immortal soul cannot be fully content with any thing that will have an end. As a capacity of this endless blessedness doth difference man from the beasts that perish; so the disposition to it doth difference saints from the ungodly; and the fruition of it doth difference the glorified from the damned. Alas, what a silly thing were man, if he were capable of nothing but these transitory things! What were our lives worth, and what were our time worth, and what were all our mercies worth, or what were all the world worth to us, or what were we worth ourselves? I would not undervalue the works of God; but truly if man had no other life to live but this, I should esteem him a very contemptible creature. If you say there is some excellency in the brutes, I answer, true; but their usefulness is their chiefest excellency; and what is their use but to be

a glass in which we may see the Lord, and to be serviceable to man in his passage to eternity? They are not capable of knowing, or loving, or enjoying God themselves; but they are useful to man that is capable of this; and so they have an everlasting end, and this is their excellency. And therefore the atheist that denieth an everlasting life to man, doth bring himself into a far baser state than the brutes are in; for the brutes have an everlasting end, in promoting the happiness of man: but if man have no everlasting end himself, there is no other whose everlasting happiness he can promote. The unbeliever therefore doth debase his own soul, and the whole creation: and faith and holiness advance the soul, and all things with it, that are useful to our advancement. The true believer honoureth his horse, his dog, his food and raiment, and the earth he treadeth on, and every creature, incomparably more than the infidel doth honour his own or any other's soul, or than he honoureth the greatest prince on earth. For the believer useth all things, even the vilest, in reference to eternity; but the infidel useth his life and soul but to a transitory end; and takes the greatest prince on earth to be but for a transitory use. And as eternity is invaluable in comparison of time, so the use and excellency that a believer doth ascribe to a bit of bread, or the basest creature, in the sanctified improvement of it, is ten thousand times, even unspeakably, above the use and excellency that an unbeliever ascribeth to his soul or to his prince. He that stampeth the image of a dog or a toad upon gold, instead of the image of the prince, and would have ten thousand pounds' worth go but for a farthing, doth not by a thousand degrees so much debase the gold, as the infidel doth debase his soul and all things. Infidelity is guilty of the destruction of all souls, and the destruction of all mercies, and the destruction of all divine revelations, of all graces, of all ordinances, and means, and of the destruction of the whole creation that was made for man: for he that destroyeth the end, destroyeth all the means: but the infidel destroyeth and denieth the end of every one of these, and holiness only doth give them up, and use them to their ends.

1. He is guilty of the destruction of all souls. For as much as in him lies they are destroyed, while they are all made useless to the end for which they were created. If there be no other life and happiness everlasting, what are souls good for? What is the reasonable creature good for? Is it to be happy here? In what? Here is no happiness. Is it in eating, and drinking, and sleeping? Why these are to strengthen us for our service which tendeth to our end, and therefore cannot be themselves our end. Is it not better be without either meat, or drink, or sleep, in point of happiness, so be it we also were without the need of them, than to need them and have them for our need, especially with the care and trouble which they cost us? I had a hundred times rather for my part, if it were lawful to desire it, never have meat, or drink, or sleep, and be without the need of them; as I had rather be without a sore, than to have a plaster that will ease it, and be every day at the pains to dress it. Brutes have some advantage in these above men, in that they have not the care, and fear, and sorrow of mind as we have, in the getting or keeping what they have or need. If you go downward, and say that men are made to govern brutes, then what are brutes made for, unless to dung the earth? And so the basest shall be the end of the noblest, and God may be as wisely said to be for man, because he is to govern him. Truly if there were no everlasting life, but man were a mere terrestrial animal, I had rather never have been born, or should wish I had never been a man: I knew not what to do with myself, nor how to employ the faculties of my soul or body, but they would all seem to me as useless things. What should I do with my reason, if I had no higher an end than beasts? What should I do with a mind that knoweth that there is a God, and another world, and that is capable of desiring him, seeking and enjoying him, if it must be frustrated of all? What should I do with a heart that is capable of the love of God, and delighting in his love, if I have no God to love and delight in, when this life is ended? Why have I a heart that so desireth him, in fuller vision and fruition, if I be capable of no such thing? What then should I do with my time and life? Verily I know not, if I were fully of this sad opinion, whether I should turn brute in my life agreeably to my judgment, or whether I should make an end of my life to be eased of a useless burden; but confident I am I should not know what to do with myself: I should be like a cashiered soldier, or like one turned out of his service, that knew not where to have work and wages: and if you found me standing "all day idle," I must give you the reason, "because no man hath hired me." What do those wretches do with their lives, that think they have no God to serve and seek, or future happiness to attain? As men use to say of naughty ministers, so may I say of all mankind according to the doctrine of the infidels: A sorry tailor may make a botcher, or a bad shoemaker may make a cobbler, and a broken mercer may be a pedlar; but a naughty priest is good for nothing (and it is true of him as such). And as Christ himself saith, (Matt. v. 13, 14,) "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. Men do not light a candle to put it under a bushel." So I say of the reasonable creature. The grass is useful for the beasts: the beasts are serviceable unto man: a swine that cannot serve you living, is useful being dead. But if there were no God to seek and serve, and no life but this for us to hope for, for aught I know man were good for nothing. What were light good for, if there were no eyes? or eyes, if there were no light to see by? What is a watch good for, but to tell the hour of the day? All the curious parts and workmanship of it, is worth no more than the metal is worth, if it be not useful to its proper end. And what reason, and will, and affections in man are good for I know not, if not to seek to please, and to enjoy the Lord! Take off this poise, and all the wheels of my soul must stand still, or else do worse.

2. The infidel and ungodly man that looks not after an eternal end, destroyeth all the mercies of God, and makes them as no mercies at all. Creation and our being is a mercy; but it is in order to our eternal end. Redemption by Christ is an unspeakable mercy; but it is denied by the infidel, and rejected by the ungodly. What is Christ worth, and all his mediation, if there be no life for man but this? Peace and liberty, health and life, friends and neighbours, food and raiment, are all mercies to us, as a ship and sails are to the mariner, or a fair way, or horse, or inn to a traveller; but if by denying our eternal end, you make our voyage or our journey vain, these mercies then are little worth: no more than a ship on the land, or a plough in the sea, or a horse to him that hath no use for him. And oh! what an ungrateful wretch is that, who will deny all the mercies of God to himself, and to all others! For, once deny the use and the eternal end, and you deny the mercy.

3. He that believeth not, or seeks not after an eternal end, destroyeth all the doctrine, law, and government of God; for all is but to lead us to this end. All the holy Scriptures, the precepts of Christ, and his holy example, the covenant of grace, the gifts and miracles of the Holy Ghost, the light and law of nature itself, are all to bring us to our eternal end: and therefore he that denieth that end, doth cancel them all, and cast them by as useless things.

4. And he denieth all the graces of the Spirit: for what use is there for faith, if the object of it be a falsehood? What use for hope, if there be no life to be hoped for? What use for holy desires and love, if God be not to be enjoyed? Grace is but the delusion and deformity of the soul, if the infidel and ungodly be in the right.

5. They destroy also all the means of our salvation, if they deny salvation, which is the end. To what purpose should men study, or read, or hear, or pray, or use either sacraments or any other means, for an end that is not to be had? To what end should men obey or suffer, for any such end that is not attainable?

6. Yea, they do let loose the soul to sin, and take off all effectual restraint. If there be no eternal end, and no reward or punishment but here, what can effectually hinder the men of this opinion from stealing, whoredom, or any villany, when it may be done with secrecy? What should hinder the revengeful man from poisoning or secretly murdering his enemy, or setting his house on fire in the night? If I know a man or woman that believes no life to come, I take it for granted they are revengeful, thieves, deceivers, fornicators, or any thing that is bad, if they have but temptation, and secret opportunity. For what hath he to seek but the pleasing of his flesh, that thinks he hath no God to seek or please, or no future reward or punishment to expect? He that confesseth himself an infidel, to me, doth confess himself to be in all things else as bad as ever he can or dare. Honesty is renounced by that man or woman that profess themselves to be atheists or infidels: methinks, in congruency with their profession, they should take it for a wrong to be called or reputed honest! If you tell me that heathens had a kind of honesty; I must tell you again, that most heathens believed the immortality of the soul, and that kind of seeming honesty which they had was only in those of them that thus expected a life to come. But those that believe not another life where man is to have his punishment and reward, have nothing like to honesty in them, but live like greedy, ravenous beasts, where they are from under the laws and government of them that look for another life. The cannibals that eat men's flesh, and some such savages as they, are the nations that expect no life but this. It is believed so commonly by all the civil infidels and Turks, as shows it to be a principle that nature doth reveal.

7. Yea, the whole creation that is within the sight of man, is destroyed opinionatively by the infidels that look for no immortal life: for all things were made to further our salvation; the "heavens to declare the glory of God, and the firmament to show his handy work;" and all creatures to be our glass in which we must behold the Lord, and our book in which we must read and learn his nature and his will. The sun is to light us, and maintain our life, and the life of other lower creatures, while we prepare for immortality; the earth is to bear us, and to bear fruit for us; and the trees and plants, and every creature, to accommodate and serve us, while we serve the Lord and pass on to eternity. And therefore the atheist that denieth us our eternity, denieth the usefulness of all the world. What were all the creatures here good for, if there were no men? The earth would be a wilderness, and the beasts would for the most part perish for want of sustenance, and all would be like a forsaken cottage that no man dwelleth in, and doth no good; and if man be not the heir of immortality, they can do him no good. All creatures are but our provision in the way to this eternity: and therefore if there were no eternity, what should we do with them? What should we do with ways, and pavements, or with inns for travellers, or with horses or other provision for our journey, if there were no travelling that way? And who will travel to a place that is not, or a city that is no where but in his brains, besides a mad-man? It is evident therefore, that as all the tools in a workman's shop are made useless to him if he be forbidden to use his trade, and all the books in my library are useless if I may not read them to get knowledge; so all creatures under heaven are made useless and destroyed doctrinally by the atheist, that thinks there is no eternal life for which they should be used. I must seriously profess, if I believed this, (being in other things of the mind I am,) I knew not what to do with any thing. What should I do with my books, but to learn the way to this eternity? What should I do with my money, if there be no treasure to be laid up in heaven, nor friends to be made with the mammon abused commonly to unrighteousness? What should I do with my tongue, my hands, my time, my life, myself, or any thing, if there were no eternity? I think I should dig my grave, and lay me down in it and die, and perish, to escape the sorrows of a longer life that must be my companions.

Remember then, christians, and still remember it, that eternity is the matter of your faith and hope! Eternity is your portion and felicity! Eternity is the end of all your desires, and labours, and distresses! Eternity is your religion, and the life of all your holy motions; and as without the capacity of it you would be but beasts, so without the love and desire of it, and title to it, you would be but wicked and miserable men. Set not your hearts on transitory things, while you stand near unto eternity. How can you have room for so many thoughts on fading things, when you have an eternity to think on? What light can you see in the candles or glow-worms of this world, in the sunshine of eternity? O, remember when you are tempted to please your eyes, your taste, and sensual desires, that these are not eternal pleasures! Remember when you are tempted for wealth or honour to wrong your souls, that these are not the eternal riches! Houses and lands are not eternal! Meats and drinks are not eternal! Sports and pastimes, and jocund sinful company, are not eternal! Alas, how short! how soon do they vanish into nothing! But it is God, and our dear Redeemer, that are eternal! The flower of beauty withereth with age, or by the nipping blast of a short disease; the honours of the world are but a dream; your graves will bury all its glory. Down comes the prince, the lord, the gallant, and suddenly takes his lodgings in the dust. The corpse that was pampered and adorned yesterday, is a clod to-day. The body that was bowed to, attended, and applauded but the other day, is now interred in the vault of darkness, with worms and moles. To-day it is corruption and a most loathsome thing, that lately was dreaming of an earthly happiness. One day he is striving for riches and pre-eminences, or glorying and rejoicing in them, that the next day may be snatched away to hell. O fix not your minds on fading things, that perish in the using, and by their vanishing mock you that set your hearts upon them.

You will not fix your eye and mind upon every bird that flyeth by you, as you will on the houses that you must dwell in: nor will you mind every passenger, as you will do your friends that still live with you. And shall transitory vanity be minded by you above eternity?

3. It is eternity that must direct you in your estimate of all things. It is this that showeth you the excellency of man above the beasts: it is this that tells you the worth of grace, and the weight of sin, the preciousness of holy ordinances and helps, and the evil of hinderances and temptations; the wisdom of the choice and diligence of the saints, and the folly of the choice, and negligent, sinful lives of the ungodly; the worth of God's favour, and the vanity of man's; and the difference between the godly and the unsanctified world, in point of happiness.

Were not grace the egg, the seed, the earnest of an eternal glory, it were not so glorious a thing. But oh how precious are all those thoughts, desires, delights, and breathings of the soul, that bring us on to a sweet eternity! Even those sorrows, and groans, and tears are precious that lead to an eternal joy! Who would not willingly obey the holy motions of the Holy Spirit, that is but hatching and preparing us for eternity! This is it that makes a Bible, a sermon, a holy book, to be of greater value than lands and lordships. It is eternity that makes the illuminated soul so fearful of sinning, so diligent in holy duties, so cheerful and resolved in suffering, because he believeth it is all for an eternity. A christian in the holy assemblies, and in his reading, learning, prayer, conference, is laying up for everlasting, when the worldling in the market, in the field or shop, is making provision for a few days or hours. Thou gloriest in thy riches and pre-eminence now, but how long wilt thou do so? To-day that house, that land is thine; but canst thou say, it shall be thine to-morrow? Thou canst not: but the believer can truly say, My God, my Christ, is mine to-day, and will be mine to all eternity! O death! thou canst take my friends from me, and my worldly riches from me, and my time, and strength, and life from me! but take my God, my Christ, my heaven, my portion from me, if thou canst! My sin is all thy sting and strength! But where is thy sting when sin is gone? and where is thy strength when Christ hath conquered thee? Is it a great matter that thou deprivest me of my sinful, weak, and troublous friends, when against thy will thou bringest me to my perfect blessed friends with whom I must abide for ever? Thou dost indeed bereave me of these riches; but it is that I may possess the invaluable eternal riches! Thou endest my time, that I may have eternity! Thou castest me down, that I may be exalted! Thou takest away my strength of life, that I may enter into life eternal! And is this the worst that death can do? And shall I be afraid of this? I willingly lay by my clothes at night, that I may take my rest, and I am not loth to put off the old when I must put on new. The bird that is hatched is not grieved because he must leave the broken shell. Nor is it the grief of man or beast that he hath left the womb! Death doth but open the womb of time and let us into eternity, and is the second birth-day of the soul. Regeneration brings us into the kingdom of grace; and death into the kingdom of glory. Blessed are they that have their part in the new birth of grace and the first resurrection from the death of sin; for to such the natural death will be gain; and they shall have their part in the second resurrection, and on them the everlasting death shall have no power. O sirs, it is eternity that telleth you what you should mind, and be, and do! and that turneth the scales in all things where it is concerned. Can you sleep in sin so near eternity? Can you play and laugh before you are prepared for eternity? Can you think him wise that selleth his eternal joy, for the ease, the mirth, the pleasure of a moment? and trifleth away the time in which he must win or lose eternity? If these men be wise, there are no fools! nor any but wise men in bedlam! Dare thy tongue report, or thy heart imagine, that any holy work is needless, or a heavenly life too much ado, or any suffering too dear, that is for an eternity? O happy souls, that win eternity with the loss of all the world! O bless that Christ, that Spirit, that light, that word, that messenger of God, that drew thy heart to choose eternity before all transitory things! That was the day when thou began to be wise, and indeed to show thyself a man! Thy wealth, thy honour, thy pleasure will be thine when the sensual world hath nothing to show, but sin and hell, of all they laboured for. Their pleasures, honours, and all die, when they die; but thine will then begin their perfection! The hopes of the ungodly are like an addle egg, that when it is broken sends forth nothing but an odious stink, when another sends forth the living bird. O all you worldlings, rich and poor, you dream, you play, you trifle, because you labour not for eternity! Even worldly princes, and nobles of the earth, your glory is but a squib, a flash, a nothing, in comparison of the eternal glory which you lose: you are doing nothing when you are striving for the world; you are trifling and befooling your immortal souls while you are grasping a shadow, the uncertain riches. It is the believer whom you despise, that seeks for something, that loseth not his labour, that shows himself a man of reason, who is caring, and studying, and labouring, and praying, and watching, and suffering for eternity. Why is a day in the courts of God, so much better than a thousand in the tents or palaces of wickedness, but because it is the exchange where we have news of heaven, and trade for an eternity? And why is it better to be a door-keeper in the house of God, than to flourish in the prosperity of sinners, but because God's house is the porch or entrance of an eternity of delights, and the lowest room among the saints affords us a better prospect into heaven, than the highest state of worldly dignity! The ungodly are near to cutting down when they flourish in their greatest glory, Psal. xxxvii. 2, 20. Stay but a little, and he that flourisheth will be withered and cast into the fire, and the righteous shall see it when he is cut off, and shall seek him, but he is not to be found, ver. 34—36, 38. For the enemies of God, and all that are far from him, shall perish, Psal. xcii. 9; xiii. 27; their desire shall perish, Psal. cxii. 10; their hope shall perish, Prov. xi. 7; Job viii. 13; their way shall perish, Psal. i. 6; and themselves and all that they sought, and loved, and delighted in, shall perish, Job xx. 7; 2 Pet. ii. 12; Rom. ii. 12; Heb. i. 11. Even the visible heavens and earth, which they abused, shall be consumed with fire. "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking towards and waiting for the coming and appearance of our Lord!" 2 Pet. iii. 11. Shall any man be accounted wise, that is not wise for eternal happiness? Shall any man be accounted happy, that must be most miserable to eternity? In the name of God, christian, I charge thee to hold on, and look to thy soul, thy words, thy ways, for it is for eternity! O play not, loiter not, do nothing by the halves in the way to eternity! Let the careless

world do what they will; they despise, and know not what they do despise; they neglect, and know not what they do neglect: but thou that seekest, and labourest, and waitest, knowest what thou seekest, and labourest, and waitest for. They sin and know not what they do; they know not what they are treasuring up for an eternity; but thou knowest why thou hatest and avoidest sin.

Sinners, be awakened by the call of God: do you know where you are, and what you do? You are every man of you stepping into eternity! Will you sin away, will you loiter away, will you sell for nothing an eternal glory? Is thy sinful lust, and gain, and mirth, and gluttony, and excess of drink, a price to set upon eternity? If heaven be no more worth to thee, art thou not as bad as Judas, that for thirty pieces of silver would sell his Lord? O eternity, eternity! what hearts have they that can so forget thee, neglect thee, and disesteem thee, when they stand so near thee! O sleepy souls! do you never use to rub your eyes, and look before you towards eternity? and doth it not amaze you to see whither it is that you are going? Merrily you run down the hill; but where is the bottom? If you look but down from the top of a steeple, it may occasion an amazing fear; what then should it cause in you to look down into hell, which is your eternity? No good can possibly be small that is eternal; and no hurt or pain can be called little, that is eternal: an eternal tooth-ache, or an eternal gout, or stone, or fever, were a misery unspeakable. But oh! what are these to an eternal loss of heaven, and to an eternal sense of the burning wrath of God Almighty! To be out of heaven a day, and in hell that day, is a misery now unknown to sinners; but if it were as many thousand years as the earth hath sands, it were a greater misery; but to be there for ever, doth make the misery past all hope, and all conceiving. O methinks the very name of eternity should frighten the drunkard out of the ale-house, and the sleepy sinner out of his security, and the lustful, sportful, voluptuous sinner out of his sensual delights! Methinks the very name of eternity should call off the worldling to seek betimes a more enduring treasure, and should take down the gallant's pride, and bring men to look after other matters than the most do look after! Methinks to hear the name of eternity should, with men of any faith and reason, even blast all the beauty, and blur the glory, and sadden the delights, and weaken the temptations of the world, and make all its pleasure, pomp, and splendour, to be to our apprehensions as a smoke, a shadow, as the dirt that we tread upon! Methinks to hear the name of eternity should lay so odious a reproach on sin, and so nakedly open the folly, and shame, and misery of the ungodly, and so lively show the need and worth of faith and holiness, that men should be soon resolved in their choice, and soon be at the end of an ungodly course, and need no more words to make them the resolved servants of the Lord, before to-morrow! O methinks, that a thought of eternity should, with a believer, answer all temptations, and put life into all his prayers and endeavours! If we were never so cold, or dull, or sleepy, one would think a serious thought of eternity should warm us, quicken us, and awake us! O christians, shall we hear carelessly or speak carelessly of eternity? Shall we pray coldly, or labour negligently, for eternity! Oh what an ocean of joy will eternity be unto the sanctified! It hath neither banks nor bottom. Oh what a gulf of misery and woe will eternity be to the ungodly! Wonderful! that on their dying beds they quake not with the horror, and that they cry not out with greatest lamentation, to think what a bottomless gulf of misery their departing souls must be cast into! To be for ever, ever, ever under the most heavy wrath of God! This is the appointed wages of ungodliness; this is the end of wicked ways; this is it that sinners chose, because they would not live to God! this they preferred, or ventured on, before a holy, heavenly life! and this is it that believers are labouring to escape in all their holy care and diligence! It is an infinite value that is put upon the blood of Christ, the promises of God, the ordinances and means of grace, and grace itself, and the poorest duties of the poorest saints, because they are for an infinite, eternal glory. No mercy is small that tastes of heaven (as all doth or should do to the believer). No action is low that aims at heaven. And oh how lively should the resolutions and courage of those men be, that are travelling, fighting, and watching for eternity! How full should be their comforts, that are fetched from the foresight of infinite, eternal comforts! As all things will presently be swallowed up in eternity, so methinks the present apprehension of eternity should now swallow up all things else in the soul.

Object. But (saith the unbeliever) if God have made man for eternity, it is a wonder that there are no more lively impressions of so infinite a thing upon the souls of all! Our sense of it is so small, that it makes me doubt whether we are made for it.

Answ. Consider, 1. That benumbedness, and sleep, and death, is the very state of an unholy soul! Hast thou cast thyself into a sleepy, senseless disease, and wilt thou argue thence against eternity? This is as if the blind should conclude that there is no sun, or that the eye of man was not made to see it, because he hath no sight himself! or as if you should think that man hath not any life or feeling, because your palsied limbs do not feel! or that the stomach was not made for meat, because the stomachs of the sick abhor it!

2. And for believers, 1. You may see by their lives that they have some apprehensions of eternity: why else do they differ from you, and deny themselves, and displease the world and the flesh itself? Why do they set their hearts above, if they have not lively thoughts of an eternity?

2. But if you ask me, Why their apprehensions are not a thousand times more lively about so infinite a thing; I answer, 1. Their apprehensions must be suitable to their state. Our state here is a state of imperfection; and so will our apprehensions be; but a perfect state will have perfect apprehensions. It is no proof that the infant in the womb is not made to come into this world, and see the sun, and converse with men, becausc he hath no apprehensions of it. Our state here is a conjunction of the soul to a frail distempered body; and so near a conjunction that the actions of the soul must have great dependence on the body; and therefore our apprehensions are limited by its frailty; and the soul can go no higher than the capacity of the body will allow. 2. And our apprehensions now are fitted to our use and benefit: we are now believers, and must live by faith; and therefore must not be beholders, and live by sense. If eternity were open to men's natural sight, or we had here as clear and lively apprehensions of it, as those have that are there, then it were no thanks, no praise to us to be believers, or to obey, and live as saints! And then God should not govern man, as man, here in the way, by a law, but as a beast by sense, or as the glorified that have possession. Where there are perfect apprehensions of God and glory, there will be also perfect love, and joy, and praise, and consequently perfect happiness; and this were to make earth a heaven, the way and the end, to be all one. Perfect apprehensions are kept

for a perfect state of happiness. But here it is well if we have such apprehensions as are fitted to the use of travellers and soldiers, as will carry us on, and prevail against the difficulties of our course. If you had never been at London, you could not have any such clear apprehensions of the place, as those that see it have; and yet your imperfect apprehensions might be sufficient to make you take a journey thither, and you may come as safely and certainly to it, as if you had seen it. Moreover, the body, the brain, which the soul in apprehending now makes use of, cannot bear such apprehensions as are suitable to the thousandth part of the greatness of the object, without distraction. The smallest eye may see the sun; but the greatest cannot endure to gaze upon its glory; much less if it were at the nearest approach. It is a mercy of mercies to give us such apprehensions of eternity, as are meet for passengers to bring us thither; and it is part of our mercy that those apprehensions are not so great as to distract and overwhelm us.

4. Lastly, The eternity of God must teach the soul contentedness and patience under all labours, changes, sufferings, and dangers that are here below. Believing soul, draw near; look seriously on eternity, and try whether it will not make such impressions as these upon thee. Art thou weary of labours, either of the mind or body? Is not eternity long enough for thy rest? Canst thou not afford to work out the daylight of this life, when thou must rest with Christ to all eternity? Canst thou not run with patience so short a race, when thou lookest to so long a rest? Canst thou not watch one hour with Christ, that must reign with him to all eternity? Dost thou begin to shrink at sufferings for Christ, when thou must be in glory with him for ever? How short is the suffering! how long is the reward! Dost thou begin to think hardly of the dealing of the Lord, because his people are here afflicted, and made the scorn and by-word of the world? Why, is not eternity long enough for God to show his love and bounty to his people in? Is not the day at hand, when Lazarus and the rich worldling both must hear, "But now he is comforted, and thou art tormented?" Luke xvi. 25. Did not that *now* come time enough which was the entrance of eternity? "Even Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God! Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds," Heb. xii. 2, 3. Dost thou grudge at the prosperity of the wicked, and prevalency of the church's enemies? Look then unto eternity, and bethink thee whether that be not long enough, for the saints to reign, and the wicked to be tormented. Wouldst thou have them in hell before their time? Dost thou begin to doubt of the coming of Christ, or the truth of his promises, because he doth so long delay? O what is a thousand years to eternity? Is there not yet time enough before thee, for Christ to make good all his promises in? Were not those disciples sharply but justly rebuked as "fools and slow of heart to believe," that when their Lord had been but two days dead, were unbelievingly saying, "We hoped this had been he that should have redeemed Israel?" O remember, christian, in all thy darkness and ignorance of the difficult passages of Scripture, or of providence, that the things that are chained to eternity, cannot be perfectly understood by him that standeth in an inch of time: but when eternity comes, thou shalt understand them. Remember when things seem crooked in this world, and the best are lowest, and the worst are highest, that eternity is long enough to set all straight. Remember when sinners crow and triumph, that eternity is long enough for their complaints. In thy poverty, and pain, and longest afflictions, remember that eternity is long enough for thy relief. If thy sorrow be long, and thy comforts short, remember that eternity is long enough for thy joys. Cannot we be content to take up short in this life, when we believe eternity? Dost thou stagger at the length or strength of thy temptations? and art thou ready to draw back and venture upon sin? Why, what temptation can there be, that should not be lighter than a feather, if eternity be put against it in the scales? In a word, if there be any man that escapeth the foolish seductions of this world, and useth it as not abusing it, and hath all his worldly accommodations as if he had none, it is he that fixeth his eye upon eternity, and seeth that the fashion of these lower things doth pass away, 1 Cor. vii. 29—31. No man can be ignorant of the necessity and worth of a holy life, that discerneth that the eternal God is the end of it. The right apprehensions of God's eternity, (supposing him our end, which is further to be manifested in its place,) is a most powerful antidote against all sin, and a most powerful composer of a distempered mind, and a most powerful means to keep up all the powers of the soul in a resolute, vigorous, cheerful motion to the eternal God, for whom and by whom it was created.

CHAPTER VI.

5. The next attribute of God, that is to make its impress on us, is, that he is a Spirit. In this one are these three especially comprehended: 1. That he is simple, and not material or compounded as bodies are: 2. That he is invisible, and not to be seen as bodies are: 3. That he is immortal and incorruptible, and not subject to death or change as bodies are.

1. As simplicity signifieth unity, in opposition to multiplicity, we have spoken of it before. As it is opposite to all materiality, mixture, or composition, we are now to speak of it. And the believing thoughts of God's immateriality and simplicity, should have these three effects upon the soul. 1. It should do much to win the heart to God, and cause it to close with him as its felicity; because as he hath no matter or mixture, so he hath nothing but pure and perfect goodness, and therefore there is nothing in him to discourage the soul. The creatures have evil in them with their good, and by contrary qualities do hurt us when they help us, and displease us when they please us; but in God there is nothing but infinite goodness. And should not the soul adhere to him, where it is sure to find nothing but simple, pure, and unmixed good? The creatures are all liable to some exceptions: in one thing they help us, but in another they hinder us; in one thing they are suitable to us, and in another thing unsuitable! But God is liable to no exceptions. This will for ever confound the ungodly that give not up themselves unto him: they did even for a thing of nought forsake that God that was purely and simply good, and against whom they had no exceptions. Had there been any thing in God to discourage the soul, or which his most malicious enemy could blame, the ungodly soul had some excuse. But this will stop all the mouths of the condemned, that they had nothing to say against the Lord; and yet they had no mind to him, no hearts for him, in comparison of the vain, vexatious creatures.

2. The simplicity of God should make us know the imperfection and vanity of all the creatures that

are compounded things; and so should help to alienate us from them. Our friends have in them perhaps much holiness, but mixed with much sin. They may have much knowledge; but mixed with much ignorance. Their humility is mixed with pride; their meekness with some passions, their love with selfishness, and a small matter will cause them to distaste us: they may be much for God; but withal they may do much against him. They help the church; but through their weakness they may lamentably detract or wrong it: they are able to help us but in part; and willing but in part; and they have usually interests of their own, that are inconsistent with ours. We have no commodity but hath its discommodity: our houses, our families, our neighbours, our callings, our cattle, our land, our countries, churches, ministers, magistrates, laws, and judgments, yea, even health, and plenty, and peace itself, all have their mixtures of bitterness or danger, and those the most dangerous commonly that have least bitterness. But in God there is none of all this mixture, but pure, uncompounded good. "He is light, and with him is no darkness," 1 John i. 5. Indeed there is somewhat in God that an ungodly man distasteth, and that seemeth in the state that he is in to be against him, and hurtful to him: as is his justice, holiness, truth, &c. But justice is not evil, because it doth condemn a thief or murderer: meat is not bad, because the sick distaste it. It is the cross position of the sinful soul, or his enmity to the Lord, that makes the Lord to use him as an enemy. Let him but become a subject fit for sweeter dealing from God, and he is sure to find it. Leave then the compounded, self-contradicting creature, and adhere to the pure, simple Deity.

3. God's simplicity must draw the soul to a holy simplicity, that it may be like to God. We that serve a pure, simple God, must do it with simple, pure affections, and not with hypocrisy, or a double heart. His interest in us should be maintained with a holy jealousy, that no other interest mix itself therewith. The soul should attain to a holy simplicity by closing with the simple, infinite God, and suffering nothing to be a sharer with him in our superlative affections. All creatures must keep their places in our hearts, and that is only in a due subordination and subserviency to the Lord: but nothing should take up the least of that estimation, those affections, or endeavours, that are his own peculiar. God will not accept of half a heart: a double-minded, double-hearted, double-faced, or double-tongued person, is contrary to the holy simplicity of a saint. As we would not bow the knee to any gods but one, so neither should we bow the heart or life to them. We should know what is God's prerogative, and that we should keep entirely for him. A subordinate esteem, and love, and desire the creature may have, as it revealeth God to us, or leadeth to him, or helpeth us in his work: but it should not have the least of his part in our esteem, or love, or desire. This is the chastity, the purity, the integrity of the soul. It is the mixture, impurity, corruption, and confusion of our souls, when any thing is taken in with God. See therefore, christian, that in thy heart thou have no God but ONE, and that he have all thy heart, and soul, and strength, as far as thou canst attain it. And because there will be still in imperfect souls some sinful mixture of the creature's interest with God's, let it be the work of thy life to be watching against it, and casting it out, and cleansing thy heart of it, as thou wouldst do thy food if it fall into the dirt. For whatever is added to God in thy affections, doth make no better an increase there, than the adding of earth unto thy gold, or of dung unto thy meat, or of corrupted humours and sickness to thy body. Mixture will make no better work.

It may be thy rejoicing, if thou have "the testimony of a good conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, and not in fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, thou hast had thy conversation in the world," 2 Cor. i. 12. It is the state of hypocrisy, when one God is openly professed and worshipped, and yet the creature lieth deepest and nearest to the heart.

2. The invisibility of God also must have its due effects upon us. And, 1. It must warn us, that we picture not God to our eyesight, or in our fancies, in any bodily shape. Saith the prophet, "To whom will you liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?" Isa. xl. 18, 25. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of his Father, he hath declared him," John i. 18; and therefore we must conceive of him but as he is declared. "Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father," John vi. 46.

If you ask me, How then you should conceive of God, if not in any bodily shape? I answer, Get all these attributes and relations of God to make their proper impress upon thy soul, as now I am teaching you, and then you will have the true conceiving of God. This question therefore is to be answered at the end of this discourse, when you have seen all the attributes of God together, and heard what impression they must make upon you.

2. This must teach us to think most highly of the things that are invisible, and meanlier of these visible things. Let it be the property of a beast, and not of a man, to know nothing but what he seeth or hath seen: let it be the mark of the brutish infidels, and not of christians, to doubt of the invisible things, because they are invisible; or to think that things visible are more excellent or sure. As the senses are more ignoble than the intellect, (a beast having as perfect senses as a man, and yet no reasonable understanding,) so the objects of sense must proportionably be below the objects of the understanding, as such. The grossest and most palpable objects are the basest. It is the subtile part that is called the spirits; which being drawn out of plants or other vegetables, is most powerful, and excellent, and valued, when the earthly dregs are cast away as little worth. It is that subtile part in our blood that is called the spirits, that hath more of the virtue of life, and doth more of the works, than the feculent, gross, and earthly part. The air and wind have as true a being as the earth, and a more excellent nature, though it be more gross and they invisible. The body is not so excellent as the invisible soul. Invisible things are as real as visible, and as suitable to our more noble, invisible part, as visible things to our fleshly, baser part.

3. The invisibility of God must teach us to live a life of faith, and to get above a sensual life: and it must teach us to value the faith of the saints, as knowing its excellency and necessity. Invisible objects have the most perfect, excellent reality; and therefore faith hath the pre-eminence above sense. Natural reason can live upon things not seen, if they have been seen, or can be known by natural evidence (subjects obey a prince that they see not, and fear a punishment which they see not; and the nature of man is afraid of the devils, though we see them not). But faith liveth upon such invisible things, as mortal eye did never see, nor natural ordinary evidence demonstrate, but are revealed only by the word of God: though about many of its invisible objects faith hath the consent of reason for

its encouragement. Value not sight and sense too much; think not all to be mere uncertainties and notions that are not the objects of sense. We should not have heard that God is a Spirit, if corporal substances had not a baser kind of being than spirits. Intellection is a more noble operation than sense. If there be any thing properly called sense in heaven, it will be as far below the pure intellective intuition of the Lord, as the glorified body will be below the glorified soul. But what that difference will be, we cannot now understand. Fix not your minds on sensible things. Remember that your God, your home, your portion, are unseen: and therefore live in hearty affections to them, and serious prosecution of them, as if you saw them. Pray, as if you saw God, and heaven, and hell. Hear, as if you saw him that sends his messenger to speak to you. Resist all the temptations to lust, and sensuality, and every sin, as you would do if you saw God stand by. Love him, and fear him, and trust him, and serve him, as you would do if you beheld him. "Faith is the evidence of things not seen," Heb. xi. 1. Believing must be to you instead of seeing; and make you as serious about things unseen, as sensual men are about things sensible. In every thing that you see, remember it is he that is unseen that appeareth in them. He lighteth you by the sun; he warmeth you by the fire; he beareth you by the earth. See him in all these by the eye of faith.

3. The immortality, incorruptibility, and immutability of God, must, 1. Teach the soul to rise up from these mortal, corruptible, mutable things, and to fix upon that God who is the immortal, incorruptible portion of his saints.

2. It must comfort and encourage all believers in the consideration of their felicity; and support them under the failings of all mortal, corruptible things. Our parents, and children, and friends, are mortal; they are ours to-day, and dead to-morrow; they are our delight to-day, and our sorrow or horror to-morrow: but our God is immortal. Our houses may be burned; our goods may be consumed or stolen; our clothes will be worn out; our treasure here may be corrupted: but our God is unchangeable, the same for ever. Our laws and customs may be changed; our governors and privileges changed; our company, and employments, and habitation changed; but our God is never changed. Our estates may change from riches to poverty; and our names that were honoured, may incur disgrace. Our health may quickly turn to sickness, and our ease to pain: but still our God is unchangeable for ever. Our friends are unconstant and may turn our enemies; our peace may be changed into war, and our liberty into slavery: but our God doth never change. Time will change customs, families, and all things here; but it changeth not our God. The creatures are all but earthen metal, and quickly dashed in pieces. Our comforts are changeable; ourselves are changeable and mortal: but so is not our God.

3. And it should teach us to draw as near to God as we are capable, by unchangeable, fixed resolutions, and constancy of endeavours; and to be still the same as we are at the best.

4. It should move us also to be more desirous of passing into the state of immortality, and to long for our unchangeable habitation, and our immortal, incorruptible bodies, and to possess the "kingdom that cannot be moved," Heb. xii. 28. And let not the mutability of things below much trouble us, while our Rock, our Portion, is unmovable. God waxeth not old: heaven doth not decay by duration: the glory of the blessed shall not wither, nor their sun set upon them, nor their day have any night; nor any mutations or commotions disturb their quiet possessions. O love and long for immortality and incorruption!

CHAPTER VII.

6. Having spoken of the effects of the attributes of God's essence as such, we must next speak of the effects of his three great attributes which some call *subsistential*, that is, his omnipotency, understanding, and will; or his infinite power, wisdom, and goodness: by which it hath been the way of the schoolmen and other divines to denominate the three persons, not without some countenance from Scripture phrase. The Father they call the infinite power of the Godhead; and the Son, the wisdom and word of God, and of the Father; and the Holy Ghost, the love and goodness of God, of the Father, and Son. But, that these attributes, of power, understanding, and will, or power, wisdom, and goodness, are of the same importance with the terms of personality, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, we presume not to affirm. It sufficeth us, 1. That God hath assumed these attributes to himself in Scripture. 2. And that man who beareth the natural image of God, hath power, understanding, and will; and as he beareth the holy moral image of God, he hath a power to execute that which is good, and wisdom to direct, and goodness of will to determine for the execution: and so while God is seen of us in this glass of man, we must conceive of him after the image that in man appeareth to us, and speak of him in the language of man, as he doth of himself.

And first, The almightiness of God must make these impressions on our souls. 1. It must possess the soul with very awful, reverent thoughts of God; and fill us continually with his holy fear. Infinite greatness and power must have no common, careless thoughts, lest we blaspheme him in our minds, and be guilty of contempt. The dread of the heavenly Majesty should be still upon us; and we must "be in his fear all the day long," Prov. xxiii. 17. Not under that slavish fear that is void of love, as men fear an enemy, or hurtful creature, or that which is evil: for we have not such a Spirit from the Lord, nor stand in a relation of enmity and bondage to him: but reverence is necessary; and from thence a fear of sinning and displeasing so great a God. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," Prov. i. 7; ix. 10; Psal. cxi. 10. "By it men depart from evil," Prov. xvi. 6. Sin is for want of the fear of God, Luke xxiii. 40; Prov. iii. 7; Jer. v. 24; Lev. xxv. 36. The fear of God is often put for the whole new man, or all the work of grace within us, even the principle of new life, Jer. ii. 19; xxxii. 40. And it is often put for the whole work of religion, or service of God, Psal. xxxiv. 11; Prov. i. 29; Psal. cxxx. 4; xxxiv. 9. And therefore the godly are usually denominated, such as fear God, Psal. xv. 4; xxii. 23; cxv. 11, 13; cxxxv. 20; xxxiv. 7, 9, &c. The godly are "devoted to the fear of God," Psal. cxix. 38. It is our "sanctifying the Lord in our hearts, that he be our fear and dread," Isa. viii. 13. If we fear him not, we take him not for our Master, Mal. i. 6. Evangelical grace excludeth not this fear, Luke xii. 5. Though we receive a kingdom that cannot be moved, yet must our acceptable service of God be with reverence and godly fear, Heb. xii. 28. With fear and trembling we must work out our salvation, Phil. ii. 12. In fear we must pass the time of sojourning here, 1 Pet. i. 17. In it we must converse together, Eph. v. 4. Yea, holiness is to be perfected in the fear of God, 2 Cor. vii. 1; and that

because we have the promises. The most prosperous churches walk in this fear, Acts ix. 31. It is a necessary means of preventing destruction, Heb. xi. 7; and of attaining salvation when we have the promises, Heb. i. 7. God puts this fear in the hearts of those that shall not depart from him, Jer. xxxii. 40. See therefore that the greatness of the Almighty God possess thy soul continually with his fear.

2. God's almightiness should also possess us with holy admiration of him, and cause us in heart and voice to magnify him. Oh what a power is that which made the world of nothing! which upholdeth the earth without any foundation but his will! which placed and maintaineth all things in their order in heaven and earth! which causeth so great and glorious a creature as the sun, that is so much bigger than all the earth, to move so many thousand miles in a few moments, and constantly to keep its time and course! that giveth its instinct to every brute, and causeth every part of nature to do its office! By his power it is that every motion of the creature is performed, and that order is kept in the kingdoms of the world. "He made the heaven and the earth by his great power and stretched-out arm, and nothing is too hard for him: The great, the mighty God, the Lord of hosts, is his name; great in counsel, and mighty in works," Jer. xxxii. 17—19. "The great, the mighty, the terrible God," Neh. ix. 32. To him therefore that alone doth great wonders we must give the greatest praise, Psal. cxxxvi. 4. "Oh how great are his works, and his thoughts are very deep," Psal. xcii. 5. "Great is our Lord and of great power," Psal. cxlvii. 5. And therefore in Zion must he be great, Psal. xcix. 2. And his great and terrible name must be praised.

3. In the church where he is known, must his name be great, Psal. lxxvi. 1. "For we know that the Lord is great, and our God is above all gods," Psal. cxxxv. 5. His saints delight to praise his greatness. "Bless the Lord, O my soul! O Lord my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty. Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain: who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters: who maketh the clouds his chariot: who walketh upon the wings of the wind: who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flame of fire," &c. Psal. civ. 1—4. From Almightiness all things have their being, and therefore must honour the Almighty "Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord; which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty," Rev. i. 8. They that magnify the Lord with the song of Moses and of the Lamb say, "Great and marvellous are thy works, O Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints," Rev. xv. 2.

3. The almightiness of God must imprint upon our souls a strong and stedfast confidence in him, according to the tenor of his covenant and promises. Nothing more certain than that impotency and insufficiency will never cause him to fail us, or to break his word. Oh what an encouragement is it to the saints, that they are built on such an impregnable rock, and that Omnipotency is engaged for them! and oh what a shame is this to our unbelief, that ever we should distrust Omnipotency!

If God be almighty, 1. Remember in thy greatest wants, that there is no want but he can easily and abundantly supply.

2. Remember in thy greatest sufferings, pains, or dangers, that no pain is so great which he cannot mitigate and remove, and no danger so great from which he is not able to deliver thee. The servants of Christ dare venture on the flames, because they trust upon the Almighty, Dan. iii. 16—18. In confidence on Omnipotency they dare stand against the threatenings of the greatest upon earth. "We are not careful (said those three believers to the king) to answer thee in this matter: if it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us," &c. He that is afraid to stand upon a slender bow, or upon the unstable waters, is not afraid to stand upon the earth; and he that is afraid of robbers when he is alone, is bolder in a conquering army. What will man trust, if he distrust Omnipotency? Where can we be safe, if not in the love, the covenant, the hands of the Almighty God? When storms and winds had frighted the disciples, lest they should be drowned when Christ was in the ship, their sin was aggravated by the presence of their powerful Lord, whose mighty works they had often seen; "Why fear ye, (saith he,) O ye of little faith?" Matt. viii. 26. Cannot he rebuke our winds and waves? and will not all obey the rebukes of the Almighty? When thou hast a want that God cannot supply, or a sickness that he cannot cure, or a danger that he cannot prevent, then be thou fearful, and distrust him and spare not.

3. Remember also in thy lowest state, and in the church's greatest sufferings or dangers, that the Almighty is able to raise up his church or thee even in a moment.

If you say, that it is true God can do it, but we know not whether he will; I answer, 1. I shall show you in due place, how far he hath revealed his will for such deliverances. In sum, we have his promise, "that all things shall work together for our good," Rom. viii. 28; and what would we have more? Would you have that which is evil for you?

2. At present, see that Omnipotency do establish thy confidence so far as it is concerned in the cause. As, 1. Be sure that no work is too hard for the Almighty; do not so much as in the thoughts of thy heart make question of his power, and say with those unbelievers, "Can God furnish a table in the wilderness? can he give bread also? can he provide flesh," Psal. lxxviii. 19, 20. If really thou distrust not the power of God, believe then the most difficult or improbable things, as well as the easiest and most probable, if God reveal or promise them. The resurrection seemeth improbable to impotent man; but God hath promised it; and nothing is difficult to Omnipotency. The calling of the Jews; the ruin of the Turk; the downfal of the pope; the unity of christians, do all seem to us unlikely things; but all things to God are not only possible but easy. He is at no more labour to make a world, than to make a straw, or make a fly. "Whatsoever pleased the Lord, that did he in heaven and earth, in the sea and in the depths," Psal. cxxxv. 6. Dost thou think it improbable that ever all thy sins should be conquered; and that ever thy soul should live with Christ among the holy saints and angels; and that ever thy body, that must first be dust, should shine as the stars in the firmament of God? And why doth it seem to thee improbable? Is it not as easy to God as to cause the earth to stand on nothing, and the sun to run its daily course? If God had promised thee to live a day longer, or any small and common things, thou couldst then believe him; and is it not as easy to him to advance thee to everlasting glory, as to cause thee to live another hour, or to keep a hair of thy head from perishing? Sin is too strong for thee to overcome, but not for God. Death is too strong for thee to conquer, but not for Christ. Heaven is too high for thee to reach by thy own strength; but he that is there, and prepared it for thee, can take thee thither. Trust God or trust nothing; he that cannot trust in him shall despair for

ever, for all other confidence will deceive him. "They that know his name, will put their trust in him; for the Lord hath not forsaken them that seek him," Psal. ix. 10. All those that trust in him shall rejoice, and ever shout for joy, because he defendeth them, Psal. v. 11. "Blessed is the man that maketh the Lord his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies," Psal. xl. 4. "Whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe," Prov. xxix. 25. Oh what hath Almightiness done in the world, and what for the church, and what for thee; and yet wilt thou distrust him? "Oh how great is the goodness that he hath laid up for them that fear him; which he hath wrought for them that trust in him before the sons of men!" Psal. xxxi. 19. "The Lord redeemeth the souls of his servants, and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate," Psal. xxxiv. 22. Are thy straits too great; thy work too hard? "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass," Psal. xxxvii. 5. In thy lowest state look up to the Almighty, and say, "What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee. In God have I put my trust; I will not fear what man can do unto me," Psal. lvi. 3, 4. "The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will put my trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower," Psal. xviii. 2. He is a buckler to all that trust in him. "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the Lord our God," Psal. xx. 7. Trust not in the creature; that is, in vanity and infirmity. There is not almightiness in man, or any creature: "It is better therefore to trust in the Lord, than to put confidence in man: it is better to trust in the Lord, than to put confidence in princes," Psal. cxviii. 7, 8. What a working passage is that, Jer. xvii. 5—7, "Thus saith the Lord, Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord! for he shall be like the heath in the deserts, and shall not see when good cometh. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, whose hope the Lord is; for he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh.——"

2. Trust also in God, as one that is assured that no enemy is too strong for the Almighty. Alas, what is an army of dust to Omnipotency! If the Lord do but arise, his enemies will be scattered, and they that hate him will flee before him; as smoke is driven away, and as wax melteth before the fire, the wicked shall perish at the presence of the Lord, Psal. lxviii. 1, 2. While the Lord of hosts is for us, we need not fear if hosts do come against us; at worst they can but kill our bodies; and "greater is he that is in us, than he that is in the world," 1 John iv. 4. Oh what a match have the miserable enemies of the church! what a work do they undertake! what a desperate attempt do they enterprise! to strive against Heaven, and overcome Omnipotency!

3. Trust in the Lord, as one that believeth that no means or instruments are too small or weak for Almightiness successfully to use. No matter who the instrument be, how mean, and weak, and despicable, if it be but an Almighty hand that uses it. A few poor fishermen and despised people shall pull down Satan's kingdom in the world, and conquer the greatest, and bring in the nations to the faith, if Omnipotency be with them.

4. The almightiness of God must fill our hearts with courage and resolution in his cause, and make us go on with the greatest alacrity in his work. Though we must be doves and lambs for innocency and meekness; yet must we be soldiers for valour and stability. Shall we flag or shrink, that have Omnipotency on our side! Whoever scorneth thee, hateth thee, threateneth thee, imprisoneth thee, is not the Almighty enough to set against them all, for thy encouragement?

5. The almightiness of God must be the comfort of all that have interest in him. Oh, did the blind world but see him that his Omnipotent, or know the strength that is engaged for the weakest saint, they would soon see which is the strongest side, and which to cleave to for their security. O blessed people, that have the Almighty on their side, and engaged with them against their enemies, and to do their works, and answer their desires! How can any of them perish when the Almighty is engaged for their salvation! "The Father is greater than all, and none shall take them out of his hands," John x. 29. How glad would men be in the beginning of a war, to know which side will prove the stronger, that they may join with that. Can the side that God is on be conquered? If you are wise, observe what cause is his, and let that be yours. "It is hard to kick against the pricks." Woe to those souls that the Almighty is against, and that dash themselves on the Rock that they should build on!

CHAPTER VIII.

7. The next attribute that must work upon us, is the infinite wisdom or omniscience of God. "His understanding is infinite," Psal. cxlvii. 5. And the impressions that this should make upon our souls, are these:

1. Delight in wisdom, that you may in your places be like to God. The new man is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him, Col. iii. 10. If God be infinitely wise, those then are the most excellent that are the wisest. Ignorance is the soul's blindness, and the privation of the image of God on the understanding. "Wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness," Eccl. ii. 13. To desire, as Adam did, any of that knowledge that God hath reserved to himself, or is unnecessary for us, is not indeed to be wise in our desires: unnecessary knowledge is but a trouble. But to know the Lord, and his revealed will, and the way of life, is the light and glory of our minds. He that hath lost his eyesight, hath lost his principal natural delight, and is as one out of the world while he is in it. And the ignorant souls that are void of the heavenly illumination, must needs be void of the delights of grace; and though they live in the visible church, where the beauty of holiness is the excellency of the saints, yet they do not see this beauty; but are like the infidels that are out of the church, while they are in it. The blind are in continual danger; they know not where they set their feet; and they know not when to be confident, nor when to fear: sometimes they are afraid where there is no cause, because there may be cause for aught they know; and sometimes they are fearless at the very brink of death, and little think of the evil that they are near. Why do our poor deluded people so boldly live in an unconverted state, but because they know not where they are? Why do they so carelessly lie down and rise in an unsanctified condition, unpardoned, unready for death and judgment, and under the condemnation of the law, but because they know not the misery or danger in which they stand? Why do they go on so carelessly and wilfully in sin, and despise the counsel of their teachers, and of the Lord, and take a holy life as needless, but because they know not what they do? Men could not go so quietly or merrily to hell,

with their eyes open, as they do when they are shut by ignorance. Whence is it, that such multitudes are still ungodly, under all the teachings and warnings of the Lord; but because "they have their understandings darkened, being alienated from the life of God, by the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; and therefore many being past feeling, have given them over to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness," Eph. iv. 18, 19. Sin is the fruit of folly, and the greatest folly: they are "fools that make a jest of it," Prov. xiv. 9. And it is for "want of wisdom that they die," Prov. x. 21; i. 32. The ignorant are prisoners to the prince of darkness, Eph. vi. 12; v. 8. "Knowledge is despised by none but fools," Prov. i. 7, 22. The conquest of so many subtle enemies, the performance of so many spiritual duties, which we must go through, if we will be saved, are works too hard for fools to do. The saving of a man's soul, is a work that requireth the greatest wisdom, and therefore the illumination of the mind is God's first work in the conversion of a sinner, Acts xxvi. 18; Eph. i. 18. If Infinite Wisdom communicate to you but the smallest beam of heavenly light, it will change your minds, and make you other men than before, and set you on another course; wisdom will be your guide, and keep you in safe paths; it will cause you to refuse the evil, and to choose the good: it will show you true happiness, and the way to obtain it; it will cause you to foresee the evil, and escape it, when fools go on and are destroyed, Prov. xxii. 3. Wisdom will teach you to know the season, and redeem your time, and walk exactly, when folly will leave you to too late repentance, Eph. v. 15. There is not a soul in hell but was brought thither by sinful folly; nor is there a soul in heaven (of them at age) but by heavenly wisdom was conducted thither. In worldly matters the wicked may seem wisest; and many a saint may be very ignorant; but when you see the end, you will all confess that those were the wise men that had wisdom to repel temptations, and to refuse the enticing baits of sin, and to make sure of everlasting joys.

O therefore apply your hearts to wisdom! Go to Christ for it, who is "the wisdom of God," 1 Cor. i. 24; and is appointed by him to be "our wisdom," 1 Cor. i. 30. He will teach it you, who is the best Master in the world, so you will but keep in his school, that is, his church, and will humbly learn as little children, and apply yourselves submissively to his Spirit, word, and ministers. "Ask wisdom of God, that giveth liberally and upbraideth not" with former ignorance, James i. 5. Think not any pains in holy means too much to get it. "If thou wilt receive the words of God, and hide his commandments with thee, and incline thy heart to wisdom, and apply it to understanding; yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God: for the Lord giveth wisdom; out of his mouth is knowledge and understanding," Prov. ii. 1—5. And fear not being a loser by thy cost or labour. For "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding; for the merchandise of it is better than silver, and the gain thereof than of fine gold: she is more precious than rubies, and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared to her; her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace," Prov. iii. 13—18.

2. The infinite wisdom of God, must resolve you to take him for your principal Teacher, Counsellor, and Director, in all your undertakings. Who would go seek the advice of a fool, when he may have Infallible Wisdom to direct him! In a work of so great difficulty and concernment, a work that hell, and earth, and flesh opposeth; a work that our everlasting state dependeth on; I think it behoveth us to take the best advice that we can get. And who knoweth the will of God, like God? or who knoweth the certain means of salvation, like him that is the Author and Giver of Salvation! Would you know whether it be best to live a mortified, holy life; who shall be your counsellor? If you advise with the flesh, you know that it would be pleased. If you advise with the world of wicked men, you know that they would be imitated, and judge as they are; and are not like to be wise for you, that are so foolish for themselves, as to part with heaven for a merry dream. If you advise with the devil, you know he would be obeyed, and have company in his misery. You can advise with none but God, but such as are your enemies: and will you ask an enemy, a deadly enemy, what course you should take to make you happy? Will you ask the devil how you may be saved? Or, will you ask the blind, ungodly world, what course you should take to please the Lord? Or, will you ask the flesh, by what means you may subdue it and become spiritual? If you take advice of Scripture, of the Spirit, of a holy, well-informed minister or christian, or of a renewed, well-informed conscience, I take this for your advising with the Lord; but besides these that are his mouth, you can ask advice of none but enemies. But if they were never so much your friends, and wanted wisdom, they could but ignorantly seduce you. And do you think that any of them all is as wise as God? It is the constant course of a worldly man to advise with the world, and of carnal men to advise with the flesh; and therefore it is that they are hurried to perdition. The flesh is brutish, and will lead you to a brutish life, and "if you live after it," undoubtedly "you shall die," Rom. viii. 13; and "if you sow to it, you shall but reap corruption," Gal. vi. 6, 7. If you are tempted to lust, will you ask the flesh that tempteth you, whether you should yield? If the cup of excess be offered to you, or flesh-pleasing feasts prepared for you, will you ask the flesh whether you should take them or refuse them? You may easily know what counsel it will give you. The counsel of God and of our flesh are contrary; and therefore the lives of the carnal and spiritual man are contrary. And will you venture on the advice of a brutish appetite, and refuse the counsel of the all-knowing God? Such as is your guide and counsellor, such will be your end. Never man miscarried by obeying God; and never man sped well by obeying the flesh: God leadeth no man to perdition, and the flesh leadeth no man to his salvation. God's motions are all for our eternal good, though they seem to be for our temporal hurt: the motions of the flesh are for our eternal hurt, though at present they seem to be for our corporal benefit. If at any time you be at a loss; and your carnal friends, or your commodity, or pleasure, adviseth you one way, and the word of God, and his faithful ministers, advise you another way; use but your reason well, and consider whether God or those that contradict him be the wiser, and accordingly suit your practice. Alas, man, thy friend is ignorant, and knows not what is good for himself. Thy flesh is ignorant, and knows not what is good for thy soul. But God knoweth all things. Your flesh and friends do feel what pleaseth them at present, and judge accordingly; but what will be hereafter they understand not, or consider not, But God knoweth as well what will be, as what is: he counselleth you as one that knoweth how your actions

will appear at last, and what it is that will save you or undo you, to all eternity. If you be but sick, it is two to one but the counsel of your physician and of your appetite will differ. And if you obey your physician before your appetite, for your health or life, should you not obey God before it, for your salvation? Do you think in your consciences that any that persuade you to a careless, worldly, fleshly life, are as wise as God that persuadeth you to the contrary? You dare not say so with your tongues; and yet the most dare say so with their lives. Oh how justly do the ungodly perish, that deliberately choose a brutish appetite, a malignant world, and a malicious devil, as a wiser or fitter conductor than the Lord! But "blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, but his delight is in the law of the Lord," Psal. i. 1, 2; and woe to the ungodly, that reject and set at nought the counsel of the Lord, (Prov. i. 25, 30; Luke vii. 30,) and will have none of it; that wait not for his counsel, Psal. cvi. 13; that "rebel against the words of God, and contemn the counsel of the Most High," Psal. cvii. 11. And woe to them "that take counsel against the Lord and his Christ, that they may break asunder his bonds, and cast away his obligations," Psal. ii. 1—3. And woe to them that are given up to the lusts of their own hearts, and to walk in their own counsels, Psal. lxxxi. 12. For by their own counsels shall they fall, Psal. v. 10. But had they hearkened to the Lord, and walked in his way, with the fulness of his blessing would he have satisfied them, Psal. lxxxi. 13, 16. Resolve therefore, whatever the flesh or the world say, that the testimonies of God shall be your counsellors, Psal. cxix. 24; and bless the Lord that giveth thee counsel, Psal. xvi. 7; for his counsel is infallible; having guided thee by his counsel, he will bring thee to his glory, Psal. lxxiii. 24.

3. The infinite wisdom of God, must resolve the soul to rest in his determinations. We are most certain that God is not deceived. Though all men seem liars to you, let God be true: for it is impossible for him to lie, Heb. vi. 18. If our reason be to seek, so is not God. When we are saying with Nicodemus, "How can these things be?" God knows how: and it is enough for us to know that they are so. If Infinite wisdom say the word, believe it, though all the world contradict it. Though proud unbelievers say, that the words of God are improbable, let them know that God is not at a loss when men's dark understandings are at a loss. The sun is not taken out of the firmament, whenever a man closeth or loseth his eyes. What! will those cavillers puzzle the Almighty? will they pose Omniscience? Doth it follow that the course of the planets, and the heavens, and all the creatures are out of order, if these silly moles understand not the order of them? No more will it follow that any word of God is false, or any rule of God is crooked, because they see not its truth and rectitude. Shall dust and ashes judge the Lord? "Who hath been his counsellor," and with whom hath he advised for the making, redeeming, or governing of the world? There is no rest to an inquisitive soul, but in the infinite wisdom of the Lord. Find once that it is his word, and inquire no further. It is madness to demand a further proof. As all goodness is comprised in his will and love, so all truth is comprised in his wisdom and revelations. There are no arguments but what are lower and subordinate to this. And therefore if thy reason be at a loss, as to the cause or manner, yet hast thou the greatest reason to believe that all is just and true that proceedeth from the wisdom of the Lord. If flesh and blood, and all the world, gainsay it, yet rest in the word of God.

4. And that is the next effect that God's omniscience should have upon our minds. Take all the sayings of men as folly, that are against the Lord. Let them be high or low, learned or unlearned, if they contradict the God of infinite wisdom, take it but as the words of a distracted man. Did you ever meet with any man of them, that durst say he was wiser than God himself? Herod, that was eaten to death with vermin, was applauded by the flattering crowd, but with this acclamation, "It is the voice of a god, and not of a man," Acts xii. 22. And will you say of any man that he is wiser than God? If you dare not say so, how dare you hear them and believe them against the word of God? how dare you be drawn from a holy life, or from a self-denying duty, or from the truth of God, by the words of a man, yea, perhaps, of a very sot, that speaks against the word of God? "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to these, it is because there is no light in them," Isa. viii. 20.

5. The infinite wisdom of God should establish our confidence concerning the fulfilling of all his word. He will not fail for want of knowledge: when he spoke that prophecy, that promise, or that threatening, he perfectly knew all things that would come to pass, to all eternity. He knew therefore what he said when he gave out his word, and therefore will fulfil it. Heaven and earth may pass away, but one iota or tittle of his word shall not pass away till all be accomplished, Matt. v. 18.

6. And from the infinite wisdom of God, the church must be encouraged in its greatest straits, and against all the cunning and subtlety of their enemies. Are we ever in such straits that God knows not how to bring us out? When we see no way for our deliverance, doth it follow that he sees none? If cunning serpents are too subtle for us, do we think that they can overwit the Lord? What had become of us long ago, if God had not known whatever is plotted at Rome, or Spain, or hell, against us; if he knoweth not of all the consultations of the conclave, and of all the contrivances of Jesuits and friars; and of all the jugglings of the masked emissaries? If God had not known of Faux and his powder mine, it might have blown up all our hopes. But while we know that God is in their councils, and heareth every word they say, and knoweth every secret of their hearts, and every mischief which they enterprise, let us do our duty, and rest in the wisdom of our great Protector, who will prove all his adversaries to have played the fools: for as sure as his omnipotency shall be glorified by over-topping all opposing powers, so sure shall his infinite wisdom be glorified, by conquering and befooling the wisdom that is against him.

7. Lastly, If God be infinite in knowledge, it must resolve us all to live accordingly. O remember, whatever thou thinkest, that God is acquainted with all thy thoughts. And wilt thou feed on lustful, or covetous, or malicious, or unbelieving thoughts, in the eye of God? Remember in thy prayers and every duty, that he knows the very frame of all thy affections, and the manner as well as the matter of thy services. And wilt thou be cold and careless in the sight of God? O remember in thy secretest sins, and thy works of darkness, that nothing is unknown to God; and that before him thou art in the open light: and fearest thou not the face of the Almighty? Wilt thou do that when he knoweth it, that thou wouldst not do if man did know? He knows whether thou deceive thy neighbour, or deal uprightly. Defraud not therefore, for the Lord is the avenger, 1 Thess. iv. 6. Do nothing that thou wouldst not have God to know; for certainly he

knoweth all things. Shall he not see, that made and illuminateth the eye? and shall he not hear, that made both tongue and ears? and shall he not know, that giveth us understanding, and by whom we know? Psal. xciv. 8—10.

And let this be thy comfort in thy secret duties: He that knoweth thy heart, will not overlook the desires of thy heart, though thou hadst not words as thou desirest to express them. And he that knoweth thy uprightness, will justify thee, if all the world condemn thee. He that seeth thee in thy secret alms, or prayers, or tears, will openly reward thee, Matt. vi. 4, 6. Let this also comfort thee under all the slanders of malicious or misinformed men: He that must be thy judge and theirs, is acquainted with the truth; who will certainly "bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday," Psal. xxxvii. 6. Oh how many souls are justified with the omniscient God, that are condemned by the malignant world! And how many blots will be wiped off before the world at the day of judgment, that here did lie upon the names of faithful, upright men! Oh how many hypocrites shall be then disclosed! And what a cutting thought should it be to the dissembler, that his secret falsehood is known to God; and when he hath the reputation that he sought with men, "he hath his reward!" Matt. vi. 2. For it is a sadder reward that God will give him.

CHAPTER IX.

8. The next of God's attributes that must make its impress on the soul, is his infinite goodness. The denomination of goodness (as all other his attributes) is fetched from, and suited to, the capacity or affections of the soul of man. That which is truly amiable is called good. Not as if there were no goodness but what is a means to man's felicity, as some most sottishly have affirmed; for our end and felicity itself, and God as he is perfect and excellent in himself, is more amiable than all means.

In three respects therefore it is that God is called good or amiable to man. 1. In that he is infinitely excellent and perfect in himself. For the love of friendship is a higher love than that of desire; and the most perfect sort of love is that which wholly carrieth the lover from himself to the perfect object of his love. The soul delighteth to contemplate excellency, when the excellency itself, and not the delight, is the ultimate end of that desire and contemplation.

2. God is called good, as he is the pattern and fountain of all moral good; as he maketh us righteous, holy laws, commanding moral good, and forbidding and condemning evil. And thus his goodness is his holiness and righteousness, his faithfulness and truth.

3. God is called good, as he is the fountain of all the creature's happiness, and as he is bountiful and gracious, and ready to do good, and as he is the felicitating end and object of the soul.

And this infinite goodness must have these effects upon us. 1. It must possess us with a superlative love to God. This blessed attribute is it that makes us saints indeed, and maketh that impression on us, which is as the heart of the new creature. It is goodness that produceth love. And love is that grace that closeth with God as our happiness and end, and is the felicitating, enjoying grace. Without it we are but "as sounding brass, or tinkling cymbals," whatever our gifts and parts may be, 1 Cor. xiii. Love is the very excellency of the soul, as it closeth with the infinite excellency of God. It is the very felicity of the soul, as it enjoyeth him that is our felicity. Most certainly the prevailing love of God, is the surest evidence of true sanctification. He that hath most love hath most grace, and is the best and strongest christian; and he that hath least love, is the worst or weakest. Knowledge and faith are but to work our hearts to love; and when love is perfect, they have done their work, 1 Cor. xii. 31; xiii. 8—10, 13. Teaching and distant revelations will not be for ever; and therefore such knowledge and faith as we have now, will not be for ever. But God will be for ever amiable to us, and therefore love will endure for ever. The goodness of God is called love; and as God is love, so "he that dwelleth in love doth dwell in God, and God in him," 1 John iv. 16. The knowledge of divine goodness makes us good, because it maketh us love him that is good. It is love that acteth most purely for God. Fear is selfish, and hath somewhat of aversation. Though there be no evil in God for us to fear, yet is there such good in him that will bring the evil of punishment upon the evil; and this they fear. But love doth resign the soul to God, and that in the most congruous, acceptable manner. Make it therefore your daily work to possess your souls with the love of God. Love him once, and all that he saith and doth will be more acceptable to you; and all that you say or dō in love will be more acceptable unto him. Love him, and you will be loth to offend him; you will be desirous to please him; you will be satisfied in his love. Love him, and you may be sure that he loveth you. "Love is the fulfilling of his law," Rom. xiii. 10. And that you may love him, this must be your work, to believe and contemplate his goodness. Consider daily of the infinite goodness or amiableness of his nature, and of his excellency appearing in his works, and of the perfect holiness of his laws. But especially see him in the face of Christ, and behold his love in the design of our redemption, in the person of the Redeemer, and in the promises of grace, and in all the benefits of redemption. Yea, look by faith to heaven itself, and think how you must for ever live in the perfect, blessed love of infinite enjoyed goodness. As it is the knowledge and sight of gold, or beauty, or any other earthly vanity, that kindleth the love of them in the minds of men; so is it the knowledge and serious contemplation of the goodness of God that must make us love him, if ever we will love him.

2. The goodness of God must also encourage the soul to trust him. For Infinite good will not deceive us. Nor can we fear any hurt from him, but what we wilfully bring upon ourselves. If I knew but which were the best and most loving man in the world, I could trust him above all men; and I should not fear any injury from him. How many friends have I that I dare trust with my estate and life, because I know that they have love and goodness in their low degree! And shall I not trust the blessed God, that is love itself, and infinitely good? whatever he will be in justice to the ungodly, I am sure he "delighteth not in the death of sinners, but rather that they turn and live;" and that he will not cast off the soul that loveth him, and would fain be fully conformed to his will. It cannot be that he should spurn at them that are humbled at his feet, and long, and pray, and seek, and mourn after nothing more than his grace and love! Think not of God as if he had less of love and goodness than the creature has. If you have high and confident thoughts of the goodness and fidelity of any man on earth, and dare quietly trust him with your life and all; see that you have much higher thoughts of God, and trust him

with greater confidence, lest you set him below the silly creature in the attributes of his goodness, which his glory and your happiness require you to know.

3. The infinite goodness of God, must call off our hearts from the inordinate love of all created good whatever. Who would stoop so low as earth, that may converse with God? And who would feed on such poor delights, that hath tasted the graciousness of the Lord? Nothing more sure than that the love of God doth not reign in that soul, where the love of the world, or of fleshly lust or pleasure reigneth, 1 John ii. 15. Had worldlings, or sensual, or ambitious men, but truly known the goodness of the Lord, they could never have so fallen in love with those deceitful vanities. If we could but open their eyes to see the loveliness of their Redeemer, they would soon be weaned from other loves. Would you conquer the love of riches, or honour, or any thing else that corrupteth your affections; O try this sure and powerful way! Draw nigh to God, and take the fullest view thou canst, in thy most serious meditation, of his infinite goodness, and all things else will be vile in thy esteem, and thy heart will soon contemn them and forget them, and thou wilt never dote upon them more.

4. The infinite goodness of God, should increase repentance, and win the soul to a more resolute, cheerful service of the Lord. Oh what a heart is that which can offend, and wilfully offend, so good a God! This is the odiousness of sin, that it is an abuse of an Infinite good. This is the most heinous, damning aggravation of it, that Infinite goodness could not prevail with wretched souls against the empty, flattering world! but that they suffered a dream and shadow to weigh down Infinite goodness in their esteem. And is it possible for worse than this to be found in man? He that had rather the sun were out of the firmament, than a hair were taken off his head, were unworthy to see the light of the sun. And surely he that will turn away from God himself, to enjoy the pleasures of his flesh, is unworthy to enjoy the Lord. It is bad enough that Augustine in one of his epistles saith of sottish, worldly men, that they had rather there were two stars fewer in the firmament, than one cow fewer in their pastures, or one tree fewer in their woods or grounds; but it is ten thousand times a greater evil that every wicked man is guilty of, that will rather forsake the living God, and lose his part in Infinite goodness, than he will let go his filthy and unprofitable sins. O sinners, as you love your souls, "despise not the riches of the goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering of the Lord; but know that his goodness should lead you to repentance," Rom. ii. 4. Would you spit at the sun? Would you revile the stars? Would you curse the holy angels? If not, O do not ten thousandfold worse, by your wilful sinning against the Infinite goodness itself.

But for you, christians, that have seen the amiableness of the Lord, and tasted of his perfect goodness, let this be enough to melt your hearts, that ever you have wilfully sinned against him. Oh what a good did you contemn in the days of your unregeneracy, and in the hour of your sin! Be not so ungrateful and disingenuous as to do so again. Remember whenever a temptation comes, that it would entice you from the Infinite good. Ask the tempter, man or devil, whether he hath more than an infinite good to offer you; and whether he can outbid the Lord for your affection?

And now for the time that is before you, how cheerfully should you address yourselves unto his service! and how delightfully should you follow it on from day to day! What manner of persons should the servants of this God be, that are called to nothing but what is good! How good a Master! how good a work! and how good company, encouragements, and helps! and how good an end! All is good, because it is the Infinite good that we serve and seek. And shall we be loitering, unprofitable servants!

5. Moreover, this Infinite goodness should be the matter of our daily praises. He that cannot cheerfully magnify this attribute of God, so suitable to the nature of the will, is surely a stranger to the praises of the Lord. The goodness of God should be a daily feast to a gracious soul, and should continually feed our cheerful praises, as the spring or cistern fills the pipes. I know no sweeter work on earth, nay, I am sure there is no sweeter, than for faithful, sanctified souls, rejoicingly to magnify the goodness of the Lord, and join together in his cheerful praises. O christians, if you would taste the joys of saints, and live like the redeemed of the Lord indeed, be much in the exercise of this heavenly work, and with holy David, make it your employment, and say, "Oh how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee!" Psal. xxxi. 19. "The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord!" Psal. xxxiii. 5. What then are the heavens? "Thy congregation hath dwelt therein: thou, O Lord, hast prepared thy goodness for the poor." "Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! for he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness," Psal. cvii. 8, 9. "The goodness of God endureth continually," Psal. lii. 1. "Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart," Psal. lxxiii. 1. "O taste and see that the Lord is good, blessed is the man that trusteth in him," Psal. xxxiv. 8. "The Lord is good, his mercy is everlasting, his truth endureth from generation to generation," Psal. c. 5. "The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works," Psal. cxlv. 9. "Oh praise the Lord, for the Lord is good; sing praises to his name, for it is pleasant," Psal. cxxxv. 3. Call him, as David, "My goodness, and my fortress, my high tower, and my deliverer, and my shield, and he in whom I trust," Psal. cxliv. 2. "Let men therefore speak of the glorious honour of his majesty and of his wondrous works: let them abundantly utter the memory of his great goodness, and sing of his righteousness," Psal. cxlv. 5, 7. If there be a thought that is truly sweet to the soul, it is the thought of the infinite goodness of the Lord. If there be a pleasant word for man to speak, it is the mention of the infinite goodness of the Lord. And if there be a pleasant hour for man on earth to spend, and a delightful work for man to do, it is to meditate on, and with the saints to praise, the infinite goodness of the Lord. What was the glory that God showed unto Moses, and the taste of heaven that he gave him upon earth, but this, "I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy?" Exod. xxxiii. 19. And his proclaimed name was, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth," Exod. xxxiv. 6. These were the holy praises that Solomon did consecrate the temple with, "Arise, O Lord God, into thy resting-place, thou and the ark of thy strength: let thy priests, O Lord God, be clothed with salvation, and let thy saints rejoice in goodness," 2 Chron. vi. 41: see Isa. lxiii. O christians, if you would have joy indeed, let this be your employment! Draw near to God, and have no low undervaluing thoughts of his infinite goodness; for, "How great is his

goodness and how great is his beauty!" Zech. ix. 17. Why is it that divine consolations are so strange to us, but because divine goodness, is so lightly thought upon? As those that think little of God at all, have little of God upon their hearts; so they that think but little of his goodness in particular, have little love, or joy, or praise.

6. Moreover, the goodness of God must possess us with desire to be conformed to his goodness in our measure. The holy perfection of his will must make us desire to have our wills conformed to the will of God: we are not called to imitate him in his works of power, nor so much in the paths of his omniscience, as we are in his goodness, which, as manifested in his work and word, is the pattern and standard of moral goodness in the sons of men. The impress of his goodness within us, is the chief part of his image on us; and the fruits of it in our lives is their holiness and virtue. As he "is good and doth good," Psal. cxix. 68; so it must be our greatest care to be as good, and do as much good, as possibly we can. Any thing within us that is sinful and contrary to the goodness of God, should be to our souls as griping poison to our bodies, which nature is excited to strive against with all its strength, and can have no safety or rest till it be cast out. And for doing good, it must be the very study and trade of our lives. As worldlings study and labour for the world, and the pleasing of their flesh; so must the christian study and labour to improve his Master's talents to his use, and to do as much good as he is able, and to please the Lord. "The desire of the righteous (as such) is only good," Prov. xi. 23. "To depart from evil and do good," is the care of the just, Psal. xxxiv. 14. We must "please our neighbours for good to their edification," Rom. xv. 2. "While we have time we must do good to all men, (as we are able,) but especially to them of the household of faith," Gal. vi. 10. Not only to them that "do good to us," but to "our enemies," Luke vi. 32—34; Matt. v. 44. This is it we must not forget; Heb. xiii. 16, and which by ministers we must be "put in mind of," 1 Tim. vi. 18; which all that "love life and would inherit the blessing" must devote themselves to, 1 Peter iii. 10—12. In this we must be "like our heavenly Father," and approve ourselves his children, Matt. v. 45, 46.

7. From the perfect infinite goodness of God, we must learn to judge of good and evil in all the creatures. To this must all be reduced as the standard, and by this must they be tried. It is a most wretched absurdity of sensual men, to try the will, or word, or ways of God, by themselves, and by their own interests or wills; and to judge all to be evil in God that is against them. And yet, alas, how common is this case! Every man is naturally loth to be miserable: suffering he abhors; and therefore that which causeth his suffering he calleth evil. And so when he hath deserved it himself by his sin, he thinks that the law is evil for threatening it, and that God himself is evil for inflicting it: so that Infinite goodness must be tried and judged by the vicious creature, and the rule and standard must be reduced to the crooked line of human actions or dispositions; and if God will please the worldling, the sensualist, the proud, the negligent, who should please him, then he shall be good, and he shall be God; if not, say these judges, he shall be evil, and unmerciful, and no God. They will not believe that he is good that punisheth them. And thus if the thief or murderer had the choice of kings and judges, you may know what persons he would choose; no one should be a judge, or accounted a good man, that would condemn and hang him.

But I beseech you consider, what is fit to be the rule and standard, if not perfection of goodness itself. Do you think that the will of ignorant, fleshly, sinful man, is fitter to be the rule of goodness, than the will of God? We are sure that God is not deceived, and sure that there is no iniquity with him; but we know that all men are liable to deceit, and have private interests, and corrupted minds, and wills that have some vicious inclinations. Oh what blasphemy is in the heart of that man, that will sooner condemn the holy will and law of God, than his own will, or the wills of any men, be they never so seemingly wise or great! The will of God is revealed in his laws, concerning the necessity of a holy life; and the will of foolish wicked men is by their scornful speeches and sinful lives revealed to be against it. And which of these do you follow; which is it that prescribeth you the better course; the will of God that is infinitely good, or the will of man that is miserably evil? If thou know any better than God, follow him before God. But if none be greater and more powerful than he, if none be wiser, or of more knowledge, it is as sure that none is better. Much less are those ignorant wicked men, that despise the Scripture and a holy life, and would persuade you that they can tell you of a better way. Let me speak it to the terror of the ungodly soul, that by the deceits or scorns of any sort of men, is drawn away from Christ and holiness; it shall stand on record against thee until judgment, and it shall stick everlastingly as a dagger in thy heart, that thou didst prefer the reason and the will of man, yea perhaps of a sottish drunkard or a worldling, before the word or will of God. And though thy tongue durst not speak it, thy life did speak it, that thou thoughtest the word and will of man to be better than the word and will of God: yea more, that thou tookest the way of the devil to be better than God's ways, who is infinitely good: for surely thou choosest that which thou takest to be best for thee. And therefore if that man deserve damnation that sets up a man, or a horse, or an image, and saith, This is greater and wiser than God, and therefore this shall be my god; then dost thou deserve the same damnation, that settest up the words or will of man, even of wicked men, and sayest by thy practice, These are better than God, and his word, or will, and therefore I will choose or follow them. For God is full as jealous of the honour of his goodness, as of his power or wisdom.

Well, christians, let flesh and blood say what it will, and let all the world say what they will, judge that best that is most agreeable to the will of God; for good and evil must be measured by this will. That event is best which he determineth of, and that action is best which he commandeth. And all is naught, and will prove so in the end, that is against this will of God, what policy or good soever may be pretended for it.

8. And if the will of God be infinitely good, we must all labour both to understand it, and perform it. Many say, "Who will show us any good? Psal. iv. 6. Would you not know what is best, that you may choose and seek it? As the inordinate desire of knowing natural good and evil did cause our misery, so the holy rectified desires of knowing spiritual good, must recover us. Search the Scriptures then, and study and inquire; for it more concerns you to know the will of God, than to know the will of your princes or benefactors, or know of any treasures of the world. The riches of grace are given to us, by God's making known the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he purposed in himself, Ephes. i. 7, 9. And our desire to know the good will of God, must

be that we may do it; for this must we pray, "That we may be filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, that we may walk worthy of the Lord, unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work," Col. i. 9, 10; that we may "be made perfect in every good work to do his will, and have that wrought in us which is pleasing in his sight," Heb. xiii. 21; that we may not only know his will and approve the things that are excellent, (Rom. ii. 18,) but may prepare ourselves to do according to his will, lest we be punished the more, Luke xii. 47. See that the will of no man be preferred before God's will; seek not your own wills, nor set them up against the Lord's. If Christ, whose will was pure and holy, profess that he sought not his own will, but his Father's, John v. 30; and that he came not to do his own will, but his that sent him, John vi. 38; should it not be our resolution, whose wills are so misguided and corrupt?

9. If God's will be infinitely good, we must rest in his will; when his ways are dark, or grievous to our flesh; when his word seems difficult; when we know not what he is doing with us; remember it is the will that is infinitely good that is disposing of us. Only let us see that we stand not cross to the greater good of his church and honour; and then we may be sure that he will not be against our good. We that can rest in the will of a dear and faithful friend, should much more rest in the will of God. Do your duty, and be "not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is" for you to do, Ephes. v. 17; and then distract not your minds with distrustful fears about his will that is infinitely good, but say, "The will of the Lord be done," Acts xxi. 14.

10. The infinite goodness of God should draw out our hearts to desire communion with him, and to long after the blessed fruition of him in the life to come. Oh how glad should we be to tread his courts! to draw near him in his holy worship, to meditate on him, and secretly open our hearts before him, and to converse with those gracious souls that love to be speaking honourably of his name! What will draw the heart of man, if goodness and infinite goodness will not? When the drunkard saith in the alehouse, It is good to be here; and the covetous man among his gains, and the sensual man among his recreations and merry companions, It is good to be here; the christian that can get nigh to God, or have any prospect of his love in his ordinances, concludeth that of all places upon earth, "It is good to be here," and that "a day in his courts is better than a thousand," Psal. lxxxiv. 10. But O, "to depart and be with Christ, is far better," Phil. i. 23. With Infinite goodness we shall find no evil, no emptiness, or defect; when we perfectly enjoy the perfect good, what more can be added, but for ever to enjoy it? O, therefore, think on this, christians, when death is dreadful to you, and you would fain stay here, as being afraid to come before the Lord, or loth to leave the things which you here possess, shall goodness itself be distrusted by you, or seem no more desirable to you? Are you afraid of goodness; even of your Father; of your happiness itself? Are you better here than you shall be with God? Are your houses, or lands, or friends, or pleasures, or any thing better than Infinite goodness? O meditate on this blessed attribute of God, till you distaste the world, till you are angry with your withdrawing, murmuring flesh, till you are ashamed of your unwillingness to be with God, and till you can calmly look in the face of death, and contentedly hear the message that is posting towards you, that you must presently come away to God. Your natural birth-day brought you into a better place than the womb; and your gracious birth-day brought you into a far better state than your former sinful, miserable captivity; and will not your glorious birth-day put you into a better habitation than this world? O know, and choose, and seek, and live to the Infinite good, and then it may be your greatest joy when you are called to him.

CHAPTER X.

9. Having spoken of these three great attributes of God, I must needs speak of those three great relations of God to man, and of those three works in which they are founded, which have flowed from these attributes.

This one God in three persons, hath created man and all things, which before were not; hath redeemed man when he was lost by sin; and sanctifieth those that shall be saved by redemption. Though the external works of the Trinity are undivided, yet not indistinct, as to the order of working, and a special interest that each person hath in each of these works. The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost did create the world; and they also did redeem us, and do sanctify us. But so as that creation is in a special sort ascribed to the Father, redemption to the Son, and sanctification to the Holy Spirit; not only because of the order of operation, agreeable to the order of subsisting; for then the Father would be as properly said to be incarnate, or to die for us, or mediate, as the Son to create us; (which is not to be said;) for he created the world by his Word, or Son and Spirit, John i. 3; Psal. xxxiii. 6; and he redeemed it by his Son; and sanctifieth it by his Spirit. But Scripture assureth us that the Son alone was incarnate for us, and died and rose again, and not the Father, or the Spirit; and so that the human nature is peculiarly united to the second person in glory; and so that each person hath a peculiar interest in these several works, the reason of which is much above our reach.

The first of these relations of God to man, which we are to consider of, is, that he is our Creator: it is he that giveth being to us and all things; and that giveth us all our faculties or powers. Under this, for brevity, we shall speak of him also as he is our Preserver; because preservation is but a kind of continued creation, or a continuance of the beings which God hath caused. God then is the first efficient cause of all the creatures, from the greatest to the least, Gen. i. And easily did he make them, for he spake but the word and they were created. They are the products of his power, wisdom, and goodness, Psal. xxxiii. 6; John i. 3. "He commanded and they were created," Psal. cxlviii. 5. He still produceth all things that in the course of nature are brought forth. "Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created: thou renewest the face of the earth," Psal. civ. 30. And from hence these following impressions must be made upon the considering soul.

1. If all things be from God as the Creator and Preserver, then we must be deeply possessed with this truth, that all things are for God as their ultimate end; for he that is the beginning and first cause of all things, must needs be the end of all. His will produced them, and the pleasure of his will is the end for which he did produce them. "I have created him for my glory," Isa. xliii. 7. "The Lord hath made all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil," Prov. xvi. 4. I think the Chaldee paraphrase, the Syriac, and Arabic give us the true meaning of this, who concordantly translate it, The wicked is kept for the day of evil; as Job hath it, (xxi. 30,) "The wicked is reserved to

the day of destruction; they shall be brought forth to the day of wrath;" and 2 Peter ii. 9, "To reserve the unjust to the day of judgment to be punished." God made not the wicked as wicked, or to be wicked; but he that gave them their being and continueth it, will not be a loser by his creation or preservation, but will have the glory of his justice by them in the day of wrath or evil, for which he keeps them, and till which he beareth with them, because they would not obediently give him the glory of his holiness and mercy. So it is said of Christ, Col. i. 16, 17, "For by him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible—all things were created by him and for him." If they are by him, they must needs be for him. So Rev. iv. 11, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." This pleasure of God's will is the end of all things: and therefore it is certain that he will see that all things shall accomplish that end, and his will shall be pleased. Rom. xi. 26, we have all in few words, "For of him, and through him, and to him are all things, to whom be glory for ever. Amen." Of him, as the first efficient that giveth them their beings; and through him, as the preserver, disposer, and conductor of them to their end; and to him, as the ultimate end.

If you say, But how is the pleasure of God's will attained from the wicked that break his laws, and displease his will?

I answer, Understand but how his will is crossed or accomplished, pleased or displeased, and you will see, that his will is always done and pleased, even by them that displease him in violating his will. For God's will hath two sorts of objects or products, which must be still distinguished: 1. He willeth what shall be due from us to him, and from him to us. 2. He willeth entities and events, or what shall actually be, or come to pass. Strictly both these acts of God's will perform the things willed, and so are not without their proper effect. God, as the cause and disposer of all things, attaineth his will concerning events: all things shall come to pass which he absolutely willeth shall come to pass. He is not frustrated of his will herein, being neither unwise, nor impotent, nor unhappy. "Whatsoever pleased the Lord, that did he in heaven and in earth, in the sea, and in the depths," Psal. cxxxv. 6. "Our God is in heaven, he hath done whatsoever he pleased," Psal. cxv. 3. And as God, as our Governor, doth by his laws oblige man to his duty, his will hath its effect: a command doth but make the thing commanded to be our duty; and our duty it is: and so this act of the will of God is not in vain. Thus far he hath his will. By his promises he maketh the reward to be due to all, on condition they perform the duty, on which he hath suspended it, and to be actually due to those only that perform the condition: and all this is accomplished. Heaven is conditionally given to all, and actually to the faithful only. So that what God willeth to be due as a Lawgiver, is accordingly due; and what he actually willeth shall come to pass, shall come to pass according to his will.

But perhaps you will say, He doth not will that all men shall eventually obey his laws, but only that it shall be their duty.

I answer, Our speeches of God being borrowed from man, (who is one of the glasses in which he is here seen by us; especially the manhood of Jesus Christ,) we must accordingly conceive and say, (acknowledging still the improprieties and imperfections of our conceptions and expressions,) that as man doth simply and most properly will the event of some things, which he absolutely desireth should come to pass, and doth not simply will some other things, but only *in tantum;* he so far willeth them, that he willeth and resolveth to do such and such things as have a tendency thereto, and to go no further, and do no more for the attaining of them, though he could; so God doth simply and properly will some things, that is, the things which he decreeth shall come to pass: but we must after our manner conceive and say, that there are other things which he willeth but *in tantum,* so far as to make it man's duty to perform it, and persuade him to the doing of that duty, and give him such a measure of help, as leaveth him without any just excuse, if he do it not; and so far he willeth the salvation of such, as to promise or offer it them on such terms: and no further doth he will the obedience of salvation which never comes to pass, but leaveth it here to the will of man. For if he simply willed that every duty should be eventually done, it would be done: and if he simply willed that all men should be actually saved, they would be saved. And that he simply willeth their duty or obligation, and *in tantum,* so far, doth will the event of their obedience and salvation, as this comes to, as aforesaid, is certain, and in this we are all agreed; and I am not so well skilled in dividing, as to understand where the real difference lieth between the parties that here most contend: but about the bare name I know they differ, some thinking that this last is not to be named an act of God's will, or a willing of man's obedience or salvation, and some thinking that it is so to be named; who doubtless are in the right: nor is there room for controversies, while we confess the impropriety of this and all our speeches of God, as speaking after the manner of men; and while Scripture, that must teach us how to speak of God, doth frequently so speak before us.

2. God being the maker and first cause of all things, that is, of all substantial beings, commonly called creatures, we must conclude that sin is no such being, because it is most certain that he is not the creator or the cause of it. Scripture assureth us, and all christians are agreed, that God is not the cause or author of sin. How odious then should that be to us, that is so bad as not to come from God! If God disclaim it, let us disclaim it. Let us abhor that it should come from us, seeing God abhorreth that it should come from him. Own not that which hath nothing of God upon it.

If you say, That it is an accident though not a substance, and therefore it must needs come from God; because even accidents have their being.

I answer, That among the subtlest disputers it is granted, that it hath no created being, or no being that is caused by God; of this they are agreed. It is granted by all christians that sin hath no other kind of being, but what the will of man can cause. And if that be so, the philosophical trifling controversy, whether it be only a privation, or a relation, or *modus entis,* which the will thus causeth, must be handled as philosophical, and valued but as it deserveth; for this is all the controversy that here remains. If the form be relative, and the foundation be but a mere privation, (the disconformity being founded in a defect,) then the case is soon resolved, as to the rest. He that erreth, understandeth amiss: that he understandeth, is of God; that he erreth, that is, is defective, and so false in his understanding, is of himself: that he willeth when he chooseth sin, is of God the universal cause; but that he willeth a forbidden object, rather than the contrary, and faileth in his understanding and his will, this is not of

God, but of himself. If others say, that the very *fundamentum* of that disconformity which is the form of sin, is sometimes an act, they must also say that it is not an act as such, but this act comparatively considered, or as circumstantiated, or as exercised on the forbidden object rather than another, or a volition instead of a nolition, and choosing that which should be refused, or a refusing that which should be chosen: and whether this comparative specifying foundation be a privation, or a mode, is a philosophical controversy; and in philosophy, and not in theology, is the difficulty; divines being agreed as aforesaid, that whatever you name it, being, or privation, or mode, it is but such as must be resolved ultimately into the will of man as its original or first cause, supposing God to be the creator and conserver of that free power that is able to choose or to refuse, and as a universal cause to concur with the agent to the act of such. But philosophers indeed are at a loss, and are fain to tell us of privations, modes, relations, denominations, *entia rationis*, and I know not what, that they say are neither beings nor nothing, but between both, they know not what! The nature of things, in the utmost extremities of the branches, being so capillar, and spun with so fine a thread, that the understanding is not subtle enough to discern them. And shall this disturb us in divinity, or be imputed to it?

If you say, That the will of God is the cause of all things, and therefore of sin;

I answer, If you call sin nothing, as a shadow, darkness, death, &c. are nothing, (for all that we abhor them,) then you answer yourselves. If you call it something, we are all agreed, that it is but such a something as man can cause without God's first causing it. It sufficeth that God do the part of a Creator, in giving man the free power of choosing or refusing; and the part of a Preserver, in maintaining that power, and as a universal cause concurring to all acts *in genere*, as the sun doth shine on the dunghill and the flowers: and that he also do the part of a just Governor, in prohibiting, and dissuading, and threatening sinners.

Object. But how can sin eventually be, if God decree it not, seeing all events are from his will?

I answer, 1. We are agreed that he causeth it not. 2. And that he doth not so much as will the event of sin as sin. 3. And that he willingly permitteth what is by him permitted. 4. And that sin is such a thing as may *evenire*, be brought forth by a bare permission, if there be no positive decree for the event. As a negative in the effects requireth not a positive cause, so neither a positive will for its production. There are millions of millions of worlds, and individual creatures, and species possible, that shall never be: and it is audaciousness to assert, that there must be millions of millions of positive decrees, that such worlds or creatures shall not be. 5. Nor is it any dishonour to God, if he have not a positive decree or will about every negation (as that all the men in the world shall not be called by a thousand possible names rather than their own, &c.)

These things being all certain, I add, 1. Let them dispute that dare, that yet *de facto* God doth positively will the events of all privations, or negations of acts. 2. But when men are once habitually wicked, and bent to evil, it is just with him, if he permit them to follow their own lusts, and if he leave before them such mercies as he foreknoweth they will wilfully make occasions of their sin; and if he resolve to make use of the sin which he knoweth they will commit, for his church's good, and for his glory.

Object. But doth not God will that sin eventually shall not be?

Answ. Even as I before said, he willeth that obedience eventually shall be. If sin come to pass, it is certain that God did not simply will that it should not come to pass; for then he must be conquered and unhappy by every sin: but he willeth simply that it shall be the duty of man to avoid it; and he may be said to nill the event *in tantum*, so far as that he will forbid it, and threaten and dissuade the sinner, and give him the helps that shall leave him unexcusable if he sin, and so leave it to his will. Thus far he may be said to will that sin eventually shall not be; but not simply.

Though these things are not obvious to vulgar capacities, yet they are such, as the subject in hand, viz. God's first causation and creation, together with the weight of them, and the contentions of the world about them, have made needful.

3. If God be the creator and the cause of all, then we must remember that all his works are good; and therefore nothing must be hated by us that he hath made, considered in its native goodness. God hateth sin, and so must we: for that he made it not, Rev. ii. 6; Psal. xlv. 7; Isa. i. 14. And he hateth all the workers of iniquity as such, (Psal. v. 5,) and so must we; but we must love all of God that is in them, and love them for it. There is somewhat good and amiable in every creature; yea, all of it, that is of God. Though toads and serpents are odious to us, because they are hurtful, and seem deformed in themselves, yet are they good in themselves, and not deformed as parts of the universe, but good unto the common end. The wants in the wheels of your watch are as useful to the motion as the nucks or solid parts. The night is part of the useful order of the creation, as well as the day. The vacant interspace in your writing, is needful as well as the words: every letter should not be a vowel, nor every character a capital: every member should not be a heart, or head, or eye: nor should every one in a commonwealth be a king, or lord: so in the creation the parts that seem base, are useful in their places, and good unto their ends. Let us not therefore vilify or detest the works of God, but study the excellences of them, and see, and admire, and love them as they are of God. It is one of the hardest practical points before us, to know how to esteem of all the creatures, and to use them without running into one extreme. At the same time to love the world, and not to love it; to honour it, and despise it; to exalt it, and to tread it under our feet; to mind it, and use it with delight, and yet to be weaned from it as those that mind it not. And yet a great part of our christian duty lieth in the doing of this difficult work. As the world is the devil's bait, and the flesh's idol, set up against God, and would flee us from him, or hinder us in his service, and either be our carnal end and happiness, or a means thereto, so we must make it the care of our hearts to hate it, despise it, neglect it, and tread it under foot; and the labour of our lives to conquer it. But the same creatures must be admired, studied, loved, honoured, delighted in, and daily used, as they are the excellent work of the Almighty God, and reveal to us his attributes or will, being the glass in which we must see him while we are in the flesh; and as they lead us to God, and strengthen, furnish, or help us in his service. But to love them for God, and not for themselves, O how hard is it! To keep pure affections towards them, and a spiritual delight in them, that shall not degenerate into a carnal delight, is a task for the holiest saint on earth, to labour in with all his care and power, as long as he here liveth. Yet this must be done; and the soul that hath obtained true self-denial, and is dead to the

world, and devoted and alive to God, is able in some good measure to perform it. To love the world for itself, and make the creature our chief delight, and live to it as to our end and idol, this is the common damning course. To cast away our possessions, and put our talents into our fellow-servants' hands, and to withdraw ourselves as it were out of the world into solitude, as monks or hermits do, this is too like the hiding of our talents, and a dangerous course of unfaithfulness and unprofitableness, unless in some extraordinary case; and is at best the too easy way of weaklings, that will be soldiers only out of the army, or where there is but little danger of the enemy: but to keep our stations, and take honours and riches as our Master's talents, as a burden that we must honour him by bearing, and the instruments by which we must laboriously do him service; and to see and love him in every creature, and study him in it, and sanctify it to his use; and to see that our lust get no advantage by it, and feed not on it; but that we tame our bodies, and have all that we have for God, and not for our flesh; this is the hard, but the excellent, most acceptable course of living in this world.

And it is not only other creatures, but ourselves also, that we must thus admire, and love, and use for God, while we abase ourselves, as to ourselves, and deny ourselves, and use not ourselves for ourselves, but as we stand in due subordination to him. Abase yourselves as sinful, and abhor that which is your own, and not the Lord's; but vilify not your nature in itself, nor any thing in you that is the work of God. Pretend not humility for the dishonouring of your Maker. Reason and natural freedom of the will are God's work, and not yours, and therefore must be honoured, and not scorned and reviled; but the blindness and error of your reason, and the bad inclinations and actions of your free wills, these are your own, and therefore vilify them, and hate them, and spare not. And when you lament the smallness of your graces, deny them not; and slight not, but magnify the preciousness of that little that you have, while you mourn for the imperfection. And when men offend you, or prove your enemies, forget not to value and love that of God that yet is in them. All is good that is of God.

4. If all things be of God, as the Creator and Conserver, we must hence remember on whom it is that ourselves and all things else depend. "In him we live, and move, and have our being," Acts xvii. 28. "He upholdeth all things by the word of his power," Heb. i. 3. The earth standeth upon his will and word. The nations are in his hands, so are the lives of our friends and enemies, and so are ourselves. And therefore our eye must be upon him; and our care must be to please him; and our trust and quietness must be in him; and blessed is he that maketh sure of an interest in his special love.

5. Hence also we must observe the vanity of all creature confidence, and our hearts must be withdrawn from resting in any means or instruments. They are nothing to us, and can do nothing for us, but what they have or do from him that made and preserveth us.

6. And lastly, Hence also we may see the patience and goodness of the Lord, that as he refused not to make those men that he foreknew would live ungodlily, so he denieth not to uphold their being, even while they sin against him. All the while that they are abusing his creatures, they are sustained by him, and have those creatures from him. From him the drunkard hath his drink, and the glutton his meat, and the voluptuous youth their abused health and strength; and all men have from him the powers or faculties of soul and body by which they sin. And shall any be so ungrateful as to say therefore that God doth cause their sin? It is true he can easily stop thy breath while thou art swearing, and lying, and speaking against the service of God that made thee: and wouldst thou have him do so? He can easily take away the meat, and drink, and riches, and health, and life which thou abusest: and wouldst thou have him do it? He can easily keep thee from sinning any more on earth, by cutting off thy life, and sending thee to pay for what thou hast done: and art thou content with this? Must he be taken to be a partaker in thy sin, because he doth not strike thee dead, or lame, or speechless, or disable thee from sinning? Provoke him not by thy blasphemies, lest he clear himself in a way that thou desirest not. But O! wonder at his patience, that holds thee in his hand, and keepeth thee from falling into the grave and hell, while thou art sinning against him! While a curse or oath is in thy mouth, he could let thee fall into utter misery. How oft hast thou provoked him to take thee in thy lust, in thy rage, or in thy neglect of God, and give thee thy desert! Would any of you support your enemy, as God doth you?

CHAPTER XI.

10. As we must know God as our Creator, so also as our Redeemer; of which I shall say but little now, because I have mentioned it more fully in the "Directions for Sound Conversion." It is life eternal to know the Father, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, John xvii. 3. The Father redeemeth us by the Son, whom he sent, and whose sacrifice he accepted, and in whom he is well pleased. And this must have these effects upon our souls.

1. We must be hence convinced, that we are not now in a state of innocency, nor to be saved as innocents, or on the terms of the law of our creation: but salvation is now by a Redeemer; and therefore consisteth in our recovery and restoration. The objects of it are only lapsed, sinful, miserable men. Name the creature if you can, since Adam, that stood before God here in the flesh, in a state of personal perfect innocency, except the immaculate Lamb of God. If God, as Creator, should now save any, without respect to a redemption, it must be on the terms of the law of creation: upon which it is certain that no man hath or shall be saved; that is, upon perfect, personal, persevering obedience. You cannot exempt infants themselves from sin and misery, without exempting them from Christ the Redeemer, and the remedy: "There is none righteous, (in himself without a Redeemer,) no not one.——They are all gone out of the way.——That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. (And if all the world be guilty, none are innocent.) Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight.—For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus," Rom. iii. 10, 19, 20, 22, 23. "All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all," Isa. liii. 6. "Through the offence of one, many are dead; and the judgment was by one to condemnation: by the offence of one, death reigned by one: by the offence of one, judgment came on all men to condemnation: by one man's disobedience many were made sinners," Rom. v. 15—19. "We were shapen in iniquity, and in sin did our mothers conceive us," Psal. li. 5. "We were by nature the children of

wrath, and dead in trespasses and sins," Eph. ii. 1, 3. "In Adam all die," 1 Cor. xv. 22. "We thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead," 2 Cor. v. 14. "Christ is the Saviour of the body.—Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water, by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church,——" Eph. v. 23, 25—27. If infants have no sin and misery, then they are none of the body, the church, which Christ loved and gave himself for, that he might cleanse it. But what need we further proof when we have the common experience of all the world? Would every man that is born of a woman, without exception, so early manifest sin in the life, if there were no corrupt disposition at the heart? And should all mankind, without exemption, taste of the punishment of sin, if they had no participation of the guilt? "Death is the wages of sin; and by sin death entered into the world, and it passeth upon all men, for that all have sinned," Rom. v. 12. Infants have sickness, and torments, and death, which are the fruits of sin. And were they not presented to Christ as a Saviour, when he took them in his arms and blessed them, and said, "Of such is the kingdom of God?" Certainly, none that never were guilty, or miserable, are capable of a place in the kingdom of the Mediator. For to what end should he mediate for them? or how can he redeem them that need not a redemption? or how should he reconcile them to God, that never were at enmity with him? or how can he wash them that were never unclean? or how can he be a physician to them that never were sick, when "the whole have no need of the physician?" Matt. ix. 12. He "came to seek and to save that which was lost," (Luke xix. 10,) and to save "his people from their sins," Matt. i. 21. They are none of his saved people therefore, that had no sin. He came to "redeem those that were under the law," Gal. iv. 5. But it is most certain, that infants were under the law, as well as the adult: and they were a part of "his people Israel, whom he visited and redeemed," Luke i. 68. If ever they be admitted into glory, they must "praise him that redeemed them by his blood," Rev. v. 9. God doth first justify those whom he glorifieth, Rom. viii. 30. And they must be "born again" that will "enter into his kingdom," John iii. 3, 5. And there is no regeneration or renovation but from sin, Col. iii. 10; Eph. iv. 22; nor any justification but from sin, and "from what we could not be justified from by the law of Moses," Acts xiii. 39; nor any justification but what containeth a "remission of sin," Rom. iii. 25. And where there is no sin, there is none to be remitted; nor is there any justification but what is "through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and his propitiation," Rom. iii. 24, 25. "He is made of God redemption to us," 1 Cor. i. 30; and the redemption that we have by him, "is remission of sins by his blood," Col. i. 14; Eph. i. 7. "By his own blood entered he once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us:" the eternal inheritance is received by means of death for the redemption of transgressions, Heb. ix. 12, 15. So that all Scripture speaks this truth aloud to us, that there is now no salvation promised but to the church, the justified, the regenerate, the redeemed; and that none can be capable of these but sinners, and such as are lost and miserable in themselves. And till our necessity be understood, redemption cannot be well understood. They that believe that Christ died not only for this or that man in particular, but for the world, methinks should believe that the world are sinners, and need his death. He is called "the Saviour of the world," (John iv. 42,) and the "Saviour of all men, especially of believers," 1 Tim. iv. 10. "We have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world," 1 John iv. 14. And from what doth he save them? "From their sins," (Matt. i. 21,) and "from the wrath to come," 1 Thess. i. 10. "For this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." Infants then are sinners, or none of those that he came to save. Christ hath made no man righteous by his obedience, but such as Adam made sinners by his disobedience; "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one many shall be made righteous," Rom. v. 19. Infants are not made righteous by Christ, if they were not sinners: and sinners they cannot be by any but original sin. "God commended his love to us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us: much more being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son," Rom. v. 8—10: so that it is sinners that "Christ died for," and sinners that are "justified by his blood," and sinners that are "reconciled to God." Infants therefore are sinners, or they are none of the redeemed, justified, or reconciled. And when Jesus Christ "by the grace of God did taste death for every man," (Heb. ii. 9,) infants are sure included. "There is one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all," 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6; therefore all had sin and misery, and needed that ransom. "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." And is it not plain then that the whole world are sinners?

I speak all this for the evincing of original sin only, because that only is denied by such as yet pretend to christianity; for actual sin is commonly confessed, and shows itself. And truly so doth original sin, in our proneness to actual; and in the earliness and commonness of such evil inclinations; and in the remnants of it, which the sanctified feel, though they are such as were sanctified never so early, before actual sin had time to breed those evil habits, which therefore certainly were born with us.

And if the image of God, consisting in true holiness, be not natural, or born in every infant in the world, then original sin must needs be born with them: for that sin is either only or chiefly the privation of that image or holiness. He that will say that this image is not requisite to infants, and so that the absence of it is a mere negation, doth make them brutes, and not of the race of man, whom God created after his image, and leaves them uncapable of heaven or hell, or any other life than beasts have. And he that thinks so of infants to-day may think so of himself to-morrow. And he that will affirm that this image or holiness is born with every infant into the world, so wilfully contradicteth common evidence which appeareth in the contrary effects, that he is not worthy to be further talked with.

One thing more I will propound yet to the contrary-minded: Can they say that any infants are saved or not? If not, either they perish as brutes, (which is a brutish opinion,) or they live in misery; and then they had sin that did deserve it: yea, if they think that any of them perish in the wrath to come, it must be for sin. If they think that any of them are saved, it is either by covenant, or without; there is some promise for it, or there is none. If none, then no man can say that any of them are saved. For who hath known the mind of the Lord without his revelation? It is arrogancy to tell the

world of the saving of any that God did no way reveal that he will save. But if they plead a revelation or promise, it is either the covenant of nature or of grace; a promise contained in nature, law, or gospel. The former cannot be affirmed, (not only because the dissenters themselves deny any such covenant to have been in nature, or any way made to Adam, but) because there is no such covenant or promise in nature to be found, for the salvation of all infants (and if not for all then for none): and because it is contrary to abundance of plain passages in the Scriptures, that assure us that there is but one covenant of salvation now in force: and that all the "world shall become guilty before God, and every mouth be stopped, (Rom. iii. 19,) and that by the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified in his sight," ver. 20; Gal. ii. 16. And if "righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain," Gal. ii. 21. "For as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse. And that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, is evident; for, The just shall live by faith; and the law is not of faith; but, The man that doeth them shall live in them," Gal. iii. 10—12. And certainly the law of nature requireth not less than Moses' law, to a man's justification, if not more. And "if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ, might be given to them that believe," Gal. iii. 21, 22.

By the fulness of this evidence, it is easy to see, that infants and all mankind are sinners, and therefore have need of the Redeemer.

2. To know God as our Redeemer, containeth the knowledge of the great ends of our redemption, and of the manifestation of God to man thereby. Having treated of these in the book forecited, I shall now say but this in brief. It is beyond dispute, that God could have made man capable of glory, and kept him from falling by confirming grace, and without a Redeemer settled him in felicity, as he did the angels. He that foresaw man's fall, and necessity of a Saviour, could easily have prevented that sin and necessity: but he would not; he did not: but chose rather to permit it, and save man by the way of a Redeemer. In which his infinite wisdom is exceedingly manifested. And in Christ, who is the power and wisdom of God, (1 Cor. i. 24,) among others these excellent effects are declared to us, which the way of redemption attaineth, above what the saving us on the terms of nature would have attained.

1. God is now wonderfully admired and magnified in the person of the Redeemer. Angels themselves desire to pry into this mystery, 1 Pet. i. 12. As the frame of nature is set us to see God in, where we daily as in a glass behold him and admire him; so the person of the Redeemer, and work of incarnation and redemption, is set the angels for their contemplation and admiration, as well as us: "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God," Eph. iii. 10. And in the glorious perfection and dignity of the Redeemer, will God be everlastingly glorified; for his greatest works do greatliest honour him: and as the sun doth now to us more honour him than a star; so the glorified person of the Redeemer doth more honour God than man or angels. "He is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God, angels, and authorities, and powers, being made subject to him," 1 Pet. iii. 23. "Being raised from the dead, God hath set him at his own right hand in heavenly places, far above all principalities, and powers, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the Head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all," Eph. i. 20—22. "Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they," Heb. i. 3.

And here a very great truth appeareth, which very many overlook, that the exaltation of the person of Redeemer, and the glory that God will have in him is a higher and more principal part of God's intent in the sending of him to be incarnate and redeem us, than the glorifying of man, and of God by us. Christ will be more glorious than men or angels, and therefore will more glorify God; and God will eternally take more complacency in him than in men or angels; and therefore (though in several respects) he is for us, and the means of our felicity, and we are for him, and the means of his glory, (as the head is for the body, and the body for the head,) yet we are more for Christ as a means to his glory, than he for us; I mean he is the more excellent principal end. "For to this end Christ both died, rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living," Rom. xiv. 9. "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross: wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, both of things in heaven, and things in earth, and under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father," Phil. ii. 6—12. "And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders, and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands: saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing: and every creature which is in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, honour, glory, and power be unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever," Rev. v. 8—12: so xv. 3, 4; xx. 6. "The city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof," Rev. xxi. 23. "The throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall serve him; and they shall see his face, and his name shall be in their foreheads," Rev. xxii. 3, 4. These and many other scriptures show us, that God will be for ever glorified in the person of the Redeemer, more than in either men or angels; and consequently that it was the principal part of his intention in the design of man's redemption.

2. (I will be briefer in the rest.) In the way of redemption man will be saved with greater humiliation and self-denial than he should have been in the way of creation. If we had been saved in a way of innocency, we should have had more to ascribe to ourselves. And it is meet that all creatures be humbled and abased, and nothing in themselves, before the Lord.

3. By the way of redemption, sin will be the more dishonoured, and holiness more advanced, than if sin had never been known in the world. Contraries illustrate one another. Health would not be so much valued, if there were no sickness; nor life, if there were no death; nor day, if there were no night; nor knowledge, if there were no ignorance; nor good, if man had not known evil. The holiness of God would never have appeared in execution of vindictive justice against sin, if there had never been any sin; and therefore he hath permitted it, and will recover us from it, when he could have prevented our falling into it.

4. By this way also, holiness and recovering grace shall be more triumphant against the devil and all its enemies: by the many conquests that Christ will make over Satan, the world, and the flesh, and death, there will very much of God be seen to us, that innocency would not thus have manifested.

5. Redemption brings God nearer unto man. The mystery of incarnation giveth us wonderful advantages to have more familiar thoughts of God, and to see him in a clearer glass, than ever we should else have seen him in on earth, and to have access with boldness to the throne of grace. The pure Deity is at so vast a distance from us, while we are here in flesh, that if it had not appeared in the flesh unto us, we should have been at a greater loss. But now "without controversy great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached to the gentiles, believed on in the world, and received up into glory," 1 Tim. iii. 16.

6. In the way of redemption, man is brought to more earnest and frequent addresses unto God, and dependence on him; necessity driveth him; and he hath use for more of God, or for God in more of the ways of his mercy, than else he would have had.

7. Principally in this way of saving miserable man by a Redeemer, there is opportunity for the more abundant exercise of God's mercy, and consequently for the more glorious discovery of his love and goodness to the sons of men, than if they had fallen into no such necessities. Misery prepareth men for the sense of mercy. In the Redeemer there is so wonderful a discovery of love and mercy, as is the astonishment of men and angels. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!" 1 John iii. 1. "God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved,) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness towards us by Christ Jesus: for by grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast," Eph. ii. 4—9. "For we ourselves were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, &c. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost," Titus iii. 3—5. Never was there such a discovery of God as he is love, in a way of mercy to man on earth, as in the Redeemer, and his benefits.

8. In the way of redemption the soul of man is formed to the most sweet and excellent temper, and his obedience cast into the happiest mould. The glorious demonstration of love, doth animate us with love to God; and the shedding abroad of his love in our hearts by the Spirit of the Redeemer, doth draw out our hearts in love to him again: and the sense of his wonderful love and mercy filleth us with thankfulness: so that love is hereby made the nature of the new man; and thankfulness is the life of all our obedience: for all floweth from these principles, and expresseth them: so that love is the compendium of all holiness in one word; and thankfulness of all evangelical obedience. And it is a more sweet and excellent state of life, to be the spouse of Christ, and his members, and serve God as friends and children, with love and thankfulness, than to serve him merely as the most loyal subjects, or with an obedience that hath less of love.

9. In the way of redemption, holiness is more admirably exemplified in Christ, than it was, or would have been, in Adam. Adam would never have declared it in that eminency of charity to others, submission to God, contempt of the world, self-denial, and conquest of Satan, as Christ hath done.

10. And in the way of redemption, there is a double obligation laid upon man for every duty. To the obligations of creation, all the obligations of redemption and the new creation are superadded: and this threefold cord should not so easily be broken. Here are moral means more powerfully to hold the soul to God.

11. And in this way there is a clearer discovery of the everlasting state of man, and life and immortality are more fully brought to light by the gospel, (2 Tim. i. 10,) than, for aught we find in Scripture, they were to innocent man himself. "No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son that is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him," John i. 18. "For no man hath ascended up into heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man, which is in heaven," John iii. 13.

12. Man will be advanced to the judging of the ungodly and of the conquered angels: even by the good-will of the Father, and a participation in the honour of Christ our head, and by a participation in his victories, and by our own victories in his strength, by the right of conquest, we shall judge with Christ, both devils and men, that were enemies to him, and our salvation; as you may see, 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3. And there is more in that promise than we yet well understand, "He that overcometh, and keepeth my words unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father," Rev. ii. 26, 27.

13. And that which Augustine so much insisteth on, I think is also plain in Scripture, that the salvation of the elect is better secured in the hands of Christ, than his own or any of his posterity's was in the hands of Adam. We know that Adam lost that which was committed to him: but "we know whom we have believed, and are persuaded, that he is able to keep that which we commit to him, against that day," 1 Tim. ii. 12. Force not these scriptures against our own consolation, and the glory of our Redeemer, and then judge. "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him," John xvii. 2. "All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out," John vi. 37. "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day," ver. 39. "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give

unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, and none shall take them out of my hands. My Father which gave them me is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hands," John x. 26—29. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved," Ephes. i. 3, 4. "Being predestinated according to the purpose of him that worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," ver. 11.

And if faith, and repentance, and the right disposition of the will itself, be his resolved gift to his elect, and not things left merely to our uncertain wills, then the case is past all question. "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil," 2 Tim. ii. 25, 26. "By grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God," Ephes. ii. 8. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, faith—," Gal. v. 22. "To you it is given on the behalf of Christ, not only to believe,—" Phil. i. 29. "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed," Acts xiii. 28. "And I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the Lord; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God; for they shall return unto me with their whole heart," Jer. xxiv. 7. "And I will give them one heart, and will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: that they may walk in my statutes, and keep my ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, Ezek. xi. 19, 20. "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes," Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27. See also Heb. viii. 6—10, where this is called the "new" and better "covenant." "I will put my laws in their minds, and write them in their hearts,—" Jer. xxxi. 33. And Jer. xxxii. 39, 40, "And I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me for ever. And I will make an everlasting covenant with them; and I will not turn away from them to do them good, but I will put my fear in their hearts that they shall not depart from me." "Who maketh thee to differ? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive?" 1 Cor. iv. 7. Much more may be produced, from which it is evident that "Christ is the author and finisher of our faith;" and that the certainty of the salvation of his elect doth lie more on his undertaking and resolution infallibly to accomplish their salvation, than upon our wisdom, or the stability of our mutable free-wills; and that thus we are better in the hands of the second Adam, than we were in the hands of the first.

14. To conclude: Vindictive justice will be doubly honoured upon them that are final rejecters of this grace. Though conscience would have had matter enough to work upon for the torment of the sinner, and the justifying of God, upon the mere violation of the law of nature or works, yet nothing to what it now will have on them that are the despisers of this great salvation. "For of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, that hath trodden under foot the Son of God?" When it is wilful impenitency, against most excellent means and mercies, that is to be charged upon sinners, and when they perish because they would not be saved, justice will be most fully glorified before all, and in the conscience of the sinner himself. All this considered, you may see that (besides what reasons of the counsel of God are unknown to us) there is abundant reason open to our sight, from the great advantages of this way, why God would rather save us by a Redeemer, than in a way of innocency, as our mere Creator.

But, for the answering of all objections against this, I must desire you to observe these two things following: 1. That we here suppose man a terrestrial inhabitant clothed with flesh: otherwise it is confessed that if he were perfect in heaven, where he had the beatifical vision to confirm him, many of these forementioned advantages to him would be none.

And it is supposed that God will work on man by moral means; and where he never so infallibly produceth the good of man, he doth it in a way agreeable to his nature and present state; and his work of grace is sapiential, magnifying the contrivance and conduct of his wisdom, as well as his power: otherwise indeed God might have done all without these or any other means.

1. The knowledge of God in Christ as our Redeemer, must imprint upon the soul those holy affections which the design and nature of our redemption do bespeak, and answer these forementioned ends. As, 1. It must keep the soul in a sense of the odiousness of sin, that must have such a remedy to pardon and destroy it.

2. It must raise us to most high and honourable thoughts of our Redeemer, the Captain of our salvation, that bringeth back lost sinners unto God; and we must study to advance the glory of our Lord, whom the Father hath advanced and set over all.

3. It must drive us out of ourselves, and bring us to be nothing in our own eyes, and cause us to have humble, penitent, self-condemning thoughts, as men that have been our own undoers, and deserved so ill of God and man.

4. It must drive us to a full and constant dependence on Christ our Redeemer, and on the Father by him: as our life is now in the Son as its Root and Fountain, so in him must be our faith and confidence, and to him we must daily have recourse, and seek to him, and to the Father in his name, for all that we need for daily pardon, strength, protection, provision, and consolation.

5. It must cause us the more to admire the holiness of God, which is so admirably declared in our redemption; and still be sensible how he hateth sin and loveth purity.

6. It must invite and encourage us to draw near to God, who hath condescended to come so near to us; and as sons we must cry, "Abba, Father;" and though with reverence, yet with holy confidence, must set ourselves continually before him.

7. It must cause us to make it our daily employment to study the riches of the love of God, and his abundant mercy manifested in Christ; so that above all books in the world, we should most diligently and delightfully peruse the Son of God incarnate, and in him behold the power, and wisdom, and goodness of the Father: and with Paul we should desire "to know nothing but Christ crucified;" and all things should be counted "but loss and dung for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord," Phil. iii. 8. "That we may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and

depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that we may be filled with all the fulness of God."

8. Above all, if we know God as our Redeemer, we must live in the power of holy love and gratitude. His manifested love must prevail with us so far, that unfeigned love to him may be the predominant affection of our souls. And being free from the spirit of bondage and slavish fear, we must make love and thankfulness the sum of our religion; and think not any thing will prove us christians, without prevailing love to Christ, nor that any duty is accepted that proceedeth not from it.

9. Redemption must teach us to apply ourselves to the holy laws and example of our Redeemer for the forming and ordering of our hearts and lives.

10. And it must quicken us to love the Lord with a redoubled vigour, and to obey with double resolution and diligence, because we are under a double obligation. What should a people so redeemed esteem too much or too dear for God?

11. Redemption must make us a more heavenly people, as being redeemed to the incorruptible inheritance in heaven. "The blessed God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation," 1 Pet. i. 3.

12. Lastly, Redemption must cause us to walk the more carefully, and with a greater care to avoid all sin, and to avoid the threatened wrath of God, because sin against such unspeakable mercy is unspeakably great; and condemnation by a Redeemer for despising his grace, will be a double condemnation, John iii. 19, 36.

CHAPTER XII.

11. The third relation in which God is to be known by us, is as he is our Sanctifier and Comforter, which is specially ascribed to the Holy Ghost. And doubtless as the dispensation of the Holy Ghost is the perfecting dispensation, without which creation and redemption would not attain their ends; and as the sin against the Holy Ghost is the great and dangerous sin; so our belief in the Holy Ghost, and knowledge of God as our Sanctifier by the Spirit, is not the least or lowest act of our faith or knowledge. And it implieth or containeth these things following.

1. We must hence take notice of the certainty of our common original sin. The necessity of sanctification proveth the corruption, as the necessity of a Redeemer proveth the guilt: it is not one but all that are baptized, that must be "baptized into the name of the Son and Holy Ghost," as well as of the Father: which is an entering into covenant with the Son as our Redeemer, and with the Holy Ghost as our Sanctifier. So that infants themselves must be sanctified, or be none of the church of Christ, which consisteth of baptized, sanctified persons: "Except a man be born again (even of the Spirit, as well as water) he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. For that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit," John iii. 3, 5, 6; and therefore the fleshly birth producing not a spiritual creature, will not save without the spiritual birth: the words are most plain; not only against them that deny original sin, but against them that misunderstanding the nature of redemption, do think that all infants are merely, by the price paid, put into a state of salvation, and have the pardon of their original sin in common, attending their natural birth. But these men should consider, 1. That this text and constant experience tell us that the new birth doth not thus commonly to all accompany the natural birth: and yet without the new birth none can be saved, nor without holiness any see God. 2. That pardon of sin is no man's, upon the bare suffering of Jesus Christ; but must be theirs by some covenant or promise conveying to them a right to the benefits of his suffering. And therefore no man can be said to be pardoned or saved (without great arroganey in the affirmer) that hath not from God a promise of such mercy. But no man can show any promise that giveth remission of original sin to all infants. Produce it, or presume not to affirm it, lest you fall under the heavy doom of those that add to his holy word. The promise is to the faithful and their seed. The rest are not the children of the promise, but are under the commination of the violated law; which indeed is dispensable; and therefore we cannot say that God will pardon none of them; but withal, we cannot say that he will, unless he had told us so. All the world stand in need of a Sanctifier: and therefore most certainly (even since Christ's death) they are naturally corrupted.

2. And as our belief in the Holy Ghost, as Sanctifier, engageth us to acknowledge our original sin and misery, so doth it engage us to magnify his renewing work of grace, and be convinced of the necessity of it, and to confess the insufficiency of corrupted nature to its own renovation. As no man must dishonour the work of our Creator; and therefore our faculties of reason and natural free-will are not to be denied or reproached: so must we be as careful that we dishonour not the works of our Redeemer or Sanctifier; and therefore the viciousness and ill-disposedness of these faculties, and the thraldom of our wills to their own misinclinations, and to concupiscence, must be confessed; and the need of grace to work the cure. It is not ingenuous for us, when God made it so admirable a part of his work in the world, to redeem us, and save us from our sin and misery, that we should hide or deny our diseases, and make ourselves believe that we have but little need of the Physician, and so that the cure is no great matter, and consequently deserveth no great praise. I know the church is troubled by men of dark, yet self-conceited minds, that in these points are running all into extremes. One side denying the sapiential method, and the other the omnipotential way of God in our recovery. One plainly casting our sin and misery principally on God; and the other as plainly robbing the Redeemer and Holy Spirit of the honour of our recovery. But it is the latter that my subject leadeth me now to speak to. I beseech you take heed of any conceit that would draw you to extenuate the honour of our Sanctifier. Dare you contend against the Holy Ghost for the integrity of your natures, or the honour of your cure? Surely he that hath felt the power of this renewing grace, and found how little of it was from himself, nay, how much he was an enemy to it, will be less inclined to extenuate the praise of grace than unexperienced men will be. Because the case is very weighty, give me leave by way of question to propound these considerations to you.

Quest. 1. Why is it, think you, that all must be baptized into the name of the Son and Holy Ghost, as well as of the Father? Doth it not imply that all have need of a Sanctifier, and must be engaged to that end in covenant with the Sanctifier? I suppose you know that it is not to a bare profession of our belief of the trinity of persons that we

are baptized. It is the covenant entrance into our happy relation to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, that is then celebrated. And therefore as infants and all must be thus engaged to the Sanctifier, so all must acknowledge their necessity of this mercy, and the excellency of it. It is essential to our christianity, that we value it, desire it, and receive it. And therefore an error inconsistent with it proveth us indeed no christians, Matt. xxviii. 19.

Quest. 2. Why is it, think you, that the Holy Ghost and this renewing work are so much magnified in the Scripture? Is not the glory of it answerable to those high expressions? Undoubtedly it is. I have already told you elsewhere of the elogies of this work. It is that by which "Christ dwelleth in them, and they are made a habitation of God by the Spirit," Ephes. iii. 17; ii. 22. They are made by it "the temples of the Holy Ghost," 1 Cor. vi. 19. It is the divine power (which is no other than omnipotency) that "giveth us all things pertaining unto life and godliness," 2 Pet. i. 3. Think not, I beseech you, any lower of this work than is consistent with these expressions. It is the "opening of the blind eyes of our understanding, and turning us from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God," and bringing us "into his marvellous light," Acts xxvi. 18; Ephes. i. 18; 1 Pet. ii. 9. It is an inward "teaching of us by God," John vi. 45; 1 Thess. iv. 9; an effectual "teaching and anointing," 1 John ii. 27; and a "writing the laws in our hearts, and putting them in our inward parts," Heb. viii. 10, 11. I purposely forbear any exposition of these texts, lest I seem to distort them; and because I would only lay the naked word of God before your own impartial considerations. It is God's work by the Spirit, and not our own, as ours, that is here so much magnified. And can all this signify no more but a common bare proposal of truth and good to the intellect and will? even such as ignorant and wicked men have? Doth God do as much to illuminate, teach, and sanctify them, that never are illuminated, or taught, and sanctified, as them that are? This work of the Holy Ghost is called a quickening, or making men that were dead alive, Ephes. ii. 1, 2; Rom. vi. 11, 13. It is called a new begetting or new birth, without which none can enter into heaven, John iii. 3, 5, 6. A renewing us, and making us new men, and new creatures, so far as that "old things are passed away, and all become new," Ephes. iv. 23, 24; Col. iii. 10; 2 Cor. v. 17. It is a "new creating us after the image of God," Ephes. iv. 24. It maketh "us holy as God is holy," 1 Pet. i. 15, 16; yea, it maketh us "partakers of the divine nature," 2 Pet. i. 4. It "giveth us repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, that we may recover ourselves out of the snare of the devil, who were taken captive by him at his will," 2 Tim. ii. 25, 26. It giveth us that "love by which God dwelleth in us, and we in God," 1 John iv. 16. We are redeemed by Christ "from all iniquity," and therefore it is that "he gave himself for us, to purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works," Titus ii. 14. It is an "abundant shedding of the Holy Ghost" on us for our renovation, (Titus iii. 5, 6,) and by it a "shedding the love of God abroad in our hearts," Rom. v. 5. It is this Holy Spirit given to believers by which they pray, and by which they "mortify the flesh," Jude 20; Rom. viii. 13, 26. By this Spirit we live, and walk, and rejoice, Rom. viii. 1; xiv. 17. Our joy, and peace, and hope, is through the power of the Holy Ghost, Rom. xv. 13. It giveth us a spiritual mind, and taketh away the "carnal mind that is enmity against God, and neither is nor can be subject to his law," Rom. viii. 7. By this Spirit that is given to us, we must "know that we are God's children," 1 John iii. 24; iv. 13. "For if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, the same is none of his," Rom. viii. 9. All holy graces are the "fruits of the Spirit," Gal. v. 22, 23. It would be too long to number the several excellent effects of the sanctifying work of the Spirit upon the soul, and to recite the elogies of it in Scripture. Surely it is no low or needless thing which all these expressions do intend.

Quest. 3. If you think it a most heinous sin to vilify the Creator and his work, and the Redeemer and his work, why should not you think so of the vilifying of the Sanctifier and his work, when God hath so magnified it, and will be glorified in it? and when it is the applying, perfecting work, that maketh the purchased benefits of redemption to be ours, and formeth our Father's image on us?

Quest. 4. Do we not doctrinally commit too much of that sin (if we undervalue the Spirit's sanctifying work, as a common thing) which the ungodly world do manifest in practice, when they speak and live in a contempt or low esteem of grace? And which is more injurious to God; for a profane person to jest at the Spirit's work, or for a christian, or minister, deliberately to extenuate it; especially when the preaching of grace is a minister's chief work? sure we should much fear partaking in so great a sin.

Quest. 5. Why is it that the Scripture speaks so much to take men off from boasting or ascribing any thing to themselves; "That every mouth may be stopped?" Rom. iii. 19: and why doth not the law of works exclude boasting, but only the "law of faith?" Rom. iii. 27. Surely the actions of nature (except so far as it is corrupt) are as truly of God, as the acts of grace. And yet God will not take it well to deny him the glory of redemption, or sanctification, and tell him that we paid it him in another kind, and ascribed all to him as the author of our free-will by natural production. For as nature shall honour the Creator, so grace shall also honour the Redeemer and Sanctifier. And God designeth the humbling of the sinner, and teaching him to deny himself; and to honour God in such a way as may stand with self-abasement, leaving it to God to honour those by way of reward, that honour him in way of duty, and deny their own honour.

Quest. 6. Why is the blaspheming and sinning against the Holy Ghost made so heinous and dangerous a sin, if the works of the Holy Ghost were not most excellent, and such as God will be most honoured by?

Quest. 7. Is it not exceeding ingratitude for the soul that hath been illuminated, converted, renewed, quickened, and saved by the Holy Ghost, to extenuate the mercy, and ascribe it most to his natural will? Oh what a change was it that sanctification made! what a blessed birth-day was that to our souls, when we entered here upon life eternal! John xvii. 3. And is this the thanks we give the Lord for so great a mercy?

Quest. 8. What mean those texts, if they confute not this unthankful opinion? "It is God that worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure," Phil. ii. 13. "God hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness towards us through Christ Jesus: for by grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship created to good works in Christ Jesus," Eph. ii. 7—10. The like is in Titus iii. 5—7. John xv. 16, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you

that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us,——" 1 John iv. 10. "For who maketh thee to differ? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive?" 1 Cor. iv. 7. "No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him," John vi. 44. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned," 1 Cor. ii. 14. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit," John iii. 6; that is, plainly, the fleshly birth produceth but flesh and not spirit; if any man will have the Spirit (and so be saved) it must be by a spiritual begetting and birth by the Holy Ghost. "The Lord opened Lydia's heart that she attended to the things that were spoken of Paul," &c. Acts xvi. 14. Was the conversion of Paul, a murdering persecutor, his own work rather than the Lord's, when the means and manner were such as we read of? "The God of our fathers hath chosen thee that thou shouldst know his will, and see that Just One, and hear the voice of his mouth," &c. Acts xxii. 14. He was chosen to the means and to faith, and not only "in faith unto salvation." When Christ called his disciples to come and follow him, was there no prevailing inward power that made them leave all and follow him? And was it not the power of the Holy Ghost that converted three thousand Jews at a sermon, of them that by wicked hands had crucified and slain the Lord Jesus? Acts ii. 23, 41. When the preaching and miracles of Christ converted so few; his brethren, and they that "saw his miracles, believed not on him," John xii. 37; v. 38; vi. 36; vii. 5; but when the Holy Ghost was given after his ascension, in that plenty which answered the gospel and promise, his words were fulfilled: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me," John xii. 32. I pass by abundance more such evidence.

Quest. 9. Doth it not tend to bring sin into credit, which holiness is contrary to, and to bring the love of God into discredit, and to hinder men's conversion, and keep them from a holy life, when holiness is taken for so low and natural or common a thing?

Quest. 10. And consequently doth it not tend to the vilifying of the attribute of holiness in God, when the image and effect of it is so extenuated?

Quest. 11. And doth it not tend to the contempt of heaven itself, whose state of felicity consisteth much in perfect holiness? And if sanctification be but some common motion, which Cain and Judas had, as well as Paul, sure it is less divine and more inconsiderable than we thought.

Quest. 12. Doth it not speak a very dangerous suspicion of a soul that never felt the special work of grace, that can make light of it, and ascribe it most to his own will? And would not sound humiliation do more than arguments to cure this great mistake? I never yet came near a thoroughly humbled soul, but I found them too low and vile in their own eyes, to have such undervaluing thoughts of grace, or to think it best for them to leave all the efficacy of grace to their own wills! A broken heart abhors such thoughts.

Quest. 13. Dare any wise and sober man desire such a thing of God, or dare you say that you will expect no other grace, but what shall leave it to yourselves to make it effectual or frustrate it? I think he is no friend to his soul that would take up with this.

Quest. 14. Do not the constant prayers of all that have but a show of godliness contradict the doctrine which I am contradicting? Do you not beg of God to melt and soften and bow your hearts, and to make them more holy, and fill them with light, and faith, and love, and hold you close to God and duty? In a word, do you not daily pray for effectual grace, that shall infallibly procure your desired ends? I scarce ever heard a prayer from a sober man but was orthodox in such points, though their speeches would be heterodox.

Quest. 15. Do you not know that there is an enmity in every unrenewed heart against sanctification, till God remove it? Are we not greater enemies to ourselves, and greater resisters of the Holy Ghost, and of our own conversion, and sanctification, and salvation, than all the world besides is? Woe to him that feeleth not this by himself! And is it likely, that we that are enemies to holiness, should do more to our own sanctification, than the Holy Ghost? Woe to us if he conquer not our enmity!

Quest. 16. Is it probable that so great a work as the destroying of our dearest sins, the setting our hearts and all our hopes on an invisible glory, and delighting in the Lord, and forsaking all for him, &c. should come rather from the choice of a will that loveth those sins, and hateth that holy, heavenly life, than from the Spirit of Christ? Sure this is much above us.

Quest. 17. Whence is it that so often one man that hath been a notorious sinner is converted by a sermon, when a civiler man, of better nature and life, is never changed, though he have that and ten times more persuasions?

Quest. 18. Doth not experience tell impartial observers, that the high esteemers of the sanctifying work of the Holy Ghost, are ordinarily of more holy, heavenly lives, than they that use to ascribe the differencing work to their free-wills? In my observation it is so.

Quest. 19. Should not every gracious, humble soul, be more inclined to magnify God, than himself? and to give him the glory, than to give it to ourselves, especially in a case where Scripture and experience telleth us that we are more unlikely than God to deserve the praise? Our destruction is of ourselves, but in him is our help, Hos. xiii. 9. When we see an effect and know it, and the causes that are in question, it is easy to conjecture from the quality, which is the true cause. If I see a serpent brought forth, I will sooner think that it was generated by a serpent than a dove. If I see sin in the world, I shall easily believe it is the spawn of this corrupted will, that is so prone to it. But if I find a divine nature in me, or see a holy, heavenly life in any, I must needs think that this is liker to be the work of the blessed God, than of such a naughty heart as man's, that hath already been a self-destroyer.

Quest. 20. What motive hath any man to exalt himself, and sin against the Holy Ghost by such an extenuation of his saving grace? It is a causeless, fruitless sin. The only reason that ever I could hear for it, was lest the doctrine of differencing grace should make God a respecter of persons, or the author of sin, of which there is no reason of a suspicion. We all agree that no man perisheth, or is denied grace, but such as deserve it: and when all deserve it, it is no more respect of persons in God to sanctify some only of those ill deservers, than it is that he makes not all men kings, nor every dog or toad a man, nor every star a sun, or every man an angel. To clear all objections concerning this, would be but to digress.

3. Lastly, Our knowledge of the Holy Ghost must raise us to a high estimation of his works, and a ready reception of his graces, and cheerful obedience

to his motions. He sanctified our Head, that had no sin, by preventing sin in his conception, and he anointed him to his office, and came upon him at his baptism. He sanctified and anointed the prophets and apostles to their offices, and by them indited the holy Scripture. He illuminateth, converteth, sanctifieth, and guideth all that are to be heirs of life. This is his work. Honour that part of it that is done on Christ, on the prophets, apostles, and the Scriptures; and value and seek after that which belongeth to yourselves. Think not to be holy without the Sanctifier, nor to do any thing well without the Spirit of Jesus Christ, who is Christ's internal, invisible agent here on earth (as Tertullian in the church's creed speaks, *misit vicariam vim Spiritus sancti qui credentes agat).* Oh that men knew how much of their welfare dependeth on a faithful obeying of the Holy Ghost!

CHAPTER XIII.

12. The next part of our knowledge of God, is to know him in those great consequent relations, to which he is entitled by creation and redemption; viz. as he is our absolute Lord or Owner, our most righteous Governor, and our most bountiful or gracious Father or Benefactor.

1. God both as our Creator and Redeemer hath *jus dominii*, an absolute dominion of the world; that is, he is our Owner or Proprietary, and we are his own; for we take not the term, lordship or dominion, here in the looser sense, as it signifieth a ruler, but in the stricter sense, as it signifieth an owner. Of this relation I have already spoken in a sermon of "Christ's Dominion;" and therefore shall say the less in this place.

The knowledge of God's dominion or propriety must comprehend, 1. The certain truth of this his right; 2. The fulness of it; 3. The effects that it must have on us.

I. And the truth of it is beyond dispute, even among infidels that know there is a God. He that made us of his own materials, or of nothing, must needs be the owner of us; and so must he that bought us from destruction: "Behold, all souls are mine," Ezek. xviii. 4. "To this end Christ both died, rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living," Rom. xiv. 9. "All things that the Father hath are mine," John xvi. 14, 15. The Father then hath this propriety by creation, and the Son by redemption; and the Father also by communication with the Son in redemption; and the Son by communication with the Father in creation.

II. And it must be the most absolute plenary dominion, because the very being of all the creatures is from God, and therefore no one can be co-ordinate with him, or his co-rival, nor any thing limit his interest in us.

III. And the effects that this must have upon us, are these following.

1. Hence we must conclude, and reverently and willingly confess, that further than he voluntarily doth oblige himself to us, it is impossible that God should be our debtor; and consequently that upon terms of commutative justice we should merit any thing of God. For what can we render to him but his own? And how should he (properly and antecedently) be indebted to and for his own?

2. And we must conclude, that (anteecedently to his laws and promise) it is impossible that God can do us any wrong, or any thing that he can do can be guilty of injustice: for justice giveth to all their own; and therefore it giveth nothing to us from God, but what he voluntarily giveth us himself, which therefore is first a gift of bounty, and but secondarily a due in justice.

3. And therefore we must hence learn, that God may do with his own as he list. And therefore we must take heed that we repine not at any of his decrees or providences, or any passages concerning them in his word. Much may be above us, because our blindness cannot reach the reasons of his ways; but nothing is unreasonable or evil; for all proceedeth from infinite wisdom and goodness, as well as from omnipotency. As no man must feign any thing of God, and say, This is his decree, or word, or providence, and therefore it is good, when there is no such thing revealed to us; so when we find that it is indeed revealed, our reason must presently submit, and undoubtedly conclude it reasonable and good. Yet is there no cause from hence to fear, lest God should condemn the innocent, or break his promises, and deny us the reward; nor is there any hope to wicked men that he should violate his peremptory threatenings, or (as they call it in their selfish language) be better than his word: because though God have an absolute propriety, and therefore in regard of his interest or power, may do what he will, yet he is essentially also most wise and good, and accordingly hath fitted all things to their use, and taken upon him the relation of our Governor, and as it were obliged himself by his laws and covenants, and declared himself to be most just; and showed us hereby that he will do nothing contrary to these. As there is no contradiction but most perfect unity in God's omnipotency, wisdom, and goodness; his dominion or propriety, his kingdom and paternity; so shall there be no contradiction, but a perfect concord, of all these in the exercise. He therefore that as our King or Governor, hath undertaken to advance the godly, and destroy the wicked, will not by the exercise of his absolute dominion, deny himself, nor be unfaithful to his people, or to his rules of government.

If you ask me, in what cases then this dominion is exercised? I answer, 1. In laying the foundations of laws and right. 2. In the disposal of the unreasonable creatures. 3. In abundance of things about his rational creatures, wherein as rector he is not engaged, nor hath in his laws declared his will: as about the various constitutions and complexions of men, their ranks and dignities in the world, their riches or poverty, their health or sickness, their gifts and parts both natural and acquired; the first giving of the gospel, and of special grace, to such as had forfeited them, and had no promise of them; the degrees of outward means and mercies; the degrees of inward grace, more than what is promised, &c.

From hence also we must learn, not to repine at the providences of God about his church, which are strange to us, and past our reach, and seem to make against its welfare. Remember that as he may do with his own as he list, so we have no reason to think that he will be lavish or disregardful of his own. The church is not ours, but God's; and therefore he is fitter than we to be trusted with it.

And so in our own distresses by affliction; when flesh repineth, let us remember, that we are his own, and he may do with us as he pleases. If we be poor, despised, sick, and miserable in the world, let us remember, that as it is no injury to the beasts that they are not men, or to the worms that they are not beasts, or to the plants that they have not sense, or to the stars that they are not suns; so it is no wrong to the subjects that they are not princes, or to the poor that they are not rich, or to the sick that they are not healthful. May not God do with his

own as he list? shall a beggar grudge that you give not all that he desireth, when you are not bound to give him any thing?

4. Yea, hence we must learn to be the more thankful for all our mercies, because they proceed from the absolute Lord, that was not obliged to us. He might have made us idiots, or mad-men; he might have made us beasts or toads, without any injury to us: and the mercies which are consequently from his promise, are antecedently from his propriety and dominion; for he might have put us into other capacities, and have chosen not to have made those promises. And his promises bind us not to be less thankful but more. As his mercies are not the less mercies but the greater, for being promised; because we have now the comfort and use of them in the promise, before we have them.

5. Hence also we must learn, that there can be no simple absolute propriety in any creature. No creature gave all the being and well-being to another that it hath, and this originally as of its own. We being not our own but God's, cannot have any thing that is absolutely our own. Human propriety is but derived, limited, and respective. Our goods, and lands, and lives are ours; that is, they are ours to use for God, as the instruments of a workman to do his work; but not ours to use as we think meet. They are so ours as that men may not take them from us, but God may take them from us at his pleasure. And therefore think not you may mispend a penny if you were never so rich, because it is your own; but know that you must mispend nothing, because it is not your own but God's.

6. Principally, we must hence learn to deny ourselves, as being not our own, and having nothing in the world that is our own, in respect to God, the absolute Owner. And therefore above all the sins of your souls, still watch against this selfishness; lest you should grow to look at your time, your strength, your wealth, your interests, as your own, and forget that you are mere stewards; and say as the ungodly, "Our lips are our own: who is lord over us?" Psal. xii. 4. Oh take heed that you use not your strength, or interest, or any thing for yourselves; no not so much as your food and raiment, 1 Cor. x. 31; that is, for yourselves ultimately, or not in subordination to the Lord. For self as subject unto God, or as closed with him in the bond of love, is no longer self in enmity and opposition, nor that which we are forbidden to seek or serve.

7. And this knowledge of the dominion of God, must prevail with us effectually to resign ourselves absolutely to him. Our consent doth give him no title to us, but it is necessary to our welfare that we confess his title. All men, even the wicked, are his own, but that is against their wills; but the godly are willingly his own, and disclaim all interest in themselves but what is duly subordinate to his: the name of God is put upon them, as you put your names on your goods or sheep. "I sware unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord, and thou becamest mine," Ezek. xvi. 8. "And they shall be mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I make up my jewels," Mal. iii. 17. To be entirely his by covenant, is proper to a saint: for sanctification hath these parts; one is the habitual devotion of the soul to God, and the other is the actual dedication, and a third is the relation of the person as thus dedicated, and the fourth is the actual using of ourselves for God. These four are the parts of sanctification; so that all is but our giving up ourselves to God. But to be his in right, is common to the devils, and most ungodly. The hearts of the sanctified do resolvedly and delightfully say, "My beloved is mine, and "I am his," Cant. ii. 16; and "I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine," chap. vi. 3. See then that you keep not any thing back, but resign up yourselves entirely to God, as those that know they are wholly his.

8. And with ourselves we must resign up all to God that we have. For if we are not our own but his, then our children, our wealth, our wits, our time, our abilities, and all that we have are his. All is not to be used one way for God; not all to the poor, nor all to the commonwealth, nor all to the direct promoting of his worship: but all must be his, and used for him, in one way or other, and in those ways which he requireth. Possess not any thing merely for yourselves.

9. And especially see to it in the use and improvement, that you use yourselves, and all that you have, for God. Let this be your intention, trade, and study. See that you be always at his work; that if a man come in upon you any hour of the day, and ask you what you are doing, and whose work it is that you are upon, you may truly be able to say, the Lord's. If you be asked, who you are now speaking for, or spending your time for, or for whom do you expend your wealth? you may truly say of every hour, and every penny, and every word, It is for the Lord. Even that which you give your children or friends, and that which you receive for your support or comfort, may all be principally and ultimately for God: "Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's," 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. "Christ died for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but to him that died for them, and rose again," 2 Cor. v. 15.

10. Lastly, This must be a stay to the souls of true believers, and cause them with comfort to trust themselves and all their affairs in the hands of God. When we have first made it our care to "give to God the things that are God's," Matt. xxii. 21; and heartily consecrated ourselves and all that we have to him as his own; we have no reason to doubt of his acceptance, nor of his care, and protection, and merciful disposal of us. This is a wonderful comfort to poor christians, to think that they have such an owner. Whoever is against you, christians, be sure of it, God will look to you as his own! And if you do but promise another that you will be as careful of his child, his horse, his goods, as if they were your own, he will think you say as much as can be expected. If you be poor, or sick, or desolate, you may be sure that yet God will look to you as his own. And why should you think that he will be careless of his own? Ground your prayers and confidence on this, as David doth, "I am thine, save me," Psal. cxix. 94. And in all our labours, and the affairs of our lives, when our consciences can say that we live to God, and study to do all we do for him, and to improve all our time and parts, and other talents, to his use, it may very much quiet us in all his disposals of us. If he keep us in the lowest case, if we be his, we must rest in his wisdom, that knows best how to use his own. If he take our friends from us, he taketh but his own. If he deny his saving grace to our ungodly children (a heavy judgment of which we must be sensible); yet when we have devoted them to God, and done our own part, we must be silent, as Aaron was when his sons were destroyed, Lev. x. 3; and confess that the "potter hath power over his own clay, to make of the same lump a vessel to honour, and another to dishonour," Rom. ix. 21. All his disposals shall work to that end which is the most universal perfect good, and most denominateth all the means. But

those that are his own by eonsent and covenant, may be sure that all shall work to their own good. Let us die with Christ, and be buried to the world, and know no lord or owner but our great Creator and Redeemer, (except in a limited, subservient sense,) and then we may boldly argue with him to the quiet of our souls from this relation, "I am thine, help me." "Stir up thyself, and awake to my judgment, even to my cause, my Lord and my God," Psal. xxxv. 23; when faith and love have first said as Thomas, "My Lord and my God," John xx. 28.

CHAPTER XIV.

13. The next relation to be spoken of, is God's sovereignty: both by creation and redemption he hath the right of governing us as our sovereign King, and we are obliged to be his willing subjects, and as such to obey his holy laws. He is the Lord or Owner of the world; even of brutes as properly as of man: but he is the sovereign King or Governor only of the reasonable creature; because no other are capable of that proper moral government which now we speak of. Vulgarly indeed his physical motions and dispositions are called his rule or government; and so God is said to govern brutes and inanimate creatures; but that is but a metaphorical expression: as an artificer metaphorically governeth his clock or engine, or a shepherd his sheep. But we now speak of proper moral government. God having made man a rational and free agent, having an immortal soul, and capable of everlasting happiness, his very nature and the end of his creation required, that he should be conducted to that end and happiness, by means agreeable to his nature; that is, by the revelation of the reward before he seeth it, that he may seek it and be fitted for it; and by prescribed duties that are necessary to obtain it, and to his living here according to his nature; and by threatened penalties to quicken him to his duty: so that he is naturally a creature to be governed, both as sociable, and as one to be conducted to his end. He therefore that created him having alone both sufficiency and right, doth by this very creation become his Governor. His government hath two parts (the world being thus constituted the kingdom of God). The first is by legislation, or making laws and officers for execution. The second is by the procuring the execution of these laws: to which end he doth exhort and persuade the subjects to obedience, and judge them according to their works, and execute his judgment. His first law was to Adam, the law of nature, obliging him to adhere to his Creator, and to love him, trust him, fear him, honour him, and obey him with all his might, in order to the pleasing of his Creator, and the attainment of everlasting life: to which was added a positive law, against the eating of the tree of knowledge; and death was the penalty due to the sinner. This law was quickly broken by man; and God delayed not his judgment, but sentenced the tempter, the woman and the man; but not according to their merits: but graciously providing a Redeemer, he presently stopt the execution of the far greatest part of the penalty, the Son of God undertaking as our surety to become a sacrifice and ransom for us. Hereupon the covenant of grace was made, and the law of grace enacted with mankind; but more obscurely in the beginning; being cleared up by degrees in the several promises to the fathers, the types of the law, and the prophecies of the prophets of several ages, the law being interposed because of transgression. In the fulness of time the Messiah was incarnate, and the first promises concerning him fulfilled, and after his holy life, and preachings, and conquests of the tempter and the world, he gave himself a ransom for us, and conquering death he rose again, ascended into heaven, being possessed in his manhood of the fulness of his power, and all things being delivered into his hands; so that he was made the General Administrator and Lord of all. And thus he more clearly revealing his covenant of grace, and bringing life and immortality to light, commissioned his ministers to preach this gospel to all the world. And thus the primitive Sovereign is God, and the Sovereign by derivation is Jesus the Mediator, in his manhood united to the second person in the Godhead; and the laws that we are governed by, are the laws of nature with the superadded covenant of grace; the subordinate officers are angels, magistrates, and pastors of the church (having works distinct); the society itself is called the church and kingdom of God; the reward is everlasting glory, with the mercies of this life in order to it; and the punishment is everlasting misery, with the preparatory judgments, especially on the soul, which are here inflicted. Subjection is due upon our first being; and is consented to or vowed in baptism, and is to be manifested in holy obedience to the death. This is the sovereignty and government of God. And now let us see how God, as our Sovereign, must be known.

1. The princes, and all the rulers of the world, must understand their place and duty: they are first God's subjects, and then his officers, and can have "no power but from God," Rom. xiii. 3, 4; nor hold any but in dependence on him, and subordination to him. Their power extendeth no further than the heavenly Sovereign hath signified his pleasure, and by commission to them, or command to us, conferred it on them. As they have no strength (or natural power) but from the omnipotent God, so can they have no authority (or governing power or right) but from the absolute King of all the world. They can less pretend to a right of governing not derived from God, than a justice or constable may to such power not derived from the earthly sovereigns.

Princes and states also must hence understand their end and work. God, who is the beginning, must be the end also of their government: their laws must be but by-laws subservient to his laws, to further men's obedience to them. The common good, which is their lower nearer end, must be measured by his interest in the nations, and men's relations unto him. The common possession of his favour, blessing, and protection, is the greatest common good. His interest in us, and ours in him, must therefore be principally maintained.

2. The knowledge of God as our sovereign King, must bring the whole man in subjection to him. Our understandings must be subject to his doctrine, and resigned to him, as teachable and tractable: when we know what is his law and will, we must rest in it, though we know not the reasons of it. We take not on us to be competent judges of all the reasons of the laws of men, but must obey them without disputing the reasons (with the limitations after to be mentioned). How much more must we submit to the wisdom of the infallible Lawgiver, that cannot deceive, or be deceived! Our wills also must be fully subject to his will, revealed by his precepts. We must desire no more to move us, or to stop us, but to know what God would have us do. As the first wheels in a watch or other engine moveth all the rest, so the will of God must move all our wills, and rule our lives. We must take heed above all things in the world, lest our wills (which are the lower

wheels) should have any such defects, distempers, reserves, any carnal bias, interest, or inclination, that makes them unfit to receive the law of God, or be ruled by his will. We must imitate our Lord, (Heb. x. 7,) and learn of the prophet, "I delight to do thy will, O God," Psal. xl. 8. With cheerful readiness to obey, we must stand waiting for the word of his command; and say as Psal. cxliii. 10, "Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God:" and as Samuel, (1 Sam. iii. 9,) "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." When a man's selfish, carnal will is mortified, and his will lies flat before the Lord, and wholly applieth itself to his will, and it is enough to a man to move him in the greatest matters, to know that it is the will of God, this is a state of true subjection. Thus must we be "in subjection to the Father of spirits," submitting even to his sharpest dispensations, Heb. xii. 9. And all the church is subject unto Christ, Eph. v. 24. And this is essential to our holy covenant and christianity itself. When God is taken to be our God, and we give up ourselves to be his people; when Christ is taken to be our Saviour, and we give up ourselves to him as his members, and redeemed ones; it essentially containeth our taking him for our chief Governor, and giving up ourselves to him as his subjects. Take heed of that wisdom that would overtop the wisdom of God, and be your guide itself, without depending on his wisdom. This is the foolish damning wisdom of the world. Take heed of that concupiscence or will that would be your ruler, and overtop the will of God. For this is the grand rebel, and greatest enemy of God and us.

3. And subjection must produce obedience; subjection is the consent of the will to be subjects, and to obey: obedience is the actual performance of commanded duties. Subjection is the root of obedience, and virtually containeth it: obedience is the fruit of subjection, and supposeth it. If God be your master, show it by his fear, or service, Mal. i. 6. It is not calling Christ our King, but obeying him before all, that will prove us subjects. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doth the will of my Father which is in heaven," Matt. vii. 21. "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, aeceptable to God, your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world, but be you transformed (or turned into other men) by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good, that acceptable, and perfect will of God," Rom. xii. 1, 2. "And this is the will of God, even your sanctification," 1 Thess. iv. 3. "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh, hath ceased from sin; that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh, to the lusts of men, but to the will of God," 1 Pet. iv. 1, 2. Yea, we should "stand perfect and complete in all the will of God," Col. iv. 12. And by the power of the word of God, "every thought should be brought in obedience unto Christ," 2 Cor. x. 5. Our obedience should be public and exemplary, Rom. xvi. 19. "For so is the will of God, that with well-doing we put to silence the ignorance of foolish men," 1 Pet. ii. 15. "Obedience is better than sacrifice," 1 Sam. xv. 22. Whatever you do, therefore, keep close to the law of God.

4. To this end we must labour to know the law, and be acquainted with God's will. The book of nature must be studied: the holy Scripture must be searched, John v. 39, and meditated in both day and night, Psal. i. 2. Princes must have this book continually in their hands, Deut. xvii. 18—20; Josh. i. 8, 9. Rich and poor must learn it, that they may obey it, Deut. vi. 6, 7.

5. And our subjection to God obligeth us to a subjection to the officers which he set over us. If any man say to judges, justices, and constables, I will obey the king, but you are no kings, therefore I will not obey you, he shall suffer as disobeying the king in his officers. Contempt of magistrates and ministers reflects on God.

6. Yea, hence we must practically understand, in what respect to obey our governors: not merely as the officers of men; not only as chosen by the people; but as the officers of God, that from him have their authority. The atheistical politicians that derive authority no higher than the sword, or the people's choice, or natural strength, do teach men to obey their governors, but as a little dog submits unto a mastiff, or so far as their commodity persuadeth them, but not for conscience in obedience to God. And they teach men to look to no higher end than common preservation and liberties, and not to expeet protection or reward from the absolute Sovereign. In a word, they entiee all princes and people into damnable rebellion against the Lord; as much as if they should entice all constables and justices to hold their places without dependence on the prince. But God teacheth us that "there is no power but of God: the powers that be, are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation: for he is the minister of God to us for good; even the minister of God, an avenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil. Wherefore we must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.——For they are God's ministers continually attending upon this very thing: and for this cause we must pay them tribute," Rom. xiii. 1, 2, 4—6. "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake,——for so is the will of God,——" 1 Pet. ii. 13, 15. "Judge righteously between every man and his brother.——Ye shall not respect persons in judgment, but shall hear the small as well as the great: you shall not be afraid of the face of man: for the judgment is God's," Deut. i. 16, 17. "And he said to the judges, Take heed what ye do; for you judge not for man, but for the Lord, who is with you in the judgment; wherefore let the fear of the Lord be upon you," 2 Chron. xix. 5—7. But our atheistical politicians would teach rulers that they are none of the ministers of God, and that they judge for man only, and not for him. The nature of all true obedience is such as Paul describeth in children and servants, Ephes. vi. 1, 6—8, that fetcheth its rise and motives from the Lord; "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.——Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ: not with eye-service as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good-will doing service as to the Lord, and not to men." So Col. iii. 22, 23.

7. Hence also you must learn, that God's authority is the highest authority, and there is indeed no such thing in the world as true authority that is against him, or not subordinate unto him: and therefore if men command us to disobey God, by neglecting that which is *hic et nunc* a duty, or by sinning against him, their commands are from a disobedient will of their own, but from no authority; and it is better in such cases to obey God than man, Acts v. 29: so many prophets, apostles, and other martyrs, would not have been sacrificed by the fury of persecutors,

if they had thought it just to obey them before God. God never gave any man authority against him; nor to nullify his laws. The acts of a justice or constable against the king, or beyond their power, are private or rebellious acts, and not authoritative. And so are the laws of men that are against God. Yet note well, that though we must rather disobey men than God, yet we may not forcibly resist when we may not obey them. And in some cases (as if a king would ravish a woman, or the like) when it is lawful to resist his fact, it is not lawful to resist his state, and disturb the government of the commonwealth. Obey men cheerfully when God forbids it not; but see that God be your absolute Sovereign, whose laws can be dispensed with by none.

If parents or masters command you to break the laws of God, obey them not. Despise them not, but humbly deprecate their displeasure, and obey them in all other things; but in the unlawful thing obey them not; no, not if they were the greatest princes upon earth. But say as the three witnesses of God, "We are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thy hands, O king: but if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up," Dan. iii. 16, 17.

What I have said of magistrates, in the two last cases, I mean also of pastors of the church. They must be obeyed in and for the Lord; but not against the Lord. Saith Paul of the churches of Macedonia, "They gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us, by the will of God," 2 Cor. viii. 5. See Acts xx. 28; 1 Thess. v. 12. "He that heareth you heareth me, and he that despiseth you despiseth me," Luke x. 16. And yet the leaven of the Pharisees must be avoided; and "an angel from heaven be held as accursed, if he should preach another gospel," Gal. i. 8. And I would not have flatterers to set either princes or pastors above the angels of heaven. Though yet in other respects, we may be still obliged, as I said before, to hear and to obey them.

8. And the knowledge of God's sovereignty must teach us to fear his righteous threatenings, and reverence his justice, and prepare ourselves to be judged by him. He ruleth by his laws, and so by threatenings and promises, which he will make good. It is not a painted fire that he threateneth. Judgment is a part of government. Laws are but shadows if there be no execution. "O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness; fear before him all the earth. Say among the heathen, that the Lord reigneth;—" Psal. xcvi. 9, 10. As his promises, so his peremptory threatenings shall be fulfilled. He will not revoke his established laws for fear of hurting wilful sinners, that will not fear his judgments till they feel them. "Let all the earth fear the Lord, let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him: for he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast," Psal. xxxiii. 8. Mark also the present judgments of the Lord, and rush not on his indignation. For "the Lord is known by the judgments which he executeth: the wicked is (oft) snared in the work of his own hands," Psal. ix. 16. Though "the wicked contemn God, and say in his heart, Thou wilt not require it," Psa. x. 13; yet they shall find that "he beholdeth mischief to requite it with his hand, and that he is the helper of the fatherless and poor that commit themselves unto him," ver. 14. "The Lord's throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try the children of men: the Lord trieth the righteous; but the wicked, and him that loveth violence, his soul hateth," Psal. xi. 4, 5.

9. The sovereignty of God is a comfort to his loyal subjects. They may be sure that he will protect them, and make good his word. "Behold, he cometh, and his reward is with him," Rev. xxii. 12. "The righteous Judge at his appearing will give the crown of righteousness to all them that love his appearing," 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8, 18. "O let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth," Psal. lxvii. 4. "Let the heavens rejoice, and the earth be glad——before the Lord; for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth," Psal. lxix. 11, 13.

10. Lastly, The knowledge of God as our sovereign King, must cause us to desire and pray for and promote the glory of his kingdom, and the obedience of his subjects in the world: that his name may be hallowed, by the coming of his kingdom, and the doing of his will on earth as it is in heaven, must be the matter of our daily requests to God. It must be the grief of every subject of the Lord, to think of the heathen and infidel parts of the world; and to see the rebellion of the profane among us; and that the laws of God are unknown or despised by the most of men. Alas! what abundance are ruled by their lusts, and self-conceitedness, and corrupted wills, and the customs of the world, or the wills of men! but how few are ruled by the laws of God! Oh how should it grieve an honest heart, to see God's kingdom hindered by infidelity, and weakened, divided, and disturbed by popery and heresy, and dishonoured by scandal and impiety, as it is! And to see the multitude and the violence and industry of corrupters, dividers, and destroyers; and the fewness, the coldness, and remissness of the builders, the healers, and restorers! All you that are loyal subjects to your Lord, lament these ways of rebellion and disobedience, and the diminutions and distempers of the subjects of his kingdom, and the unfaithfulness and negligence of his ministers; and bend your cares, desires, and prayers, to the promoting of God's kingdom in you, and in the world, and befriend not any thing that hindereth its prosperity.

CHAPTER XV.

14. The third of these relations, and the next point in the knowledge of God, to be spoken of, is, That he is our most loving Father, or bountiful Benefactor. As he is good, so he doth good, Psal. cxix. 68. And as he is the chiefest good, so he bestoweth the greatest benefits: and therefore is thence by a necessary resultancy, our most bountiful Benefactor. The term Father comprehendeth in it all his three great relations to us. 1. A father gives being to his children, and therefore hath some propriety in them; and God is the first cause of our whole being, and therefore we are his own. 2. A father is the governor of his children; and God is our chief governor. 3. A father tenderly loveth his children that are childlike, loving, and obedient to him; and seeketh their felicity: and so doth God love, and will make happy, his loving and obedient children, who have not only their being from him as their maker, but their new being, or holy nature, from him as their sanctifier. And this last being the end and perfection of the rest, doth communicate its nature to the rest, as the means. And so, 1. The new nature that God thus giveth us in our regeneration, is not from his common love, but is an act of

special grace, proceeding from his special fatherly love. 2. The government that he exerciseth over them, as his regenerate children, is not a common government, such as is that of the mere law of nature, or of works; but it is a special government by a law of grace, a justifying, remedying, saving law, or covenant; together with an internal illuminating, quickening, guiding Spirit, with church-state, and officers, and ordinances, all suited to this way of grace. Even as his dominion or propriety by redemption, and our sanctification and resignation, is not a common propriety, but a gracious relation to us as our own Father, who hath the endeared relation to him of being his own children. All is from love, and in a way of love, and for the exercise and demonstration of love: so that when I call God our Benefactor, I precisely distinguish this last part of his relation to us, from the rest. But when I call him a Father, I mean the same thing or relation which a benefactor signifieth; but with fuller aspect on the foregoing relations, and connotation of them as they are perfected all in this.

And here, I. I shall briefly name the benefits on which this relation of God is founded. And, 1. Even in creating us, he acted as a benefactor, giving us the fundamental good of being, and the excellency of manhood. 2. By setting us in a well-furnished world, and putting all things under our feet, and giving us the use of creatures. 3. By entering into the relation of a governor to us, and consequently engaging himself to terms of justice in his dealing with us, and to protect us, and reward us, if we did obey; and making us capable of an everlasting happiness as our end, and appointing us sufficient means thereto. These benefits denominated God the great Benefactor or Father unto man, in the state of his creation.

But then moreover he is a common benefactor also. 4. By so loving the world, as to give his only begotten Son, to be their Redeemer; a sufficient sacrifice for sin. 5. By giving out his promise or covenant of grace, and making a common deed of gift of pardon, reconciliation, and eternal life, to all that will accept it in and with Christ, to gospel ends. 6. By sending forth the messengers of this grace, commanding them to preach to every creature the gospel or word of reconciliation committed to them, and to beseech men in Christ's stead, as his ambassadors; as if God himself did entreat by them, to be reconciled to God, Matt. xxviii. 18, 19; Mark xvi. 16; 2 Cor. v. 19, 20. 7. By affording some common mercies without, and motions of his Spirit within, to second these invitations. But though by this much God hath a title to their dearest love, yet they have no title to his highest benefits, nor are in the nearest relation of children or beneficiaries to him.

But, 8. When he begetteth us again to a lively hope, by his incorruptible seed, and giveth us both to will and to do, and when the Father effectually draweth us to the Son, and reneweth us according to his image, and taketh away our old and stony hearts, and giveth us new and tender hearts, and giveth us to know him and love him as a Father; then is he our Father in the dearest and most comfortable sense, and we are his children, that have interest in his dearest love. 9. And therefore we have his Spirit, and pardon, justification, and reconciliation with him. 10. And also we have special communion with him in prayer, praises, sacraments, and all holy ordinances and conversation. 11. And we and our services are pleasing to him, and so we are in the light of his countenance, and under a special promise of his protection and provision, and that "all things shall work together for our good." 12. And we have the promise of perfection in everlasting glory.

II. And now as you see how God is our benefactor, or most gracious and loving Father, let us next see what this must work on us.

And, 1. Goodness and bounty should shame men from their sin, and lead them to repentance, Rom. ii. 4, 5. Love is not to be abused and requited with unkindness and provocation. He that can turn grace into wantonness, and do evil because grace hath abounded, or that it may abound, shall be forced to confess that his damnation is just. He that will not hate his sin, when he seeth such exceeding benefits stand by, and heareth mercy, and wonderful mercy, plead against it, and upbraid the sinner with ingratitude, is like to die a double death, and shall have no more sacrifice for sin.

2. The fatherly love and benefits of God, do call for our best returns of love. The benefits of creation oblige all to love him with all their heart, and soul, and might: much more the benefits of redemption, and especially (as applied by sanctifying grace to them that shall be heirs of life) it obligeth them by multiplied strongest obligations: the worst are obliged to as much love of God as the best (for none can be obliged to more than to love him with all their heart, &c.); but they are not as much obliged to that love. We have new and special obligations; and therefore must return a hearty love, or we are doubly guilty. Mercies are love's messengers, sent from heaven to win up our hearts to love again, and entice us thither. All mercies therefore should be used to this end. That mercy that doth not increase, or excite and help, our love, is abused and lost, as seed that is buried when it is sowed, and never more appeareth. Earthly mercies point to heaven, and tell us whence they come, and for what. Like the flowers of the spring, they tell us of the reviving approaches of the sun: but like foolish children, because they are near us, we love the flowers better than the sun; forgetting that the winter is drawing on. But spiritual mercies are as the sunshine that more immediately dependeth on and floweth from the sun itself. And he that will not see (and value) the sun by its light, will never see it! These beams come down to invite our minds and hearts to God; and if we shut the windows, or play till night, and they return without us, we shall be left to utter darkness.

The mercies of God must imprint upon our minds the fullest and deepest conceptions of him, as the most perfect, suitable, lovely object to the soul of man; when all our good is originally in him, and all flows from him, that hath the goodness of a means, and finally himself is all: not to love God then, is not to love goodness itself; and there is nothing but good that is suited to our love. Night and day therefore should the believer be drawing and deriving from God, by the views and tastes of his precious mercies, a sweetness of nature, and increase of holy love to God, as the bee sucks honey from the flowers. We should not now and then for a recreation light upon a flower, and meditate on some mercy of the Lord, but make this our work from day to day, and keep continually upon our souls the lively tastes and deep impressions of the infinite goodness and amiableness of God. When we love God most, we are at the best, most pleasing to God; and our lives are sweetest to ourselves: and when we steep our minds in the believing thoughts of the abundant fatherly mercies of the Lord, we shall most abundantly love him. Every mercy is a suitor to us from God! The contents of them all is this, My Son, give me thy heart. Love him that thus loveth thee. Love him,

or you reject him. O wonderful love! that God will regard the love of man! that he will enter into a covenant of love! that he will be related to us in a relation of love! and that he will deal with us on terms of love! that he will give us leave to love him, that are so base, and have so loved earth and sin! yea, and that he will be so earnest a suitor for our love, as if he needed it, when it is only we that need! But the paths of love are mysterious and incomprehensible.

3. As God is in special a Benefactor and a Father to us, we must be the readiest and most diligent in obedience to him. Childlike duty is the most willing and unwearied kind of duty. Where love is the principle, we shall not be eye-servants, but delight to do the will of God, and wish, Oh that I could please him more! It is a singular delight to a gracious soul to be upon any acceptable duty; and the more he can do good, and please the Lord, the more he is pleased. As fatherly love and benefits are the fullest and the surest, so will filial duty be. The heart is no fit soil for mercies, if they grow not up to holy fruits. The more you love, the more cheerfully will you obey.

4. From hence we must well learn, both how God is man's end, and what are the chief means that lead us to him.

1. God is not the end of reason, nakedly considered, but he is *finis amantis*, the end which love inclineth us to, and which by love is attained, and by love enjoyed: the understanding of which would resolve many great perplexing difficulties that *a natura finis* do step into our way in theological studies. I will name no more now, but only that it teacheth us, How both God and our own felicity in the fruition of him, may be said to be our ultimate end, without any contradiction, yet so that it be eminently and chiefly God. For it is a union (such as our natures are capable of) that is desired, in which the soul doth long to be swallowed up in God: understand but what a filial or friendly love is, and you may understand what a regular intention is, and how God must be the christian's end.

2. And withal it shows us, that the most direct and excellent means of our felicity, and to our end, are those that are most suited to the work of love. Others are means more remotely, and necessary in their places; but these directly. And therefore the promises and narratives of the love and mercy of the Lord, are the most direct and powerful part of the gospel, conducing to our end; and the threatenings the remoter means. And therefore as grace was advanced in the world, the promissory part of God's covenant or law grew more illustrious, and the gospel consisted so much of promises, that it is called "Glad tidings of great joy." And therefore the most full demonstration of God's goodness and loveliness to our hearers, is the most excellent part of all our preaching, though it is not all. And therefore the meditation of redemption is more powerful than the bare meditation of creation, because it is redemption that most eminently revealeth love. And therefore Christ is the principal means of life, because he is the principal messenger and demonstration of the Father's love; and by the wonders of love which he revealeth, and exhibiteth in his wondrous grace, he wins the soul to the love of God. For God will have external objective means and internal effective means concur, because he will work on man agreeably to the nature of man. Though there was never given out such prevalent invincible measures of the Spirit, as Christ hath given for the renewing of those that he will save, yet shall not that Spirit do it without as excellent objective means. And though Christ, and the riches of his grace revealed in the gospel, be the most wonderful objective means, yet shall not these do it without the internal effective means. But when love doth shine to us so resplendently without us, in the face of the glorious Sun of love, and is also set into us by the Spirit's illumination, that sheds abroad this love in our hearts, then will the holy fire burn, which comes from heaven, and leads to heaven, and will never rest till it have reached its centre, and brought us to the face and arms of God.

5. And from the fatherly relation and love of God, we must learn to trust him, and rest our souls in his securing love. Shall we distrust a Father? an omnipotent Father? Therefore is this relation prefixed to the petitions of the Lord's Prayer, and we begin with "Our Father which art in heaven," that when we remember his love, and our interest in him, and his all-sufficiency, we may be encouraged to trust him, and make our addresses to him. If a Father, and such a Father, smite me, I will submit, and kiss the rod: for I know it is the healing fruit of love. If a Father, and such a Father, afflict me, wound me, deal strangely with me, and grieve my flesh, let me not murmur or distrust him; for he well understandeth what he doth; and nothing that shall hurt me finally can come from Omnipotent paternal love. If a Father, and such a Father, kill me, yet let me trust in him, and let not my soul repine at his proceedings, nor tremble at the separating stroke of death. A beast knows not when we strive with him, what we intend, whether to cure, or to kill him: but a child need not fear a killing blow, nor a loving soul a damning death, from such a Father. If he be a Father, where is his love and trust?

6. If God be our Father, and so wonderful a Benefactor to us, then thanks and praise must be our most constant work, and must be studied above all the rest of duty, and most diligently performed. If the tongue of man, which is called his glory, be made for any thing, and good for any thing, it is to give the Lord his glory, in the thankful acknowledgment of his love and mercies, and the daily cheerful praises of his name. Let this then be the christian's work.

7. The children of such a Father should live a contented, cheerful life. Diligence becometh them, but not contrivances for worldly greatness, nor carking cares for that which their Father hath promised them to care for. Humility and reverence beseemeth them, but not dejection and despondency of mind, and a still complaining, fearful, troubled, disconsolate soul. If the children of such a Father shall not be bold, and confident, and cheerful, let joy and confidence then be banished from the earth, and be renounced by all the sons of men.

CHAPTER XVI.

15. THERE are yet divers subordinate attributes of God, that being comprised in the forementioned, may be passed over with the briefer touch. And the next that I shall speak of is, his freedom. And God is free in more senses than one; but for brevity, I shall speak of all together.

1. And first, God hath a natural freedom of will, being determined to will by nothing without him, nor liable to any necessity, but what is consistent with perfect blessedness and liberty. His own being, and blessedness, and perfections, are not the objects of his election; and therefore not of that which we call free-will: but all his works without, as creation, providence, redemption, &c. are the effects of his free-will. Not but that his will concern-

ing all these, hath a necessity of existence: for God did from eternity will the creation, and all that is done in time; and therefore from eternity that will existing, had a necessity of existence: but yet it was free, because it proceedeth not necessarily from the very nature of God: God was God before he made the world, or redeemed it, or did the things that are daily done. And therefore one part of the schoolmen maintain, not only that there is contingency from God, but that there could be no contingency in the creature, if it had not its original in God; the liberty of God being the fountain of contingency.

There is also an eminency both of dominion and sovereignty in God, according to which he may be called free. His absoluteness of propriety freeth him from the restraint of any obligation, but what floweth from his own free-will, from disposing of his own as he pleases. And his absolute sovereignty freeth him from the obligation of his own laws, as laws, though he will still be true to his promises and predictions. Let man therefore take heed how he questioneth his Maker, or censureth his laws, or works, or ways.

CHAPTER XVII.

16. Another attribute of God is his justice. With submission, I conceive that this is not to be said to be from eternity, any otherwise than all God's relations are, (as Creator, Redeemer, &c.) because there is no time with God. For though the blessed nature denominated just is from eternity, yet not the formality or denomination of justice. For justice is an attribute of God, as he is governor only: and he was not governor, till he had creatures to govern: and he could not be a just governor when he was no governor. The denomination did not arise till the creation had laid the foundation. Many questions may be resolved hence, which I will not trouble you to recite.

Justice in God is the perfection of his nature, as it giveth every one his due, or governeth the world in the most perfect orders for the ends of government. Because he is just, he will reward the righteous, and difference between the godly and the wicked: for that governor that useth all alike, is not just. The "crown of righteousness" is given by him as a "righteous Judge," 2 Tim. iv. 8.

1. The justice of God is substantially (in men we call it an inclination) in his nature, and so it is eternal.

2. It is founded formally in his relation of Governor.

3. It is expressively first in his laws: for as a just Governor he made them suited to the subjects, objects, and ends.

4. It is expressively secondarily in his judgments and executions; which is when they are according to his law; or in the cases of penalty where he may dispense at least according to the state of the subject, and fitted to the ends of government.

1. The justice of God is the consolation of the just: he will justify them whom his gospel justifieth, because he is just. The justice of God in many places of Scripture, is taken for his fidelity in vindicating his people, and his judging for them, and procuring them the happy fruits of his government, and so is taken in a consolatory sense. "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne; mercy and truth shall go before thy face," Psal. lxxxiv. 14. "It is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble us, and rest to the troubled," 2 Thess. i. 5, 6.

2. The justice of God is the terror of the ungodly. As he would not make unrighteous laws, for the pleasure of unrighteous men, so neither will he pass unrighteous judgment. But look what a man soweth, that shall he also reap. All his peremptory threatenings shall be made good, and his wrath poured out for ever upon impenitent souls, because he is the righteous God.

CHAPTER XVIII.

17. Another of God's attributes is his holiness. He is called holy, 1. As he is transcendently above and separated from all the creatures, in comparison of whom the heavens are not clean; and from whom all things stands at an infinite distance. 2. As the perfection of his nature is the fountain of all moral good; 1. In the holiness of his law, the rule of holiness; 2. In the holiness of the soul; and, 3. In his holy judgments: and consequently as this perfect nature is contrary to all the moral pollution of the creature, loathing iniquity, forbidding and condemning it. That perfect goodness of the will of God, from whence floweth holy laws, and motions, and the holiness of the soul of man, is it that Scripture meaneth usually by God's holiness; rather than the foresaid distance from the creatures. And therefore his holiness is usually given as the reason of his laws and judgments, and of his enmity to sin: and our holiness is called his image, (who imitate not his transcendency,) and we are commanded to be "holy as he is holy," 1 Peter i. 16. The nature of the image will best tell us what holiness is in God. Holiness in us is called "the divine nature," 2 Peter i. 4; and therefore is radically a right inclination and disposition of the soul; which hath its rise from transcendent holiness in God, even as our wisdom from his transcendent wisdom, and our being from his being. Holiness therefore being indeed the same with the transcendently moral goodness of God, which I have spoken of before, I shall say but little of it now. Thus must the holiness of God be known:

1. It must cause us to have a most high and honourable esteem of holiness in the creature, because it is the image of the holiness of God. Three sorts of creatures have a derivative holiness: the first is the law; which is the mere signification of the wise and holy will of God concerning man's duty, with rewards and penalties, for the holy governing of the world. This is the nearest image of God, engraven upon that seal which must be the instrument of imprinting it in our souls. Now the holiness of the word is not the mere product of the will of God, considered as a will; but of the will of God considered as holy, that is, as the infinite transcendent moral goodness in the Architype or Original. For all events that proceed from God, are the products of his will which is holy, but not as holy; (as the creating, preserving, disposing of every fly, or fish in the sea, or worm in the earth, &c.) There is somewhat therefore in the nature of God, which is the perfection of his will, and is called holiness, which the holiness of the law doth flow from and express.

This holy word is the immortal seed that begetteth holiness in the soul, which is the second subject of derived holiness: and this our holiness is a conformity of the soul to the law, as the product of the holy will of God, and not a mere conformity to his predictions, and decreeing will, as such. It is a separation to God, but not every separation: Pharaoh was set apart to be the passive monument of the

honour of God's name; and Cyrus was his servant to restore his people; and yet not thus holy. But it is a separation from common and unclean uses; and a purgation from polluting vice, and a renovation by reception of the image of God's holiness, whose nature is to incline the soul to God, and devote it wholly to him; both in justice, because we are his own, and in love, because he is most holy and perfectly good.

The third subject of holiness is those creatures that are but separated to holy uses, and these have but a relative holiness, and *secundum quid:* as the temple, the holy utensils, the Bible as to the materials, the minister as an officer, the people as visible members, &c.

All these must be reverenced and honoured by us according to the proportion of their holiness. 1. Our principal reverence must be to the holy word of God; for holiness is more perfect there than in our souls. The holiness of the word, which is it that the ungodly hate or quarrel at, is the glory of it in the eyes of holy men. We may much discern a holy and an unholy soul, by their loving or not loving a holy law; especially as it is a rule to themselves. A distaste of the holiness of Scripture, and of the holiness of the writings of divines, and of the holiness of their preaching or conference, discovereth an unholy soul. A love to holy doctrine showeth that there is somewhat suitable to it in the soul that loveth it. It is the elogy of the Scriptures, the promises, the covenant, the prophets and apostles, that they are all holy, Rom. i. 2; Psal. cv. 42; Luke i. 70, 72; Rev. xviii. 20; 2 Tim. iii. 15; Rom. vii. 12. The holiness of the Scripture doth make it as suitable and savoury to a holy soul, as light is suitable to the eyesight, and sweetness to the taste: and therefore it is to them as the honeycomb. But to the unholy it is a mystery, and as foolishness, and that which is contrary to their disposition, and they have an enmity to it: which makes a wonderful difference in their judging of the evidences of Scripture verity, and much facilitateth the work of faith in one sort, and strengtheneth unbelief in the other. Holy doctrine is the glass that showeth us the holy face of God himself, and therefore must needs be most excellent to the saints.

2. And we must honour and love also the holiness of the saints; for they also bear the image of the Lord. Their holy affections, prayers, discourses, and conversations must be beautiful in our eyes: and we must take heed of those temptations, that either from personal injuries received from any, or from their blots or imperfections, or from their meanness in the world, or from the contempt, and reproach, and slanders of the ungodly, would draw us to think dishonourably of their holiness. He that honoureth the holy God will honour his image in his holy people. "In his eyes a vile person will be contemned, but he will honour them that fear the Lord," Psal. xv. 4. "The saints on earth are the excellent" in his eyes, and his "delight" is in them, Psal. xvi. 2, 3. The breathings of divine love in the holy prayers, praises, and speeches of the saints, and their reverent and holy mention of his name, are things that a holy soul doth sweetly relish, and take pleasure in, as we would do to hear an angel speak of the holy things of the invisible glory.

3. And relative holiness itself, though the lowest, must be honoured by us. Holy offices and persons in them must be reverenced for their relative holiness. Holy ordinances (which also participate of the holiness of the law, as significative) must be reverently used. Due reverence must be given even to that which is lawfully by men devoted to a holy use, as are temples and utensils of worship, and the maintenance dedicated to the service of God. That which is holy, must not be devoured, (Prov. xx. 25,) nor used as we do things common and unclean.

2. God's holiness must make us holy: we must fall in love with it, and wholly conform ourselves unto it. Every part of sanctifying grace must be entertained, and cherished, and excited, and used by us. Sin must be loathsome to us, because it is contrary to the holiness of God. No toad or snake should seem to us so ugly. A dead carcass is an unpleasant sight, because it showeth us a privation of natural life; but an unholy soul is incomparably a more loathsome, ghastly sight, because it showeth us the privation of the life of holiness. No man can well know the odiousness of sin, and the misery and loathsomeness of the unholy soul, that knoweth not the holiness of God. "Speak unto all the congregation of Israel, and say unto them, Ye shall be holy; for I the Lord your God am holy," Lev. xix. 2. "Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy, for I am the Lord your God," Lev. xx. 7, 8. "As he that hath called us is holy, so must we be holy in all manner of conversation," 1 Pet. i. 25. It is "an holy calling wherewith we are called," 2 Tim. i. 9. We are "sanctified to be a peculiar people to Christ," Tit. ii. 14. "That denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world," ver. 12. We are made "an holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifice, acceptable to God, by Jesus Christ," 1 Pet. ii. 5. We must therefore "present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, our reasonable service," Rom. xii. 1, 2. For we are "chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame," Eph. i. 4; and are redeemed and sanctified by Christ, "that we may be presented glorious, holy, and without blemish," Eph. v. 26, 27. See therefore that you "follow holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord," Heb. xii. 14. For "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see him," Matt. v. 8.

3. The holiness of God must be to us a standing unanswerable argument to shun all temptations that would draw us to be unholy, and to confound all the words of wicked men that are spoken against holiness. Remember but that God is holy, and if thou like that which is spoken against God, thou art his enemy. Think on the prophecy of Enoch, "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him," Jude 14, 15. "God will not hold him guiltless that taketh his holy name in vain;" much less that blasphemeth holiness, which is the perfection of his blessed nature.

4. The holiness of God must possess us with a sense of our uncleanness, and further our humiliation. When Isaiah heard the seraphims cry, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory," (Isa. vi. 3,) he said, "Woe is me, for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts," ver. 5.

5. The holiness of God must cause us to walk continually in his fear, and to take heed to all the affections of our souls, and even to the manner of our behaviour, when we come near to him in his holy worship. What suffered the Bethshemites for irreverent looking into the holy ark, (1 Sam. vi. 19,)

and Uzzah but for touching it! And what a dreadful example is that of the two sons of Aaron, that were slain by a devouring fire from the Lord, for offering strange fire which he commanded not! Lev. x. 1, 2. And Aaron was awed into silence by this account from God, "I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified," ver. 3. Take heed lest irreverence, or deadness, or customary, heartless, worldly services, should be brought before a holy God. Take heed of hypocritical, carnal worship. The holy God will not be mocked with compliments and shows.

CHAPTER XIX.

18. The next attribute of God to be spoken of is, his veracity, truth, and faithfulness. This is the result of his perfect wisdom, goodness, and omnipotency: for because he is most wise and powerful, he cannot be necessitated to lie; and because he is most good, he will not lie. Though God speaketh by none but a *created voice*, and signifieth his will to us by men, that in themselves considered are defectible; yet what he maketh *his voice* shall speak truth; and what he chooseth to signify his will, shall truly signify it. He therefore condemneth lying in man, because it is contrary to his own veracity. For if any should say that God is under no law, and therefore is not bound to speak truth, or not deceive a prophet or apostle by his inspirations; I answer, that he hateth lying as contrary to his perfect nature, and is himself against it, and cannot possibly be guilty of it, because of his own perfection, and not because he is under a law. Lying comes from some imperfection, either of knowledge, power, or goodness, which can none of them befall the Lord. The goodness of the creature is a goodness of conformity to an obliging law; and the goodness of the law is a goodness of conformity to, and expressive of, the good will of God. But the goodness of God is a perfection of essence, the primitive goodness, which is the fountain, and standard, and end of all other good; and not a goodness of conformity to another.

And this attribute of God is of very great use to his servants. 1. From hence we must be resolved for duty, and for a holy, heavenly life; because the commands of God are serious, and his promises and threatenings true. If God were not true, who tells us of these great eternal things, then might we excuse ourselves from godliness, and justify the worldling in his sensual way. There is nothing of common sense and reason that can be said against a holy life, by a man that denieth not the truth of God or of his word. And to deny God's truth, is most unreasonable of all. O sirs, when you read and hear of the wonderful weighty matters of the Scripture, of an endless life, and the way thereto; bethink you, if these things be true, "what manner of persons you should be, in all holy conversation and godliness!" 2 Pet. iii. 11. If the word be true, that telleth us of death and judgment, and heaven and hell, is it time for us to sin, to trifle, and live unready?

2. The truth of God is the terror of his enemies. O happy men, if their unbelief could make void the threatenings of God, and doubting of them would make them false! and if their misery were as easily remedied as denied, and ended as easily as now forgotten! or forgotten hereafter as easily as now! But true and righteous is the Lord, and "from the beginning his word is true," Psal. cxix. 16. Not a word shall fall to the ground, nor a jot or tittle pass unfulfilled.

3. The truth of God is the ground of faith, and the stay of our souls, and the rock of all our confidence and comfort. A christian did not differ from another man (unless in being somewhat more deluded) if God were not true. But this is the foundation of all our hopes, and the life of our religion; and all that we are as christians, proceeds from this. Faith is animated by God's veracity, and from thence all other graces flow, or are excited in us. O christians, what a treasure is before your eyes, when you open the blessed book of God! What life should it put into your confidence and comforts, to think that all these words are true! All those descriptions of the everlasting kingdom, and all those exceeding precious promises of this life and that which is to come, and all the expressions of that exceeding love of God unto his servants, all these are the true sayings of God. "A faithful witness will not lie," (Prov. xiv. 5,) much less will the faithful God. "Eternal life is promised by God that cannot lie," Tit. i. 2. "Wherein God willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us," Heb. vi. 17, 18. Let faith therefore live upon the truth of God, and let us be strengthened, and rejoice therein.

4. Abhor all doctrines which deny the truth and faithfulness of God, for they destroy the ground of christian faith, of all divine faith, and all religion. The veracity of God is the formal object of all divine faith. We believe God, because he cannot lie: if he can lie, and do lie, he is not credible. But you will say, Is there any that hold such odious doctrines? *Answ.* I like not the charging of persons with the consequences of their opinions which they discern not, but disclaim: God will not charge them with such consequences, who do their best to know the truth; and why should we? All men have some errors, whose consequences contradict some articles of faith. It is not the persons that I persuade you to dislike, but the doctrine. And the doctrine is never the less to be abhorred, because a wise or good man may hold that which doth infer it.

I shall now instance only in the Dominicans' predetermination. They that hold that it is necessary to the being of every circumstantiated act, natural and free, that God be the principal, immediate, physical, efficient, predetermining cause of it, do hold that he so causeth all the false speeches and writings (as well as other sins) that ever were spoken or written in the world: not only as they are acts *in genere*, but as these words in particular; as that he so predetermined the tongues of Ananias and Sapphira to say those very words which they said, rather than others. Now seeing it is apparent, 1. That God hath not a voice, but speaketh to us by a created voice, even by prophets and apostles, and that the Scripture was written by men. 2. And that God's veracity, which is the formal object of our faith, consisteth in his not using lying instruments, nor sending a lying messenger to us (it is *veracitas revelantis per alium)*; 3. And that no way of inspiration can make God to be any more the cause of the words or writings of an apostle, than his immediate, physical, efficient, specifying predetermination doth (for it can do no more than irresistibly as the first cause, physically to premove the agent to his thought, will, word, or deed, considered with all its circumstances;) it followeth that we have no certainty when God premoveth an apostle or prophet to speak true, and when to speak falsely; and that no words or writings are of certain truth upon any account of

God's inspiration or premotion, because God not only can, but doth cause all the untruths that are spoken or written in the world: therefore no faith in God's revelations hath any sure foundation, nor any formal object at all: and so all religion is dashed out at a stroke. To say that God causeth not the falsity of the word, nor the word as false, but the word which is false, might well be the justification of them that affirm God to be but the universal cause of the word or act *in genere*, as a word or act; and that the specification is only from the sinner. But in them that say he is the particular cause of this word comparatively, rather than another, it is but a contradiction: 1. For there is no other cause of the falsity, which is a mere relation, but that which causeth the rule and the word or writing which is false, and so layeth the foundation. 2. It overthroweth all certainty of faith, if God speak to us by his instruments those words that are false: the *quod falsum*, as well as the *qua falsum*, leaveth us no ground of certainty. The Dominicans therefore have but one task in which their hope is placed, to excuse their opinion from plain obliterating all divine belief and religion; and that is, to prove that there is so great a difference between inspiration and their physical predetermination, that God cannot by inspiration premove to an untruth, though by physical predetermination he may. This is their task, which I see not the least possibility that ever they should perform. If God premove and predetermine every will, and tongue, and pen, to every lie that is spoken or written, more potently and irresistibly than I move my pen in writing, it is past my power to understand what more he can do by inspiration, to interest him in the creature's act; or at least how the difference can be so great as that one of the ways he can predeterminate all men to their falsities, and none the other way. But of this I have written a large disputation; yet think it not needless, even in a practical treatise, to say thus much here.

5. The truth of God must teach us to hate every motion to unbelief in ourselves and others. It is a heinous sin to give God the lie, though he speak to us but by his messengers. Every honest man, so far as he is honest, is to be believed; and is God less true? A graceless gallant will challenge you to the field for the dishonour, if you give him the lie. If you deny God's veracity, you do not only equal him with the worst of men, but with the devil, who was a liar from the beginning. Yea, you may make him uncapable of being the governor of the world, or suppose him to govern it by deceits and lies. Abhor therefore the first motions of unbelief: it makes men somewhat worse than devils; for the devils know that God cannot lie, and therefore they believe and tremble. Unbelief of the truth of the word of God, is the curse of the soul; the enemy and bane of all grace and religion, so far as it prevaileth. Let it be the principal care and labour of your souls, to settle the foundation of your faith aright, and to discern the evidence of divine authority in the holy Scriptures, and to extirpate the remnants of infidelity in your hearts.

6. Let the truth and faithfulness of God engage you to be true and faithful to him, and to each other. You have promised him to be his servants; be faithful in your promises: you are in covenant with him; break not your covenant. Many a particular promise of reformation you have made to God: prove not false to him that is true to you.

Be as good as your word to all men that you have to do with. Abhor a lie, as the offspring of the devil, who is the father of it. Remember you serve a God of truth; and that it is the rectitude and glory of his servants to be conformable to him. They say the Turks are offended at christianity, because of the lies and falsehood of christians. But sure they were but nominal christians, and no true christians, that ever they found such: and it is pity that christianity should be judged of through the world, by the lives of them that never were christians but from the teeth outward, and the skin that was washed in baptism. They that will lie to God, and covenant to be his holy servants, when they hate his holy service, will lie to man, when their commodity requireth it. When they seem to repent, and honour him with their tongues; "They flatter him with their mouth, and lie to him with their tongues; for their heart is not right with him, neither are they stedfast in his covenant," Psal. lxxviii. 34—37. God saith, "Ye shall not steal, nor deal falsely, nor lie one to another," Lev. xix. 11. "A righteous man hateth lying," Prov. xiii. 5. "The lying tongue is but for a moment," (Prov. xii. 19,) "for God hateth it, and it is an abomination to him," Prov. xvi. 16, 17. "The lovers and makers of lies are shut out of the kingdom of Christ," Rev. xxii. 15.

But above all, false teachers that preach and prophesy lies, and deceive the rulers and people of the earth, are abominable to God: see Jer. xxvii. 10, 14—16; xiv. 14, 23, 25, 26, 32; Ezek. xiii. 9, 12; Isa. liv. 13. When Ahab was to be destroyed, a lying spirit in the mouth of his prophets deceived him. And "if a ruler hearken to lies, all his servants are wicked," Prov. xxix. 2.

7. Above all, false witness and perjury should be most odious to the servants of the God of truth. "A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall perish," Prov. xix. 9. "When thou vowest a vow to God, defer not to pay it," Eccl. v. 4, 5. Saith David, "Thy vows are upon me, O God," Psal. lvi. 12. And "unto thee shall the vow be performed," Psal. lxv. 1. Perjury is a sin that seldom escapeth vengeance, even in this life. The instances of Saul the first, and Zedekiah the last, of the kings of Judah, before the desolation, are both very terrible. Saul's posterity must be hanged, to stay the famine that came upon the people for his breaking a vow that was made by Joshua, and not by him, though he did it in zeal for Israel, 2 Sam. xxi. Zedekiah's case you may see, 2 Chron. xxvi.; Ezek. xvii. He that swearcth, appealeth to God as the searcher of hearts and avenger of perjury. The perjured person chooseth the vengeance of God. He is unfit (till he repent) to be a member of any civil society; for he dissolveth the bond of all societies. He cannot well be supposed to make conscience of any sin or villany in the world, against God, his country, his king, his friend, or neighbour, that makes no conscience of an oath. It is not easy to name a greater wickedness out of hell, than to approve of perjury by laws or doctrine. And whether the church of Rome do so or not, I only desire them to consider that have read the third canon of the Council of Lateran under Pope Innocent the third, where an approved general council decreeth, That the pope discharge vassals from their allegiance or fidelity to those temporal lords that exterminate not heretics (as they call them) out of their dominions. What shall restrain men from killing kings, or any villany, if once the bond of oaths be nullified? But Scripture saith, "Keep the king's commandment, and that in regard of the oath of God," Eccl. viii. 2. No man defendeth perjury by name: but to say that men that swear to do that which God commandeth, or forbids not, are not bound to keep that oath; or that the pope may absolve men, or

disoblige them that swore fidelity to temporal lords, when once the pope hath excommunicated them, doth seem to me of the same importance.

CHAPTER XX.

19. THE next attribute to be spoken of is, his mercifulness, and his long-suffering patience, which we may set together. This is implied in his goodness, and the relation of a father before expressed. Mercy is God's goodness inclining him to prevent or remove his creature's misery. It is not only the miserable that are the objects of it, but also those that may be miserable; it being as truly mercy to keep us out of it foreseen, as to deliver us out of it when we were in it. Hence it is that he "taketh not pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that he may turn and live." And hence it is that he "afflicts not willingly, nor grieves the children of men," Lam. iii. 33. Not that his mercy engageth him to do all that he can do for the salvation of every sinner, or absolutely to prevent or heal his misery; but it is his attribute chiefly considered as Governor of the rational creature; and so his mercy is so great to all, that he will destroy none but for their wilful sin, and shut none among us out of heaven, but those that were guilty of contemning it. God doth not prevent the sinner with his judgment, but with his grace he often doth. He never punisheth before we are sinners, nor never decreed so to do, as all will grant. He punisheth none, where his foregoing commands and warnings have had their due effect for the prevention: and therefore because the precept is the first part of his law, and the threatening is but subservient to that, and the first intent of a governor is to procure obedience, and punishing is but upon supposition that he misseth of the first, therefore is God said not to afflict willingly; because he doth it not *ex voluntate antecedente*, but *ex voluntate consequente*, that is, (for so the distinction is sound,) not as a lawgiver, and ruler by those laws considered before the violation; but only as a judge of the law-breakers. But yet God's mercy is no security to the abusers of his mercy; but rather will sink them into deeper misery, as the aggravation of their sin: as God afflicts not willingly, and yet we feel that he afflicteth; so if he do not condemn you willingly, you shall find if you are impenitent, that yet he will condemn you.

If you say, God can be forced to do nothing against his will: I answer you, that it is not simply against his will; for then it should never come to pass: but it is against the principal act of his will, which floweth from him as a lawgiver, or ruler by laws, in which respect it may be said, that he had "rather that the wicked turn and live:" but yet if they will not turn, they shall not live. A merciful judge had rather the thief had saved his life by forbearing to steal; but yet he had not rather that thieves go unpunished than he should condemn them.

But, you will say, If God had rather men did not sin, why doth he not hinder it? I answer, He had not absolutely and simply rather; that is, so far as to do all that he can to prevent it, nor all that without which he fore-knoweth it will not be prevented: but he doth much against sin as a law-giver, and nothing for it; he causeth us not, but persuades us from it; and therefore, as a ruler, he may be said to have rather that men did not sin, or rather that they would turn and live.

1. The mercy of God therefore should lead sinners to repentance, and shame them from their sin, and lead them up to God in love.

2. Mercy should encourage sinners to repent, as well as engage them to it: for we have to do with a merciful God, that hath not shut up any among us in despair, nor forbid them to come in, but continueth to invite when we have oft refused, and will undoubtedly pardon and welcome all that do return.

3. Mercy being specially the portion of the saints, must keep them in thankfulness, love, and comfort: and all mercies must be improved for their proper ends. When a merciful God is pleased to fill up his servants' lives with such great and various mercies as he doth, it should breed a continual sweetness upon their hearts, and cause them to study the most grateful retribution. He should breathe forth nothing but thankfulness, obedience, and praise, who breathes nothing but mercies from God. As the food that men live upon, will be seen in their temperature, health, and strength; so they that live continually upon mercies, should be wholly turned into love and thankfulness: it should become as it were their nature, temperature, and constitution. Oh how unspeakable is the love of God, that provideth so sweet a life for his servants, even in their warfare and pilgrimage in this world! that mercy must be as it were the air that they breathe in, the food which they must live upon; and the remembrance, improvement, and thankful mention of it, must be the business and employment of their lives! Oh with what sweet affections, meditations, and expressions should we live, if we lived but according to the rate of those mercies upon which we live! Love, and joy, and thanks, and praise, would be our very lives. What sweet thoughts would mercy breed and feed in our minds when we are alone! What sweet apprehensions of the love of God, and life eternal, should we have in prayer, reading, sacraments, and other holy ordinances! Sickness and health, poverty and wealth, death as well as life, would be comfortable to us: for all is full of mercy to the vessels of mercy. O christians, what a shame is it that God is so much wronged, and ourselves so much defrauded of our peace and joy, by passing over such abundance of great, invaluable mercies, without tasting their sweetness, or well considering what we do receive! Had we David's heart, what songs of praise would mercy teach us to indite! How affectionately should we recount the mercies of our youth and riper age, of every place and state that we have lived in, to the honour of our gracious Lord, and the encouragement of those that know not how good and merciful he is!

But withal, see that you contemn not, or abuse not, mercy: use it well; for it is mercy that you must trust to in the hour of your distresses. O do not trample upon mercy now, lest you should be confounded when you should cry for mercy in your extremity!

4. The mercifulness of God must cause his servants to imitate him in a love of mercy: "Be merciful, for your heavenly Father is merciful. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy," Matt. v. 7. Be merciful in your censures; be merciful in your retributions: you are none of God's children, if you "love not your enemies, and pray not for them that curse you, and do not good to them that hate and persecute you," (according to your power,) Matt. v. 44, 45. "If you forgive not men their trespasses," but take your brother by the throat, "neither will your heavenly Father forgive you your trespasses," Matt. vi. 14, 15. Mark, that even while he is called "your heavenly Father," yet he will not forgive, if you forgive not. Unmerciful men are too unlike to God, to claim any interest in his saving mercy, in the hour of their extremest misery. Men of cruelty, blood, and violence, he abhorreth; and usually they do not "live out half their days:" but they that "bite and devour one another, are devoured

one of another," Gal. v. 15. The last judgment will pass much according to men's works of mercy to the members of Christ, Matt. xxv. "He shall have judgment without mercy, that hath showed no mercy: and mercy rejoiceth against judgment," James ii. 13. "Pure religion, and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their afflictions, and to keep himself unspotted from the world," James i. 27. "He that having this world's goods, seeth his brother in need, and shutteth up the bowels of his compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" But above all cruelty, there is none more devilish than cruelty to souls. And in those that undertake the place of pastors, cruelty to men's souls is a far greater sin than in any others. To starve those that they undertake to feed, and to seduce those whom they undertake to guide, and be wolves to those whose shepherds they pretend to be, and to prefer their worldly honours, and commodity, and ease, before the souls of many thousands; to be so cruel to souls, when Christ hath been so merciful to them, as to come down on earth to seek and save them, and to give his life a ransom for them; this will one day be so heavy a charge, that the man that must stand as guilty under it, will a thousand times wish that a "millstone had been hanged about his neck, and he had been cast into the bottom of the sea," before he had betrayed or murdered souls, or offended one of the little ones of Christ. Be merciful to men's souls and bodies, as ever you would find mercy with a merciful God in the hour of your necessity and distress.

CHAPTER XXI.

20. The last of God's attributes which I shall now mention, is, his dreadfulness or terribleness to those that are the objects of his wrath. This is the result of his other attributes, especially of his holiness, and governing justice, and truth in his comminations. He is a "great and dreadful God," Dan. ix. 4. "A mighty God and terrible," Deut. vii. 21. "A great and terrible God," Nah. i. 5. "With God is terrible majesty," Job xxxvii. 22. "The Lord most high is terrible," Psal. xlvii. 22.

1. His children therefore must be kept in a holy awe: God is never to be approached or mentioned, but with the greatest reverence. We must "sanctify the Lord of hosts himself, and he must be our fear and dread," Isa. viii. 13. Even they that "receive the unmovable kingdom, must have grace in their hearts to serve him acceptably, with reverence and godly fear, because our God is a consuming fire," Heb. xii. 28, 29. When we come to worship in the holy assemblies, we should think, as Jacob, "How dreadful is this place! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven," Gen. xxviii. 17. Especially when God seemeth to frown upon the soul, his servants must humble themselves before him, and deprecate his wrath, as Jeremiah did, "Be not a terror to me," Jer. xvii. 17. It ill becometh the best of men, to make light of the frowns and threatenings of God. Also when he dealeth with us in judgment, and we feel the smart of his chastisements, though we must remember that he is a Father, yet withal we must consider that he showeth himself an offended Father: and therefore true and deep humiliation hath ever been the course of afflicted saints, to turn away the wrath of a terrible God.

2. But above all, what cause have the ungodly to tremble at the dreadfulness of that God who is engaged in justice (except they be converted) to use them everlastingly as his unpardoned enemies. As there is no felicity like the favour of God, and no joy comparable to his children's joys; so is there no misery like the sense of his displeasure, nor any terrors to be compared to those, which his wrath inflicteth everlastingly on the ungodly. O wretched sinner! what hast thou done to make God thine enemy? what could hire thee to offend him by thy wilful sin? and to do that which thou knewest he forbid and condemned in his word? What madness caused thee to make a mock at sin and hell, and to play with the vengeance of the Almighty? What gain did hire thee to cast thy soul into the danger of damnation? Canst thou save by the match, if thou win the world and lose thy soul? Didst thou not know who it was thou hadst to do with? It had been better for thee that all the world had been offended with thee, even men and angels, great and small, than the most dreadful God! Didst thou not believe him, when he told thee how he was resolved to judge and punish the ungodly? Read it, 2 Thess. ii. 7—11; Matt. xxv.; Jude 15; Psal. i. &c. What caused thee to venture upon the consuming fire? Didst thou not know that as he is merciful, so he is jealous, holy, just, and terrible? In the name of God, I require and entreat thee, fly to his mercy in Jesus Christ; and hearken speedily to his grace, and turn at his reproof and warning; to-day, while it is called to-day, harden not thy heart, but hear his voice, lest he resolve in his wrath, that thou shalt never enter into his rest. There is no enduring, there is no overcoming, there is no contending with an angry, dreadful, holy God: repent therefore and turn to him, and obey the voice of mercy that thy soul may live?

3. The dreadfulness of God, doth tell both good and bad the great necessity of a Mediator. What an unspeakable mercy is it that God hath given us his Son! and that by Jesus Christ we may come with boldness and confidence into the presence of the dreadful God, that else would have been to us a greater terror than all the world, yea than Satan himself! The more we are apprehensive of our distance from God, and of his terrible majesty, and his more terrible justice against such sinners as we have been, the more we shall understand the mystery of redemption, and highly value the mediation of Christ.

4. Lastly, let the dreadfulness of God prevail with every believing soul to pity the ungodly that pity not themselves. O pray for them, O warn them, exhort them, entreat them, as men that know the terrors of the Lord, 2 Cor. v. 11. If they knew, as well as you do, what sin is, and what it is to be children of wrath, and what it is to be unpardoned, unjustified, and unsanctified, they would pity themselves, and cry for mercy, mercy, mercy, from day to day, till they were recovered into a state of life, and turned from the power of Satan unto God. Alas! they know not what it is to die, and to see the world to come, and to appear before a dreadful God: they know not what it is to be in hell-fire; nor what it is to be glorified in heaven: they never saw or tried these things, and they want the faith by which they must be foreseen by those that are yet short of nearer knowledge. You therefore that have faith to foreknow these things, and are enlightened by the Spirit of God, O pity, and warn, and help the miserable! Tell them how much easier it is to escape hell, than to endure it; and how much easier a holy life on earth is, than the endless wrath of the most dreadful God. Tell them that unbelief, presumption, and security, are the certain means to bring their misery, but will do nothing to keep it off; though they may keep off the present knowledge and sense of it, which would have driven them to seek a cure. Tell them

that death and judgment are at hand, and that when they laugh, or sport, or scorn, and jest at the displeasure of the dreadful God, it is posting toward them, and will be upon them before they are aware; and when they slumber, their damnation slumbereth not: but while unbelieving sinners say, Peace, peace, sudden destruction will come upon them, as unexpected travail on a woman with child, and they shall not escape. O tell them how dreadful a thing it is, for a soul that is unregenerate and unsanctified, to go from that body which it pampered and sold its salvation to please, and to appear at the tribunal of God; and how dreadful it is for such a soul to fall into the hands of the living God. At least save your own souls, by the faithful discharge of so great a duty; and if they will take no warning, let them at last remember, when it is too late, that they were told in time, what they should see and feel at last, and what their latter end would prove; and that God and man did warn them in compassion, though they perish beeause they would have no compassion or mercy upon themselves. Thus let the terribleness of God provoke you to do your duty with speed and zeal, for the converting and saving of miserable souls.

And thus I have briefly set before you the glass in which you may see the Lord, and told you how he must be known; and how he must be conceived of in our apprehensions; and how the knowledge of God must be improved, and what impressions it must make upon the heart, and what effect it must have upon our lives. Blessed, and for ever blessed, are those souls, that have the true and lively image of this God, and all these his attributes, imprinted on them (as to the creature they are communicable). And oh that the "veil were taken from our hearts, that we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, may be changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord," 2 Cor. iii. 18; and may increase and live in the knowledge of the true and only God, and of Jesus Christ, which is eternal life. Amen.

THE DESCRIPTION, REASONS, AND REWARD

OF

THE BELIEVER'S WALKING WITH GOD.

GENESIS V. 24.

AND ENOCH WALKED WITH GOD: AND HE WAS NOT; FOR GOD TOOK HIM.

CHAPTER I.

BEING to speak of our Converse with God in Solitude, I think it will not be unsuitable, nor unserviceable to the ends of that discourse, if I here premise a short description of the general duty of practical godliness, as it is called in Scripture a Walking with God. It is here commended to us in the example of holy Enoch, whose excellency is recorded in this signal character, that "he walked with God;" and his special reward, expressed in the words following, "and he was not, for God took him." I shall speak most of his character, and then somewhat of his reward.

The Samaritan and vulgar Latin versions do strictly translate the Hebrew as we read it; but the interpretation of the Septuagint, the Syriac, the Chaldee, and the Arabic, are rather good expositions (all set together) of the meaning of the word, than strict translations. The Septuagint and Syriac read it, Enoch pleased God. The Chaldee hath, Enoch walked in the fear of God. And the Arabic, he walked in obedience to God. And indeed to walk in the fear and obedience of God, and thereby to please him, is the principal thing in our "walking with God." The same character is given of Noah, in Gen. vi. 19, and the extraordinary reward annexed; he and his family were saved in the deluge. And the holy life which God commanded Abraham, is called a walking before God. "Walk before me, and be thou perfect," Gen. xvii. 1. And in the New Testament the christian conversation is ordinarily called by the name of walking. Sometimes a walking in Christ, as Col. ii. 6. Sometimes a walking in the Spirit, in which we live, Gal. v. 25. And a walking after the Spirit, Rom. viii. 1. Sometimes a walking in the light, as God is in the light, 1 John i. 7. Those that abide in Christ must so walk even as he hath walked, 1 John ii. 6. These phrases set together tell us what it is to walk with God. But I think it not unprofitable somewhat more particularly to show you what this walking with God doth contain.

As atheism is the sum of wickedness, so all true religiousness is called by the name of godliness or holiness, which is nothing else but our devotedness to God, and living to him, and our relation to him as thus devoted in heart and life. Practical atheism is a "living as without God in the world," Ephes. ii. 12. Godliness is contrary to practical atheism, and is a living as with and to God in the world and in the church, and is here called a walking with God. And it containeth in it these particulars.

1. To walk with God includeth the practical acknowledgment (that is made by the will as well as the understanding) of the grand attributes of God, and his relations to man: that he is infinite in his being, that is, immense and eternal; as also in his power, wisdom, and goodness: that he is the Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier: that he is our absolute Lord, (or Owner), our most righteous Governor, and most bountiful Benefactor (or Father): that "of him, and through him, and to him, are all things:" that "in him we live, and move, and have our being:" that he is the fountain, or first cause, from which all (proper) being, truth, and goodness in the creature is but a derived stream. To have the soul unfeignedly resign itself to him, as his own; and subject itself to him as our Governor, walking in the awe of his sovereign power; sensible

of the strong obligation of his laws, which reason, justice, and necessity do all command us to obey. To live as in full dependence on him: to have the first and greatest respect unto him; a more observant respect to him than to our rulers; a more obedient respect to him than to our masters; a more dependent, tender, and honourable respect to him than to parents, or our nearest friends. Thus "he that cometh to God" (as God, and so as to be accepted of him) "must believe that he is," (his essential attributes,) and (what he is in his relations to man; especially that as our Governor and Benefactor) "he is the Rewarder of them that diligently seek him," Heb. xi. 6. The impress of a Deity in his essential and relative attributes must be upon the heart of him that walks with God. Yea, the being of God must be much more remarkable to him, than the being of all creatures, and his presence more regarded than the presence of the creature; and all things must be to us in comparison of God, as a candle is in comparison of the sun: His greatness and transcendent excellences must so overpower them all, as to make them less observed and regarded, by his taking up our chief observation and regard.

2. Our walking with God includeth our reconciliation to him, and that we are not in our natural state of enmity, but made his children and friends in Christ. "Can two walk together unless they be agreed?" Amos iii. 3. Enmity is against unity; disaffection causeth aversion, and flying from each other: yea, the fears of a guilty child may make him fly from his father's presence, till there be a particular reconciliation, besides the general state of reconciliation. A provoking, faulty child doth dwell with God his Father, though under the continual terror of his frowns; but to walk with him (in the full sense) is more than to be related to him, and to dwell with him. In a large sense indeed all God's children may be said to walk with him, as it signifieth only a conversation ordered in godliness, sincerity, and simplicity. But in this sublimer sense, as it signifieth a lively exercise of faith and love, and heavenly-mindedness, and a course of complacential contemplation, and holy converse with God, so it is proper only to some of the sounder and more vigilant, industrious believers. And hereto it is necessary, not only that we be justified and reconciled to God from our state of enmity, but also that we be pardoned, justified, and reconciled from our particular wounding falls, which are more than the ordinary infirmities of believers. And also it is necessary that we have grateful, friendly thoughts of God; that we have so much sense of his excellency, goodness, and kindness to ourselves, as may give us a complacency in conversing with him, and may make the thoughts and mention of him to be desirable and pleasing to us. Walking with God doth import, though not the full assurance of his special love and grace to us, yet such an apprehension of his love and goodness, as may draw the heart to think of him with desire, if not with delight. A lothness to draw near him, to think of him, or to mention him, a weariness of his special service, are contrary to this special walking with God.

3. Our walking with God, doth include our esteeming and intending Him as the ultimate end and felicity of our souls. He is not to be sought, or loved, or conversed with, as a means to any greater good, (for there is no greater,) nor as inferior, or merely equal unto any. His goodness must be the most powerful attractive of our love; his favour must be valued as our happiness; and the pleasing of him must be our most industrious employment. To walk with him, is to live in the warming, reviving sunshine of his goodness, and to feel a delighting, satisfying virtue in his love and gracious presence. To live as those that are not their own, and that have their lives, and faculties, and provisions, and helps for their Master's service: as a horse or dog is of so much worth, as he is of use to him that owneth him; and that is the best that is the most serviceable to his master: yet with this very great difference, that man being a more noble and capacious creature, is admitted not only into a state of service, but of sonship, and friendship, and communion with God; and is allowed and appointed to share more in the pleasure and fruits of his services, and to put in his own felicity and delight into his end; not only because self-love is natural and necessary to the creature, but also because he is under the promise of a reward; and (more than either) because he is a lover and not only a servant, and his work is principally a work of love, and therefore his end is *finis amantis*, the end of a lover, which is mutual complacency in the exercises of love.

He that seeketh not first the kingdom and righteousness of God, and referreth not other things to him, but seeks first the creature, and God only for it, doth but deny God in his heart, and basely subject him to the works of his own hands, and doth not walk with God, but vilify and reject him. If you live not to God, even to obey, and please, and honour him, you do not walk with him; but walk contrary to him, (by living to his enemies, the flesh, the world, and the devil,) and therefore God will "walk contrary to you," Levit. xxvi. 21, 23, 24, 27, 28. You were both created and redeemed, though for your own felicity, yet principally for the glory and pleasure of your Creator and Redeemer; and for no felicity of your own, but what consisteth in pleasing him, glorifying him, and enjoying him: "Whether therefore we eat or drink, or whatever we do, it should all be done to the glory of God," 1 Cor. x. 31. He that regardeth a day, or regardeth it not; he that eateth, or that eateth not, must do it to the Lord. (And though a good intention will not sanctify a forbidden action, yet sins of ignorance and mere frailty are forborne and pardoned of God, when it is his glory and service that is sincerely intended, though there be a mistake in the choice of means.) "None of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself: for whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord. Whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ both died, rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living," Rom. xiv. 6—9. Our walking with God, is a serious "labouring, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him," 2 Cor. v. 9. To this the love of our Redeemer must constrain us: "For he died for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them, and rose again," ver. 14, 15. Religion therefore is called the seeking of God, because the soul doth press after him, and labour to enjoy him, as the runner seeks to reach the prize; or as a suitor seeketh the love and fruition of the person beloved. And all the particular acts of religion are oft denominated from this intention of the end, and following after it, and are all called a seeking the Lord. Conversion is called a seeking the Lord. "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found," Isa. lv. 6. "The children of Israel shall return and seek the Lord their God," Hos. iii. 5. "They do not return to the Lord their God, nor seek him," Hos. vii. 10. Men that are called to conversion, are called to seek God. "Break up your fallow ground, for it is time to seek the Lord, till he come

and rain righteousness upon you," Hos. x. 12. The converted children of "Israel and Judah shall go weeping together to seek the Lord their God," Jer. l. 4. The wicked are described to be men that "do not seek the Lord," Isa. ix. 13; xxxi. 1. The holy covenant was "to seek the Lord," 2 Chron. xv. 12, 13. If therefore you would walk with God, let him be the mark, the prize, the treasure, the happiness, the heaven itself which you aim at, and sincerely seek. "Now set your heart and your soul to seek the Lord your God," 1 Chron. xxii. 19. "Glory ye in his holy name. Let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord. Seek the Lord and his strength, seek his face for evermore," Psal. cv. 3, 4. As the life of a covetous man is a seeking of riches, and the life of an ambitious man is a seeking of worldly honour and applause, so the life of a man that liveth to God, is a seeking him; to please him, honour him, and enjoy him: and so much of this as he attaineth, so much doth he attain of satisfaction and content. If you live to God, and seek him as your end and all, the want of any thing will be tolerable to you, which is but consistent with the fruition of his love. If he be pleased, man's displeasure may be borne. The loss of all things, if Christ be won, will not undo us. Man's condemnation of us signifieth but little, if God the absolute Judge do justify us. He walketh not with God, that liveth not to him as his only happiness and end.

4. Moreover our walking with God includeth our subjection to his authority, and our taking his wisdom and will to be our guide, and his laws in nature and Scripture for our rule. You must not walk with him as his equals, but as his subjects; nor give him the honour of an ordinary superior, but of the universal King. In our doubts he must resolve us; and in our straits we must ask counsel of the Lord. "Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do?" is one of the first words of a penitent soul, Acts ix. 6; when sensual worldlings do first ask the flesh, or those that can do it hurt or good, what they would have them be or do. None of Christ's true subjects do call any man father or master on earth, but in subordination to their highest Lord, Matt. xxiii. The authority of God doth awe them, and govern them, more than the fear of the greatest upon earth. Indeed they know no power but God's, and that which he committeth unto man. And therefore they can obey no man against God, whatever it cost them: but under God they are most readily and faithfully subject to their governors, not merely as to men that have power to hurt them if they disobey, but as to the officers of the Lord, whose authority they discern and reverence in them. But when they have to do with the enemies of Christ, who usurp a power which he never gave them against his kingdom and the souls of men, they think it easy to resolve the question, "Whether it be better to obey God or men?" As the commands of a rebellious constable, or other fellow-subject, are of no authority against the king's commands; so the commands of all the men on earth are of so small authority with them against the laws of God, that they fully approve of the ready and resolute answer of those witnesses, "We are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us, &c. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up," Dan. iii. 16—18. Worldlings are ruled by their fleshly interest, and wisdom, and self-will, and by the will of man so far as it doth comport with these. By these you may handle them and lead them up and down the world: by these doth Satan hold them in captivity. But believers feel themselves in subjection to a higher Lord, and better law, which they faithfully, though imperfectly, observe. Therefore our walking with God is called a walking in his law, Exod. xvi. 4; a walking in his statutes, and keeping and doing his commands, Lev. xxvi. 3; walking in his paths, Mic. iv. 2. It is our following the Lamb which way soever he goeth. To be given up to our own heart's lusts, and to walk in our counsels, is contrary to this holy walk with God, (Psal. lxxxi. 12,) and is the course of those that are departed from him: and they that are far from him shall perish: he destroyeth those that go a whoring from him. But it is good for us to draw near to God, Psal. lxxiii. 27, 28.

5. Our walking with God doth imply that as we are ruled by his will, so we fear no punishment like his threatened displeasure; and that the threats of death from mortal men, will not prevail with us so much as his threats of hell, Luke xii. 4. If God say, I will condemn thee to everlasting punishment if thou wilt not keep my laws; and if men say, We will condemn thee to imprisonment or death if thou keep them; the believer more feareth God than man. The law of the king doth condemn Daniel to the lions' den, if he forbear not to pray for a certain time. But he more feareth God, that will deny those that deny him, and forsake those that forsake him. Therefore the forementioned witnesses ventured on the fiery furnace, because God threatened a more dreadful fire. Therefore a true believer dare not live, when an unbeliever dare not die: he dare not save his life from God, lest he lose it; but loseth it that he may save it. But unbelievers that walk not with God, but after the flesh, do most fear them that they observe most powerful in the world, and will more be moved with the penalty of some worldly loss or suffering, than with God's most dreadful threats of hell: for that which they see not, is to them as nothing, while they want that faith by which it is foreknown, and must be escaped.

6. Moreover he that walks with God, doth from God expect his full reward. He ceaseth not his holy course, though no man observe him, or none commend him or approve him; though all about him hate him and condemn him; though he be so far from gaining by it with men, that it cost him all that he hath or hoped for in the world: for he knoweth that godliness is of itself great gain, and that it "hath the promise of this life and that to come," and none can make God's promise void. He knoweth that his "Father which seeth in secret will reward him openly," Matt. vi.; and that he "shall have a treasure in heaven" that parteth with all on earth for Christ, Luke xviii. 22. And he hath such respect to this promised "recompence of reward," that for it he can "suffer with the people of God, and account the very reproach of Christ a greater treasure," than court or country can afford him in a way of sin, Heb. xi. 26. He accounteth them "blessed that are persecuted for righteousness' sake, because the kingdom of heaven is theirs." He judgeth it a cause of exceeding joy, to be reviled and persecuted, and to have all manner of evil falsely spoken of us for the sake of Christ, because our reward in heaven is great, Matt. v. 10—12. For he verily believeth, that as sure as these transitory pleasures will have an end, and everlastingly forsake those miserable souls that were deluded by them, so certainly is there a life of endless joys, to be possessed in heaven with God and all the holy ones; and this he will trust to, as that which will fully repair his losses, and repay his cost, and not deceive him. Let others trust to what they will, it is this that he is resolved to trust to, and venture all to

make it sure (when he is sure that all is nothing which he ventureth, and that by the adventure he can never be a loser, nor ever save by choosing that which itself must perish). Thus he that truly walks with God expecteth his reward from God, and with God, and thence is encouraged in all his duty, and thence is imboldened in all his conflicts, and thence is upheld and comforted in his sufferings; when man is the rewarder (as well as the chief ruler) of the hypocrite, and earthly things are the poise and motives to his earthly mind.

7. Our walking with God importeth that as we expect our reward from him, so also that we take his promise for our security for that reward. Believing his word and trusting his fidelity to the quieting and imboldening of the soul, is part of our holy walking with him. A promise of God is greater satisfaction and encouragement to a true believer, than all the visible things on earth. A promise of God can do more, and prevail further, with an upright soul, than all the sensible objects in the world. He will do more, and go further, upon such a promise, than he will for all that man can give him. Peruse the life of Christ's apostles, and see what a promise of Christ can do: how it made them forsake all earthly pleasures, possessions, and hopes, and part with friends, and houses, and country, and travel up and down the world, in dangers and sufferings, and unwearied labours, despised and abused by great and small; and all this to preach the gospel of the kingdom, which they had never seen; and to attain that everlasting happiness, and help others to attain it, for which they had nothing but the promise of their Lord. See what a promise well believed will make a christian do and suffer. Believers did those noble acts, and the martyrs underwent those torments, which are mentioned Heb. xi. because "they judged him faithful that had promised," Heb. xi. 11. They considered not difficulties and defect of means, and improbabilities as to second causes, nor "staggered at the promise of God through unbelief; but being strong in faith, gave glory to God; being fully persuaded, that what he had promised he was also able to perform." As it is said of Abraham, Rom. iv. 19—21.

8. To walk with God, is to live as in his presence, and that with desire and delight. When we believe and apprehend that wherever we are, we are before the Lord, who seeth our hearts and all our ways; who knoweth every thought we think, and every word we speak, and every secret thing which we do: as verily to believe that God is here present and observeth all, as we do that we ourselves are here. To compose our minds, our thoughts, our affections to that holy reverence and seriousness as beseemeth man before his Maker. To order our words with that care and gravity as beseems those that speak in the hearing of the Lord. That no man's presence do seem more considerable to us than his presence: as we are not moved at the presence of a fly, or worm, or dog, when persons of honour and reverence are present; so should we not comparatively be moved at the presence of man, how great, or rich, or terrible soever, when we know that God himself is present, to whom the greatest of the sons of men are more inconsiderable than a fly or worm is unto them. As the presence of the king makes ordinary standers-by to be unobserved, and the discourses of the learned make us disregard the babblings of children; so the presence of God should make the greatest to be scarce observed or regarded in comparison of him. God, who is still with us, should so much take up our regard, that all others in his presence should be but as a candle in the presence of the sun. Therefore it is that a believer composeth himself to that behaviour which he knoweth God doth most expect, and beseemeth those that stand before him. When others accommodate themselves to the persons that are present, observing them, pleasing them, and showing them respect, while they take no notice of God at all, as if they believed not that he is there. Hence it is that the men of God were wont to speak (though reverently, yet) familiarly of God, as children of their father with whom they dwell, as being indeed fellow-citizens with the saints, who are his household. Abraham calleth him, "The Lord before whom I walk," Gen. xxiv. 40. And Jacob, "God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked," Gen. xlviii. 15. And David resolveth, "I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living," Psal. cxvi. 9. Yea, God himself is pleased to use the terms of gracious, condescending familiarity with them. "Christ dwelleth in them by faith," Eph. iii. 17. His Spirit dwelleth in them as his house and temple, Rom. viii. 9. Yea, the Father himself is said to dwell in them, and they in him: "He that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him: and he in him," 1 John iii. 24. "If we love one another, God dwelleth in us. Hereby we know that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him," 1 John iv. 12, 13, 15, 16. Yea, God is said to walk in them, as they are said to walk with him; "For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people," 2 Cor. vi. 16.

Our walking with God then is not only a sense of that common presence which he must needs afford to all; but it is also a believing apprehension of his gracious presence, as our God and reconciled Father, with whom we dwell, being brought near unto him by Christ; and who dwelleth in us by his Spirit.

9. To walk with God (as here we are in flesh) includeth not only our believing his presence, but also that we see him (as the chief cause in the effects) in his creatures, and his daily providence: that we look not on creatures as independent or separated from God; but see them as the glass, and God as the represented face; and see them as the letters and words, and God as the sense of all the creatures, that are the first book which he appointed man to read. We must behold his glory declared by the heavens, (Psal. xix. 1,) and see him shining in the sun; and see his power in the fabric of the world, and his wisdom in the admirable order of the whole. We must taste the sweetness of his love in the sweetness of our food, and in the comforts of our friends, and all our accommodations; we must see and love his image in his holy ones; and we must hear his voice in the ministry of his messengers. Thus every creature must become a preacher to us, and we must see the name of God upon it: and thus all things will be sanctified to us, while "Holiness to the Lord" is written upon all. Though we must not therefore make idols of the creatures, because God appeareth to us in them, yet must we hear the message which they bring us, and reverence in them the name of the Creator which they bear. By this way of conversing with them, they will not insnare us, or deceive or poison us, as they do the carnal, unbelieving world: but as the fish brought money to Peter to pay his tribute, so every creature would bring us a greater, even a spiritual gain. When we behold it, we should say with pleasant admiration, "This is the work of God, and it is

wonderful in our eyes." This is the true divine philosophy, which seeketh, and findeth, and contemplateth, and admireth the great Creator in his works: when that which sticketh in the creature itself (whatever discovery it seem to make) is but a childish, unprofitable trifling; like learning to shape all the letters aright, without learning to know their signification and sense. It is God appearing in the creatures, that is the life, and beauty, and use, and excellency of all the creatures; without him they are but carcasses, deformed, useless, vain, insignificant, and very nothings.

10. Our walking with God, doth contain our willing and sincere attendance on him in the use of those holy duties in which he hath appointed us to expect his grace. He is every where in his essential presence, but he is not every where alike to be found in the communications of grace. The assemblies of his saints that worship him in holy communion, are places where he is likelier to be found than in an ale-house or a play-house. You are likelier to have holy converse with him among the holy, that will speak of holy things to your edification, than among the senseless, ignorant sensualists, and the scornful enemies of holiness, that are the servants of the devil, whom he useth in his daily work for the deceiving and perdition of the world. Therefore the conversation of the wicked doth grieve and vex a righteous soul, (as it is said the Sodomites did by Lot, 2 Pet. ii. 7, 8,) because all their conversation is ungodly, far from God, not savouring of any true knowledge of him, or love to him, but is against him by enmity and provocation. If God himself do dwell and walk in all his holy ones, then they that dwell and walk with them, have the best opportunity to dwell and walk with God. To converse with those in whom God dwelleth, is to converse with him in his image, and to attend him at his dwelling: and wilfully to run among the wicked, is to run far away from God. "In his temple doth every man speak of his glory," Psal. xxix. 9; when among his brutish enemies every man speaketh to the dishonour of him in his word and ways. He is otherwise present with those that are congregated in his name and for his worship, than he is with those that are assembled for wickedness or vanity, or live as brutes without God in the world. And we must draw as near him as we can, if we would be such as walk with God.

We must not be strange to him in our thoughts, but make him the object of our most serious meditations. It is said of the wicked that "they are far from God;" and that "God is not in all their thoughts," Psal. lxxiii. 27; x. 4. The thoughts are the mind's employment. It dwells on that which it frequently thinks of. It is a walk of the mind, and not of the body, which we are treating of. To mind the world, and fleshly things, is contrary to this walk with God: we are far from him, when our thoughts are (ordinarily) far from him. I know that it is lawful and meet to think of the business of our callings, so far as is necessary to the prudent successful management of them; and that it is not requisite that our thoughts be always actually upon God: but he that doth manage his calling in holiness, doth all in obedience to God's commands, and sees that his work be the work of God, and he intendeth all to the glory of God, or the pleasing of his blessed will: and he oft reneweth these actual intentions; and oft interposeth thoughts of the presence, or power, or love, or interest of him whom he is serving: he often lifteth up his soul in some holy desire or ejaculatory request to God: he oft taketh occasion from what he seeth, or heareth, or is doing, for some more spiritual meditation or discourse; so that still it is God that his mind is principally employed on or for, even in his ordinary work (while he liveth as a christian).

And it is not enough to think of God; but we must think of him as God; with such respect, and reverence, and love, and trust, and submission (in our measure) as is due from the creature to his Creator. For as some kind of speaking of him is but a taking his name in vain; so some kind of thinking of him is but a dishonouring of him, by contemptuous, or false, unworthy thoughts. Most of our walking with God consisteth in such affectionate apprehensions of him as are suitable to his blessed attributes and relations. All the day long our thoughts should be working either on God, or for God; either upon some work of obedience which he hath imposed on us, and in which we desire to please and honour him, or else directly upon himself. Our hearts must be taken up in contemplating and admiring him, in magnifying his name, his word, and works; and in pleasant, contentful thoughts of his benignity, and of his glory, and the glory which he conferreth on his saints. He that is unskilful or unable to manage his own thoughts with some activity, seriousness, and order, will be a stranger to much of the holy converse which believers have with God. They that have given up the government of their thoughts, and turned them loose to go which way fantasy pleaseth, and present sensitive objects do invite them, and to run up and down the world as masterless, unruly vagrants, can hardly expect to keep them in any constant attendance upon God, or readiness for any sacred work. And the sudden thoughts which they have of God, will be rude and stupid, savouring more of profane contempt than of holiness, when they should be reverent, serious, affectionate, and practical, and such as conduce to a holy composure of their hearts and lives.

And as we must walk with God, 1. In our communion with his servants; 2. And in our affectionate meditations; so also, 3. In all the ordinances which he hath appointed for our edification and his worship.

1. The reading of the word of God, and the explication and application of it in good books, is a means to possess the mind with sound, and orderly, and working apprehensions of God and of his holy truths: so that in such reading our understandings are oft illustrated with a heavenly light, and our hearts are touched with a special delightful relish of that truth, and they are secretly attracted and engaged unto God, and all the powers of our souls are excited and animated to a holy, obedient life.

2. The same word preached with a lively voice, with clearness and affection, hath a greater advantage for the same illumination and excitation of the soul. When a minister of Christ that is truly a divine, being filled with the knowledge and love of God, shall copiously and affectionately open to his hearers the excellences which he hath seen, and the happiness which he hath foreseen and tasted of himself, it frequently (through the co-operation of the Spirit of Christ) doth wrap up the hearers' hearts to God, and bring them into a more lively knowledge of him, actuating their graces, and inflaming their hearts with a heavenly love, and such desires as God hath promised to satisfy. Christ doth not only send his ministers furnished with authority from him, but also furnished with his Spirit, to speak of spiritual things in a spiritual manner; so that in both respects he might say, "He that heareth you heareth me:" and also by the same Spirit doth open and excite the hearts of the hearers. So that it is God himself that a serious christian is principally

employed with, in the hearing of his heavenly, transforming word: and therefore he is affected with reverence and holy fear, with some taste of heavenly delight, with obediential subjection and resignation of himself to God. The word of God is powerful, not only in pulling down all high, exalting thoughts, that rise up against God, but also in lifting up depressed souls, that are unable to rise unto heavenly knowledge, or communion with God. If some christians could but always find as much of God upon their hearts at other times, as they find sometimes under a spiritual, powerful ministry, they would not so complain that they seem forsaken, and strangers to all communion with God, as many of them do. While God (by his messengers and Spirit) is speaking, and man is hearing him; while God is treating with man about his reconciliation and everlasting happiness, and man is seriously attending to the treaty and motions of his Lord; surely this is a very considerable part of our walking and converse with God.

3. Also in the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, we are called to a familiar converse with God. He there appeareth to us by a wonderful condescension in the representing, communicating signs of the flesh and blood of his Son, in which he hath most conspicuously revealed his love and goodness to believers: there Christ himself with his covenant gifts are all delivered to us by these investing signs of his own institution; even as knighthood is given by a sword, and as a house is delivered by a key, or land by a twig and turf. No where is God so near to man as in Jesus Christ; and no where is Christ so familiarly represented to us, as in this holy sacrament. Here we are called to sit with him at his table, as his invited, welcome guests; to commemorate his sacrifice, to feed upon his very flesh and blood; that is, with our mouths upon his representative flesh and blood, and with our applying faith upon his real flesh and blood, by such a feeding as belongs to faith. The marriage covenant betwixt God incarnate and his espoused ones, is there publicly sealed, celebrated, and solemnized. There we are entertained by God as friends, and not as servants only, and that at the most precious costly feast. If ever a believer may on earth expect his kindest entertainment, and near access, and a humble intimacy with his Lord, it is in the participation of this sacrifice feast, which is called The Communion, because it is appointed as well for our special communion with Christ as with one another. It is here that we have the fullest intimation, expression, and communication of the wondrous love of God; and therefore it is here that we have the loudest call, and best assistance, to make a large return of love: and where there is the most of this love between God and man, there is most communion, and most of heaven, that can be had on earth.

But it much concerneth the members of Christ, that they deprive not themselves of this communion with God in this holy sacrament through their miscarriage; which is too frequently done by one of these extremes: either by rushing upon holy things with a presumptuous, careless, common frame of heart, as if they knew not that they go to feast with Christ, and discerned not his body: or else by an excess of fear, drawing back and questioning the good-will of God, and thinking diminutively of his love and mercy. By this means Satan depriveth many of the comfortable part of their communion with God, both in this sacrament, and in other ways of grace; and maketh them avoid him as an enemy, and be loth to come into his special presence; and even to be afraid to think of him, to pray to him, or to have any holy converse with him: when the just belief and observation of his love would establish them, and revive their souls with joy, and give them experience of the sweet delights which are opened to them in the gospel, and which believers find in the love of God, and the foretaste of the everlasting pleasures.

4. In holy, faithful, fervent prayer, a christian hath very much of his converse with God. For prayer is our approach to God, and calling to mind his presence and his attributes, and exercising all his graces in a holy motion towards him, and an exciting all the powers of our souls to seek him, attend him, and reverently to worship him. It is our treating with him about the most important businesses in all the world; a begging of the greatest mercies, and a deprecating his most grievous judgments; and all this with the nearest familiarity that man in flesh can have with God. In prayer, the Spirit of God is working up our hearts unto him, with desires expressed in sighs and groans: it is a work of God as well as of man; he bloweth the fire, though it be our hearts that burn and boil. In prayer we lay hold on Jesus Christ, and plead his merits and intercession with the Father: he taketh us as it were by the hand, and leadeth us unto God, and hideth our sins, and procureth our acceptance, and presenteth us amiable to his Father, having justified and sanctified us, and cleansed us from those pollutions, which rendered us loathsome and abominable. To speak to God in serious prayer, is a work so high, and of so great moment, that it calleth off our minds from all things else, and giveth no creature room or leave to look into the soul, or once to be observed: the mind is so taken up with God, and employed with him, that creatures are forgotten, and we take no notice of them (unless when through the diversions of the flesh, our prayers are interrupted and corrupted, and so far degenerate, and are no prayer; so far I say as we thus turn away from God). So that the soul that is most and best at prayer, is most and best at walking with God, and hath most communion with him in the Spirit. And to withdraw from prayer, is to withdraw from God: and to be unwilling to pray, is to be unwilling to draw near to God. Meditation or contemplation is a duty in which God is much enjoyed: but prayer hath meditation in it, and much more. All that is upon the mind in meditation, is upon the mind in prayer, and that with great advantage, as being presented before God, and pleaded with him, and so animated by the apprehensions of his observing presence, and actuated by the desires and pleadings of the soul. When we are commanded to pray, it includeth a command to repent, and believe, and fear the Lord, and desire his grace. For faith and repentance, and fear and desire, are altogether in action in a serious prayer; and, as it were, naturally each one takes his place, and there is a holy order in the acting of these graces in a christian's prayers, and a harmony which he doth seldom himself observe. He that in meditation knoweth not how to be regular and methodical, when he is studiously contriving and endeavouring it, yet in prayer, before he is aware, hath repentance, and faith, and fear, and desire, and every grace, fall in its proper place and order, and contribute its part to the performance of the work. The new nature of a christian is more immediately and vigorously operative in prayer, than in many other duties: and therefore every infant in the family of God can pray (with groaning desires, and ordered graces, if not with well-ordered words). When Paul began to live to Christ, he began (aright) to pray: "Behold, he prayeth," saith God to Ananias, Acts ix. 11. And "because

they are sons, God sends the Spirit of his Son into the hearts of his elect, even the Spirit of adoption, by which they cry, Abba, Father," (Gal. iv. 6,) as children naturally cry to their parents for relief. And nature is more regular in its works than art or human contrivance is. Necessity teacheth many a beggar to pray better for relief to men, than many learned men (that feel not their necessities) can pray to God. The Spirit of God is a better methodist than we are. And though I know that we are bound to use our utmost care and skill for the orderly aetuating of each holy affection in our prayers, and not pretend the suffieiency of the Spirit for the patronage of our negligence or sloth (for the Spirit makes use of our understandings for the actuating of our wills and affections) ; yet withal it cannot be denied, but that it was upon a special reason that the Spirit that is promised to belicvers is ealled a "Spirit of grace and supplication," Zech. xii. 10. And that it is given us to "help our infirmities," even the infirmities of our understanding, when "we know not what to pray for as we ought," Rom. viii. 26. And that the Spirit itself is said to make "intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered." It is not the Spirit without, that is here meant : such intercession is no where aseribed to that. How then is the prayer of the Spirit within us distinguished from *our* prayer? Not as different effects of different causes; as different prayers by these different parties ; but as the same prayer proceeding from different causes, having a special force (for quality and degree) as from one cause, (the Spirit,) which it hath not from the other cause, (from ourselves,) except as received from the Spirit. The Spirit is a new nature or fixed inclination in the saints : for their very self-love and will to good, is sanctified in them, which works so readily (though voluntarily) as that it is in a sort by the way of nature, though not excluding reason and will ; and not as the motion of the brutish appetite. And that God is their felicity, and the only help and comfort of their souls, and so the principal good to be desired by them, is become to them a truth so certain and beyond all doubt, that their understandings are convinced that *velle bonum*, and *velle Deum*, to love good, and to love God, are words that have almost the same signification ; and therefore here is no room for deliberation and choice, where there is *omnimoda ratio boni*, nothing but unquestionable good. A christian (so far as he is such) cannot choose but desire the favour and fruition of God in immortality, even as he eannot choose (because he is a man) but desire his own felicity in general: and as he cannot (as a man) but be unwilling of destruction, and cannot but fear apparent misery, and that which bringeth it ; so as a christian he cannot choose but be unwilling of damnation, and of the wrath of God, and of sin as sin, and fear the apparent danger of his soul ; so that his new nature will presently cast his fear, and repentance, and desires into their proper course and order, and set them on work on their several objects (about the main unquestionable things, however they may err, or need more deliberation, about things doubtful). The new creature is not as a lifeless engine, (as a clock, or watch, or ship,) where every part must be set in order by the art and hand of man, and so kept and used: but it is liker to the frame of our own nature, even like man who is a living engine, when every part is set in its place and order by the Creator, and hath in itself a living and harmonical principle, which disposeth it to action, and to regular action, and is so to be kept in order and daily exercise by ourselves, as yet to be principally ordered and actuated by the Spirit, which is the principal cause.

By all which you may understand how the Holy Ghost is in us a Spirit of supplication, and helpeth our infirmities, and teaeheth us to pray, and intercedeth in us; and also that prayer is to the new man so natural a motion of the soul towards God, that much of our walking with God is exercised in this holy duty : and that it is to the new life as breathing to our natural life ; and therefore no wonder that we are commanded to "pray continually," (1 Thess. v. 17,) as we must breathe continually ; or as nature, which needeth a daily supply of food for nourishment, hath a daily appetite to the food which it needeth, so hath the spiritual nature to its necessary food, and nothing but sickness doth take it off.

And thus I have showed how our walking with God containeth a holy use of his appointed means.

11. To walk with God includeth our dependence on him for our receivings, and taking our mercies as from his hand; to live as upon his love and bounty, as children with their father, that can look for nothing but from him. As the eye of a servant, yea, of a craving dog, is upon his master's face and hand, so must our eye be on the Lord, for the gracious supply of all our wants. If men give us any thing, we take them but as the messengers of God, by whom he sendeth it us : we will not be unthankful to men ; but we thank them but for bringing us our Father's gifts. Indeed man is so much more than a mere messenger, as that his own charity also is exercised in the gift. A mere messenger is to do no more but obediently to deliver what is sent us, and he need not exercise any charity of his own; and we owe him thanks only for his fidelity and labour, but only to his master for the gift: but God will so far honour man, as that he shall be called also to use his charity, and distribute his Master's gifts with some self-denial; and we owe him thanks, as, under God, he partaketh in the charity of the gift ; and as one child oweth thanks to another, who both in obedience to the father, and love to his brother, doth give some part of that which his father had given him before. But still it is from our Father's bounty, as the principal cause, that all proceeds. Thus Jacob speaketh of God, "God, before whom my fathers, Abraham and Isaac, did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, the Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads," &c. Gen. xlviii. 15, 16. When he had mentioned his father Abraham and Isaac's walking with God, he describeth his own by his dependence upon God, and receiving from him, acknowledging him the God that had fed him and delivered him all his life. Carnal men that live by sense, do depend upon inferior sensible causes ; and though they are taught to pray to God, and thank him with their tongues, it is indeed their own contrivances and industry, or their visible benefactors, which their hearts depend upon and thank. It were a shame to them to be so plain as Pharaoh, and to say, "Who is the Lord?" or to speak as openly as Nebuchadnezzar, and say, "Is not this great Babylon that I have built, by the might of my power," &c. Dan. iv. 30. Yet the same atheism and self-idolizing is in their hearts, though it be more modestly and cunningly expressed. Hence it is that they that walk with God, have all their receivings sanctified to them, and have in all a divine and spiritual sweetness, which those that take them but as from creatures, do never feel or understand.

12. Lastly, It is contained in our walking with God, that the greatest business of our lives be with him, and for him. It is not a walk for compliment or recreation only, that is here meant; but it is a life of nearness, converse, and employment, as a servant or child that dwelleth with his master or father

in the house. God should be always so regarded, that man should stand by as nothing, and be scarce observed in comparison of him. We should begin the day with God, and entertain him in the first and sweetest of our thoughts: we should walk abroad and do our work as in his sight: we must resolve to do no work but his, no not in our trades and ordinary callings: we must be able to say, It is the work which my Master set me to do, and I do it to obey and please his will. At night we must take an account of ourselves, and spread open that account before him, desiring his acceptance of what was well, and his pardon for what we did amiss, that we may thus be ready for our last account. In a word, though men be our fellow-labourers and companions, yet the principal business of our care and diligence, must be our Master's service in the world. And therefore we must look about us, and discern the opportunities of serving him, and of the best improvement of his talents; and must make it our daily study and business, to do him the greatest service we are able, whatever it may cost us through the malice of the enemies, being sure our labour shall not be in vain, and that we cannot serve him at too dear a rate. It is not as idle companions, but as servants, as soldiers, as those that put forth all their strength, to do his work and reach the crown, that we are called to walk with God. And all this is done, though not in the same degree by all, yet according to the measure of their holiness by every one that lives by faith.

Having told you what it is to walk with God, as to the matter of it, I shall more briefly tell you as to the manner: the nature of God, of man, and of the work, will tell it you.

1. That our walk with God must be with the greatest reverence: were we ever so much assured of his special love to us, and never so full of faith and joy, our reverence must be never the less for this. Though love cast out that guilty fear which discourageth the sinner from hoping and seeking for the mercy which would save him, and which disposeth him to hate and fly from God, yet doth it not cast out that reverence of God which we owe him as his creatures, so infinitely below him as we are. It cannot be that God should be known and remembered as God without some admiring and awful apprehensions of him. Infiniteness, omnipotency, and inaccessible majesty and glory, must needs affect the soul that knoweth them with reverence and self-abasement. Though "we receive a kingdom that cannot be moved," yet if we will "serve God acceptably," we must "serve him with reverence and godly fear," as knowing he "is our God," so he is also a "consuming fire," Heb. xii. 28, 29. We must so worship him as those that remember that we are worms and guilty sinners, and that he is most high and holy, and will be "sanctified in them that come nigh him, and before all the people he will be glorified," Lev. x. 3. Unreverence showeth a kind of atheistical contempt of God, or else a sleepiness and inconsiderateness of the soul. The sense of the goodness and love of God, must consist with the sense of his holiness and omnipotency. It is presumption, pride, or blockish stupidity, which excludeth reverence; which faith doth cause, and not oppose.

2. Our walking with God must be a work of humble boldness and familiarity. The reverence of his holiness and greatness, must not overcome or exclude the sense of his goodness and compassion, nor the full assurance of faith and hope. Though by sin we are enemies and strangers to God, and stand afar off, yet in Christ we are reconciled to him, and brought near, Eph. ii. 13. "For he is our peace, who hath taken down the partition, and abolished the enmity, and reconciled Jew and gentile unto God," ver. 14—16. "And through him we have all an access to the Father by one Spirit. We are now no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens of the saints, and of the household of God," ver. 18, 19. "In him we have boldness and access with confidence by the belief of him," Eph. iii. 12. Though of ourselves we are unworthy to be called his children, and may well stand afar off with the publican, and not dare to lift up our faces towards heaven, but smite our breasts, and say, "O Lord, be merciful to me a sinner;" yet "have we boldness to enter into the holiest, by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh: and having an High Priest over the house of God, we may draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith," Heb. x. 19—22. Therefore whensoever we are afraid at the sight of sin and justice, let us remember that "we have a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens, even Jesus the Son of God. And therefore let us come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need," Heb. iv. 14—16. He that alloweth us to walk with him, doth allow us such humble familiarity as beseemeth those that walk together with him.

3. Our walking with God must be a work of some holy pleasure and delight. We may unwillingly be dragged into the presence of an enemy, and serve as drudges upon mere necessity or fear. But walking together is the loving and delightful converse of friends. When we take sweet counsel of the Lord, and set him always at our right hand, and are glad to hear from him, and glad to speak to him, and glad to withdraw our thoughts from all the things and persons in the world, that we may solace ourselves in the contemplations of his excellency, and the admirations of his love and glory, this is indeed to walk with God. You converse with him as with a stranger, an enemy, or your destroyer, and not as with God, while you had rather be far from him, and only tremble in his presence, and are glad when you have done and are got away, but have no delight or pleasure in him. If we can take delight in our walking with a friend, a friend that is truly loving and constant, a friend that is learned, wise, and holy; if their wise and heavenly discourse be better to us than our recreations, meat, or drink, or clothes; what delight then should we find in our secret converse with the most high, most wise, and gracious God! How glad should we be to find him willing and ready to entertain us! How glad should we be that we may employ our thoughts on so high and excellent an object! What cause have we to say, "My meditation of him shall be sweet, and I will be glad in the Lord!" Psal. civ. 34. "In the multitude of my thoughts within me (my sorrowful, troublesome, weary thoughts) thy comforts do delight my soul," Psal. xciv. 19. Let others take pleasure in childish vanity or sensuality, but say thou as David, "I have rejoiced in the ways of thy commandments, as much as in all riches. I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways. I will delight myself in thy statutes, and will not forget thy word. I will delight myself in thy commandments which I have loved," Psal. cxix. 14—16, 47. Let "scorners delight in scorning, and fools hate knowledge," (Prov. i. 22,) but "make me to go in the path of thy commandments, for therein do I delight," Psal. cxix. 35. If thou wouldst experimentally know the safety and glory of a holy

life, "delight thyself in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desire of thy heart," Psal. xxxvii. 4. Especially when we draw near him in his solemn worship, and when we separate ourselves on his holy days from all our common worldly thoughts, to be conversant, as in heaven, with the blessed God; then may we with the holy apostle be "in the Spirit on the Lord's day," Rev. i. 10: "and if we turn away our foot from the sabbath, from doing our pleasure on that holy day, and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable, and shall honour him, not doing our own ways, nor finding our own pleasure, nor speaking our own words, then shall we delight ourselves in the Lord," (Isa. lviii. 13, 14,) and understand how great a privilege it is, to have the liberty of those holy days and duties for our sweet and heavenly converse with God.

4. Our walking with God must be a matter of industry and diligence. It is not an occasional idle converse, but a life of observance, obedience, and employment, that this phrase importeth. The sluggish, idle wishes of the hypocrite, whose hands refuse to labour, are not this walking with God; nor "the sacrifice of fools," who are hasty to utter the overflowings of their fantasy before the Lord, while they "keep not their foot, nor hearken to the law, nor consider that they do evil," Eccles. v. 1—3. "He that cometh to God (and will walk with him) must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him." "God is with you, while you are with him; but if you forsake him, he will forsake you," 2 Chron. xv. 2. "Up and be doing, and the Lord will be with you," 1 Chron. xxii. 16. If you would meet with God in the way of mercy, "take diligent heed to do the commandment and law, to love the Lord your God, and to walk in all his ways, and to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all your heart, and with all your soul," Josh xxii. 5.

5. Our walking with God is a matter of some constancy: it signifieth our course and trade of life, and not some accidental action on the by. A man may walk with a stranger for a visit, or in compliment, or upon some unusual occasion: but this walk with God, is the act of those that dwell with him in his family, and do his work. It is not only to step and speak with him, or cry to him for merey in some great extremity, or to go to church for company or custom, or think or talk of him sometimes heartlessly on the by, as a man will talk of news, or matters that are done in a foreign land, or of persons that we have little to do with: but it is to "be always with him," Luke xv. 31. "To seek first his kingdom and righteousness," Matt. vi. 33. "Not to labour (comparatively) for the food that perisheth, but for that which endureth to everlasting life," John vi. 27. "To delight in the law of the Lord, and meditate in it day and night," Psal. i. 2. That his "words be in our hearts, and that we teach them diligently to our children, and talk of them sitting in the house, and walking by the way, lying down, and rising up," &c. Deut. vi. 6—8. That "we pray continually," 1 Thess. v. 17; "and in all things give thanks." But "will the hypocrite delight himself in the Almighty, or will he always eall upon God," Job xxvii. 10. "His goodness is as the morning eloud, and as the early dew it goeth away," Hos. vi. 4.

So much of the description of this walking with God.

CHAPTER II.

Use. We are next to consider how far this doctrinc doth concern ourselves, and what use we have to make of it upon our hearts and lives.

And, First, It acquainteth us with the abundance of atheism that is in the world, even among those that profess the knowledge of God. It is atheism not only to say, "There is no God;" but to say so "in the heart," Psal. xiv. 1. While the heart is no more affected towards him, observant of him, or confident in him, or submissive to him, than if indeed there were no God; when there is nothing of God upon the heart, no love, no fear, no trust, no subjection; this is heart atheism. When men that have some kind of knowledge of God, yet "glorify him not as God, nor are thankful to him, but become vain in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts are darkened;" these men are heart atheists; and "professing themselves wise, they become fools, and are given up to vile affections: and as they do not like to retain God in their knowledge, (however they may discourse of him, so) God oft giveth them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things that are not convenient, being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covctousness, maliciousness, envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity," &c. Rom. i. 21, 22, 26, 28—30. Swarms of such atheists go up and down under the self-deceiving name of christians: being indeed unbelieving and defiled, so void of purity, that they deride it, and "nothing is pure to them; but even their mind and conscience is defiled: they profess that they know God, but they deny him in their works, being abominable and disobedient, and to every good work reprobate," Titus i. 15, 16. What are they but atheists, when "God is not in all their thoughts," Psal. x. 4; unless it be in their impious or blaspheming thoughts, or in their slight, contemptuous thoughts! To take God for God indeed, and for our God, essentially includeth the taking him to be the most powerful, wise, and good, the most just and holy, the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of the world; whom we and all men are obliged absolutely to obey and fear, to love and desire; whose will is our beginning, rule, and end. He that taketh not God for such as here described, taketh him not for God, and therefore is indeed an atheist: what name soever he assumeth to himself, this is the name that God will call him by; even a "fool that hath said in his heart, There is no God. While they are corrupt and do abominably, they understand not, and seek not after God; they are all gone aside, and are altogether become filthy, there is none of them that doth good; they are workers of iniquity, they have no knowledge, and eat up the people of God as bread, and call not upon the Lord," Psal. xiv. 1—4. Ungodliness is but the English for atheism. The atheist or ungodly in opinion, is he that thinks that there is no God, or that he is one that we need not love and serve (and that is but the same, viz. to be no God). The atheist or ungodly in heart, or will, is he that consenteth not that God shall be his God, to be loved, feared, and obeyed before all. The atheist in life, or outward practice, is he that liveth as without God in the world; that seeketh him not as his chiefest good, and obeyeth him not as his highest absolute Lord: so that indeed atheism is the sum of all iniquity, as godliness is the sum of all religion and moral good. If you see by the description which I have given you, what it is to be godly, and to walk with God, and what it is to be an atheist or ungodly, you may easily see that godliness is more rare, and atheism more eommon,

than many that themselves are atheists will believe. It is not that which a man calls his God, that is taken by him for his God indeed. It is not the tongue, but the heart, that is the man. Pilate called Christ the King of the Jews, when he crucified him. The Jews called God their Father, when Christ telleth them, they were of their father the devil, and proveth it because (whatever they said) they would do his lusts, John viii. 44. The same Jews pretended to honour the name of the Messiah, and expect him, while they killed him. The question is not what men call themselves, but what they are: not whether you say you take God for your God, but whether you do so indeed: not whether you profess yourselves to be atheists, but whether you are atheists indeed or not. If you are not, look over what I have here said, and ask your consciences, Do you walk with God? who is it you submit yourselves willingly to be disposed of by? to whom are you most subject? and whose commands have the most effectual authority with you? who is the chief Governor of your hearts and lives? whom is it that you principally desire to please? whom do you most fear? and whose displeasure do you principally avoid? from whom is it that you expect your greatest reward? and in whom, and with whom, do you place and expect your happiness? whose work is it that you do, as the greatest business of your lives? Is it the goodness of God in himself, and unto you, that draweth up your hearts to him in love? Is he the ultimate end of the main intentions, design, and industry of your lives? Do you trust upon his word as your security for your everlasting hopes and happiness? Do you study and observe him in his works? Do you really live as in his presence? Do you delight in his word, and meditate on it? Do you love the communion of saints? and to be most frequent and familiar with them that are most frequent and familiar with Christ? Do you savour more the particular affectionate discourse about his nature, will, and kingdom, than the frothy talk of empty wits, or the common discourse of carnal worldlings? Do you love to be employed in thanking him for his mercies, and in praising him, and declaring the glory of his attributes and works? Is your dependence on him as your great Benefactor, and do you receive your mercies as his gifts? If thus your principal observation be of God, and your chief desire after God, and your chiefest confidence in God, and your chiefest business in the world be with God, and for God, and your chiefest joy be in the favour of God, (when you can apprehend it,) and in the prosperity of his church, and your hopes of glory; and your chiefest grief and trouble be your sinful distance from him, and your backwardness and disability in his love and service, and the fear of his displeasure, and the injuries done to his gospel and honour in the world; then I must needs say, you are savingly delivered from your atheism and ungodliness; you do not only talk of God, but walk with God; you are then acquainted with that spiritual life and work, which the sensual world is unacquainted with, and with those invisible, everlasting excellences, which if worldlings knew, they would change their minds, and choice, and pleasures; you are then acquainted with that rational, manly, saint-like life, which ungodly men are strangers to; and you are in the way of that well-grounded hope and peace to which all the pleasures and crowns on earth, if compared, are but cheats and misery. But if you were never yet brought to walk with God, do not think you have a sound belief in God, nor that you acknowledge him sincerely, nor that you are saved from heart atheism: nor is it piety in the opinion and the tongue, that will save him that is an atheist, or ungodly, in heart and life. Divinity is an affective-practical science: knowing is not the ultimate or perfective act of man; but a means to holy love, and joy, and service. Nor is it clear and solid knowledge, if it do not somewhat affect the heart, and engage and actuate the life, according to the nature and use of the thing known. The soundness of knowledge and belief is not best discerned in the intellectual acts themselves, but in their powerful, free, and pleasant efficacy, upon our choice and practice. By these therefore you must judge, whether you are godly or atheistical. The question is not what your tongues say of God, nor what complimental ceremonious observances you allow him; but what your hearts and your endeavours say of him, and whether you glorify him as God, when you say you know him: otherwise you will find that the "wrath of God is revealed from heaven, against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness," Rom. i. 18, 21.

And now, alas! what matter of lamentation is here before us! To see how seriously men converse with one another, and how God is overlooked or neglected by the most! How men live together, as if there were more that is considerable and regardable in these particles of animated dust, than in the Lord Almighty, and in all his graces, service, and rewards! To see how God is cast aside, and his interest made to give place to the interest of the flesh, and his services must stay till men have done their service to their lusts, or to worldly men, that can do them hurt, or show them favour! and his will must not be done, when it crosseth the will of sinful man! How little do all the commands, and promises, and threatenings of God signify, with these atheistical men, in comparison of their lusts, or the laws of men, or any thing that concerneth their temporal prosperity! Oh how is the world revolted from their Maker! How have they lost the knowledge of themselves, and forgotten their natures, capacities, and obligations, and what it is to be indeed a man! O hearken, sinners, to the call of your Redeemer! Return, O seduced, wandering souls, and know at last your resting-place! Why is not God in all your thoughts? or why is he thought on with so much remissness, unwillingness, and contempt? and with so little pleasure, seriousness, or regard? Do you understand yourselves in this? Do you deal worthily with God? or wisely for yourselves? Do you take more pleasure, with the prodigal, to feed swine, and to feed with swine, than to dwell at home with your heavenly Father? and to walk before him, and serve him in the world? Did you but know how dangerous a way you have been in, and how unreasonably you have dealt, to forsake God in your hearts, and follow that which cannot profit you, what haste would you make to leave the crowd, and come home to God, and try a more noble and gainful conversation! If reasons may have room and leave to work upon you, I will set a few before you more distinctly, to call you off from your barren, inordinate creature converse, to a believing, serious converse with God.

1. The higher and more excellent the object is, (especially when it is also of most concernment to ourselves,) the more excellent is the converse. Therefore as nothing dare compare itself with God, so no employment may be compared with this of holy walking with him. How vile a contempt is it of the Almighty, and of our celestial joys, for the heart to neglect them, and turn away, and dwell upon vanity and trouble, and let these highest pleasures go! Is not God and glory worthy of thy thoughts, and all thy service?

2. What are those things that take thee up? Are they better than God? or fitter to supply thy wants? If thou think, and trust in them accordingly, ere long thou shalt know better what they are, and have enough of thy cursed choice and confidence. Tell those that stand by thee at the parting hour, whether thou didst choose aright and make a gaining or a saving match. O poor sinners! have you not yet warning enough to satisfy you that all things below are vanity and vexation, and that all your hope of happiness is above? Will not the testimony of God satisfy you? Will not the experience of the world for so many thousand years together satisfy you? Will not the ill success of the damned satisfy you? Will nothing but your own experience convince you? If so, consider well the experience you have already made, and seasonably retire, and try no further, and trust not so dangerous a deceiver to the last, lest you buy your knowledge at a dearer rate than you will now believe.

3. You have daily more to do with God, than with all the world, whether you will or no: and therefore seeing you cannot avoid him if you would, prefer that voluntary, obedientiall converse, which hath a reward, before that necessitated converse which hath none. You are always in his hands: he made you for his service; and he will dispose of you and all that you have, according to his will. It shall not go with you as yourselves would have it, nor as your friends would have it, nor as princes and great ones of the world would have it; (unless as their wills comply with God's;) but as God would have it, who will infallibly accomplish all his will. If a sparrow fall not to the ground without him, and all the hairs of our heads are numbered, then certainly he overruleth all your interests and affairs, and they are absolutely at his disposal. To whom then in reason should you so much apply yourselves as unto him? If you will not take notice of him, he will take notice of you: he will remember you, whether you remember him or not; but it may be with so strict and severe a remembrance, as may make you wish he did quite forget you. You are always in his presence; and can you then forget him, and hold no voluntary converse with him, when you stand before him? If it be but mean, inferior persons that we dwell with, and are still in company with, we mind them more and speak more to them, than we do to greater persons that we seldom see. But in God there is both greatness and nearness to invite you. Should not all the worms on earth stand by, while the glorious God doth call you to him, and offer you the honour and happiness of his converse? Shall the Lord of heaven and earth stand by, and be shut out, while you are chatting or trifling with his creatures? Nay, shall he be neglected that is always with you? You cannot remove yourselves a moment from his sight; and therefore you should not shut your eyes, and turn away your face, and refuse to observe him who is still observing you.

Moreover, your dependence, both for soul and body, is all on him. You can have nothing desirable but by his gift. He feeds you, he clotheth you, he maintaineth you, he gives you life, and breath, and all things; and yet can you overlook him, or forget him? Do not all his mercies require your acknowledgment? A dog will follow him that feedeth him; his eye will be upon his master: and shall we live upon God, and yet forget and disregard him? We are taught a better use of his mercies by the holy prophet; "O bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of his praise to be heard: which holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved!" Psal. lxvi. 8, 9.

Nay, it is not yourselves alone, but all the world that depends on God. It is his power that supporteth them, and his will that disposeth of them, and his bounty that provideth for them: and therefore he must be the observation and admiration of the world: it is less unreasonable to take no notice of the earth that beareth us and yieldeth us fruit, and of the sun that yieldeth us heat and light, than to disregard the Lord, that is more to us than sun, and earth, and all things. "The eyes of all things wait on him; and he giveth them their meat in season: he openeth his hand and satisfieth the desire of every living thing," Psal. cxlv. 15, 16. "The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works: all his works therefore shall praise him, and his saints shall bless him: they shall speak of the glory of his kingdom, and talk of his power," ver. 10, 11.

Moreover, God is so abundantly and wonderfully represented to us in all his works, as will leave us under the guilt of most unexcusable contempt, if we overlook him, and live as without him in the world. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handy work: day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge," Psal. xix. 1, 2. Thus "that which may be known of God is manifest; for the invisible things of him from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that the ungodly are without excuse," Rom. i. 19, 20. Cannot you see that which all the world revealeth; nor hear that which all the world proclaimeth? "O sing ye forth the honour of his name: make his praise glorious! Say to the Lord, How terrible art thou in thy works! Through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee: all the earth shall worship thee, and shall sing unto thee: they shall sing unto thy name. Come and see the works of God: he is terrible in his doings towards the children of men," Psal. lxvi. 2—5. Can we pass him by, that is every where present, and by every creature represented to us? Can we forget him, when all the world are our remembrancers? Can we stop our ears against the voice of heaven and earth? Can we be ignorant of him, when the whole creation is our teacher? Can we overlook that holy, glorious name, which is written so legibly upon all things that ever our eyes beheld, that nothing but blindness, sleepiness, or distraction, could possibly keep us from discerning it! I have many a time wondered, that (as the eye is dazzled so with the beholding of the greatest light, that it can scarce perceive the shining of a lesser, so) the glorious transcendent majesty of the Lord doth not even overwhelm our understandings, and so transport and take us up, as that we can scarce observe or remember any thing else. For naturally the greatest objects of our sense are apt to make us at that time insensible of the smaller: and our exceeding great business is apt to make us utterly neglect and forget those that are exceeding small: and oh what nothings are the best and greatest of the creatures, in comparison of God! and what toys and trifles are all our other businesses in the world, in comparison of the business which we have with him! But I have been stopped in these admirations by considering that the wise Creator hath fitted and ordered all his creatures according to the use which he designeth them to: and therefore as the eye must be receptive only of so much light as is proportioned to its use and pleasure, and must be so distant from the sun, that its light may rather guide than blind us, and its heat may rather quicken than consume us; so God

hath made our understandings capable of no other knowledge of him here, than what is suited to the work of holiness: and while we have flesh, and fleshly works to do, and lawful and necessary business in the world, in which God's own commands employ us, our souls in this lantern of the body must see him through so thick a glass, as shall so far allay our apprehension, as not to distract us, and take us off the works which he enjoineth us. And God and our souls shall be at such a distance, as that the proportionable light of his countenance may conduct us, and not overwhelm us; and his love may be so revealed, as to quicken our desires, and draw us on to a better state, but not so as to make us utterly impatient of this world and utterly weary of our lives, or to swallow us up, or possess us of our most desired happiness, before we arrive at the state of happiness. While the soul is in the body, it maketh so much use of the body (the brains and spirits) in all its operations, that our wise and merciful Creator and Governor doth respect the body as well as the soul, in his ordering, disposing, and representing of the objects of those operations: so that when I consider that certainly all men would be distracted, if their apprehensions of God were any whit answerable to the greatness of his majesty and glory, (the brain being not able to bear such high operations of the soul, nor the greatness of the passions which would necessarily follow,) it much reconcileth my wondering mind to the wise and gracious providence of God, even his setting innocent nature itself at such a distance from his glory (allowing us the presence of such grace, as is necessary to bring us up to glory.) Though it reconcile me not to that doleful distance which is introduced by sin, and which is furthered by Satan, the world, and the flesh, and which our Redeemer by his Spirit and intercession must heal.

And it further reconcileth me to this disposure and will of the blessed God, and this necessary natural distance and darkness of our mind, when I consider, that if God, and heaven, and hell, were as near and open to our apprehensions, as the things are which we see and feel, this life would not be what God intended it to be, a life of trial and preparation to another, a work, a race, a pilgrimage, a warfare. What trial would there be of any man's faith, or love, or obedience, or constancy, or self-denial? If we saw God stand by, or apprehended him as if we saw him, (in degree,) it would be no more praise-worthy or rewardable for a man to abhor all temptations to worldliness, ambition, gluttony, drunkenness, lust, cruelty, &c. than it is for a man to be kept from sleeping that is pierced with thorns, or for a man to forbear to drink a cup of melted gold which he knoweth will burn out his bowels, or to forbear to burn his flesh in fire. It were no great commendation to his chastity, that would forbear his filthiness, if he saw or had the fullest apprehensions of God; when he will forbear it in the presence of a mortal man. It were no great commendation to the intemperate and voluptuous, to have no mind of sensual delights, if they had but such a knowledge of God as were equal to sight. It were no thanks to the persecutor to forbear his cruelty against the servants of the Lord, if he "saw Christ coming with his glorious angels, to take vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel, and to be admired in his saints, and glorified in them that now believe," 2 Thess. i. 7—10. I deny not but this happily necessitated holiness is best in itself, and therefore will be our state in heaven; but what is there of trial in it? or how can it be suitable to the state of man, that must have good and evil set before him, and life and death left to his choice; and that must conquer if he will be crowned, and approve his fidelity to his Creator against competitors, and must live a rewardable life before he have the reward?

But though in this life we may neither hope for, nor desire, such overwhelming, sensible apprehensions of God, as the rest of our faculties cannot answer, nor our bodies bear; yet that our apprehensions of him should be so base, and small, and dull, and unconstant, as to be borne down by the noise of worldly business, or by the presence of any creature, or by the tempting baits of sensuality, this is the more odious, by how much God is more great and glorious than the creature, and even because the use of the creature itself is but to reveal the glory of the Lord. To have such slight and stupid thoughts of him, as will not carry us on in uprightness of obedience, nor keep us in his fear, nor draw out our hearts in sincere desires to please him and enjoy him, and as will not raise us to a contempt of the pleasures, and profits, and honours of this world, this is to be despisers of the Lord, and to live as in a sleep, and to be dead to God, and alive only to the world and flesh. It is no unjust dishonour or injury to the creature, to be accounted as nothing in comparison of God, that it may be able to do nothing against him and his interest: but to make such a nothing of the most glorious God, by our contemptuous forgetfulness or neglect, as that our apprehensions of him cannot prevail against the sordid pleasures of the flesh, and against the richest baits of sin, and all the wrath or allurements of man, this is but to make a god of dust, and dung, and nothing, and (in heart and practice) to make God worse than dust and dung. And it is a wonder that man's understanding can become so sottish, as thus to wink the sun itself into a constant darkness, and to take God as nothing, or as no God, who is so abundantly revealed to them in astonishing transcendent greatness and excellency, by all the creatures in the world, and with whom we have continually so much to do. O sinful man! into how great a depth of ignorance, stupidity, and misery art thou fallen!

But because we may see by the lives of the ungodly, that they little think that they have so much to do with God, though I have spoke of this to the godly in the other part of this treatise, I shall somewhat more particularly acquaint those that have most need to be informed of it, what business it is that they have with God.

1. It is not a business that may be done or left undone, like your business with men; but it is such as must be done, or you are undone for ever. Nothing is absolutely necessary but this: nothing in all the world doth so much concern you. You may at far cheaper rates forbear to eat, or drink, or clothe yourselves, or live, than forbear the despatch of this necessary work.

2. Your business with God, and for God in the world, is that which you have all your powers and endowments for; it is that which you were born into the world for; and that which you have understanding and free-will for; and that which you have your thoughts, and memories, and affections for; and that which you have eyes, and ears, and tongues, and your corporal parts and abilities for; and that which you have your time for; and your preservation, protection, and provisions: it is that which you have all your teaching for; which Christ himself came into the world for; which the Scriptures are written for; which ministers are sent for; which all order and government in church and state is principally

appointed for: in a word, it is that for which you have your lives, and all things, and without which all were as nothing, and will be to you worse than nothing, if they do not further your work with God: you will wish you had never seen them if they befriend you not in this.

3. Your business with God, and for him, is such as you must be continually doing; as is incumbent on you every hour, for you have every hour given you for this end. You may despatch this man to-day, and another to-morrow, and have no more to do with them again of a long time: but you have always incessantly important works to do with God. For your common work should be all his work; and all should be done with principal respect to him.

But I shall yet more particularly tell the ungodly what business it is that they have with God, which it seems, by their careless, negligent lives, they are not aware of.

1. You must be either saved or damned by him; either glorified with him, or punished by him to everlasting: and it is now that the matter must be determined, which of the two conditions you must be in. You must now obtain your title to heaven, if ever you will come thither. You must now procure deliverance from hell-fire, if ever you will escape it. Now it is that all that must be done, upon which the scales must turn for your salvation or damnation: and you know this work is principally to be done between you and God, who alone can save you or destroy you: and yet do you forget him, and live as if you had no business with him, when you have your salvation to obtain from him, and your damnation to prevent? Have you such business as this with any other?

2. You have a strict and righteous judgment to undergo, in order to this salvation or damnation. You must stand before the Holy Majesty, and be judged by the Governor of the world: you must be there accused, and found guilty or not guilty; and judged as fulfillers or as breakers of the holy covenant of grace: you must be set on the right hand or on the left: you must answer for all the time that you here spent, and for all the means and mercies which you here received, and for that you have done, whether it were good or evil. And it is now in this life that all your preparation must be made, and all that must be done, upon which your justification or condemnation will then depend. And it is between God and you that all this business must be done: and yet can you live as negligently towards him, as if you had no business with him?

3. You have a death to die, a change to make, which must be made but once; which will be the entrance upon endless joy or pain: and do you think this needeth not your most timely and diligent preparation? You must struggle with pains, and faint with weakness, and feel death taking down your earthen tabernacle: you must then have a life that is ending to review, and all that you have done laid open to your more impartial judgment; you must then see time as at an end, and the last sand running, and your candle ready to go out, and leave the snuff; you must then look back upon all that you have had from the world, as ending; and upon all that you have done as that which cannot be undone again, that you may do it better; and you must have a more serious look into eternity, when you are stepping thither, than you can now conceive of: and doth all this need no preparation? It is with God that all that business must be now transacted, that must make your death to be comfortable or safe. If now you will only converse with men, and know no business that you have with God, you shall find at last to your exceeding terror, that you are in his hands, and passing to his bar, and that it is God that then you have to do with, when your business with all the world is at an end: he will then have something to do with you, if you will now find nothing to do with him.

4. In order to all this, you have now your peace to be made with God, and the pardon of all your sins to be obtained. For woe to you if then you are found under the guilt of any sin! Look back upon your lives, and remember how you have lived in the world, and what you have been doing: how you have spent your time in youth, and in your riper age; and how many sinful thoughts, and words, and deeds you have been guilty of: how oft you have sinfully pleased your appetites, and gratified your flesh, and yielded to temptations, and abused mercy, and lost your time: how oft you have neglected your duty, and betrayed your souls: how long you have lived in forgetfulness of God and your salvation; minding only the things of the flesh and of the world: how oft you have sinned ignorantly and against knowledge, through carelessness and through rashness, through negligence and through presumption, in passion and upon deliberation, against convictions, purposes, and promises: how oft you have sinned against the precepts of piety to God, and of justice and charity to men. Think how your sins are multiplied and aggravated, more in number than the hours of your lives; aggravated by a world of mercies, by the clearest teachings, and the loudest calls, and sharpest reproofs, and seasonable warnings, and by the long and urgent importunities of grace. Think of all these, and then consider whether you have nothing now to do with God, whether it be not a business to be followed with all possible speed and diligence, to procure the pardon of all these sins. You have no such businesses as these to transact with men. You may have business with them which your estates depend upon, or which touch your credit, commodity, or lives; but you have no business with men (unless in subordination to God) which your salvation doth depend upon: your eternal happiness is not in their hands; they may kill your bodies, (if God permit them,) but not your souls. You need not solicit them to pardon your sins against God: it is a small matter how you are judged of by man: you have one that judgeth you, even the Lord, 1 Cor. iv. 3, 4. No man can forgive sin, but God only. Oh then how early, how earnestly should you cry to him for mercy! Pardon must be obtained now or never. There is no justification for that man at the day of judgment, that is not forgiven and justified now. Blessed then is the man whose iniquity is forgiven, whose sin is covered, and to whom it is not imputed by the Lord, Rom. iv. 7, 8. And woe to that man that ever he was born, that is then found without the pardon of his sins! Think of this as the case deserves, and then think if you can, that your daily business with God is small.

5. Moreover, you have peace of conscience to obtain: and that dependeth upon your peace with God. Conscience will be your accuser, condemner, and tormentor, if you make it not your friend, by making God your friend. Consider what conscience hath to say against you, and how certainly it will speak home, when you would be loth to hear it: and bethink you how to answer all its accusations, and what will be necessary to make it a messenger of peace; and then think your business with God to be but small, if you are able. It is no easy matter to get assurance that God is reconciled to you, and that he hath forgiven all your sins.

6. In order to all this, you must be united to Jesus

Christ, and be made his members, that you may have part in him, and that he may wash you by his blood, and that he may answer for you to his Father! woe to you if he be not your righteousness, and if you have not him to plead your cause, and take upon him your final justification! None else can save you from the wrath of God: and he is the Saviour only of his body, Eph. v. 23. He hath died for you without your own consent, and he hath made a universal conditional grant of pardon and salvation, before you consented to it; but he will not be united to you, nor actually forgive, and justify, and save you, without your own consent: and therefore that the Father may draw you to the Son, and may give you Christ, and life in him, (1 John v. 9—11,) when all your hope dependeth on it, you may see that you have more to do with God, than your senseless hearts have hitherto understood.

7. And that you may have a saving interest in Jesus Christ, you must have sound repentance for all your former life of wickedness, and a lively, effectual faith in Christ: neither sin nor Christ must be made light of. Repentance must tell you to the very heart, that you have done foolishly in sinning, and that it is an evil and a bitter thing that you forsook the Lord, and that his fear was not in you: and thus your wickedness shall correct you and reprove you, Jer. ii. 19. And faith must tell you that Christ is more necessary to you than food or life, and that there is no other name given under heaven by which you can be saved, Acts iv. 12. And it is not so easy nor so common a thing to repent and believe, as ignorant, presumptuous sinners do imagine. It is a greater matter to have a truly humbled, contrite heart, and to loathe yourselves for all your sins, and to loathe those sins, and resolvedly give up yourselves to Christ and to his Spirit for a holy life, than heartlessly and hypocritically to say, I am sorry, or, I repent, without any true contrition or renovation. And it is a greater matter to betake yourselves to Jesus Christ as your only hope, to save you both from sin and from damnation, than barely through custom, and the benefit of education, to say, I do believe in Christ. I tell you it is so great a work to bring you to sound repentance and faith, that it must be done by the power of God himself, Acts v. 31; 2 Tim. ii. 25. They are the "gift of God," Eph. ii. 8; you must have his Spirit to illuminate you, (Eph. i. 18,) and show you the odiousness of sin, the intolerableness of the wrath of God, the necessity and sufficiency, the power and willingness of Christ; and to overcome all your prejudice, and save you from false opinions and deceits; and to repulse the temptations of Satan, the world, and the flesh, which will all rise up against you. All this must be done to bring you home to Jesus Christ, or else you will have no part in him, his righteousness and grace: and can you think that you have not most important business with God, who must do all this upon you, or else you are undone for ever?

8. Moreover, you must have all the corruptions of your natures healed, and your sins subdued, and your hearts made new by sanctifying grace, and the image of God implanted in you, and your lives made holy and sincerely conformable to the will of God. All this must be done, or you cannot be acceptable to God, nor ever will be saved: though your carnal interest rise against it; though your old corrupted natures be against it; though your custom, and pleasure, and worldly gain and honour be against it; though all your carnal friends and superiors be against it; though the devil will do all that he can against it: yet all this must be done, or you are lost for ever: and all this must be done by the Spirit of God; for it is his work to make you new and holy: and can you think then that the business is not great which you have with God? When you have tried how hard every part of this work is, to be begun and carried on, you will find you have more to do with God, than with all the world.

9. Moreover, in order to this it is necessary that you read, and hear, and understand the gospel, which must be the means of bringing you to God by Christ: this must be the instrument of God, by which he will bring you to repent and believe, and by which he will renew your natures, and imprint his image on you, and bring you to love him, and obey his will. The word of God must be your counsellor, and your delight, and you must set your heart to it, and meditate in it day and night. Knowledge must be the means to reclaim your perverse, misguided wills, and to reform your careless, crooked lives, and to bring you out of the kingdom of darkness into the state of light and life. And such knowledge cannot be expected without a diligent attending unto Christ the teacher of your souls, and a due consideration of the truth. By that time you have learnt what is needful to be learnt for a true conversion, a sound repentance, a saving faith, and a holy life, you will find that you have far greater business with God than with all the world.

10. Moreover, for the attaining of all this mercy, you have many a prayer to put up to God: you must daily pray for the forgiveness of your sins, and deliverance from temptations, and even for your daily bread, or necessary provisions for the work which you have to do: you must daily pray for the supplies of grace which you want, and for the gradual mortification of the flesh, and for help in all the duties which you must perform; and for strength against all spiritual enemies which will assault you; and preservation from the manifest evils which attend you: and these prayers must be put up with unwearied constancy, fervency, and faith. Keep up this course of fervent prayer, and beg for Christ, and grace, and pardon, and salvation in any measure as they deserve, and according to thy own necessity, and then tell me whether thy business with God be small, and to be put off as lightly as it is by the ungodly.

11. Moreover, you are made for the glory of your Creator, and must apply yourselves wholly to glorify him in the world: you must make his service the trade and business of your lives, and not put him off with something on the by: you are good for nothing else but to serve him: as a knife is made to cut, and as your clothes are made to cover you, and your meat to feed you, and your horse to labour for you; so you are made, and redeemed, and maintained for this, to love and please your great Creator. And can you think that it is but little business that you have with him, when he is the End and Master of your lives, and all you are or have is for him?

12. And for the due performance of his service, you have all his talents to employ. To this end it is that he hath intrusted you with reason, and health, and strength; with time, and parts, and interest, and wealth, and all his mercies, and all his ordinances and means of grace; and to this end must you use them, or you lose them: and you must give him an account of all at last, whether you have improved them all to your Master's use. And can you look within you, without you, about you, and see how much you are trusted with, and must be accountable to him for, and yet not see how great your business is with God?

13. Moreover, you have all the graces which you shall receive to exercise; and every grace doth carry

you to God, and is exercised upon him, or for him: it is God that you must study, and know, and love, and desire, and trust, and hope in, and obey: it is God that you must seek after, and delight in, so far as you enjoy him: it is his absence or displeasure that must be your fear and sorrow: therefore the soul is said to be sanctified when it is renewed, because it is both disposed and devoted unto God. And therefore grace is called holiness, because it all disposeth, and carrieth the soul to God, and useth it upon and for him. And can you think your business with God is small, when you must live upon him, and all the powers of your soul must be addicted to him, and be in serious motion towards him? and when he must be much more to you than the air which you breathe in, or the earth you live upon, or than the sun that gives you light and heat; yea, than the soul is to your bodies?

14. Lastly, You have abundance of temptations and impediments to watch and strive against, which would hinder you in the doing of all this work, and a corrupt and treacherous heart to watch and keep in order, which will be looking back, and shrinking from the service. Lay all this together, and then consider whether you have not more and greater business with God, than with all the creatures in the world.

And if this be so, (as undeniably it is so,) is there any cloak for that man's sin, who is all day taken up with creatures, and thinks of God as seldom and as carelessly as if he had no business with him? And yet, alas, if you take a survey of high and low, of court, and city, and country, you shall find that this is the case of no small number, yea, of many that observe it not to be their case. It is the case of the profane, that pray in jest, and swear, and curse, and rail in earnest. It is the case of the malignant enemies of holiness, that hate them at the heart that are most acquainted with this converse with God, and count it but hypocrisy, pride, or fancy, and would not suffer them to live upon the earth, who are most sincerely conversant in heaven. It is the case of Pharisees and hypocrites, who take up with ceremonious observances, as, Touch not, taste not, handle not, and such like traditions of their forefathers, instead of a spiritual, rational service, and a holy, serious walking with the Lord. It is the case of all ambitious men, and covetous worldlings, who make more ado to climb up a little higher than their brethren, and to hold the reins, and have their wills, and be admired and adored in the world, or to get a large estate for themselves and their posterity, than to please their Maker, or to save their souls. It is the case of every sensual epicure, whose belly is his god, and serveth his fancy, lust, and appetite before the Lord. It is the case of every unsanctified man, that seeketh first the prosperity of his flesh, before the kingdom and righteousness of God, and is most careful and laborious to lay up a treasure on earth, and laboureth more (with greater estimation, resolution, and delight) for the meat that perisheth, than for that which endureth to everlasting life. All these (who are too great a part of the world, and too great a part of professed christians) are taken up with creature converse; and yet think to escape the deluge of God's displeasure, because the Enochs and Noahs are so few who walk with God; and they think God will not destroy so many: and thus they think to be saved by their multitude, and to hide themselves in the crowd from God: they will go the wide and common path, and be of the mind that most are of: they will not be convinced till most men are convinced; that is, till their wisdom come too late, and cost them dearer than its worth. When all men are convinced that God should have been preferred before the world, and served before their fleshly lusts, (as they will certainly and sadly, be) then they will be convinced with the rest. When all men understand that life was given them to have done the work which eternal life dependeth on, then they will understand it with the rest. When all men shall discern between the righteous and the wicked; between those that serve God and that serve him not; then they will discern it with the rest: they will know what their business was in the world, and how much they had to do with God, when all men know it. But oh how much better for them had it been to have known it in time, while knowledge might have done them better service, than to make them feel the greatness of their sin and folly, and the hopes which once they had of happiness, and to help the sting of desperation continually to prick them at the heart! they would not be of so "little a flock" as that to which it was the "good pleasure" of God to "give the kingdom," Luke xii. 32. If you demand a reason of all this, their reason was in their throats and bellies: they had fleshly appetites and lusts, and thereby could relish fleshly pleasures; but spiritual life and appetite they had none, and therefore relished not spiritual things. Had Christ, and holiness, and heaven, been as suitable to their appetites as the sweetness of their meat, and drink, and lusts, and as suitable to their fantasies as their worldly dignities and greatness were, they would then have made a better choice. They would have walked with God, if drunkenness, and gluttony, and pride, and wantonness, and covetousness, and idleness, had been the way in which they might have walked with him. If these had been godliness, how godly would they have been! How certainly would they have come to heaven if this had been the way! To be idle, and proud, and fleshly, and worldly, is it that they love; and to be humble, and holy, and heavenly, and mortified, is that which they hate, and cannot away with: and their love and hatred proceed from their corrupt natures; and these are instead of reason to them. Their strong apprehensions of a present suitableness in fleshly pleasures to their appetites, and of a present unsuitableness of a holy life, do keep out all effectual apprehensions of the excellences of God, and of spiritual, heavenly delights, which cross them in the pleasures which they most desire.

But yet (their appetites corrupting their understandings as well as their wills) they will not be mad without some reason, nor reject their Maker and their happiness without some reason, nor neglect that holy work which they were made for without some reason. Let us hear then what it is.

CHAPTER III.

Object. 1. They say, It is true that God hath much to do with us and for us: but it followeth not that we have so much to do with him, or for him, as you would have us to believe; for he is necessarily good, and necessarily doth good; and therefore will do so, whether we think of him or not. The sun will not give over shining on me, though I never think on it, or never pray to it, or give it thanks. Nor doth God need any service, that we can do him, no more than the sun doth; nor is he pleased any more in the praise of men, or in their works.

Answ. 1. It is most certain that God is good as necessarily as he is God: but it is not true, that he must necessarily do good to you, or other individual

persons; nor that he necessarily doth the good he doth them. As he is not necessitated to make toads and serpents as happy as men, or men as angels; so he is not necessitated to save the devils or damned souls (for he will not save them). And he was under no greater a necessity to save you, than them. He was not necessitated to give you a being; he could have passed you by, and caused others to have possessed your room. As it was God's free-will, and not any necessity, that millions more are never born, that were in possibility of it; (for all that is possible doth not come to pass;) so that you and millions more were born was not of necessity, but of the same free-will. And as God did not make you of necessity but of free-will; so he doth not necessarily but freely justify, or sanctify, or save. If he did it by necessity of nature, he would do it to all as well as some; seeing all have a natural capacity of grace as well as those that receive it: God is able to sanctify and save more, yea all, if it were his will; and it is not for want of power or goodness that he doth not. Millions of beings are possible which are not future. God doth not all the good which he is able, but communicateth so much to his several creatures as to his wisdom seemeth meet. If the damned would be so presumptuous as to argue, that because God is able yet to sanctify and save them, therefore he must do it of necessity of nature, it would not be long before they should thus dispute themselves out of their torments. God will not ask leave of sinners to be God: their denying him to be good, (that is, to be God,) because he complieth not with their conceits and wills, doth but prove them to be fools and bad themselves.

Indeed some sciolists, pretending to learning, while they are ignorant of most obvious principles of natural knowledge, have taught poor sinners to cheat their souls with such dreams as these. They have made themselves believe that goodness in God is nothing else but his benignity, or disposition to do good. As if the creature were the ultimate end, and all God's goodness but a means thereto: and so God were the Alpha or first efficient, and yet the creature the Omega or *finis ultimus;* and all the goodness in God were to be estimated and denominated by its respect to the felicity of man; and so the creature hath the best part of the Deity. Such notions evidently show us, that lapsed man is predominantly selfish, and is become his own idol, and is lost in himself, while he hath lost himself by his loss of God. When we see how powerful his self-interest is, both with his intellect and will; even men of great ingenuity, till sanctification hath restored them to God and taught them better to know him and themselves, are ready to measure all good or evil by their own interests; when yet common reason would have told them, if they had not perverted it by pride and partial studies, that short of God, even among the creatures, there are many things to be preferred before themselves and their own felicity. He is irrationally enslaved by self-love, that cannot see that the happiness of the world, or of his country, or of multitudes, is more to be desired than his happiness alone: and that he ought rather to choose to be annihilated, or to be miserable, (if it were made a matter of his deliberation and choice,) than to have the sun taken out of the firmament, or the world or his country to be annihilated or miserable. And God is infinitely above the creature.

Object. But they say, He needeth nothing to make him happy, having no defect of happiness.

Answ. And what of that? Must it needs therefore follow, that he made not all things for himself, but for the creature finally? He is perfectly happy in himself, and his will is himself: this will was fulfilled when the world was not made, (for it was his will that it should not be made till it was made,) and it is fulfilled when it is made, and fulfilled by all that comes to pass. And as the absolute simple goodness and perfection of God's essence is the greatest good, the eternal, immutable good; so the fulfilling of his will is the ultimate end of all obedience. He hath expressed himself to take pleasure in his works, and in the holiness, obedience, and happiness of his chosen: and though pleasure be not the same thing in God as it is in a man, (no more than will or understanding is,) yet it is not nothing which God expresseth by such terms, but something which we have no fitter expression for: this pleasing of the will of God being the end of all, even of our felicity, is better than our felicity itself.

They that will maintain that God, who is naturally and necessarily good, hath no other goodness but his benignity, or aptness to do good to his creatures, must needs also maintain that (God being for the creature, and not the creature for God) the creature is better than God, as being the ultimate end of God himself, and the highest use of all his goodness being but for the felicity of the creature: as also that God doth all the good that he is able; (for natural necessary agents work *ad ultimum posse:*) and that all men shall be saved, and all devils, and every worm and toad be equal to the highest angel, or else that God is not able to do it. And that he did thus make happy all his creatures from eternity (for natural, necessary agents work always if they be not forcibly hindered); and that there never was such a thing as pain or misery, in man or brute, or else that God was not able to prevent it. But abundance of such odious consequences must needs follow from the denying of the highest good, which is God himself, and confessing none but his efficient goodness. But some will be offended with me for being so serious in confuting such an irrational, atheistical conceit, who know not how far it prevaileth with an atheistical generation.

Be it known to you, careless sinners, that though the sun will shine on you whether you think on it or not, or love it, or thank it, or not; and the fire will warm you whether you think on it and love it or not; yet God will not justify or save you, whether you love him or think on him or not: God doth not operate brutishly in your salvation; but governeth you wisely, as rational creatures are to be governed; and therefore will give you happiness as a reward; and therefore will not deal alike with those that love him and that love him not; that seek him and that seek him not; with the labourers and the loiterers, the faithful and slothful servant. Would you have us believe that you know better than God himself what pleaseth himself, or on what terms he will give his benefits, and save men's souls? or do you know his nature better than he knoweth it, that you dare presume to say, because he needeth not our love or duty, therefore they are not pleasing to him? Then what hath God to do in governing the world, if he be pleased and displeased with nothing that men do, or with good and evil actions equally? Though you cannot hurt him, you shall find that he will hurt you, if you disobey him: and though you cannot make him happy by your holiness, you shall find that he will not make you happy without it.

And if he did work as necessarily as the sun doth shine, according to your similitude; yet, 1. Even the shining of the sun doth not illuminate the blind, nor doth it make the seeds of thorns and nettles to bring forth vines or roses, nor the gendering of frogs to bring forth men; but it actuateth all things according to the several natures of their powers. And

therefore how can you expect that an unbelieving and unholy soul should enjoy felicity in God, when in that state they are uncapable of it? 2. And if the sun do neeessarily illuminate any one, he must neeessarily be illuminated; and if it necessarily warm or quieken any thing, it must be necessarily warmed and quickened; else you would assert contradietions. So if God did neeessarily save you, and make you happy, you would necessarily be saved and made happy. And that containeth essentially your holiness, your loving, desiring, and seeking after God. To be saved or happy without enjoying God by love, or to love him and not desire him, seek him, or obey him, are as great contradictions as to be illuminated without light, or quickened without life. What way soever it be that God eonveyeth his sanctifying Spirit, I am sure that "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, the same is none of his," (Rom. viii. 9,) and that without "holiness none shall see God," (Heb. xii. 14,) and that if you will have the kingdom of God, you must seek it first, preferring it before all earthly things, Matt. vi. 33; John vi. 27; Col. iv. 1—3. And then if all the question that remaineth undecided be, whether God do you wrong or not in damning you, or whether God be good beeause he will not save you when he can, I shall leave you to him to receive satisfaction, who will easily silence and eonfound your impudenee, and justify his works and laws. Prepare your aeeusations against him, if you will needs insist upon them, and try whether he or you shall prevail: but remember that thou art a worm, and he is God, and that he will be the only Judge when all is done; and ignorance and impiety, that prate against him to their own confusion, in the day of his patienee, shall not then usurp the throne.

Object. 2. But how can God be fit for mortals to converse with, when they see him not, and are infinitely below him?

Answ. I hope you will not say that you have nothing to do at home, with your own souls: and yet you never saw your souls. And it is the souls, the reason and the will of men, that you daily converse with here in the world, more than their bodies; and yet you never saw their souls, their reason, or their wills. If you have no higher light to discern by than your eyesight, you are not men but beasts. If you are men, you have reason; and if you are christians, you have faith, by which you know things that you never saw. You have more dependence on the things that are unseen, than on those whieh you see, and have much more to do with them.

And though God be infinitely above us; yet he condeseendeth to communicate to us aecording to our eapacities: as the sun is far from us, and yet doth not disdain to enlighten, and warm, and quieken a worm or fly here below. If any be yet so much an atheist as to think that religious converse with God is but a faney, let him well answer me these few questions.

Quest. 1. Doth not the continued being and well-being of the creatures, tell us that there is a God on whom (for being and well-being) they depend, and from whom they are and have whatsoever they are, and whatsoever they have? And therefore that passively all the ereatures have more respeet to him by far, than to one another?

Quest. 2. Seeing God eommunieateth to every creature aecording to their several eapaeities; is it not meet then that he deal with man as man, even as a creature rational, capable to know, and love, and obey his great Creator, and to be happy in the knowledge, love, and fruition of him? That man hath sueh natural faculties, and eapaeities, is not to be denied by a man that knoweth what it is to be a man: and that God hath not given him these in vain, will be easily believed by any that indeed believe that he is God.

Quest. 3. Is there any thing else that is finally worthy of the highest aetions of our souls? or that is fully adequate to them, and fit to be our happiness? If not, then we are left either to eertain infelieity, eontrary to the tendency of our natures, or else we must seek our felieity in God.

Quest. 4. Is there any thing more eertain than that by the title of creation, our Maker hath a full and absolute right to all that he hath made; and eonsequently to all our love and obedienee, our time and powers? For whom should they all be used but for him from whom we have them?

Quest. 5. Can any thing be more sure, than that God is the righteous Governor of the world? and that he governeth man as a rational creature, by laws and judgment? And can we live under his absolute sovereignty, and under his many righteous laws, and under his promises of salvation to the justified, and under his threatenings of damnation to the unjustified, and yet not have more to do with God than with all the world? If indeed you think that God doth not love and reward the holy and obedient, and punish the ungodly and disobedient, then either you take him not to be the governor of the world, or (whieh is worse) you take him to be an unrighteous governor: and then you must by the same reason say, that magistrates and parents should do so too, and love and reward the obedient and disobedient alike: but if any man's disobedienee were exereised to your hurt, by slandering, or beating, or robbing you, I dare say you would not then eommend so indifferent and unjust a governor.

Quest. 6. If it be not needless for man to labour for food and raiment, and necessary provision for his body, how can it be needless for him to labour for the happiness of his soul? If God will not give us our daily bread while we never think of it, or seek it, why should we expect that he will give us heaven though we never think on it, value it, or seek it?

Quest. 7. Is it not a contradiction to be happy in the fruition of God, and yet not to mind him, desire him, or seek him? How is it that the soul ean reaeh its object, but by estimation, desire, and seeking after it? and how should it enjoy it but by loving it, and taking pleasure in it?

Quest. 8. While you seem but to wrangle against the duty of believers, do you not plead against the eomfort and happiness of believers? For surely the employment of the soul on God, (and for him,) is the health and pleasure of the soul; and to eall away the soul from sueh employment, is to imprison it in the dungeon of this world, and to forbid us to smell to the sweetest flowers, and eonfine us to a sink or dunghill, and to forbid us to taste of the food of angels, or of men, and to offer us vinegar and gall, or turn us over to feed with swine. He that pleadeth that there is no such thing as real holiness and eommunion with God, doth plead in effect that there is no true felicity or delight for any of the sons of men: and how welcome should ungodly atheists be unto mankind, that would for ever exclude them all from happiness, and make them believe they are all made to be remedilessly miserable?

And here take notiee of the madness of the unthankful world, that hateth and persecuteth the preaehers of the gospel, that bring them the glad tidings of pardon, and hope, and life eternal, of solid happiness, and durable delight; and yet they are not offended at these atheists and ungodly eavillers, that would take them off from all that is truly good

and pleasant, and make them believe that nature hath made them capable of no higher things than beasts, and hath enthralled them in remediless infelicity.

Quest. 9. Do you not see by experience that there are a people in the world whose hearts are upon God, and the life to come, and that make it their chiefest care and business to seek him, and to serve him? How then can you say that there is no such thing, or that we are not capable of it, when it is the case of so many before your eyes? If you say that it is but their fancy or self-deceit: I answer, that really their hearts are set upon God, and the everlasting world, and that it is their chiefest care and business to attain it; this is a thing that they feel, and you may see in the bent and labour of their lives; and therefore you cannot call that a fancy, of which you have so full experience: but whether the motives that have invited them, and engaged them to such a choice and course, be fancies and deceits or not, let God be judge, and let the awakened consciences of worldlings themselves be judge, when they have seen the end, and tried whether it be earth or heaven that is the shadow, and whether it be God or their unbelieving hearts that was deceived.

Quest. 10. Have you any hopes of living with God for ever or not? If you have not, no wonder if you live as beasts, when you have no higher expectations than beasts: when we are so blind as to give up all our hopes, we will also give up all our care and holy diligence, and think we have nothing to do with heaven. But if you have any such hopes, can you think that any thing is fitter for the chiefest of your thoughts and cares, than the God and kingdom which you hope for ever to enjoy? Or is there any thing that can be more suitable, or should be more delightful, to your thoughts, than to employ them about your highest hopes, upon your endless happiness and joy? and should not that be now the most noble and pleasant employment for your minds, which is nearest to that which you hope to be exercised in for ever? Undoubtedly he that hath true and serious thoughts of heaven, will highliest value that life on earth which is likest to the life in heaven; and he that hateth, or is most averse to that which is nearest to the work of heaven, does boast in vain of his hopes of heaven.

By this time you may see (if you love not to be blind) that man's chiefest business in the world is with his God, and that our thoughts, and all our powers, are made to be employed upon him, or for him; and that this is no such needless work as atheists make themselves believe.

Remember that it is the description of the desperately wicked, (Psal. x. 4,) that "God is not in all his thoughts." And if yet you understand it not, I will a little further show you the evil of such atheistical, unhallowed thoughts.

1. There is nothing but darkness in all thy thoughts, if God be not in them. Thou knowest nothing, if thou knowest not him; and thou usest not thy knowledge, if thou use it not on him. To know the creature as without God, is to know nothing; no more than to know all the letters in the book, and not to know their signification or sense. All things in the world are but insignificant ciphers, and of no other sense or use, if you separate them from God, who is their sense and end. If you leave out God in all your studies, you do but dream and dote, and not understand what you seem to understand. Though you were taken for the learnedest men in the world, and were able to discourse of all the sciences, and your thoughts had no lower employment daily than the most sublime speculations which the nature of all the creatures doth afford, it is all but folly and impertinent dotage, if it reach not unto God.

2. Yea, your thoughts are erroneous and false, which is more than barely ignorant, if God be not in them. You have false thoughts of the world, of your houses and lands, and friends and pleasures, and whatsoever is the daily employment of your minds. You take them to be something, when they are nothing; you are covetous of the empty purse, and know not that you cast away the treasure; you are thirsty after the empty cup, when you wilfully cast away the drink. You hungrily seek to feed upon a painted feast: you murder the creature by separating it from God who is its life, and then you are enamoured on the carcass, and spend your days and thoughts in its cold embracements. Your thoughts are but vagabonds, straggling abroad the world, and following impertinences, if God be not in them. You are like men that walk up and down in their sleep, or like those that have lost themselves in the dark, who weary themselves in going they know not whither, and have no end nor certain way.

3. If God be not in all your thoughts, they are all in vain. They are like the drone that gathereth no honey: they fly abroad and return home empty: they bring home no matter of honour to God, or profit or comfort to yourselves: they are employed to no more purpose than in your dreams; only they are more capable of sin: like the distracted thoughts of one that doteth in a fever, they are all but nonsense, whatever you employ them on, while you leave out God, who is the sense of all.

4. If God be not in all your thoughts, they are nothing but confusion: there can be no just unity in them, because they forsake him who is the only centre, and are scattered abroad upon incoherent creatures. There can be no true unity but in God: the further we go from him, the further we run into divisions and confusions. There can be no just method in them, because he is left out that is the beginning and the end. They are not like a well-ordered army, where every one is moved by the will of one commander, and all know their colours and their ranks, and unanimously agree to do their work: but like a swarm of flies, that buzz about they know not whither, nor why, nor for what. There is no true government in your thoughts, if God be not in them; they are masterless and vagrants, and have no true order, if they be not ordered by him and to him, if he be not their first and last.

5. If God be not in all your thoughts, there is no life in them: they are but like the motion of a bubble, or a feather in the air: they are impotent as to the resisting of any evil, and as to the doing of any saving good: they have no strength in them, because they are laid out upon objects that have no strength: they have no quickening, renewing, reforming, encouraging, resolving, confirming power in them, because there is no such power in the things on which they are employed. Whereas the thoughts of God and everlasting life, can do wonders upon the soul: they can raise up men above this world, and teach them to despise the worldling's idol, and look upon all the pleasures of the flesh as upon a swine's delight in wallowing in the mire. They can renew the soul, and cast out the most powerful beloved sin, and bring all our powers into the obedience of God, and that with pleasure and delight; they can employ us with the angels, in a heavenly conversation, and show us the glory of the world above, and advance us above the life of the greatest princes upon earth: but the thoughts of earthly, fleshly things have power indeed to delude men, and mislead them, and

hurry them about in a vertiginous motion; but no power to support us, or subdue concupiscence, or heal our folly, or save us from temptations, or reduce us from our errors, or help us to be useful in the world, or to attain felicity at last. There is no life, nor power, nor efficacy in our thoughts, if God be not in them.

6. There is no stability or fixedness in your thoughts if God be not in them. They are like a boat upon the ocean, tossed up and down with winds and waves: the mutable, uncertain creatures can yield no rest or settlement to your minds. You are troubled about many things; and the more you think on them, and have to do with them, the more are you troubled: but you forget the one thing necessary, and fly from the eternal Rock, on which you must build, if ever you will be established. While the creature is in your thought instead of God, you will be one day deluded with its unwholesome pleasure, and the next day feel it gripe you at the heart: one day it will seem your happiness, and the next you will wish you had never known it: that which seemeth the only comfort of your lives this year, may the next year make you weary of your lives. One day you are impatiently desiring and seeking it, as if you could not live without it; and the next day, or ere long, you are impatiently desiring to be rid of it. You are now taking in your pleasant morsels, and drinking down your delicious draughts, and jovially sporting it with your inconsiderate companions; but how quickly will you be repenting of all this, and complaining of your folly, and vexing yourselves, that you took not warning, and made not a wiser choice in time! The creature was never made to be our end, or rest, or happiness: and therefore you are but like a man in a wilderness or maze, that may go and go, but knoweth not whither, and findeth no end, till you come home to God, who only is your proper end, and make him the Lord, and life, and pleasure of your thoughts.

7. As there is no present fixedness in your thoughts, so the business and pleasure of them will be of very short continuance, if God be not the chief in all. And who would choose to employ his thoughts on such things as he is sure they must soon forget, and never more have any business with to all eternity? You shall think of those houses, and lands, and friends, and pleasures, but a little while, unless it be with repenting, tormenting thoughts, in the place of misery: you will have no delight to think of any thing, which is now most precious to your flesh, when once the flesh itself decays, and is no more capable of delight. "His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish," Psal. cxlvi. 4.

Call in your thoughts then from these transitory things, that have no consistency or continuance, and turn them unto him with whom they may find everlasting employment and delight. Remember not the enticing baits of sensuality and pride, but "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them."

8. Thy thoughts are but sordid, dishonourable, and low, if God be not the chiefest in them. They reach no higher than the habitation of beasts; nor do they attain to any sweeter employment than to meditate on the felicity of a brute. Thou choosest with the fly to feed on dung and filthy ulcers, and as maggots to live on stinking carrion, when thou mightest have free access to God himself, and mightest be entertained in the court of heaven, and welcomed thither by the holy angels. Thou wallowest in the mire with the swine, or diggest thyself a house in the earth, as worms and moles do, when thy thoughts might be soaring up to God, and might be taken up with high, and holy, and everlasting things. What if your thoughts were employed for preferment, wealth, and honour in the world? Alas! what silly things are these, in comparison of what your souls are capable of! You will say so yourselves when you see how they will end, and fail your expectations. Imprison not your minds in this infernal cell, when the superior regions are open to their access; confine them not to this narrow vessel of the body, whose tossings and dangers on these boisterous seas will make them restless, and disquiet them with tumultuous passions, when they may safely land in paradise, and there converse with Christ. God made you men, and if you reject not his grace, will make you saints: make not yourselves like beasts or vermin. God gave you souls that can step in a moment from earth to heaven, and there foretaste the endless joys: do not you stick then fast in clay, and fetter them with worldly cares, or intoxicate them with fleshly pleasures, nor employ them in the worse than childish toys of ambitious, sensual, worldly men. Your thoughts have manna, angels' food, provided them by God: if you will loathe this and refuse it, and choose with the serpent to feed on the dust, or upon the filth of sin, God shall be judge, and your consciences one day shall be more faithful witnesses, whether you have dealt like wise men or like fools; like friends or enemies to yourselves; and whether you have not chosen baseness, and denied yourselves the advancement which was offered you.

9. If God be not the chiefest in your thoughts, they are no better than dishonest and unjust. You are guilty of denying him his own. He made not your minds for lust and pleasure, but for himself. You expect that your cattle, your goods, your servants, be employed for yourselves, because they are your own. But God may call your minds his own by a much fuller title; for you hold all but derivatively and dependently from him. What will you call it but injustice and dishonesty, if your wife, or children, or servants, or goods, be more at the use and service of others, than of you? If any can show a better title to your thoughts than God doth, let him have them; but if not, deny him not his own. O straggle not so much from home; for you will be no where else so well as there. Desire not to follow strangers, you know not whither, nor for what; you have a Master of your own, that will be better to you than all the strangers in the world. Bow not down to creatures, that are but images of the true and solid good: commit not idolatry or adultery with them in your thoughts: remember still that God stands by: bethink you how he will take it at your hands; and how it will be judged of at last, when he pleads his right, his kindness, and solicitations of you; and you have so little to say for any pretence of right or merit in the creature. Why are not men ashamed of the greatest dishonesty against God, when all that have any humility left them, do take adultery, theft, and other dishonesty against creatures, for a shame? The time will come when God and his interest shall be better understood, when this dishonesty against him will be the matter of the most confounding shame, that ever did or could befall men. Prevent this by the juster exercise of your thoughts, and keeping them pure and chaste to God.

10. If God be not in your thoughts (and the chiefest in them) there will be no matter in them of solid comfort or content. Trouble and deceit will be all their work: when they have fled about the earth,

and taken a taste of every flower, they will come loaden home with nothing better than vanity and vexation. Such thoughts may excite the laughter of a fool, and cause that mirth that is called madness, Eccles. vii. 4, 6; ii. 2; but they will never conduce to settled peace and durable content: and therefore they are always repented of themselves, and are troublesome to our review, as being the shame of the sinner, which he would fain be cleared of, or disown. Though you may approach the creature with passionate fondness and the most delightful promises and hopes, be sure of it, you will come off at last with grief and disappointment, if not with the loathing of that which you chose for your delight. Your thoughts are in a wilderness among thorns and briers, when God is not in them as their guide and end: they are lost and torn among the creatures; but rest and satisfaction they will find none. It may be at the present it is pleasanter to you to think of recreation, or business, or worldly wealth, than to think of God; but the pleasure of these thoughts is as delusory, and short-lived, as are the things themselves on which you think. How long will you think with pleasure on such fading transitory things? And the pleasure cannot be greater at the present, which reacheth the flesh and fantasy, and which the possessed knoweth will be but short. Nay, you will shortly find by sad experience, that of all the creatures under heaven, there will none be so bitter to your thoughts, as those which you now find greatest carnal sweetness in. Oh how bitter will the thought of idolized honour, and abused wealth and greatness, be to a dying or a damned Dives! The thoughts of that alehouse or play-house where thou hadst thy greatest pleasure, will trouble thee more than the thoughts of all the houses in the town besides! The thoughts of that one woman with whom thou didst commit thy pleasant sin, will wound and vex thee more than the thoughts of all the women in the town besides! The thoughts of that beloved sport which thou couldst not be weaned from, will be more troublesome to thee than the thoughts of a thousand other things in which thou hadst no inordinate delight! For the end of sinful mirth is sorrow. When Solomon had tried to please himself to the full, in mirth, in buildings, vineyards, woods, waters, in servants, and possessions, silver, and gold, and cattle, and singers, and instruments of music of all sorts, in greatness, and all that the eye or appetite or heart desired; he findeth when he awaked from this pleasant dream, that he had all this while been taken up with vanity and vexation, insomuch that he saith on the review, "Therefore I hated life, because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous to me, for all is vanity and vexation of spirit: yea, I hated all my labour which I had taken under the sun," Eccles. ii. 1—3, &c.; 17, 18. You may toil out and tire yourselves among these briers, in this barren wilderness; but if ever you would feel any solid ground of quietness and rest, it must be by coming off from vanity, and seeking your felicity in God, and living sincerely for him and upon him, as the worldling doth upon the world. His pardoning mercy must begin your peace, forgiving you your former thoughts; and his healing, quickening mercy must increase it, by teaching you better to employ your thoughts, and drawing up your hearts unto himself; and his glorifying mercy must perfect it, by giving you the full intuition and fruition of himself in heaven, and employing you in his perfect love and praise, not leaving any room for creatures, nor suffering a thought to be employed on vanity for ever.

CHAPTER IV.

By this time I hope you may see reason to call yourselves to a strict account, what converse you have been taken up with in the world, and upon what you have exercised your thoughts. Surely you must needs be conscious, that the thoughts which have been denied God, have brought you home but little satisfaction, and have not answered the ends of your creation, redemption, or preservation! and that they are now much fitter matter for your penitential tears, than your comfort, in the review! I do not think you dare own and stand to those thoughts which have been spent for fleshly pleasures, or in unnecessary worldly cares, or that were wasted in impertinent vagaries upon any thing, or nothing, when you should have been seeking God! I do not think you have now any great pleasure, in the review of those thoughts, which once were taken up with pleasure, when your most pleasant thoughts should have been of God. Dare you approve of your rejecting your Creator, and the great concernments of your soul, out of your thoughts, and wasting them upon things unprofitable and vain? Did not God and heaven deserve more of your serious thoughts than any thing else that ever they were employed on? Have you laid them out on any thing that more concerned you? or on any thing more excellent, more honourable, more durable, or that could claim precedency upon any just account? Did you not shut heaven itself out of your thoughts, when you shut out God? And is it not just that God and heaven should shut out you? If heaven be not the principal matter of your thoughts, it is plain that you do not principally love it: and if so, judge you whether those that love it not are fit to be made possessors of it.

O poor distracted, senseless world! is not God great enough to command and take up your chiefest thoughts? Is not heaven enough to find them work, and afford them satisfaction and delight? And yet is the dung and dotage of the world enough? Is your honour, and wealth, and fleshly delights, and sports enough? God will shortly make you know, whether this were wise and equal dealing! Is God so low, so little, so undeserving, to be so oft and easily forgotten, and so hardly and so slightly remembered? I tell you, ere long he will make you think of him to your sorrow, whether you will or no, if grace do not now set open your hearts, and procure him better entertainment.

But perhaps you will think that you walk with God, because you think of him sometimes ineffectually, and as on the by. But is he esteemed as your God, if he have not the command, and if he have not the precedency of his creatures? Can you dream that indeed you walk with God, when your hearts were never grieved for offending him, nor never much solicitous how to be reconciled to him; nor much inquisitive whether your state or way be pleasing or displeasing to him? when all the business of an unspeakable importance, which you have to do with God, before you pass to judgment, is forgotten and undone, as if you knew not of any such work that you had to do? when you make no serious preparation for death; when you call not upon God in secret, or in your families, unless with a little heartless lip-labour; and when you love not the spirituality of his worship, but only delude your souls with the mockage of hypocritical, outside compliment? Do you walk with God while you are plotting for preferment, and gaping after worldly greatness; while you are gratifying all the desires of your flesh,

and making provision for the future satisfaction of its lusts? Rom. xiii. 13. Are you walking with God when you are hating him in his holiness, his justice, his word and ways, and hating all that seriously love and seek him; when you are doing your worst to despatch the work of your damnation, and put your salvation past all hope, and draw as many to hell with you as you can? If this be a walking with God, you may take further comfort that you shall also dwell with God, according to the sense of such a walk: you shall dwell with him as a devouring fire, and as just, whom you thus walked with in the contempt of his mercies, and the provocation of his justice.

I tell you, if you walked with God indeed, his authority would rule you, his greatness would much take up your minds, and leave less room for little things; you would trust his promises, and fear his threatenings, and be awed by his presence, and the idols of your hearts would fall before him: he would overpower your lusts, and call you off from your ambitious and covetous designs, and obscure all the creature's glory. Believing, serious, effectual thoughts of God, are very much different from the common, doubtful, dreaming, uneffectual thoughts of the ungodly world.

Object. But (perhaps some will say) this seemeth to be the work of preachers, and not of every christian, to be always meditating of God: poor people must think of other matters; they have their business to do, and their families to provide for: and ignorant people are weak-headed, and are not able either to manage or endure a contemplative life: so much thinking of God will make them melancholy and mad, as experience tells us it hath done by many: and therefore this is no exercise for them.

To this I answer, 1. Every christian hath a God to serve, and a soul to save, and a Christ to believe in and obey, and an endless happiness to secure and enjoy, as well as preachers. Pastors must study to instruct their flock, and to save themselves, and those that hear them. The people must study to understand and receive the mercy offered them, and to make their own calling and election sure. It is not said of pastors only, but of every blessed man, that "his delight is in the law of the Lord, and therein doth he meditate day and night," Psal. i. 2. 2. And the due meditation of the soul upon God, is so far from taking you off from your necessary business in the world, that it is the only way to your orderly and successful management of it. 3. And it is not a distracting thoughtfulness that I persuade you to, or which is included in a christian's walk with God; but it is a directing, quickening, exalting, comforting course of meditation. Many a hundred have grown melancholy and mad with careful, discontented thoughts of the world; it doth not follow therefore that no man must think of the world at all, for fear of being mad or melancholy; but only that they should think of it more regularly, and correct the error of their thoughts and passions. So is it about God and heavenly things. Our thoughts are to be well ordered, and the error of them cured, and not the use of them forborne. Atheism and impiety, and forgetting God, are unhappy means to prevent melancholy. There are wiser means for avoiding madness, than by renouncing all our reason, and living by sense, like the beasts that perish, and forgetting that we have an everlasting life to live.

But yet because I am sensible that some do here mistake on the other hand, and I would not lead you into any extreme, I shall fully remove the scruple contained in this objection, by showing you in the following propositions, in what sense, and how far, your thoughts must be taken up with God (supposing what was said in the beginning, where I described to you the duty of walking with God).

Prop. 1. When we tell you that your thoughts must be on God, it is not a course of idle musing, or mere thinking, that we call you to, but it is a necessary practical thinking of that which you have to do, and of him that you must love, obey, and enjoy. You will not forget your parents, or husband, or wife, or friend; and yet you will not spend your time in sitting still and thinking of them, with a musing, unprofitable thoughtfulness: but you will have such thoughts of them, and so many, as are necessary to the ends, even to the love and service which you owe them, and to the delight that your hearts should have in the fruition of them. You cannot love, or obey, or take pleasure in those that you will not think of: you will follow your trades, or your master's service, but unhappily, if you will not think on them. Thinking is not the work that we must take up with: it is but a subservient, instrumental duty, to promote some greater, higher duty: therefore we must think of God, that we may love him, and do his service, and trust him, and fear, and hope in him, and make him our delight. And all this is it that we call you to, when we are persuading you to think on God.

2. A hypocrite, or a wicked enemy of God, may think of him speculatively, and perhaps be more frequent in such thoughts than many practical believers. A learned man may study about God, as he doth about other matters, and names, and notions; and propositions and decisions concerning God, may be a principal part of his learning. A preacher may study about God, and the matters of God, as a physician or a lawyer does about the matters of their own profession, either for the pleasure which knowledge, as knowledge, brings to human nature, or for the credit of being esteemed wise and learned, or because their gain and maintenance comes in this way. They that fill many volumes with controversies concerning God, and fill the church with contentions and troubles by them, and their own heart with malice and uncharitableness against those that are not of their opinions, have many and many a thought of God, which yet will do nothing to the saving of their souls, no more than they do to the sanctifying of them. And such learned men may think more orthodoxly and methodically concerning God, than many an honest, serious christian, who yet thinks of him more effectually and savingly: even as they can discourse more orderly and copiously of God, when yet they have no saving knowledge of him.

3. All men must not bestow so much time in meditation as some must do. It is the calling of ministers to study so as to furnish their minds with all those truths concerning God, which are needful to the edification of the church; and so to meditate on these things as to give themselves wholly to them, 1 Tim. iv. 15, 16. It is both the work of their common and their special calling. The study necessary to christians as such, belongeth as well to others as to them: but other men have another special or particular calling, which also they must think of, so far as the nature and ends of their daily labours do require. It is a hurtful error to imagine that men must either lay by their callings to meditate on God, or that they must do them negligently, or to be taken up in the midst of their employments with such studies of God as ministers are, that are separated to that work.

4. No man is bound to be continually taken up with actual, distinct thoughts of God; for in duty we have many other things to think on, which must

have their time: and as we have callings to follow, and must eat our bread in the sweat of our brows, so we must manage them with prudence: "A good man will guide his affairs with discretion," Psal. cxii. 5. It is both necessary as duty, and necessary as a means to the preservation of our very faculties, that both body and mind have their times of employment about our lawful business in the world: the understandings of many cannot bear it, to be always employed on the greatest and most serious things: like lute-strings, they will break if they be raised too high, and be not let down and relaxed, when the lesson is played. To think of nothing else but God, is to break the law of God, and to confound the mind, and to disable it to think aright of God, or any thing. As he that bid us pray continually, did not mean that we should do nothing else, or that actual prayer should have no interruptions, but that habitual desires should on all meet occasions be actuated and expressed; so he that would be chief in all their thoughts, did never mean that we should have no thoughts of any thing else, or that our serious meditation on him should be continual without interruption; but that the final intending of God, and our dependence on him, should be so constant as to be the spring or mover of the rest of the thoughts and actions of our lives.

5. An habitual intending God as our end, and depending on his support, and subjection to his government, will carry on the soul in a sincere and constant course of godliness, though the actual, most observed thoughts of the soul, be fewer in number about God, than about the means that lead unto him, and the occurrences in our way. The soul of man is very active and comprehensive, and can think of several things at once; and when it is once clear and resolved in any case, it can act according to that knowledge and resolution, without any present sensible thought; nay, while its actual, most observed thoughts are upon something else. A musician that hath an habitual skill, can keep time and tune while he is thinking of some other matter. A weaver can cast his shuttle right, and work truly, while he is thinking or talking of other things. A man can eat and drink with discretion, while he talks of other things. Some men can dictate to two or three scribes at once, upon divers subjects. A traveller can keep on his way, though he seldom think distinctly of his journey's end, but be thinking or discoursing most of the way, upon other matters: for before he undertook his journey he thought both of the end and way, and resolved then which way to go, and that he would go through all both fair and foul, and not turn back till he saw the place. And this habitual understanding and resolution, may be secretly and unobservedly active, so as to keep a man from erring, and from turning back, though at the same time the traveller's most sensible thoughts and his discourse may be upon something else. When a man is once resolved of his end, and hath laid his design, he is past deliberating of that, and therefore hath less use of his thoughts about it; but is readier to lay them out upon the means, which may be still uncertain, or may require his frequent deliberation. We have usually more thoughts and speeches by the way, about our company, or our horses, or inns, or other accommodations, or the fairness or foulness of the way, or other such occurrences, than we have about the place we are going to: and yet this secret intention of our end will bring us thither. So when a soul hath cast up his accounts, and hath renounced a worldly and sensual felicity, and hath fixed his hopes and resolution upon heaven, and is resolved to cast himself upon Christ, and take God for his only portion, this secret, habitual resolution will do much to keep him constant in the way, though his thoughts and talk be frequently on other things: yea, when we are thinking of the creature, and feel no actual thoughts of God, it is yet God more than the creature that we think of: for we did beforehand look on the creature as God's work, representing him unto the world, and as his talents, which we must employ for him, and as every creature is related to him: and this estimation of the creature is still habitually (and in some secret, less-perceived act) most prevalent in the soul. Though I am not always sensibly thinking of the king, when I use his coin, or obey his laws, &c. yet it is only as his coin still that I use it, and as his laws that I obey them. Weak habits cannot do their work without great carefulness of thoughts; but perfect habits will act a man with little thoughtfulness, as coming near the natural way of operation. And indeed the imperfection of our habitual godliness doth make our serious thoughts, and vigilancy, and industry to be the more necessary to us.

6. There are some thoughts of God that are necessary to the very being of a holy state; as that God be so much in our thoughts, as to be preferred before all things else, and principally beloved and obeyed; and to be the end of our lives, and the bias of our wills. And there are some thoughts of God that are necessary only to the acting and increase of grace.

7. So great is the weakness of our habits, so many and great are the temptations to be overcome, so many difficulties are in our way, and the occasions so various for the exercise of each grace, that it behoveth a christian to exercise as much thoughtfulness about his end and work, as hath any tendency to promote his work, and to attain his end; but such a thoughtfulness as hindereth us in our work, by stopping, or distracting, or diverting us, is no way pleasing unto God. So excellent is our end, that we can never encourage and delight the mind too much in the forethoughts of it. So sluggish are our hearts, and so loose and unconstant are our apprehensions and resolutions, that we have need to be most frequently quickening them, and lifting at them, and renewing our desires, and suppressing the contrary desires, by the serious thoughts of God and immortality. Our thoughts are the bellows that must kindle the flames of love, desire, hope, and zeal. Our thoughts are the spur that must put on a sluggish, tired heart. And so far as they conduce to any such works and ends as these, they are desirable and good. But what master loveth to see his servant sit down and think when he should be at work? Or to use his thoughts only to grieve and vex himself for his faults, but not to mend them. To sit down lamenting that he is so bad and unprofitable a servant, when he should be up and doing his master's business as well as he is able? Such thoughts as hinder us from duty, or discourage or unfit us for it, are real sins, however they may go under a better name.

8. The godly themselves are very much wanting in the holiness of their thoughts, and the liveliness of their affections. Sense leadeth away the thoughts too easily after these present sensible things; while faith being infirm, the thoughts of God and heaven are much disadvantaged by their invisibility. Many a gracious soul crieth out, Oh that I could think as easily, and as affectionately, and as unweariedly about the Lord, and the life to come, as I can do about my friends, my health, my habitation, my business, and other concernments of this life! But, alas, such thoughts of God and heaven have far more enemies and resistance than the thoughts of earthly matters have.

9. It is not distracting, vexatious thoughts of God,

that the holy Scriptures call us to; but it is to such thoughts as tend to the healing, and peace, and felicity of the soul; and therefore it is not a melancholy, but a joyful life. If God be better than the world, it must needs be better to think of him. If he be more beloved than any friend, the thoughts of him should be sweeter to us. If he be the everlasting hope and happiness of the soul, it should be a foretaste of happiness to find him nearest to our hearts. The nature and use of holy thoughts, and of all religion, is but to exalt, and sanctify, and delight the soul, and bring it up to everlasting rest. And is this the way to melancholy or madness? Or is it not liker to make men melancholy, to think of nothing but a vain, deceitful, and vexatious world, that hath much to disquiet us, but nothing to satisfy us, and can give the soul no hopes of any durable delight?

10. Yet as God is not equally related unto all, so is he not the same to all men's thoughts. If a wicked enemy of God and godliness be forced and frightened into some thoughts of God, you cannot expect that they should be as sweet and comfortable thoughts, as those of his most obedient children are. While a man is under the guilt and power of his reigning sin, and under the wrath and curse of God, unpardoned, unjustified, a child of the devil, it is not this man's duty to think of God, as if he were fully reconciled to him, and took pleasure in him as in his own. Nor is it any wonder if such a man think of God with fear, and think of his sin with grief and shame. Nor is it any wonder the justified themselves do think of God with fear and grief, when they have provoked him by some sinful and unkind behaviour, or are cast into doubts of their sincerity and interest in Christ, and when he hides his face or assaulteth them with his terrors. To doubt whether a man shall live for ever in heaven or hell, may rationally trouble the thoughts of the wisest man in the world; and it were but sottishness not to be troubled at it. David himself could say, "In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord: my sore ran in the night and ceased not: my soul refused to be comforted: I remembered God and was troubled: I complained and my spirit was overwhelmed: thou holdest mine eyes waking: I am so troubled that I cannot speak.—— Will the Lord cast off for ever?—" Psal. lxxvii. 2—5, 7.

Yet all the sorrowful thoughts of God, which are the duty either of the godly or the wicked, are but the necessary preparatives of their joy. It is not to melancholy, distraction, or despair, that God calleth any, even the worst; but it is that the wicked would "Seek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near; that he would forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, and he will abundantly pardon," Isa. lv. 6, 7. Despair is sin; and the thoughts that tend to it are sinful thoughts, even in the wicked. If worldly crosses, or the sense of danger to the soul, had cast any into melancholy, or overwhelmed them with fears, you can name nothing in the world that in reason should be so powerful a remedy to recover them, as the thoughts of God, his goodness, and mercy, and readiness to receive and pardon those that turn unto him, his covenant, and promises, and grace, through Christ, and the everlasting happiness which all may have that will accept and seek it in the time of grace, and prefer it before the deceitful, transitory pleasures of the world. If the thoughts of God, and of the heavenly, everlasting joys, will not comfort the soul, and cure a sad, despairing mind, I know not what can rationally do it. Though yet it is true, that a presumptuous sinner must needs be in a trembling state, till he find himself at peace with God: and mistaken christians that are cast into causeless doubts and fears, by the malice of Satan, are unlikely to walk comfortably with God, till they are resolved and recovered from their mistakes and fears.

CHAPTER V.

Object. But it may be the objector will be ready to think, that if it be indeed our duty to walk with God, yet thoughts are no considerable part of it. What more uncertain or mutable than our thoughts? It is deeds and not thoughts that God regardeth. To do no harm to any, but to do good to all, this is indeed to walk with God. You set a man upon a troublesome and impossible work, while you set him upon so strict a guard, and so much exercise of his thoughts. What cares the Almighty for my thoughts?

Answ. 1. If God know better than you, and be to be believed, then thoughts are not so inconsiderable as you suppose. Doth he not say, that "the thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord?" Prov. xv. 26. It is the work of the gospel by its power, to "pull down strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ," 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. The unrighteous man's forsaking his thoughts, is part of his necessary conversion, Isa. lv. 7. It was the description of the deplorate state of the old world, "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually; and it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart," Gen. vi. 5. Judge by this, whether thoughts be so little regarded by God, as you imagine. David saith of himself, "I hate vain thoughts," Psal. cxix. 113. Solomon saith, "The thoughts of the righteous are right," Prov. xii. 5. Paul saith that "charity thinketh not evil," 1 Cor. xiii. 5.

2. Thoughts are the issue of a rational soul. And if its operations be contemptible, its essence is contemptible: if its essence be noble, its operations are considerable. If the soul be more excellent than the body, its operations must be more excellent. To neglect our thoughts and not employ them upon God, and for God, is to vilify our noblest faculties, and deny God, who is a Spirit, that spiritual service which he requireth.

3. Our thoughts are commonly our most cordial, voluntary acts, and show the temper and inclination of the heart: and therefore are regardable to God that searcheth the heart, and calleth first for the service of the heart.

4. Our thoughts are radical and instrumental acts: such as they are, such are the actions of our lives. Christ telleth us that "out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies, which defile the man," Matt. xv. 19, 20.

5. Our thoughts are under a law, as well as words and deeds. "The thought of foolishness is sin," Prov. xxiv. 9. And Matt. v. 28, &c. Christ extendeth the law even to the thoughts and desires of the heart. And under the law it is said, "Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart," &c. (Deut. xv. 9,) viz. of unmercifulness towards thy brother.

6. Thoughts can reach higher much than sense,

and may be employed upon the most excellent and invisible objects; and therefore are fit instruments to elevate the soul that would converse with God. Though God be infinitely above us, our thoughts may be exercised on him: our persons never were in heaven, and yet our conversation must be in heaven, Phil. iii. 20. And how is that but by our thoughts? Though we see not Christ, yet by the exercise of believing thoughts on him, we love him, and rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Though God be invisible, yet our "meditations of him may be sweet, and we may delight in the Lord," Psal. civ. 34. Say not that all this is but fantastical and delusory, as long as thoughts of things unseen are fitter to actuate and elevate the love, desires, and delights of the soul, and to move and guide us in a regular and holy life, than the sense of lesser present good. The thoughts are not vain or delusory, unless the object of them be false and vain, or delusory. Where the object is great, and sure, and excellent, the thoughts of such things are excellent operations of the soul. If the thoughts of vainglory, wealth, and pleasure, can delight the ambitious, covetous, and sensual; no wonder if the thoughts of God and life eternal, afford us solid, high delights.

7. The thoughts are not so liable to be counterfeit and hypocritical as are the words and outward deeds: and therefore they show more what the man is, and what is in his heart. For as Solomon saith, "As he thinketh in his heart, so is he," Prov. xxiii. 7.

8. Our thoughts may exercise the highest graces of God in man; and also show those graces, as being their effects. How is our faith, and love, and desire, and trust, and joy, and hope to be exercised but by our thoughts? If grace were not necessary and excellent, it would not be wrought by the Spirit of God, and called the divine nature, and the image of God. And if grace be excellent, the use and exercise of it is excellent: and therefore our thoughts by which it is exercised must needs have their excellency too.

9. Our thoughts must be the instruments of our improving all holy truth in Scripture, and all the mercies which we receive, and all the afflictions which we undergo. What good will reading a chapter in the Bible do to any one that never thinketh on it? "Our delight in the law of God," must engage us to "meditate in it day and night," Psal. i. 2. What good shall he get by hearing a sermon that exerciseth not his thoughts for the receiving and digesting it? Our considering what is said, is the way in which we may expect that God should give us "understanding in all things," 2 Tim. ii. 7. What the better will he be for any of the merciful providences of God, who never bethinks him whence they come, or what is the use and end that they are given for? What good will he get by any afflictions, that never bethinks him, who it is that chastiseth him, and for what, and how he must get them removed, and sanctified to his good. A man is but like one of the pillars in the church, or like the corpse which he treadeth on, or at best but like the dog that followeth him thither for company, if he use not his thoughts about the work which he hath in hand, and cannot say, as Psal. xlviii. 9, "We have thought of thy loving-kindness, O God, in the midst of thy temple." He that biddeth you hear, doth also bid you "Take heed how you hear," Luke viii. 18. And you are commanded to "lay up the word in your heart and soul," Deut. xi. 18, 19. And to set your hearts to all the words which are testified among you: for it is not a vain thing for you, because it is your life.

10. Our thoughts are so considerable a part of God's service, that they are oft put for the whole. "A book of remembrance was written for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name," Mal. iii. 16. Our believing and loving God, and trusting in him, and desiring him and his grace, are the principal parts of his service, which are exercised immediately by our thoughts: and in praise and prayer it is this inward part that is the soul and life of all. He is a foolish hypocrite that thinks "to be heard for his much speaking," Matt. vi. 7.

And on the contrary, the thoughts are named as the sum of all iniquity. "Their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity," Isa. lix. 7. "I have spread out my hands all the day long unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts," Isa. lxv. 2. "O Jerusalem, wash thy heart from wickedness that thou mayest be saved: how long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?" Jer. iv. 14. "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God," Psal. xiv. 1.

11. A man's thoughts are the appointed orderly way for the conversion of a sinner, and the preventing of his sin and misery. David saith, "I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies," Psal. cxix. 59. The prodigal "came to himself," and returned to his father, by the success of his own consideration, Luke xv. 17, 18. "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Consider your ways," (Hag. i. 5,) is a voice that every sinner should hear. "It is he that considereth, and doth not according to his father's sins, that shall not die," Ezek. xviii. 14. Therefore it is God's desire, "Oh that they were wise and understood this, and that they would consider their latter end," Deut. xxxii. 29. It is either men's inconsiderateness, or the error of their thoughts, that is the cause of all their wickedness. "My people doth not consider," Isa. i. 3. Paul "verily thought that he ought to do many things against the name of Jesus," Acts xxvi. 9. Many "deceive themselves by thinking themselves something when they are nothing," Gal. vi. 3. "They think it strange that we run not with them to excess of riot;" and therefore "they speak evil of us," 1 Pet. iv. 4. Disobedient formalists "consider not that they do evil," when they think they are offering acceptable sacrifices to God, Eccles. v. 1, 2. The very murder of God's holy ones hath proceeded from these erroneous thoughts; "They that kill you shall think they do God service," John xvi. 2. All the ambition, and covetousness, and injustice, and cruelty following thereupon, which troubleth the world, and ruineth men's souls, is from their erroneous thoughts, overvaluing these deceitful things. "Their inward thought is that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling-places to all generations," Psal. xlix. 11. The presumptuous and impenitent are surprised by destruction, for want of thinking of it to prevent it: "In such an hour as you think not, the Son of man cometh."

12. Lastly, The thoughts are the most constant actions of a man, and therefore most of the man is in them. We are not always reading, or hearing, or praying, or working; but we are always thinking. And therefore it doth especially concern us to see that this constant breath of the soul be sweet, and that this constant stream be pure and run in the right channel. Well therefore did David make this his request; "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting," Psal. cxxxix. 23, 24. I say therefore to those that insist on this irrational objection, that

these very thoughts of theirs, concerning the inconsiderableness of thoughts, are so foolish and ungodly, that when they understand the evil even of these, they will know that thoughts were more to be regarded. "If therefore thou hast done foolishly in lifting up thyself, or if thou hast thought evil, lay thy hand upon thy mouth."

And though after all this, I still confess that it is so exceeding hard a matter to keep the thoughts in holy exercise and order, that even the best do daily and hourly sin, in the omissions, the disorder, or vanity of their thoughts; yet for all that, we must needs conclude that the inclination and design of our thoughts must be principally for God, and that the thoughts are principal instruments of the soul, in acting it in his service, and moving it towards him, and in all this holy work of our walking with God: and therefore to imagine that thoughts are inconsiderable and of little use, is to unman us, and unchristen us. The labour of the mind is necessary for the attaining the felicity of the mind; as the labour of the body is necessary for the things that belong unto the body. As bodily idleness bringeth unto beggary, when the diligent hand makes rich; so the idleness of the soul doth impoverish the soul, when the laborious christian liveth plentifully and comfortably through the blessing of God upon his industry and labour. You cannot expect that God should appear to you in a bodily shape, that you may have immediate converse with him in the body. The corporeal eating of him in transubstantiated bread, supposed common to men, and mice, or dogs, we leave to papists, who have made themselves a singular new religion, in despite of the common sense and reason of mankind, as well as of the Scriptures and the judgment of the church. It is in the Spirit that thou must converse with God who is a Spirit. The mind seeth him by faith, who is invisible to the bodily eyes. Nay, if you will have a true and saving knowledge of God, you must not liken him to any thing that is visible, nor have any corporeal conceivings of him. Earthly things may be the glass in which we may behold him, while we are here in the flesh; but our conceivings of him must be spiritual, and minds that are immersed in flesh and earth are unmeet to hold communion with him. The natural man knoweth him not, and the "carnal mind is enmity to him, and they that are in the flesh cannot please him," Rom. viii. It is the pure, abstracted, elevated soul, that understandeth by experience what it is to walk with God.

CHAPTER VI.

§ 1. Having in the foregoing uses reproved the atheism and contempt of God, which ungodly men are continually guilty of, and endeavoured to convince them of the necessity and desirableness of walking with God, and in particular of improving our thoughts for holy converse with him, and answered the objections of the impious and atheists; I shall next endeavour to cure the remnants of this disease in those that are sincerely holy, who live too strangely to God their Father in the world. In the performance of this, I shall first show you what are the benefits of this holy life, which should make it appear desirable and delightful. 2. I shall show you why believers should addict themselves to it as doubly obliged, and that their neglect of it is a sin attended with special aggravations. This is the remainder of my task.

§ 2. I. To walk with God in a holy and heavenly conversation, is the employment most suitable to human nature; not to its corrupt disposition, nor to the carnal interest and appetite; but to nature as nature, to man as man. It is the very work that he was made for; the faculties and frame of the soul and body were composed for it by the wise Creator; they are restored for it by the gracious Redeemer. Though in corrupted nature, where sensuality is predominant, there is an estrangedness from God, and an enmity and hatred of him, so that the wicked are more averse to all serious, holy converse with him (in prayer, contemplation, and a heavenly life) than they are to a worldly, sinful life; yet all this is but the disease of nature, corrupting its appetite, and turning it against that proper food, which is most suitable to its sound desires, and necessary to its health and happiness. Though sinful habits are become as it were a second nature to the ungodly, so depraving their judgments and desires, that they verily think the business and pleasures of the flesh are most suitable to them; yet these are as contrary to nature as nature, that is, to the primitive tendencies of all our faculties, and the proper use to which they were fitted by our Creator, and to that true felicity which is the end of all our parts and powers, even as madness is contrary to the rational nature, though it were hereditary.

1. What can be more agreeable to the nature of man, than to be rational and wise, and to live in the purest exercise of reason? And certainly there is nothing more rational than that we should live to God, and gladly accept of all that communion with him which our natures on earth are capable of. Nothing can be more reasonable than for the reasonable soul to be entirely addicted to him that did create it, that doth preserve it, and by whom it doth subsist and act. Nothing is more reasonable than that the absolute Lord of nature be honoured and served wholly by his own. Nothing is more reasonable than that the reasonable creature do live in the truest dependence upon, and subordination to, the highest reason; and that derived, imperfect, defectible wisdom, be subservient to and guided by the primitive, perfect, indefectible wisdom. It is most reasonable that the children depend upon the Father, and the foolish be ruled by the most wise, and that the subjects be governed by the universal King; and that they honour him and obey him; and that the indigent apply themselves to him that is all-sufficient, and is most able and ready to supply their wants; and that the impotent rest upon him that is omnipotent.

2. Nothing can be more reasonable, than that the reasonable nature should intend its end, and seek after its true and chief felicity; and that it should love good as good, and therefore prefer the chiefest good before that which is transitory and insufficient. Reason commandeth the reasonable creature to avoid its own delusion and destruction, and to rest upon him that can everlastingly support us, and not upon the creature that will deceive us and undo us: and to prefer the highest and noblest converse before that which is inferior, unprofitable, and base; and that we rejoice more in the highest, purest, and most durable delights, than in those that are sordid, and of short continuance. And who knoweth not that God is the chiefest good, and true felicity of man, the everlasting rock, the durable delight, and to be preferred before his creatures? And who might not find, that would use his reason, that all things below are vanity and vexation?

3. Nothing can be more rational and agreeable to man's nature, than that the superior faculties should govern the inferior, that the brutish part be subject to the rational; and that the ends and objects of this higher faculty be preferred before the objects of the

lower; that the objects of sense be made subservient to the objects of reason. If this be not natural and rational, then it is natural to man to be no man, but a beast, and reasonable to be unreasonable. Now it is evident that a holy living unto God, is but the improvement of true reason, and its employment for and upon its noblest object, and its ultimate end; and that a sensual life is the exercise of the inferior, brutish faculties, in predominancy above and before the rational: and therefore to question whether God or the creature should be first sought, and loved, and principally desired, and delighted in, and served, is but to question whether we should live like men or like beasts, and whether dogs or wise men be the fitter companions for us? And whether the rider or the horse should have the rule? Whether the rational or sensitive powers be superior and proper to the nature of a man?

Object. But there is a middle state of life betwixt the sensual and the divine or holy life, which sober philosophers did live, and this is the most natural life, and most properly so called.

Answ. I deny this: there is no middle state of life, if you denominate the several states of life, from the several ends, or the several powers. I grant that the very sensitive powers in man, especially the imagination, is much advanced by the conjunction of reason, above that of a brute: and I grant that the delights of the fantasy may be preferred before the immediate pleasure of the senses: and I grant that some little distant knowledge of God, and things divine, and hopes of attaining them, may affect an unsanctified man with an answerable pleasure. But all this is nothing to prove that there is a third sort of end, or of powers, and so a third or middle state of life, specifically distinct from the sensitive and the holy life. Besides, the vegetative man hath no other life or faculties, than the sensitive and the rational; and therefore one of these must be in predominancy or rule. And therefore he can have no middle sort or end; and therefore no middle state of life, that can be said to be agreeable to his nature. Those that seek and take up their chief felicity in riches and plenty, and provisions for the flesh, though not in present pleasing of the sense, do live but the life of sensuality. A fox or dog takes pleasure when he hath eaten his belly full, to hide and lay up the rest; and so doth the bee to fill the hive, and make provision for the winter. The proud that delight in honour and applause, and making others subject to their lusts, do live but the life of sensuality: a dog, a horse, and other brutes, have something of the same. They that are grave through melancholy, or because they can reach no great matter in the world, and because their old or duller spirits are not much pleased with juvenile delights, and so live retiredly, and seek no higher pleasure or felicity, but only sit down with the weeping or the laughing philosopher, lamenting or deriding the vanity of the world, do yet live no other than a sensual life: as an old dog that hath no pleasure in hunting or playfulness, as he had when he was a whelp. Only he is less deluded, and less vain, than other sensualists that find more pleasure in their course.

All the doubt is concerning those that place their felicity in knowledge, and those that delight in moral virtues, or that delight in studying of God, though they are no christians.

Answ. The point is weighty, and hath oft unhappily fallen into injudicious hands. I shall endeavour to resolve it as truly, clearly, and impartially as I can. 1. It is a great error against the nature of man, to say, that knowledge as such, is fit to be any man's chief and ultimate end. It may be that act which is next the enjoying act of the will, which is it that indeed is next the end, objectively considered; but it is not that act which we call *ultimate ultimus*. And this is plain, 1. Because the object of the understanding, which is truth, is not formally the nearest object or matter of full felicity or delight: it is goodness that is the nearest object. 2. And therefore the office of the intellect is but introductive and subservient to the office of the will, to apprehend the verity of good, and present it to the will to be prosecuted or embraced, or delighted in. There are many truths that are ungrateful and vexatious, and which men would wish to be no truths. And there is a knowledge which is troublesome, useless, undesirable, and tormenting, which even a wise man would fain avoid, if he knew how. Morality is but preparatively in the intellect: and therefore intellectual acts, as such, are not morally good, or evil, but only participatively, as subject to the will. And therefore knowledge, as such, being not a moral good, can be no other than such a natural good as is *bonum alicui*, only so far as it tendeth to some welfare, or happiness, or pleasure of the possessor or some other: and this welfare or pleasure is either that which is suited to the sensitive powers, or to the rational (which is to be found in the love of God alone).

2. I add therefore, that even those men that seem to take up their felicity in common knowledge, indeed do but make their knowledge subservient to something else which they take for their felicity. For knowledge of evil may torment them. It is only to know something which they take to be good, that is their delight. And it is the complacency or love of that good at the heart, which sets them on work, and causeth the delight of knowing. If you will say that common knowledge, as knowledge, doth immediately delight, yet will it be found but such a pleasing of the fantasy, as an ape hath in spying marvels, which if it have no end that is higher, is still but a sensitive delight; but if it be referred to a higher delight, (in God,) it doth participate of the nature of it. Delight in general is the common end of men and brutes: but in specie they are distinguished as sensual or rational.

3. If you suppose a philosopher to be delighted in studying mathematics, or any of the works of God, either he hath herein an end, or no end beyond the knowledge of the creature; either he terminateth his desires and delights in the creature, or else useth it as a means to raise him to the Creator. If he study and delight in the creature ultimately, this is indeed the act of a rational creature, and an act of reason, as to the faculty it proceeds from (and so is a rational contrivance for sensual ends and pleasures): but it is but the error of reason, and is no more agreeable to the rational nature, than the deceit of the senses is to the sensitive. Nor is it finally to be numbered with the operations felicitating human nature, any more than an erroneous dream of pleasure, or than that man is to be numbered with the lovers of learning, who taketh pleasure in the binding, leaves, or letters of the book, while he understandeth nothing of the sense. But if this philosopher seek to know the Creator in and by the creatures, and take delight in the Maker's power, wisdom, and goodness, which appeareth in them, then this is truly a rational delight, in itself considered, and beseeming a man. And if he reach so far in it, as to make God his highest desire and delight, overpowering the desires and delights of sensuality, he shall be happy, as being led by the Son unto the Father: but if he make but some little approaches towards it, and drown all such desires in the sensual desires and delights, he is then but an unhappy sen-

sualist, and liveth brutishly in the tenor of his life, though in some acts in part he operate rationally as a man.

The like I may say of them that are said to place their delight in moral virtues. Indeed, nothing is properly a moral good (or virtue) but that which is exercised upon God as our end, or upon the creature as a means to this end. To study and know mere notions of God, or what is to be held and said of him in discourse, is not to study to know God, no more than to love the language and phrase of holy writing, is to love God. To study God, as one that is less regardable and desirable than our sensual delights, is but to blaspheme him. To study, seek, and serve him as one that can promote or hinder our sensual felicity, is but to abuse him as a means to your sensuality. And for the virtues of temperance, justice, or charity, they are but analogically and *secundum quid* to be found in any ungodly person. Materially they may have them in an eminent degree; but not as they are informed by the end which moralizeth them. Jezebel's fast was not formally a virtue, but an odious way of hypocrisy to oppress the innocent. He that doth works of justice and mercy to evil ends only, (as for applause, or to deceive, &c.) and not from the true principles of justice and mercy, doth not thereby exercise moral virtue, but hypocrisy, and other vice. He that doth works of justice and mercy, out of mere natural compassion to others, and desire of their good, without respect to God, as obliging, or rewarding, or desiring it, doth perform such a natural good work, as a lamb or a gentle beast doth to his fellows, which hath not the true form of moral virtue, but the matter only. He that in such works hath some little by-respect to God, but more to his carnal interest among men, doth that which on the by participateth of moral good, or is such *secundum quid*, but not *simpliciter*, being to be denominated from the part predominant. He that doth works of justice or charity principally to please God, and in true obedience to his will, and a desire to be conformed thereto, doth that which is formally a moral good, and holy, though there may be abhorred mixtures of worse respects.

So that there are but two states of life here; one of those that walk after the flesh, and the other of those that walk after the Spirit. However, the flesh hath several materials and ways of pleasure: and even the rational actings that have a carnal end, are carnal finally and morally, though they are acts of reason; for they are but the errors of reason, and defectiveness of true rationality; and being but the acts of erroneous reason as captivated by the flesh, and subservient to the carnal interest, they are themselves to be denominated carnal: and so even the reasonable soul as biassed by sensuality, and captivated thereto, is included in the name of flesh in the Scripture.

How much moral good is in that course of piety or obedience to God, which proceedeth only from the fear of God's judgments, without any love to him, I shall not now discuss, because I have too far digressed already.

All that I have last said, is to show you the reasonableness of living unto God, as being indeed the proper and just employment of the superior faculties of the soul, and the government of the lower faculties. For if any other, called moralists, do seem to subject the sensual life to the rational, either they do but seem to do so; the sensual interest being indeed predominant, and their rational operations subjected thereto: or at the best, it is but some poor and erroneous employment of the rational faculties which they exercise, or some weak approaches towards that high and holy life, which is indeed the life which the rational nature was created for, and which is the right improvement of it.

4. Moreover, nothing is more beseeming the nature of man, than to aspire after the highest and noblest improvement of itself; and to live the most excellent life that it is capable of. For every nature tendeth to its own perfection. But it is most evident, that to walk with God in holiness, is a thing that human nature is capable of; and that is the highest life that we are capable of on earth: and therefore it is the life most suitable to our natures.

5. And what can be more rational and beseeming a created nature, than to live to those ends, which our Creator intended in the very forming of our natures? It is his ends that are principally to be served. But the very composure of our faculties plainly prove, that his end was that we should be fitted for his service: he gave us no powers or capacity in vain; and therefore to serve him and walk with him, is most suitable to our natures.

Object. That is natural which is first, and born with us: but our enmity to holiness is first, and not our holiness.

Answ. It may be called natural indeed, because it is first, and born with us: and in that respect we confess that sin, and not holiness, is natural to us. But holiness is called natural to us, in a higher respect, because it was the primitive, natural constitution of man, and was before sin, and is the perfection or health of nature, and the right employment and improvement of it, and tends to its happiness. An hereditary leprosy may be called natural, as it is first, and before health in that person: but health and soundness is natural, as being the well-being of nature, when the leprosy is unnatural, as being but its disease, and tending to its destruction.

Object. But nature in its first constitution was not holy, but innocent only, and it was by a superadded gift of grace that it became holy, as some schoolmen think; and as others think, Adam had no holiness till his restoration.

Answ. These are popish improved fancies, and contrary to nature and the word of God. 1. They are no where written, nor have any evidence in nature, and therefore are the groundless dreams of men.

2. The work of our recovery to God is called in Scripture a redemption, renovation, restoration, which imply that nature was once in that holy estate before the fall. And it is expressly said, that the "new man" which we "put on, is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him," Col. iii. 10. And after God's image Adam was created.

3. If it belongs to the soundness and integrity of nature to be holy, (that is, disposed and addicted to live to God,) then it is rash and foolish for men out of their own imagination, to feign that God first made nature defective, and then mended it by superadded grace. But if it belong not to the soundness and integrity of human nature to be holy, then why did God give him grace to make him so? Nay, then it would follow, that when God sanctified Adam, or any since, he made him specifically another thing, another creature, of another nature, and did not only cure the diseases of his nature.

4. It is yet apparent in the very nature of man's faculties, that their very usefulness and tendency, is to live to God, and to enjoy him: and that God should make a nature apt for such a use, and give it no disposedness to its proper use, is an unnatural conceit. We see to this day that it is but an unreasonable abuse of reason, when it is not used holily

for God; and it is a very disease of nature to be otherwise disposed. Therefore primitive nature had such a holy inclination.

5. The contrary opinion tendeth to infidelity, and to brutify human nature. For if no man can believe that he must be holy, and live to God, and enjoy him hereafter in heaven, but he that also believeth that primitive nature was never disposed or qualified for such a life; and that God must first make a man another creature in specie, of another nature, (and consequently not a man,) this is not only so improbable, but so contrary to Scripture and reason, that few considerate persons would believe it. As if we must believe that God would turn brutes into men. God healeth, elevateth, and perfecteth nature, but doth not specifically change it, at least in this life.

Object. But let it be granted that he giveth no man specifically another nature, yet he may give him such higher gifts, as may be like another nature to him so far.

Answ. No doubt he may and doth give him such gifts as actuate and perfect nature: but some disposition to our ultimate end is essential to our nature; and therefore to assign man another ultimate end, and to give a disposition to it, of which he had no seed, or part, or principle before, is to make him another creature. I confess that in lapsed man, the holy disposition is so far dead, as that the change maketh a man a new creature in a moral sense (as he is a new man that changeth his mind and manners): but still nature hath its aptitude, as rational, to be employed for its Maker; so that he is not a new creature in a natural sense.

An actual or habitual willingness to his holy employment, a promptitude to it, and a due understanding of it, is the new creature, morally so called, which is given in our sanctification: but the natural aptitude that is in our faculties as rational, to this holy life, is essential to us as men, or as rational; even to have the *potentiam naturalem* which must yet have further help or moral life to actuate it. And Adam had both these: the one he retained, or else he had not continued a man; the other he lost, or else he had not had need of renovation.

6. If Adam's nature had not been disposed to God, as to his end and sovercign, then the law of nature (to adhere to God, and obey and serve him) was not written in his heart: and then it would not have been his duty to adhere to God, and to obey and serve him; which is so false, that even in lapsed, unrenewed nature, there is left so much aptitude hereto, as will prove him to be still under the obligations of this law of nature, even actually to adhere to God, and to obey him, which a dead man, a mad-man, or an infant, is not (immediately).

By all this you see, that though the blindness and disease of reason is contrary to faith and holiness, yet reason itself is so much for it, as that faith itself is but the act of elevated, well-informed reason; and supernatural revelation is but the means to inform our reason, about things which have not a natural evidence, discernible by us. And sanctification (actively taken) is but the healing of our reason and rational appetite: and holiness is but the health or soundness of them. The error of reason must be renounced by believers; but not the use of reason: the sufficiency of reason and natural light, without supernatural light and help, we must all deny: but to set reason, as reason, in opposition to faith or holiness, or divine revelation, is as gross a piece of foolery as to set the visive faculty in opposition to the light of the sun, or to its objects. It is the unreasonableness of sinners that is to be cured by illuminating grace. "They are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge." Their reason is wounded, depraved, and corrupted about the matters of God: they have reason to serve the flesh, but not to master it. God doth renew men by giving them wisdom, and bringing them to a sound mind: as logic helpeth reason in discourse and arguing, so theology informeth reason about the matters of God and our salvation; and the Spirit of God doth make his doctrine and revelation effectual. Make nature sound, and reason clear, and then we will consent that all men be persuaded to live according to their nature and their reason. But if a bedlam will rave and tear himself and others, and say, This is according to my nature or my reason; it is fitter that chains and whips do cure that nature and reason, than that he be allowed to live according to his madness. If a drunkard or whoremonger will say, My nature and reason incline me to please my appetite and lust, it is fit that the swinish nature be corrected, and the beast which rideth and ruleth the man, be taken down; and when indeed his nature is the nature of man, and fitted to the use and ends it was made for, then let him live according to it and spare not. If a malicious man will abuse or kill his neighbour, and say, This is according to my nature, let that nature be used as the nature of wolves, and foxes, and other noxious creatures are. But let human nature be cured of its blindness, carnality, and corruption, and then it will need no external testimony to convince it, that no employment is so natural and suitable to man, as to walk with God, in love and confidence, and reverent worship, and cheerful obedience to his will. A worldly, fleshly, sensual life, will then appear to be below the rational nature of a man, as it is below us to go to grass with horses, or to live as mere companions of brutes. It will then appear to be as natural for us to love and live to our Creator and Redeemer, and to walk with God, as for a child to love his parents, and to live with them and serve them. When I say that this is natural, I mean not that it is necessary by natural necessity, or that grace doth operate *per modum naturæ*, as their rational motion is so called. There is a brutish or inanimate nature, and there is a rational, voluntary nature. Grace worketh not according to the way of inanimate nature, in free agents. I may well say, that whatever is rational, is natural to a rational creature as such, so far as he discerneth it. Yea, and habits, though they effect not necessarily, but freely in a rational nature, yet they incline necessarily, *et per modum naturæ*. They contain in their being a natural aptitude and propensity to action.

Object. But thus you confound nature and grace, natural and supernatural operations, while you make grace natural.

Answ. No such matter: though walking with God be called natural, as it is most agreeable to nature so far as it is sound, and is the felicity and meetest employment of the rational nature as such: yet, 1. Diseased nature doth abhor it, as a diseased stomach the pleasantest and most wholesome food (as I said before). 2. And this disease of nature cannot be cured without divine, supernatural grace. So that as to the efficient cause, our holiness is supernatural. But it is unsound doctrine of those that affirm that Adam in his pure, natural state of innocency, had no natural holiness, or aptitude and promptitude to walk with God in order to everlasting happiness; but say that all this was either wanting to him, and was a state specifically distinct, which he fell short of by his sin, or that it was given him by superadded grace, and was not in his entire nature.

And yet we deny not but as to degrees, Adam's

nature was to grow up to more perfection: and that his natural holiness contained not a sufficient immediate aptitude and promptitude to every duty which might afterward be required of him; but this was to be obtained in the exercise of that holiness which he had: even as a vine or other fruit-tree, though it be natural to it to bear its proper fruit, yet hath it not an immediate sufficient aptitude hereto, whilst it is but appearing out of the seed, before it be grown up to just maturity. Or as it is natural to a man to discourse and reason; but yet his nature in infancy, or untaught and unexercised, hath not a sufficient immediate aptitude and promptitude hereunto. Or as grace inclineth a renewed soul to every holy truth and duty; and yet such a soul in its infancy of grace, hath not a sufficient, immediate aptitude or promptitude to the receiving of every holy truth, or the doing of every holy duty; but must grow up to it by degrees. But the addition of these degrees, is no specifical alteration of the nature of man, or of that grace which was before received.

Having been so long upon this first consideration, (that walking with God is most agreeable to human nature,) I shall be briefer in the rest that follow.

II. To walk with God, and live to him, is incomparably the highest and noblest life. To converse with men only, is to converse with worms: whether they be princes or poor men, they differ but as the bigger vermin from the lesser. If they be wise and good, their converse may be profitable and delightful, because they have a beam of excellency from the face of God; (and oh how unspeakable is the distance between his wisdom and goodness, and theirs;) but if they be foolish, ungodly, and dishonest, how loathsome is their conversation! What stinking breath is in their profane and filthy language! in their lives and slanders of the just! in their sottish jeers and scorns of those that walk with God! which expose at once their folly and misery to the pity of all that are truly understanding. When they are gravely speaking evil of the things which they understand not, or with a fleering confidence deriding merrily the holy commands and ways of God, they are much more lamentably expressing their infatuation, than any that are kept in chains in Bedlam: though indeed, with the most, they escape the reputation which they deserve, because they are attended with persons of their own proportion of wisdom, that always reverence a silken coat, and judge them wise that wear gold lace, and have the greatest satisfaction of their wills and lusts, and are able to do most mischief in the world: and because good men have learned to honour the worst of their superiors, and not to call them as they are. But God is bold to call them as they are, and give them in his word, such names and characters by which they might come to know themselves. And is it not a higher, nobler life to walk with God, than to converse in Bedlam, or with intoxicated sensualists, that live in a constant deliration.

Yea, worse than so: ungodly men are "children of the devil," so called by Jesus Christ himself, (John viii. 44,) because they have much of the nature of the devil, and the lusts of their father they will do; yea, they "are taken captive by him at his will," 2 Tim. ii. 26. They are "the servants of sin," and do the drudgery that so vile a master sets them on, John viii. 34. Certainly as the spirits of the just are so like to angels, that Christ saith, we shall be as they, and equal to them; so the wicked are nearer kin to devils, than they themselves will easily believe. They are as like him as children to their father. He is a liar, and so are they. He is a hater of God, and godliness, and godly men, and so are they. He is a murderer, and would fain devour the holy seed; and such are they. He envieth the progress of the gospel, and the prosperity of the church, and the increase of holiness, and so do they. He hath a special malice against the most powerful and successful preachers of the word of God, and against the most zealous and eminent saints; and so have they. He cares not by what lies and fictions he disgraceth them, nor how cruelly he useth them; no more do they (or some of them at least). He cherisheth licentiousness, sensuality, and impiety; and so do they. If they do seem better in their adversity and restraint, yet try them but with prosperity, and power, and you shall see quickly how like they are to devils. And shall we delight more to converse with brutes and incarnate devils, than with God? Is it not a more high and excellent conversation to walk with God, and live to him, than to be companions of such degenerate men, that have almost forfeited the reputation of humanity? Alas! they are companions so deluded and ignorant, and yet so wilful; so miserable, and yet so confident and secure; that they are, to a believing eye, the most lamentable sight that the whole world can show us out of hell. And how sad a life must it then needs be, to converse with such, were it not for the hope that we have of furthering their recovery and salvation!

But to walk with God is a word so high, that I should have feared the guilt of arrogance in using it, if I had not found it in the holy Scriptures. It is a word that importeth so high and holy a frame of soul, and expresseth such high and holy actions, that the naming of it striketh my heart with reverence, as if I had heard the voice to Moses, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground," Exod. iii. 5. Methinks he that shall say to me, Come see a man that walks with God, doth call me to see one that is next unto an angel, or glorified soul! It is a far more reverend object in mine eye, than ten thousand lords or princes, considered only in their fleshly glory. It is a wiser action for people to run and crowd together, to see a man that walks with God, than to see the pompous train of princes, their entertainments, or their triumph. O happy man, that walks with God, though neglected and contemned by all about him! What blessed sights doth he daily see! What ravishing tidings, what pleasant melody, doth he daily hear, unless it be in his swoons or sickness! What delectable food doth he daily taste! He seeth by faith the God, the glory, which the blessed spirits see at hand by nearest intuition! He seeth that in a glass and darkly, which they behold with open face! He seeth the glorious majesty of his Creator, the eternal King, the cause of causes, the composer, upholder, preserver, and governor of all the worlds! He beholdeth the wonderful methods of his providence: and what he cannot reach to see, he admireth, and waiteth for the time when that also shall be open to his view! He seeth by faith the world of spirits, the hosts that attend the throne of God; their perfect righteousness, their full devotedness to God; their ardent love, their flaming zeal, their ready and cheerful obedience, their dignity and shining glory, in which the lowest of them exceedeth that which the disciples saw on Moses and Elias when they appeared on the holy mount, and talked with Christ! They hear by faith the heavenly concert, the high and harmonious songs of praise, the joyful triumphs of crowned saints, the sweet commemorations of the things that were done and suffered on earth, with the praises of him that redeemed them by his blood, and made them kings and priests

to God: herein he hath sometimes a sweet foretaste of the everlasting pleasures, which though it be but little, as Jonathan's honey on the end of his rod, or as the clusters of grapes which were brought from Canaan into the wilderness, yet are they more excellent than all the delights of sinners. And in the beholding of this celestial glory, some beams do penetrate his breast, and so irradiate his longing soul, that he is changed thereby into the same image, from glory to glory; the Spirit of glory and of God doth rest upon him. And oh what an excellent holy frame doth this converse with God possess his soul of! How reverently doth he think of him! What life is there in every name and attribute of God which he heareth or thinketh on! The mention of his power, his wisdom, his goodness, his love, his holiness, his truth, how powerful and how pleasant are they to him! when to those that know him but by the hearing of the ear, all these are but like common names and notions; and even to the weaker sort of christians, whose walking with God is more uneven, and low, interrupted by their sins, and doubts, and fears, this life and glory of a christian course is less perceived.

And the sweet appropriating and applying works of faith, by which the soul can own his God, and finds himself owned by him, are exercised most easily and happily in these near approaches unto God. Our doubts are cherished by our darkness, and that is much caused by our distance: the nearer the soul doth approach to God, the more distinctly it heareth the voice of mercy, the sweet reconciling invitations of love; and the more clearly it discerneth that goodness and amiableness in God, which maketh it easier to us to believe that he loveth us, or is ready to embrace us; and banisheth all those false and horrid apprehensions of him, which before were our discouragement, and made him seem to us more terrible than amiable. As the ministers and faithful servants of Christ are ordinarily so misrepresented by the malignant devil, to those that know them not, that they are ready to think them some silly fools, or false-hearted hypocrites, and to shun them as strange, undesirable persons; but when they come to thorough acquaintance with them by a nearer and familiar converse, they see how much they were mistaken, and wronged by their prejudice and belief of slanderers' misreports: even so a weak believer, that is under troubles, in the apprehension of his sin and danger, is apt to hearken to the enemy of God, that would show him nothing but his wrath, and represent God as an enemy to him: and in this case it is exceeding hard for a poor sinner to believe that God is reconciled to him, or loveth him, or intends him good, but he is ready to dread and shun him as an enemy, or as he would fly from a wild beast or murderer, or from fire or water, that would destroy him: and all these injurious thoughts of God are cherished by strangeness and disacquaintance. But as the soul doth fall into an understanding and serious converse with God, and having been often with him, doth find him more merciful than he was by Satan represented to him, his experience reconcileth his mind to God, and maketh it much easier to him to believe that God is reconciled unto him, when he hath found much better entertainment with God than he expected, and hath observed his benignity, and the treasures of his bounty laid up in Christ, and by him distributed to believers, and hath found him ready to hear and help, and found him the only full and suitable felicitating good, this banisheth his former horrid thoughts, and maketh him ashamed that ever he should think so suspiciously, injuriously, and dishonourably of his dearest God and Father.

Yet I must confess that there are many upright, troubled souls, that are much in reading, prayer, and meditation, that still find it hard to be persuaded of the love of God, and that have much more disquietment and fear since they set themselves to think of God, than they had before. But yet for all this, we may well conclude, that to walk with God, is the way to consolation, and tendeth to acquaint us with his love. As for those troubled souls, whose experience is objected against this, some of them are such as are yet but in their return to God, from a life of former sin and misery, and are yet but like the needle in the compass that is shaken, in a trembling motion towards their rest, and not in any settled apprehensions of it. Some of them by the straying of their imaginations too high, and putting themselves upon more than their heads can bear, and by the violence of fears, or other passions, do make themselves uncapable of those sweet consolations which else they might find in their converse with God; as a lute, when the strings are broken with straining, is uncapable of making any melody. All of them have false apprehensions of God, and therefore trouble themselves by their own mistakes. And if some perplex themselves by their error, doth it follow that therefore the truth is not comfortable? Is not a father's presence consolatory, because some children are afraid of their fathers, that know them not because of some disguise? And some of God's children walk so unevenly and carelessly before him, that their sins provoke him to hide his face, and to seem to reject them and disown them, and so to trouble them that he may bring them home: but shall the comforts of our Father's love and family be judged of by the fears or smart of those whom he is scourging for their disobedience, or their trial? Seek God with understanding, as knowing his essential properties, and what he will be to them that sincerely and diligently seek him; and then you will quickly have experience, that nothing so much tendeth to quiet and settle a doubting, troubled, unstable soul, as faithfully to walk with God.

But the soul that estrangeth itself from God, may indeed for a time have the quietness of security; but (so far) it will be strange to the assurance of his love, and to true consolation. Expect not that God should follow you with his comforts in your sinfulness and negligence, and cast them into your hearts whilst you neither seek nor mind them; or that he will give you the fruit of his ways in your own ways. Will he be your joy when you forget him? Will he delight your souls with his goodness and amiableness, while you are taken up with other matters, and think not of him? Can you expect to find the comforts of his family, among his enemies, out of doors? The experience of all the world can tell you, that prodigals, while they are straggling from their Father's house, do never taste the comfort of his embraces; the strangers meddle not with his children's joys: they grow not in the way of ambition, covetousness, vain-glory, or sensuality; but in the way of holy obedience, and of believing contemplations of the divine, everlasting objects of delight. "For, lo, they that are far from him shall perish. He destroyeth them that go a whoring from him: but it is good for us to draw nigh to God," Psal. lxxiii. 27, 28.

III. Walking with God is the only course that can prove and make men truly wise. It proves them wise that make so wise and good a choice, and are disposed and skilled in any measure for so high a work. Practical wisdom is the solid, useful, profitable wisdom: and practical wisdom is seen in our choice of good, and refusal of evil, as its most immc-

diate and excellent effect. And no choosing or refusing doth show the wisdom or folly of man so much as that which is about the greatest matters, and which everlasting life or death depend on. He is not thought so wise among men that can write a volume about the orthography or etymology of a word, or that can guess what wood the Trojan horse was made of, or that can make a chain to tie a flea in; as he that can bring home gold and pearls, or he that can obtain and manage governments, or he that can cure mortal maladies. For as in lading we difference bulk and value, and take not that for the best commodity which is of greatest quantity or weight, but that which is most precious and of greatest use; so there is a bulky knowledge, extended far, to a multitude of words and things, which are all of no great use or value; and therefore the knowledge of them is such as they: and there is a precious sort of knowledge, which fixeth upon the most precious things; which being of greatest use and value, do accordingly prove the knowledge such. Nothing will prove a man simply and properly wise, but that which will prove or make him happy. He is wise indeed, that is wise to his own and others' good; and that is indeed his good, which saveth his soul, and maketh him for ever blessed. Though we may admire the cunning of those that can make the most curious engines, or by deceiving others advance themselves, or that can subtilly dispute the most curious niceties, or criticise upon the words of several languages; yet I will never call them wise, that are all that while the devil's slaves, the enemies of God, the refusers of grace, and are making haste to endless misery. And I think there is not one of those in hell who were once the subtle men on earth, that now take themselves to have been truly wise, or glory much in the remembrance of such wisdom.

And as the choice doth prove men wise, so the practice of this holy walking with God, doth make them much wiser than they were. As there must be some work of the Spirit to draw men to believe in Christ, and yet the Spirit is promised and given (in a special sort or measure) to them that do believe; so must there be some special wisdom to make men choose to walk with God; but much more is given to them in this holy course. As Solomon was wiser than most of the world, before he asked wisdom of God, or else he would not have made so wise a choice, and preferred wisdom before the riches and honours of the world; and yet it was a more notable degree of wisdom that was afterwards given him in answer to his prayer: so it is in this case.

There are many undeniable evidences to prove, that walking with God doth do more to make men truly wise, than all other learning or policy in the world.

1. He that walketh with God, doth begin aright, and settles upon a sure foundation; (and we use to say, that a work is half finished that is well begun;) he hath engaged himself to the best and wisest teacher; he is a disciple to him that knoweth all things. He hath taken in infallible principles, and taken them in their proper place and order; he hath learned those truths which will every one become a teacher to him, and help him to that which is yet unlearned. Whereas many that thought they were doctors in Israel, if ever they will be wise and happy, must "become fools (that is, such as they have esteemed fools) if ever they will be wise," 1 Cor. iii. 18; and must be called back with Nicodemus to learn Christ's cross, and to be taught that "that which is born of the flesh is but flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit;" and that therefore they "must be born again" (not only of water, but also of the Spirit) if ever they "will enter into the kingdom of heaven," John iii. 3, 5, 6. Oh miserable beginning! and miserable progress! when men that never soundly learned the mysteries of regeneration, and faith, and love, and self-denial, and mortification, do proceed to study names and words, and to turn over a multitude of books, to fill their brains with airy notions, and their common-places with such sayings as may be provision and furniture for their pride and ostentation, and ornament to their style and language; and know not yet what they must do to be saved, and indeed know nothing as they ought to know! 1 Cor. viii. 2. As every science hath its principles, which are supposed in all the consequential verities; so hath religion as doctrinal and practical, those truths which must be first received, before any other can be received as it ought; and those things which must be first done, before any other can be done, so as to attain their ends. And these truths and duties are principally about God himself, and are known and done effectually by those, and only those, that walk with God, or are devoted to him. It is a lamentable thing to see men immersed in serious studies, even till they grow aged, and to hear them seriously disputing and discoursing about the controversies or difficulties in theology, or inferior sciences, before ever they had any saving knowledge of God, or of the work of the Holy Ghost in the converting and sanctifying of the soul, or how to escape everlasting misery!

2. He that walketh with God hath fixed upon a right end, and is renewing his estimation and intention of it, and daily prosecuting it: and this is the first and greatest part of practical wisdom. When a man once knoweth his end aright, he may better judge of the aptitude and seasonableness of all the means. When we know once that heaven containeth the only felicity of man, it will direct us to heavenly thoughts, and to such spiritual means as are fitted to that end: if we have the right mark in our eye, we are liker to level at it, than if we mistake our mark. He is the wise man, and only he, that hath steadily fixed his eye upon that blessedness which he was created and redeemed for, and maketh straight towards it, and bends the powers of soul and body, by faithful, constant diligence to obtain it. He that hath rightly and resolvedly determined of his end, hath virtually resolved a thousand controversies that others are unsatisfied and erroneous in. He that is resolved, that his end is to please and glorify God, and to enjoy him for ever, is easily resolved whether a holy life or a sensual and worldly, be the way; whether the way be to be godly, or to make a mock at godliness: whether covetousness and riches, ambition and preferment, voluptuousness and fleshly pleasures, be the means to attain his end: whether it will be attained rather by the studying of the word of God, and meditating on it day and night, and by holy conference, and fervent prayer, and an obedient life; or by negligence, or worldliness, or drunkenness, or gluttony, or cards and dice, or beastly filthiness, or injustice and deceit. Know once but whither it is that we are going, and it is easy to know whether the saint, or the swine, or the swaggerer, be in the way. But a man that doth mistake his end, is out of his way at the first step; and the further he goes, the further he is from true felicity; and the more he erreth, and the further he hath to go back again, if ever he return. Every thing that a man doth in the world, which is not for the right end, (the heavenly felicity,) is an act of foolishness and error, how splendid soever the matter or the name may make it appear to ignorant men. Every word that an ungodly person speaketh, being not for a right end, is in him but sin and folly, however

materially it may be an excellent and useful truth. While a miserable soul hath his back upon God, and his face upon the world, every step he goeth is an act of folly, as tending unto his further misery. It can be no act of wisdom, which tendeth to a man's damnation. When such a wretch begins to inquire and bethink him where he is, and whither he is going, and whither he should go, and to think of turning back to God, then, and never till then, he is beginning to come to himself, and to be wise, Luke xv. 17. Till God and glory be the end that he aimeth at, and seriously bends his study, heart, and life to seek, though a man were searching into the mysteries of nature; though he were studying or discussing the notions of theology; though he were admired for his learning and wisdom by the world, and cried up as the oracle of the earth; he is all the while but playing the fool, and going a cleanlier way to hell than the grosser sinners of the world! For is he wise, that knoweth not whether heaven or earth be better? whether God or his flesh should be obeyed? whether everlasting joys or the transitory pleasures of sin should be preferred? Or that seemeth to be convinced of the truth in these and such like cases, and yet hath not the wit to make his choice, and bend his life according to his conviction? He cannot be wise who practically mistakes his end.

3. He that walketh with God doth know those things with a deep, effectual, heart-changing knowledge, which other men know but superficially, by the halves, and as in a dream. And true wisdom consisteth in the intensiveness of the knowledge subjectively, as much as in the extensiveness of it objectively. To see a few things in a narrow room perspicuously and clearly, doth show a better eyesight, than in the open air to see many things obscurely, so as scarce to discern any of them aright (like him that saw men walk like trees). The clearness and depth of knowledge, which makes it effectual to its proper use, is the greatness and excellency of it: therefore it is, that unlearned men that love and fear the Lord, may well be said to be incomparably more wise and knowing men than the most learned that are ungodly. As he hath more riches that hath a little gold or jewels, than he that hath many loads of stones; so he that hath a deep, effectual knowledge of God the Father, and the Redeemer, and of the life to come, is wiser and more knowing than he that hath only a notional knowledge of the same things, and of a thousand more. A wicked man hath so much knowledge, as teacheth him to speak the same words of God, and Christ, and heaven, which a true believer speaks; but not so much as to work in him the same affections and choice, nor so much as to cause him to do the same work. As it is a far more excellent kind of knowledge which a man hath of any country by travel and habitation there, than that which cometh but by reading or report; or which a man hath of meat, of fruits, of wines, by eating and drinking, than that which another hath by hearsay: so is the inward, heart-affecting knowledge of a true believer, more excellent than the flashy notions of the ungodly. Truth, simply as truth, is not the highest and most excellent object of the mind: but good, as good, must be apprehended by the understanding, and commended to the will, which entertaineth it with complacency, adhereth to it with choice and resolution, prosecuteth it with desire and endeavour, and enjoyeth it with delight. And though it be the understanding which apprehendeth it, yet it is the heart or will that relisheth it, and tasteth the greatest sweetness in it, working upon it with some mixture of internal sense (which hath made some ascribe a knowledge of good, as such, unto the will). And it is the will's intention that causeth the understanding to be denominated practical: and therefore I may well say, that it is wisdom indeed when it reacheth to the heart. No man knoweth the truth of God so well as he that most firmly believeth him; and no man knoweth the goodness of God so well as he that loveth him most. No man knoweth his power and mercy so well as he that doth most confidently trust him; and no man knoweth his justice and dreadfulness so well as he that feareth him. No man knoweth or believeth the glory of heaven so well as he that most esteemeth, desireth, and seeketh it, and hath the most heavenly heart and conversation. No man believeth in Jesus Christ so well, as he that giveth up himself unto him, with the greatest love, and thankfulness, and trust, and obedience. As James saith, "Show me thy faith by thy works," so say I, let me know the measure and value of my knowledge by my heart and life. That is wisdom indeed, which conformeth a man to God, and saveth his soul: this only will be owned as wisdom to eternity, when dreaming notions will prove but folly.

4. He that walketh with God hath an infallible rule, and taketh the right course to have the best acquaintance with it, and skill to use it. The doctrine that informeth him is divine; it is from heaven, and not of men: and therefore if God be wiser than man, he is able to make his disciples wisest; and teaching will more certainly and powerfully illuminate. Many among men have pretended to infallibility, that never could justify their pretensions, but have confuted them by their own mistakes and crimes; but none can deny the infallibility of God. He never yet was deceived, or did deceive: he erreth not, nor teacheth error. Nicodemus knew Christ was to be believed, when he knew that he was "a teacher come from God," John iii. 2. Christ knew that the Jews themselves durst not deny the truths of John's doctrine, if he could but convince them that it was "from heaven, and not of men." It is impossible for God to lie: it is the devil that "was a liar from the beginning," and is yet the father of lies. No wonder if they believe lies that follow such a teacher: and those that follow the flesh and the world, do follow the devil. They that will believe what their fleshly interests and lusts persuade them to believe, do believe what the devil persuadeth them to believe; for he persuadeth them by these, and for these. What marvel then, if there be found men in the world, that can believe that holiness is hypocrisy, or a needless thing? that those are the worst men that are most careful to please God? that the world is more worthy of their care and labour, than their salvation is? that the pleasures of sin for a season are more desirable, than the everlasting happiness of the saints? that cards and dice, and mirth and lust, and wealth and honour, are matters more delectable than prayer, and meditating on the word of God, and loving him, and obeying him, and waiting in the hopes of life eternal? that gluttons, and drunkards, and whoremongers, and covetous persons, may enter into the kingdom of God? &c. What wonder, if a thousand such damnable lies are believed by the disciples of the father of lies? What wonder, if there are so many saint-haters and God-haters in the world, as to fill the earth with persecutions and cruelties, or make a scorn of that which God most highly valueth, and all this under pretences of order, or unity, or justice, or something that is good, and therefore fit to palliate their sin? Is there any thing so false, or foul, or wicked, that Satan will not teach his followers? Is he grown modest, or

moderate, or holy, or just? Is he reconciled to Christ, to Scripture, to godliness, or to the godly? or is his kingdom of darkness at an end? And hath he lost the earth? Or are men therefore none of the servants of the devil, because they were baptized, (as Simon Magus was,) and call and think themselves the servants of Christ? As if still it were not the art by which he gets and keeps disciples, to suffer them to wear the livery of Christ, and to use his name, that he may thus keep possession of them in peace, who else would be frighted from him, and fly to Christ. He will give them leave to study arts and sciences, and to understand things excellent of inferior use, so be it they will be deceived by him in the matters of God and their salvation. He can allow them to be learned lawyers, excellent physicians, philosophers, politicians, to be skilful artists, so be it they will follow him in sin to their damnation, and will overlook the "truth that should set them free," John viii. 32. Yea, he will permit them (when there is no remedy) to study the holy Scripture, if he may but be the expounder and applier of it. Yea, he will permit them notionally to understand it, if they will not learn by it to be converted, to be holy, and to be saved. He can suffer them to be eminent divines, so they will not be serious christians. Thus is the world by the grand deceiver hurried in darkness to perdition, being "taken captive by him at his will," 2 Tim. ii. 26. But the sanctified are all illuminated by the Holy Ghost, by whom their eyes are so effectually opened, that they "are turned from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God," Acts xxvi. 18. "The Father of glory hath given them the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of Christ, that the eyes of their understanding being enlightened, they may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints," Ephes. i. 17, 18. Certainly that illumination of the Holy Ghost, which is so often mentioned in Scripture as given to all true believers, is not a fancy, nor an insignificant name: and if it signify any thing, it signifieth somewhat that is much above the teaching of man. All that walk with God are taught of God! And can man teach like God? God hath access unto the heart, and there he doth transcribe his laws, and put them into our inward parts. And they that walk with him have not only his word to read, but his Spirit to help them to understand it; and being with him, in his family, (yea, he dwelleth in them, and they in him,) he is ready at hand to resolve their doubts: when he gave them his fear, he gave them the "beginning of wisdom," Psal. cxi. 10. He causeth them to "incline their ear to wisdom," Prov. ii. 2, 6; and to "apply their hearts unto it," Psal. xc. 12; "and maketh them to know it in the hidden parts," Psal. li. 6.

It is his law that they have determined to make their rule: they live as under his authority: they are more observant of his will and government, than of any laws or government of man. And as they obey man in and for the Lord, so they do it in subordination to him, and therefore not against him and his laws, which being the standard of justice, and the rule of rulers, and of subjects both, they are in the safest way of unerring wisdom, who walk with God according to that rule; and refuse to turn aside, though commanded by man, or enticed by Satan, the world, or flesh.

5. He that walketh with God is the most considerate person, and therefore hath great advantage to be wise. The frequent and serious thoughts of God, do awaken all the powers of the soul, so that drowsiness doth not hinder the understanding, and so occasion its deceit. There is scarce a more common and powerful cause of men's folly and delusion and perdition, in all the world, than that sleepiness and stupidity which hindereth reason from the vigorous performance of its office. In this senseless case, though a man both know and consider of the same truths, which in their nature are most powerful to cleanse and govern and save his soul, yet sluggishness doth enervate them: he knoweth them as if he knew them not, and considereth them as if he never thought of them. They work little more upon him, than if he believed them not, or had never heard of them. Even as a dream of the greatest matters, moveth not the sleeper from his pillow. In this senseless state, the devil can do almost any thing with a sinner. He can make him sin against his knowledge: and when conscience hath frighted him into some kind of penitence, and made him cry out, I have sinned and done foolishly, and caused him to promise to do so no more; yet doth the devil prevail with him to go on, and to break his promises, as if he had never been convinced of his sins, or confessed them, or seen any reason or necessity to amend: he doth but imprison the truth in unrighteousness, and bury it in a senseless heart: whereas if you could but awaken all the powers of his soul, to give this same truth its due entertainment, and take it deeper into his heart, it would make him even scorn the baits of sin, and see that the ungodly are beside themselves, and make him presently resolve and set upon a holy life. And hence it is, that sickness which causeth men to receive the sentence of death, doth usually make men bewail their former sinful lives, and marvel that they could be before so sottish as to resist such known and weighty truths: and it makes them purpose and promise reformation, and wish themselves in the case of those that they were wont before to deride and scorn: because now the truth is deeplier received and digested, by their awakened souls, and appeareth in its proper evidence and strength. There is no man but must acknowledge that the same truth doth at one time command his soul, which at another time seems of little force. It is a wonder to observe how differently the same consideration worketh with a man when he is awakened, and when he is in a secure, stupid case.

Now this is his advantage that walks with God. He is much more frequently than others awakened to a serious apprehension of the things which he understandeth. The thoughts of the presence of the most holy God, will not suffer him to be secure and senseless as others are, or as he is himself, when he turneth aside from this heavenly conversation. He hath in God such exceeding transcendent excellences, such greatness, such goodness, continually to behold, that it keepeth his soul in a much more serious, lively frame than any other means could keep it in: so that whenever any truth or duty is presented to him, all his faculties are awake and ready to observe and improve it. A sermon, or a good book, or godly conference, or a mercy, when a man hath been with God in prayer and contemplation, will relish better with him, and sink much deeper, than at another time. Nay, one serious thought of God himself, will do more to make a man truly and solidly wise, than all the reading and learning in the world, which shuts him out.

6. Walking with God doth fix the mind, and keep it from diversions and vagaries, and consequently much helpeth to make men wise. A straggling mind is empty and unfurnished. He that hath no dwelling, for the most part hath no wealth. Wandering is the beggar's life. Men do but bewilder and lose themselves, and not grow wise, whose thoughts are ranging in the corners of the earth, and are like masterless dogs, that run up and down according to

their fancy, and may go any whither, but have business no where. The creature will not fix the soul; but God is the centre of all our thoughts: in him only they may unite, and fix, and rest. He is the only loadstone that can effectually attract and hold it stedfast to himself. Therefore he that walks with God is the most constant and unmovable of men. Let prosperity or adversity come, let the world be turned upside down, and the mountains be hurled into the sea, yet he changeth not: let men allure or threat, let them scorn or rage, let laws, and customs, and governments, and interest change, he is still the same. For he knoweth that God is still the same, and that his word changeth not. Let that be death one year, which was the way to reputation another, and let the giddy world turn about as the seasons of the year, this changeth not his mind and life (though in things lawful he is of a yielding temper); for he knoweth that the interest of his soul doth not change with the humours or interests of men: he still feareth sinning, for he knoweth that judgment is still drawing on, in all changes and seasons whatsoever: he is still set upon the pleasing of the most holy God, whoever be uppermost among men; as knowing that the God whom he serveth is able to deliver him from man, but man is not able to deliver him from God. He still goeth on in the holy path, as knowing that heaven is as sure and as desirable as ever it was. "Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord: his heart is established, he shall not be afraid," Psal. cxii. 6, 7.

7. He that walketh with God, hath the great master truths upon his heart, which are the standard of the rest, and the stock, as it were, out of which they spring. The great truths about God, and grace, and glory, have a greater power than many hundred truths of an inferior nature. And moreover, such a one is sure that he shall be wise in the greatest and most necessary points. He is guilty of no ignorance or error that shall keep him out of heaven, or hinder his acceptance with his God. And if he be wise enough to please God and to be saved, he is wise indeed (as before was hinted).

8. Walking with God doth take off the vizor of deluding things, and keepeth us out of the reach and power of those objects and arguments which are the instruments of deceit. When a man hath been believingly and seriously with God, how easily can he see through the sophistry of the tempting world! How easily can he practically confute the reasonings of the flesh, and discern the dotage of the seeming subtilties of wicked men, that will needs think they have reason for that which is displeasing to their Maker, and tends to the damning of their souls! So far as a man is conversant with God, so far he is sensible, that all things are nothing, which can be offered as a price to hire him to sin; and that the name of preferment, and honour, and wealth, or of disgrace, and imprisonment, and death, are words almost of no signification, as to the tempter's ends, to draw the soul from God and duty. It is men that know not God, and know not what it is to walk with him, that think these words so big and powerful, to whom wealth and honour do signify more than God and heaven; and poverty, disgrace, and death, do signify more than God's displeasure and everlasting punishment in hell. As it is easy to cheat a man that is far from the light, so is it easy to deceive the learnedest man that is far from God.

9. Walking with God, doth greatly help us against the deceitful and erroneous disposition of our own hearts. The will hath a very great power upon the understanding: and therefore ungodly, fleshly men will very hardly receive any truth which crosseth the carnal interest or disposition; and will hardly let go any error that feedeth them; because their corrupted wills are a bias to their understandings, and make them desperately partial in all their reading and hearing, and hypocritical in their prayers and inquiries after truth. Interest and corruption lock-eth up their hearts from their own observation. Whereas a man that walketh with God, that is jealous, and holy, and just, and a searcher of the heart, is driven from hypocrisy, and forced to behave himself as in the open light, and to do all as in the sight of all the world, as knowing that the sight of God is of far greater concernment and regard. The partiality, corruption, and bias of the heart, is detected and shamed by the presence of God. Therefore to walk with God is to walk in the light, and as children of the light, and not in darkness. And he that doth truth "cometh to the light, that his deeds might be manifest, that they are wrought in God: when every one that doth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. And this is their condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love the darkness rather than the light, because their deeds are evil," John iii. 19—21. It tendeth therefore exceedingly to make men wise, to walk with God, because it is a walking in the light, and in such a presence as most powerfully prevaileth against that hypocrisy, deceitfulness, and partiality of the heart, which is the common cause of damning error.

10. Lastly, they that walk with God are entitled by many promises to the guidance and direction of his Spirit. And blessed are those that have such a guide; at once a light in the world without them, and a light immediately from God within them. For so far as he is received and worketh in them, he will lead them into truth, and save them from deceit and folly, and having "guided them by his counsel, will afterwards take them unto glory," Psal. lxxiii. 24. Whereas the ungodly are led by the flesh, and often "given up to their own heart's lusts, to walk in their own counsels," Rom. viii. 1, 13; Psal. lxxxi. 12; till at last "the fools do say in their hearts, There is no God," Psal. xiv. 1; "and they become corrupt and abominable, eating up the people of the Lord as bread, and call not on his name," ver. 2, &c. "Deceiving and being deceived: sensual, having not the Spirit," Jude 19; "who shall receive the reward of their unrighteousness, as accounting it pleasure to riot in the day time," 2 Pet. ii. 13.

IV. Another benefit of walking with God is, that it maketh men good, as well as wise. It is the most excellent means for the advancement of man's soul to the highest degree of holiness attainable in this life. If conversing with good men doth powerfully tend to make men good, conversing with God must needs be more effectual; which may appear in these particulars.

1. The apprehensions of the presence and attributes of God, do most effectually check the stirrings of corruption, and rebuke all the vicious inclinations and motions of the soul: even the most secret sin of the heart, is rebuked by his presence, as well as the most open transgression of the life; for the thoughts of the heart are open to his view. All that is done before God, is done as in the open light: nothing of it can be hid: no sin can have the encouragement of secrecy to embolden it. It is all committed in the presence of the universal King and Lawgiver of the world, who hath forbidden it. It is done before him that most abhorreth it, and will never be recon-

ciled to it. It is done before him that is the Judge of the world, and will shortly pass the sentence on us according to what we have done in the body. It standeth up in his presence who is of infinite majesty and perfection, and therefore most to be reverenced and honoured; and therefore if the presence of a wise, and grave, and venerable person will restrain men from sin, the presence of God apprehended seriously, will do it much more. It is committed before him who is our dearest Friend, and tender Father, and chiefest Benefactor; and therefore ingenuity, gratitude, and love will all rise up against it in those that walk with God. There is that in God, before the eyes of those that walk with him, which is most contrary to sin, and most powerful against it of any thing in the world. Every one will confess, that if men's eyes were opened to see the Lord in glory standing over them, it would be the most powerful means to restrain them from transgressing. The drunkard would not then venture upon his cups: the fornicator would have a cooling for his lusts: the swearer would be afraid to take his Maker's name in vain: the profane would scarce presume to scorn or persecute a holy life. And he that walketh with God, though he see him not corporally, yet seeth him by faith, and liveth as in his presence; and therefore must needs be restrained from sin, as having the means which is next to the sight of God. If pride should begin to stir in one that walks with God, oh what a powerful remedy is at hand! How effectually would the presence of the great and holy God rebuke it; and constrain us to say as Job xlii. 5, 6, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now my eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." If worldly love, or carnal lust, should stir in such a one, how powerfully would the terrors of the Lord repress it, and his majesty rebuke it, and his love and goodness overcome it! If worldly cares or murmuring discontents begin to trouble such a one, how effectually will the goodness, the all-sufficiency, and the faithfulness of God allay them, and quiet and satisfy the soul, and cause it to be offended at its own offence, and to chide itself for its repinings and distrust! If passion arise and begin to discompose us, how powerfully will the presence of God rebuke it! and the reverence of his majesty, and the sense of his authority and pardoning grace, will assuage it, and shame us into silent quietness! Who dare let out his passions upon man, in the presence of his Maker, that apprehendeth his presence? The same I might say of all other sins.

2. The presence and attributes of God apprehended by those that walk with him, is the potent remedy against temptations. Who will once turn an eye to the gold and glory of the world, that is offered him to allure to sin, if he see God stand by? Who would be tempted to lust or any sinful pleasure, if he observe the presence of the Lord? Satan can never come in so ill a time with his temptations, and have so little hope to speed, as when the soul is contemplating the attributes of God, or taken up in prayer with him, or any way apprehensive of his presence. The soul that faithfully walks with God, hath enough at hand in him to answer all temptations. And the further any man is from God, and the less he knoweth him, the more temptations can do upon him.

3. The presence of God affordeth the most powerful motives unto good, to those that walk with him. There is no grace in man, but is from God, and may find in God its proper object or incentive. As God is God, above the creature transcendently and infinitely in all perfections, so all the motives to goodness which are fetched from him, are transcendently above all that may be fetched from any creature. He that liveth always by the fire, or in the sunshine, is likest to be warm. He that is most with God, will be most like to God in holiness. Frequent and serious converse with him, doth most deeply imprint his communicable attributes on the heart, and make there the clearest impression of his image. Believers have learned by their own experience, that one hour's serious prayer, or meditation, in which they can get nigh to God in the Spirit, doth more advance their grace, than any help that the creature can afford them.

4. Moreover, those that walk with God, have not only a powerful, but a universal incentive for the actuating and increasing of every grace. Knowledge, and faith, and fear, and love, and trust, and hope, and obedience, and zeal, and all have in God their proper objects and incentives. One creature may be useful to us in one thing, and another in another thing; but God is the most effectual mover of all his graces; and that in a holy harmony and order. Indeed he hath no greater motive to draw us to love him, and fear him, and trust him, and obey him, than himself. "It is life eternal to know him in his Son," John xvii. 3; and that is, not only because it entitleth to life eternal, but also because it is the beginning and incentive of that life of holiness which will be eternal.

5. Moreover, those that walk with God, have a constant as well as a powerful and universal incentive to exercise and increase their graces. Other helps may be out of the way; their preachers may be silenced or removed; their friends may be scattered or taken from them; their books may be forbidden or not at hand; but God is alway ready and willing; they have leave at all times to come to him, and be welcome. Whenever they are willing they may go to him by prayer or contemplation, and find all in him which they can desire. If they want not hearts, they shall find no want of any thing in God. At what time soever fear would torment them, they may draw near and put their trust in him, Psal. lvi. 2—4; xi. 1; xviii. 2, 30; xxxi. 1, 6. He will be a sure and speedy refuge for them, a very present help in trouble, Psal. xlvi. 1; lxii. 7, 8; xci. 2, 9; xciv. 22. Whenever coldness or lukewarmness would extinguish the work of grace, they may go to him, and find those streams of flaming love flow from him, those strong attractives, those wonderful mercies, those terrible judgments, of which, while they are musing, the fire may again wax hot within them, Psal. xxxix. 3.

6. Lastly, by way of encouraging reward, God useth to give abundantly of his grace, to those that walk most faithfully with him. He will show most love to those that most love him. He will be nearest to them that most desirously draw nigh to him; while he forsaketh those that forsake him, and turneth away from those that turn away from him. "The hand of our God is for good upon all them that seek him; but his power and his wrath is against all them that forsake him," 2 Chron. xv. 2; Prov. i. 32; Ezra viii. 22.

Thus it is apparent in all these evidences, that walking with God is not only a discovery of the goodness that men have, but the only way to increase their grace, and make them better. Oh what a sweet humility, and seriousness, and spirituality appeareth in the conference, or conversation, or both, of those that newly come from a believing, close converse with God! When they that come from men and books, may have but a common mind or life; and those that come from the business and pleasure of

the world and flesh, and from the company of foolish, riotous gallants, may come defiled, as the swine out of the mire!

V. Lastly, To walk with God, is the best preparation for times of suffering, and for the day of death. As we must be judged according to what we have done in the body; so the nearer we find ourselves to judgment, the more we shall be constrained to judge ourselves according to what we have done, and shall the more perceive the effect upon our souls.

That this is so excellent a preparative for sufferings and death, will appear by the consideration of these particulars.

1. They that walk with God are most safe from all destructive sufferings; and shall have none but what are sanctified to their good, Rom. viii. 28. They are near to God, where destruction cometh not; as the chicken under the wings of the hen. They walk with him that will not lead them to perdition; that will not neglect them, nor sell them for nought, nor expose them to the will of men and devils, though he may suffer them to be tried for their good. No one can take them out of his hands. Be near to him, and you are safe: the destroyer cannot fetch you thence. He can fetch you (when the time is come) from the side of your merriest companions, and dearest friends; from the presence of the greatest princes; from the strongest tower, or most sumptuous palace, or from your heaps of riches, in your securest health: but he cannot take you from the arms of Christ, nor from under the wings of your Creator's love. "For there is no god like him, in heaven above, or on the earth beneath, who keepeth covenant and mercy with his servants, that walk before him with all their heart," 1 Kings viii. 23; xi. 38. However we are used in our Father's presence, we are sure it shall be for good in the latter end: for he wanteth neither power nor love to deliver us, if he saw deliverance to be best.

2. Walking with God is the surest way to obtain a certainty of his special love, and of our salvation. And what an excellent preparative for sufferings or death such assurance is, I need not tell any considerate believer. How easy may it be to us to suffer poverty, disgrace, or wrongs, or the pains of sickness or death, when once we are certain that we shall not suffer the pains of hell! How cheerfully may we go out of this troublesome world, and leave the greatest prosperity behind us, when we are sure to live in heaven for ever! Even an infidel will say that he could suffer or die, if he could but be certain to be glorified in heaven when he is dead!

3. Walking with God doth mortify the flesh, and all the affections and lusts thereof. The soul that is taken up with higher matters, and daily seeth things more excellent, becometh as dead to the things below: and thus it weaneth us from all that in the world which seemeth most desirable to carnal men. And when the flesh is mortified, and the world is nothing to us, or but as a dead and loathsome carcass, what is there left to be very troublesome in any suffering from the world? or to make us loth by death to leave it? It is men that know not God, that overvalue the profits and honours of the world; and men that never felt the comforts of communion with God, that set too much by the pleasures of the flesh: and it is men that set too much by these, that make so great a matter of suffering. It is he that basely overvalueth wealth, that whineth and repineth when he comes to poverty. It is he that sets too much by his honour, and being befooled by his pride, doth greatly esteem the thoughts or applauding words of men, that swelleth against those that disesteem him, and breaketh his heart when he falleth into disgrace. He that is cheated out of his wits by the pomp and splendour of a high and prosperous estate, doth think he is undone when he is brought low. But it is not so with him that walks with God; for being taken up with far higher things, he knoweth the vanity of these. As he seeth not in them any thing that is worthy of his strong desires, so neither any thing that is worthy of much lamentation when they are gone. He never thought that a shadow, or feather, or a blast of wind could make him happy; and he cannot think that the loss of these can make him miserable. He that is taken up with God, hath a higher interest and business, and findeth not himself so much concerned in the storms or calms that are here below, as others are, who know no better, and never minded higher things.

4. Walking with God doth much overcome the fear of man. The fear of him who can destroy both soul and body in hell fire, will extinguish the fear of them that can but kill the body, Luke xii. 4. The threats or frowns of a worm are inconsiderable to him that daily walketh with the great and dreadful God, and hath his power and word for his security. As Moses "esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, because he had respect to the recompence of reward; so he feared not the wrath of the king, for he endured as seeing him that is invisible," Heb. xi. 27.

5. Walking with God doth much prepare for sufferings and death, in that it breedeth quietness in the conscience; so that when all is at peace within, it will be easy to suffer any thing from without. Though there is no proper merit in our works to comfort us, yet it is an unspeakable consolation to a slandered, persecuted man to be able to say, These evil sayings are spoken falsely of me, for the sake of Christ; and I suffer not as an evil-doer, but as a christian. And it is matter of very great peace to a man that is hasting unto death, to be able to say as Hezekiah, "Remember now, O Lord, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight," 2 Kings xx. 3. And as Paul, 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness," &c. And as 2 Cor. i. 12, "For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world." Such a testimony of conscience is a precious cordial to a suffering or a dying man. The time we have spent in a holy and heavenly conversation, will be exceedingly sweet in the last review, when time spent in sinful vanity, and idleness, and in worldly and fleshly designs, will be grievous and tormenting. The day is coming, and is even at hand, when those that are now the most hardened infidels, or obstinate, presumptuous sinners, or scornful, malicious enemies of holiness, would wish and wish a thousand times, that they had spent that life in a serious, obedient walking with God, which they spent in seeking worldly wealth, and laying up a treasure on earth, and feeding the inordinate desires of their flesh. I tell you, it is walking with God, that is the only way to have a sound and quiet conscience: and he that is healing and settling his conscience upon the love of God and the grace of Christ, in the time of prosperity, is making the wisest preparation for adversity: and the preparation thus made so long before (perhaps twenty, or forty, or threescore years or more) is as

truly useful and comfortable at a dying hour, as that part which is made immediately before. I know that besides this general preparation, there should be also a particular, special preparation for sufferings and death; but yet this general part is the chiefest and most necessary part. A man that hath walked in his life-time with God, shall certainly be saved, though death surprise him unexpectedly, without any more particular preparation. But a particular preparation without either such a life, or such a heart as would cause it if he had recovered, is no sufficient preparation at all, and will not serve to any man's salvation. Alas! what a pitiful provision doth that man make for death and for salvation, who neglecteth his soul, despiseth the commands of God, and disregardeth the promises of eternal life, till he is ready to die, and then crieth out, I repent, I am sorry for my sin, I would I had lived better: and this only from the constraint of fear, without any such love to God and holiness which would make him walk with God if he should recover. What if the priest absolve this man from all his sins? Doth God therefore absolve him? Or shall he thus be saved? No, it is certain that all the sacraments and absolutions in the world will never serve to save such a soul, without that grace which must make it new and truly holy. The absolution of a minister of Christ, which is pronounced in his name, is a very great comfort to the truly penitent: for such God hath first pardoned by his general act of oblivion in the gospel, and it is God that sendeth his messenger to them (in sacraments and ministerial absolution) with that pardon particularized and applied by themselves. But where the heart is not truly penitent and converted, that person is not pardoned by the gospel, as being not in the covenant, or a child of promise; and therefore the pardon of a minister, being upon mistake, or to an unqualified person, can reach no further than to admit him into the esteem of men, and to the communion and outward privileges of the church (which is a poor comfort to a soul that must lie in hell); but it can never admit him into the kingdom of heaven. God indeed may approve the act of his ministers, if they go according to his rule, and deal in church administrations with those that make A CREDIBLE PROFESSION of FAITH and HOLINESS, as if they had true faith and holiness: but yet he will not therefore make such ministerial acts effectual to the saving of unbelieving or unholy souls. Nay, (because I have found many sensual, ungodly people inclining to turn papists, because with them they can have a quick and easy pardon of their sins, by the pope, or by the absolution of the priest,) let me tell such, that if they understand what they do, even this cheat is too thin to quiet their defiled consciences: for even the papists' school doctors do conclude, that when the priest absolveth an impenitent sinner, or one that is not qualified for pardon, such a one is not loosed or pardoned in heaven. (Leg. Martini de Ripalda Exposit. Liber. Magist. lib. 4. dist. 18. p. 654, 655, and p. 663, 664, dist. 20. Aquin. dist. 20. q. 1. a. 5. Suar. Tom. 4. in 3. p. disp. 52. Greg. Valent. Tom. 4. disp. 7. q. 20. p. 5. Tolet. lib. 6. cap. 27. Navar. Notab. 17. and 18. Cordub. de indulg. lib. 5. q. 23.) They deny not the truth of those words of Origen, Hom. 14. ad cap. 24. Levit. *Exit quis a fide, perexit de castris Ecclesiæ etiamsi, Episcopi voce non abjiciatur: sicut contra interdum fit, ut aliquis non recto judicio eorum qui præsunt Ecclesiæ, foras mittatur: sed si non egit ut mereretur exire, nihil læditur: interdum enim quod foras mittitur, intus est; et qui foris est, intus videtur retineri.* And what he saith of excommunication, is true of absolution: an erring key doth neither lock out of heaven, nor let into heaven. A godly believer shall be saved though the priest condemn him; and an unbeliever or ungodly person shall be condemned by God, though he be absolved by the priest.

Nay, if you have not walked with God in the Spirit, but walked after the flesh, though your repentance should be sound and true at the last, it will yet very hardly serve to comfort you, though it may serve to your salvation; because you will very hardly get any assurance that it is sincere. It is dangerous lest it should prove but the effect of fear (which will not save) when it cometh not till death do fright you to it. As Augustine saith, *Nullus expectet, quando peccare non potest: arbitrii enim libertatem quærit Deus, ut deleri possint commissa; non necessitatem, sed charitatem, non tantum timorem: quia non in solo timore vivit homo.* Therefore the same Augustine saith, *Siquis positus in ultima necessitate voluerit accipere pœnitentiam, et accipit; fateor vobis, non illi negamus quod petit; sed non præsumimus quod bene hinc exit: si securus hinc exierit, ego nescio: Pœnitentiam dare possumus, securitatem non possumus.* You see then how much it is needful to the peace of conscience at the hour of death, that you walk with God in the time of life.

6. Moreover, to walk with God is an excellent preparation for sufferings and death, because it tendeth to acquaint the soul with God, and to imbolden it both to go to him in prayer, and to trust on him, and expect salvation from him. He that walketh with God is so much used to holy prayer, that he is a man of prayer, and is skilled in it, and hath tried what prayer can do with God: so that in the hour of his extremity, he is not to seek either for a God to pray to, or a Mediator to intercede for him, or a Spirit of adoption to enable him as a child to fly for help to his reconciled Father. And having not only been frequently with God, but frequently entertained and accepted by him, and had his prayers heard and granted, it is a great encouragement to an afflicted soul in the hour of distress, to go to such a God for help. And it is a dreadful thing when a soul is ready to go out of the world, to have no comfortable knowledge of God, or skill to pray to him, or encouragement to expect acceptance with him: to think that he must presently appear before a God whom he never knew, nor heartily loved, being never acquainted with that communion with him in the way of grace, which is the way to communion in glory; oh what a terrible thought is this! But how comfortable is it when the soul can say, I know whom I have believed. The God that afflicteth me is he that loveth me, and hath manifested his love to me by his daily attractive, assisting, and accepting grace. I am going by death to see him intuitively, whom I have often seen by the eye of faith, and to live with him in heaven, with whom I lived here on earth; from whom, and through whom, and to whom was my life! I go not to an enemy, nor an utter stranger, but to that God who was the spring, the ruler, the guide, the strength, and the comfort of my life! He hath heard me so oft, that I cannot think he will now reject me. He hath so often comforted my soul, that I will not believe he will now thrust me into hell. He hath mercifully received me so oft, that I cannot believe he will now refuse me. Those that come to him in the way of grace, I have found he will in nowise cast out. As strangeness to God doth fill the soul with distrustful fears, so walking with him doth breed that humble confidence, which is a wonderful comfort in the hour of distress, and a happy preparation to sufferings and death.

7. Lastly, to walk with God, doth increase the love of God in the soul, which is the heavenly tincture, and inclineth it to look upward, and being weary of a sinful flesh and world, to desire to be perfected with God. How happy a preparation for death is this, which it is but the passage to that God with whom we desire to be, and to that place where we fain would dwell for ever! To love the state and place that we are going to, being made connatural and suitable thereto, will much overcome the fears of death. But for a soul that is acquainted with nothing but this life, and savoureth nothing but earth and flesh, and hath no connaturality with the things above, for such a soul to be surprised with the tidings of death, alas! how dreadful must it be!

And thus I have showed you the benefits that come by walking with God, which if you love yourselves with a rational love, methinks should resolve every impartial, considerate reader, to give up himself without delay to so desirable a course of life; or, if he have begun it, to follow it more cheerfully and faithfully than he had done.

CHAPTER VII.

I AM next to show you that believers have special obligations to this holy course of life, and therefore are doubly faulty if they neglect it; though indeed, to neglect it totally, or in the main drift of their lives, is a thing inconsistent with a living faith.

Consider, 1. If you are true christians, your relations engage you to walk with God. Is he not your reconciled Father, and you his children in a special sense? And whom should children dwell with, but with their father? You were glad when he received you into his covenant that he would enter into so near a relation to you, as he expresseth, 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18, "I will receive you, and will be a Father to you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." And do you draw back, as if you repented of your covenant; and were not only weary of the duty, but of the privileges and benefits of your relation? You may have access to God when others are shut out: your prayers may be heard, when the prayers of the wicked are abominable: you may be welcome, when the worldlings, and ambitious, and carnal are despised. He that dwelleth in the highest heaven, is willing to look to you with respect, and "dwell with you, when he beholdeth the proud afar off," Isa. lxvi. 1, 2; lvii. 15, 16. And yet will you not come that may be welcome? Doth he put such a difference between you and others, as to feed you as children at his table, while others are called dogs, and are without the doors, and have but your crumbs and leavings? And yet will you be so foolish and unthankful, as to run out of your Father's presence, and choose to be without among the dogs? How came your Father's presence to be so grievous to you? and the privileges of his family to seem so vile? Is it not some unchildlike carriage, the guilt of some disobedience or contempt, that hath first caused this? Or have you fallen again in love with fleshly pleasures, and some vanity of the world? Or have you had enough of God and godliness, till you begin to grow aweary of him? If so, you never truly knew him. However it be, if you grow as indifferent to God, do not wonder if shortly you find him set as light by you. And believe it, the day is not far off, in which the fatherly relation of God, and the privileges of children, will be more esteemed by you: when all things else forsake you in your last distress, you will be loth that God should then forsake you, or seem as a stranger to hide his face. Then you will cry out, as the afflicted church, "Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holiness and of thy glory. Where is thy zeal and thy strength? the sounding of thy bowels, and of thy mercies towards me? are they restrained? Doubtless thou art our Father: though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not, thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer, thy name is from everlasting," Isa. lxiii. 15, 16. Nothing but God, and his fatherly relation, will then support you. Attend him therefore, and with reverent, obedient cheerfulness and delight, converse with him as with your dearest Father. For since the beginning of the world, men have not known by sensible evidence, either of the ear or the eye, "besides God himself, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him," Isa. lxiv. 4. Though he be "wroth with us because we have sinned, yet doth he meet him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness, that remembereth him in his ways," ver. 5. Say not, I have played abroad so long that I dare not now go home: I have sinned so greatly, that I dare not speak to him, or look him in the face. Come yet but with a penitent, returning heart, and thou mayst be accepted through the Prince of peace. Prodigals find better entertainment than they did expect, when once they do but resolve for home. If he allow us to begin with "Our Father which art in heaven," we may boldly proceed to ask forgiveness of our trespasses, and whatever else is truly good for us. But, alas, as our iniquities seduce us away from God, so the guilt of them affrighteth some from returning to him, and the love of them corrupteth the hearts of others, and makes them too indifferent as to their communion with him; so that too many of his children live as if they did not know their Father, or had forgotten him. We may say as Isa. lxiv. 6—9, "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags, and we all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities like the wind have taken us away: and there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee; for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us because of our iniquities: but now, O Lord, thou art our Father; we are the clay, and thou our potter, and we are all the work of thy hand. Be not wroth very sore, O Lord, neither remember iniquity for ever. Behold, see, we beseech thee, we are all thy people." O do not provoke your Father to disown you, or to withdraw his help, or hide his face, or to send the rod to call you home; for if you do, you will wish you had known the privileges of his presence, and had kept nearer to him! Be not so unnatural, so unthankful, so unkind, as to be weary of your Father's presence, (and such a Father's too,) and to take more delight in any others.

Moreover, you are related to God in Christ, as a wife unto a husband, as to covenant union, and nearness and dearness of affection, and as to his tender care of you for your good: and is it seemly, is it wisely or gratefully done of you, to desire rather the company of others, and delight in creatures more than him? Isa. liv. 5, 6, how affectionately doth thy Maker call himself the Husband of his people! And can thy heart commit adultery, and forsake him? "My covenant they brake, though I was an Husband to them, saith the Lord," Jer. xxxi. 32. O put not God to exercise his jealousy. It is one of his terrible attributes, to be "a jealous God." And can he be otherwise to thee, when thou lovest not his converse or company, and carest not how long thou art from him in the world? Woe to thee

if he onee say, as Hos. ii. 2, "She is not my wife, neither am I her husband."

Nay, more than this, if you are christians, you are members of the body of Christ; and therefore how can you withdraw yourselves from him, and not feel the pain and torment of so sore a wound or dislocation? You cannot live without a constant dependence on him, and communieation from him: "I am the true Vine, and my Father is the Husbandman: abide in me, and I in you.——I am the Vine, ye are the branches; he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me, ye can do nothing.——If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you," John xv. 1, 4, 5.

So near are you to Christ, that he delighteth to acquaint you with his secrets. Oh how many mysteries doth he reveal to those that walk with him, which carnal strangers never know! mysteries of wisdom! mysteries of love and saving grace! mysteries of Scripture, and mysteries of Providence! mysteries felt by inward experience, and mysteries revealed, foreseen by faith! Not only the strangers that pass by the doors, but even the common servants of the family, are unacquainted with the seeret operations of the Spirit, and entertainments of grace, and joy in believing, which those that walk with God either do or may possess. Therefore Christ calleth you friends, as being more than servants. "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you: henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you," John xv. 14, 15. It is true, for all this, that every true christian hath reason (and is apt) to complain of his darkness and distance from God. Alas! they know so little of him, and of the mysteries of his love and kingdom, that sometimes they are apt to think that they are indeed but utter strangers to him; but this is, beeause there is infinitely more still unknown to them than they know! What! can the silly, shallow creature comprehend his infinite Creator? or shall we know all that is to be known in heaven, before we enjoy all that is to be enjoyed in heaven? It is no more wonder to hear a believer pant and mourn after a fuller knowledge of God, and nearer access to him, than to seek after heaven, where this will be his happiness. But yet, though his knowledge of God be small, compared with his ignorance, that little knowledge of God which he hath attained, is more mysterious, sublime, and excellent, than all the learning of the greatest unsanctified scholars in the world. Walk with him according to the nearness of your relations to him, and you shall have this excellent knowledge of his mysteries, which no books or teachers alone can give. You shall be effectually touched at the heart with the truths which others do uneffectually hear; you shall be powerfully moved, when they are but uneffeetually exhorted. When they only hear the voice without them, you shall hear the voice within you, and as it were behind you, saying, This is the way, walk in it. Oh that you could duly value such a friend, to watch over you, and for you, and dwell in you, and tell you faithfully of every danger, and of every duty, and teach you to know good and evil, and what to choose, and what to refuse! how closely and delightfully would you converse with such a blessed friend, if you rightly valued him!

2. Moreover, you that are the servants of God, have by your covenant and profession renounced and forsaken all things else, (as they stand in any opposition to him, or competition with him,) and have resigned yourselves wholly unto him alone; and therefore with him must you converse, and be employed, unless you will forsake your covenant. You knew first that it was your interest to forsake the world and turn to God; you knew the world would not serve your turn, nor be instead of God to you, either in life, or at death; and upon this knowledge it was that you changed your master, and changed your minds, and changed your way, your work, your hopes. And do you dream now that you were mistaken? Do you begin to think that the world is fitter to be your God or happiness? If not, you must still confess that both your interest and your covenant do oblige you to turn your hearts and minds from the things which you have renounced, and to walk with him that you have taken for your God, and to obey him whom you have taken for your King and Judge, and to keep close to him with purest love, whom you have taken for your everlasting portion. Mark what you are minding all the day, while you are neglecting God; is it not something that you have renounced? and did you not renounce it upon sufficient cause? was it not a work of your most serious deliberation? and of as great wisdom, as any that ever you performed? if it were, turn not back in your hearts again from God unto the renounced creature. You have had many a lightning from heaven into your understandings, to bring you to see the difference between them; you have had many a teaching, and many a warning, and many a striving of the Spirit, before you were prevailed with to renounce the world, the flesh, and the devil, and to give up yourself entirely and absolutely to God. Nay, did it not cost you the smart of some afflictions, before you would be made so wise? and did it not eost you many a gripe of conscience, and many a terrible thought of hell, and of the wrath of God, before you would be heartily engaged to him, in his covenant? And will you now live as strangely and neglectfully towards him, as if those days were quite forgotten? and as if you had never felt such things? and as if you had never been so convinced, or resolved? O christians, take heed of forgetting your former case! your former thoughts! your former convictions, and complaints, and covenants! God did not work all that upon your hearts to be forgotten; he intended not only your present change, but your after-remembrance of it, for your close adhering to him while you live; and for your quickening and constant perseverance to the end. The forgetting of their former miseries, and the workings of God upon their hearts in their conversion, is a great cause of mutability and revolting, and of unspeakable hurt to many a soul.

Nay, may you not remember also what sorrow you had in the day of your repentance, for your forsaking and neglecting God so long? And will you grow again neglective of him? Was it then so heinous a sin in your eyes? and is it now grown less? Could you then aggravate it so many ways, (and justly,) and now do you justify or extenuate it? Were you then ready to sink under the burden of it? and were so hardly persuaded that it would be forgiven you? and now do you make so small a matter of it? Did you then so much wonder at your folly, that could so long let out your thoughts and affections upon the creature, while you neglected God and heaven? and do you begin to look that way again? Do you now grow familiar with a life so like to that which was once your state of death? and bear that easily that once was the breaking of your heart? O christians, turn not away from that God again, who once fetched you home, with so much smart and so much grace! with such a twist of love and fatherly severity! Methinks when you remember how you were once

awakened, you should not easily fall asleep again. And when you remember the thoughts which then were in your hearts, and the tears that were in your eyes, and the earnest prayers which you then put up, that God would receive, and take you for his own, you should not now forget him, and live as if you could live without him. Remember that so far as you withdraw your hearts from God, and let them follow inferior things, so far you contradict his works upon your hearts; so far you violate your covenant with him, or sin against it; so far you are revolters, and go against the principal part of your professed religion; yea, so far you are ungodly as you thus withdraw your hearts from God. Cleave to him, and prosecute your covenant, if you will have the saving benefits of his love and covenant.

3. Moreover, the servants of God are doubly obliged to walk with him, because they have had that experience of the goodness, the safety, and the sweetness of it, which strangers have not. Do you not remember how glad you were, when you first believed that he pardoned and accepted you? and how much you rejoiced in his love and entertainment? and how much better you found your Father's house, than ever you had found your sinful state? and how much sweeter his service was, than you did before believe? It is like you can remember something like that which is described in Luke xv. 20, 22—24, "And he arose and came to his father; but when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him: and the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet, and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead, and is alive again, he was lost, and is found." What would you have thought or said of this prodigal, if after all this he should have been weary of his father's house and company, and have taken more pleasure in his former company? Would you not have said, He was a forgetful and unthankful wretch, and worthy never more to be received? I do not speak to you now as to apostates, that are turned ungodly, and have quite forsaken God and holiness; but I beseech you consider what it is, after such experiences and obligations as these, so much as to abate your love, and grow remiss, and mindless, and indifferent, as if you were weary of God, and were inclined to neglect him, and look again to the world for your hope, and satisfaction, and delight! As you love your souls, and as you would avoid the sorrows which are greater than any that ever you felt, take heed of slighting the love that hath done such wonders for you, and of dealing so unthankfully with the everlasting God, and of turning thus away from him that hath received you! Remember, whilst you live, the love of your espousals. Was God so good to you at the first, and holiness so desirable? and is it not so still?

And I am sure that your own experience will bear witness, that since that time, in all your lives, it never was so well with you as when you walked most faithfully with God. If you have received any falls and hurts, it hath been when you have straggled from him; if ever you had safety, peace, or joy, it hath been when you have been nearest to him; your wounds, and grief, and death, hath been the fruit of your own ways, and of your forsaking him: your recovery, and health, and life, have been the fruit of his ways, and of your adhering to him: many and many a time you have confessed this, and have said, It is good for me to draw near to God. He hath helped you when none else could help you, and comforted you when none else could comfort you. How far are you above the worldling's happiness, when you are nigh to God! One lively thought of his greatness, and excellency, and of his love to you in Jesus Christ, will make the name of wealth, and honour, and favour, and preferment, and sensual pleasures, to seem to you as words of no signification. How indifferent will you be, as to your prosperity in the world, when you feel what it is to walk with God! If you are lively, experimental christians, you have found this to be true: have you not found that it is the very health, and ease, and proper employment of your souls to walk with God, and keep close to him? and that all goes well with you while you can do thus, however the world doth esteem or use you? and that when you grow strange or disobedient to God, and mindless of his goodness, his presence, and his authority, you are like the stomach that is sick, and like a bone that is out of joint, that can have no ease till it be healed, and restored to its proper place? No meats or drinks, no company or recreation, no wealth or greatness, will serve to make a sick man well, or ease the dislocated bones. Nothing will serve a faithful, holy soul but God: this is the cause of the dolour of his heart, and of the secret groans and complainings of his life, because in this life of distance and imperfection, he finds himself so far from God; and when he hath done all that he can, he is still so dark, and strange, and cold in his affections! When persecution driveth him from the ordinances and public worship, or when sin hath set him at a greater distance from his God, he bemoaneth his soul, as David in his banishment from the tabernacle: "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God? My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God?" Psal. xlii. 1, 2, &c. And it is no wonder, if with his greatest joy he be yet clouded with these sorrows, because he yet wanteth more of God than he enjoyeth; and his enjoying graces (love and joy) are yet imperfect. But when he hath attained his nearest approach to God, he will have fulness of delight in fulness of fruition.

O christians! do I need to tell you, that after all the trials you have made in the world, you have never found any state of life that was worthy your desires, nor that gave you any true content, but only this living upon God? If you have not found such comfort here as others have done, yet at least you have seen it afar off, within your reach; as men that in the Indies, in the discovery of plantations, expect gold mines, when they find those golden sands that promise it. You have found a life which is certainly desirable, and leadeth to joy in the midst of sorrow; and it is no small joy to have a certain promise and prospect of everlasting joy. It is therefore more excusable in those that never tasted any better than the pleasures of the flesh, to neglect this sweeter heavenly life, than it is in you, that have been convinced by your own experience, that there is no life to be compared with it.

4. Your walking with God is the necessary prosecution of your choice and hopes of life eternal. It is your necessary preparation to your enjoying him in heaven. And have you fixed on those hopes with so great reason and deliberation, and will you now draw back and be slack in the prosecution of them? Have you gone so far in the way to heaven, and do you now begin to look behind you, as if you were about to change your mind? Paul setteth you a

better example: "Yea, doubtless, I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him.——If by any means I might attain to the resurrection of the dead: not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus," Phil. iii. 8—13. He compareth himself to a runner in a race, that till he apprehend the prize or mark, doth still make forward with all his might, and will not so much as mind or look at any thing behind him, that would turn him back, or stop him in his course. The world and the flesh are the things behind us: we turned our backs upon them at our conversion, when we turned to God: it is these that would now call back our thoughts, and corrupt our affections, when we should run on, and reach forward to the heavenly prize: it is God and heaven, and the remaining duties of a holy life, that are the things before us! And shall we now look back? what we, that are running and striving for a crown of endless glory! we, that if we lose it, do lose our souls and hopes for ever! we, that have loitered in the morning of our lives, and lost so much precious time as we have done! we, that have gone so far in our way, and held out through so many difficulties and assaults! shall we now grow weary of walking with God, and begin to look to the things behind us? Did he not tell us at the first, that father and mother, and house and land, and life, and all things, must be forsaken for Christ, if we will be his disciples? These are the things behind us, which we turned our back on when we consented to the covenant; and are they now grown better, or is God grown worse, that we turn our hearts from him to them? When we first begun our christian race, it was upon supposition that it was for that immortal crown, which all the world is not to be compared to: and have we not still the same consideration before us, to move us to hold on till we attain it? Hold on, christians, it is for heaven: is there not enough in that word to drive back all the cares and pleasures, that importune your minds to forget your God? is there not enough in that word to quicken you up in your greatest dulness; and to call you home, when you are wandering from God; and to make you again fall out with all that would reduce you, or divert you, and call it vanity and vexation of spirit? Methinks the forethought of that life and work which you hope to have with God for ever, should make you earnestly desire to have as much of the like on earth, as is here to be attained! If it will be your heaven and happiness then, it must needs be desirable now. It is not beseeming a man that saith he is seeking for perfect communion with God in heaven, and that above all things, (as every christian doth,) to live in a daily neglect or forgetfulness of God on earth. Delightfully to draw near him, and exercise all our faculties upon him, or for him, sometimes in prayer and contemplation on himself, and always in works of obedience to him; this is the life that beseemeth those that profess to seek eternal life. O therefore let us make it our daily work, to keep our God and glory in our eye, and to spur on our dull affections, and in the diligent attendance and following the Captain of our salvation, to prosecute our expected end.

5. Lastly consider, that God doth purposely provide you hard entertainment in the world, and cause every creature to deny you the pleasure and satisfaction which you desire, that so you may have none to walk with but himself, with any heart-settling comfort and content. If you see not enough in him to allure you to himself, you shall feel enough in the world to drive you to him; if his love and goodness will not serve you alone to make him your pleasure, and hold you to him in the best and most excellent way, (of love,) at least the storms and troubles that are abroad shall show you a necessity of keeping close to God; and the love of yourselves shall help you to do that, which was not done by the attraction of his love alone. If you will put him to it, to send out his command to every creature, to cross and vex you, and disappoint all expectations from it, that so he may force you to remember your Father and your home, deny not then but it is long of yourselves that you were not saved in an easier way. Would you wish God to make that condition pleasant to you, which he seeth you take too much pleasure in already (or seek and desire it, at least)? whenas it is the pleasantness of the creature that is your danger, and which detaineth your thoughts and affections from himself? If you could but learn to walk with him, and to take up your pleasure in his love appearing to you in his creatures, and to make their sweetness a means to your apprehension of the sweetness of his favour, and of the everlasting joys, then you might say the creature doth you good; and then it is like you might be permitted to possess and use it for such pleasure. The jealous God will watch your hearts, though you watch them not; and he will make you know that he seeth which way they run out from him, and what creature it is that is minded and delighted in, while he is neglected, as if he were unsuitable, and scarce desirable. And you must never look that he should long permit you those prohibited delights, or let you alone in those idolatrous inclinations. If he love you, he will cure that carnal love, and recover your love to himself that hath deserved it. If he intended not your salvation, he may let you go, and try again whether the creature will prove better to you than himself; but you cannot think that he will thus let go his children that must live with him for ever. Have you not perceived that this is the design and meaning of his afflicting and disappointing providences? even to leave you no comfortable entertainment or converse but with himself, and with his servants, and with those means that lead you to himself? If you begin to desire to lodge abroad in strange habitations, he will uncover those houses, and will not leave you a room that is dry to put your head in; or he will throw open the doors, and leave all open to the lust of ravenous beasts and robbers. He will have thy heart, and he will have thy company, because thou art his child, and because he loveth thee. He will allow thee neither thy carnal delights nor hopes. If he perceive thee either taking that pleasure in thy prosperity, which thou shouldst take in him alone, or hoping at least that the world may hereafter prove more amiable and delightful to thee; the more he loveth thee, the more his providence shall conspire with his grace, to change thy mind, by depriving thee of thy unwholesome, dangerous delights, and of all thy hopes of such hereafter. Use the world as a traveller, for the ends to which it was ordained, to the service of God, and the furtherance of thy salvation, and then thou shalt find that God will furnish thee with all that is necessary to these necessary ends: but if the world must have your love and care, and must be your chiefest business and delight, and your excuse for not attending upon God, murmur

not, nor marvel not, if he dispose of it and you accordingly. If you are yet too healthful to think with seriousness on your eternal state; if you are too rich to part with all for Christ, or openly to own his cause; if you are too much esteemed in the world to own a scorned, slandered religion; if you are so busy for earth, that you cannot have time to think of heaven; if you have so much delight in house or land, or in your employments, or recreations, or friends, that God and godliness can have little or none of your delight: marvel not then if God do shake your health, or waste your riches, or turn your honour into contempt, and suffer men to slander and reproach you, and spit in your face, and make you of no reputation: marvel not if he turn you out of all, or turn all to your grief and trouble, and make the world a desert to you, and the inhabitants as wolves and bears. The great lesson that Christ hath undertaken to teach you, is the difference betwixt the Creator and the creature, and the difference betwixt heaven and earth. The great work that Christ hath undertaken to do upon you, is to recover your hearts from the world to God: and this lesson he will teach you, and this work he will do upon you, whatever it cost you: for it must be done. Yet is not the world unjust enough, or cruel, or vexatious enough to you, to teach you to come home, and take up your content and rest in God? It may then prove more cruel, and more vexatious to you, till you have better learned this necessary lesson. Yet is not your condition empty enough of carnal delusory pleasures, to wean you from the world, and make you look to surer things? Yet are you keeping up your worldly hopes, that the world will again prove better to you, and that you shall have happy days hereafter? It seems you are not yet brought low enough: you must yet take another purge, and perhaps a sharper than you took before: you must have more blood-letting, till your deliration cease, and your feverish thirst after creature comforts do abate. It is sad that we should be so foolish and unkind, as to stay from God, as long as any preferments, or pleasures, or profits in the world, will entertain us: but seeing it is so, let us be thankful both to that grace and that providence which cureth us. If you perceive it not better to dwell with God, than with a flattering, prospering world, he will try whether you can think it better to dwell with God, than with a malicious, cruel, persecuting world; and whether it be better to have your hearts in heaven, than in poverty, prison, banishment, or reproach. If you find it not better to converse with God, than with those that honour you, please you, or prefer you; he will try whether you can think it better to converse with him, than with those that hate, revile, belie, and persecute you. And are these the wise and wholesome methods of our great Physician? And shall we not rather be ruled by him, than by our brutish appetites? and think better of his counsels, than of the blind concupiscence of the flesh? Let this be the issue of all our sufferings, and all the cruelties and injuries of the world, to drive us home to converse with God, and to turn our desires, and labours, and expectations, to the true felicity that never will forsake us; and then, the will of the Lord be done! Let him choose his means, if this may be the end: let us kiss the rod, and not revile it, if this may be the fruit of his corrections. Who will not pray that God would deny us those contents, which keep us from seeking our content in him? And that he would deny us all those hurtful pleasures which hinder us from pleasing him, or from making him and his ways our chiefest pleasure? and that he would permit us no such creature converse, as hindereth our converse with him? It is best living there (be it in prison or at liberty) where we may live best to God. Come home, O suffering christian, to thy God! take up thy content and rest in him; be satisfied with him as thy portion; and remember where it is that he is to be fully and perpetually enjoyed; and then it is good for thee that thou wast afflicted; for all thy sufferings have their end.

This last consideration will be further prosecuted in the following part: and the Directions for Walking with God, which I should here give you, I have reserved for a peculiar Treatise, entitled, "A Christian Directory."

THE

CHRISTIAN'S CONVERSE WITH GOD:

OR,

THE INSUFFICIENCY AND UNCERTAINTY OF HUMAN FRIENDSHIP; AND THE IMPROVEMENT OF SOLITUDE IN CONVERSE WITH GOD.

JOHN XVI. 32.

BEHOLD, THE HOUR COMETH, YEA, IS NOW COME, THAT YE SHALL BE SCATTERED, EVERY MAN TO HIS OWN, AND SHALL LEAVE ME ALONE: AND YET I AM NOT ALONE, BECAUSE THE FATHER IS WITH ME.

HAVING treated of our conformity to Christ in sufferings, in general, I since came distinctly to treat of his particular sufferings in which we must be conformed to him: and having gone over many of those particulars, I am this day to handle the instance of Christ's being forsaken by his friends and followers.

He thought meet to foretell them how they should manifest their infirmity and untrustiness in this temporary forsaking of him, that so he might fullier convince them, that he knew what was in man, and that he knew future contingencies, (or things to come, which seem most dependent on the will of man,) and that he voluntarily submitted to his deserted state, and expected no support from creatures, but that man should then do least for Christ, when Christ was doing most for man: that man, by an un-

thankful forsaking Christ, should then manifest his forsaken, deplorate state, when Christ was to make atonement for his reconciliation to God, and was preparing the most costly remedy for his recovery. He foretold them of the fruit which their infirmity would produce, to humble them, that were apt to think too highly of themselves for the late free confession they had made of Christ, when they had newly said, "Now we are sure that thou knowest all things: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God," ver. 30.

He answereth them, "Do ye now believe? Behold, the hour cometh," &c. Not that Christ would not have his servants know his graces in them, but he would also have them know the corruption that is latent, and the infirmity consistent with their grace. We are very apt to judge of all that is in us, and of all that we shall do hereafter, by what we feel at the present upon our hearts. As when we feel the stirring of some corruption, we are apt to think that there is nothing else, and hardly perceive the contrary grace, and are apt to think it will never be better with us: so when we feel the exercise of faith, desire, or love, we are apt to overlook the contrary corruptions, and to think that we shall never feel more. But Christ would keep us both humble and vigilant, by acquainting us with the mutability and inconstancy of our minds. When it goes well with us, we forget that the time is coming when it may go worse. As Christ said to his disciples here in the case of believing, we may say to ourselves in that and other cases, Do we now believe? It is well: but the time may be coming in which we may be brought to shake with the stirrings of our remaining unbelief, and shrewdly tempted to question the truth of christianity itself, and of the holy Scriptures, and of the life to come. Do we now rejoice in the persuasions of the love of God? The time may be coming when we may think ourselves forsaken and undone, and think he will esteem and use us as his enemies. Do we now pray with fervour, and pour out our souls enlargedly to God? It is well: but the time may be coming when we shall seem to be as dumb and prayerless, and say, we cannot pray, or else we find no audience and acceptance of our prayers. Christ knoweth that in us which we little know by ourselves; and therefore may foreknow that we will commit such sins, or fall into such dangers, as we little fear.

What Christ here prophesieth to them, did afterwards all come to pass. As soon as ever danger and trouble did appear, they began to flag, and to show how ill they could adhere unto him, or suffer with him, without his special corroborating grace. In the garden when he was sweating blood in prayer, they were sleeping: "Though the spirit was willing, the flesh was weak:" they could not "watch with him one hour," Matt. xxvi. 40, 41. When he was apprehended, they shifted each man for himself, "Then all the disciples forsook him and fled," ver. 56: and as this is said to be, "that the Scriptures might be fulfilled," ver. 54, 56; so it might be said to be, that this prediction of Christ himself might be fulfilled. Not that Scripture prophecies did cause the sin by which they were fulfilled; nor that God caused the sin, to fulfil his own predictions; but that God cannot be deceived who foretold in Scriptures long before that thus it would come to pass. When it is said that "thus it must be that the Scripture may be fulfilled," the meaning is not, that thus God will make it be, or thus he causeth men to do, that he may fulfil the Scriptures. It is not *necessitas consequentis vel causata*, that is inferred from predictions; but only *necessitas consequentiæ*; a logical necessity *inordine cognoscendi et dicendi*; not a natural necessity *in ordine essendi*: not a necessity of the thing itself, as caused by the prediction or decree; but a necessity of the truth of this conclusion in arguing; such a thing will be, because God hath decreed, foreknown, or foretold it: or, whatever God foretelleth, must necessarily come to pass; that is, will certainly come to pass: but this God hath foretold; therefore this will come to pass.

Here are three observable points in the text, that are worthy our distinct consideration, though for brevity sake I shall handle them together.

1. That Christ was forsaken by his own disciples and left alone.

2. When the disciples left Christ, they were scattered every one to his own. They returned to their old habitations, and old acquaintance, and old employment, as if their hopes and hearts had been almost broken, and they had lost all their labour in following Christ so long. Yet the root of faith and love that still remained, caused them to inquire further of the end, and to come together in secret to confer about these matters.

3. When Christ was forsaken of his disciples and left alone, yet was he not forsaken of his Father, nor left so alone as to be separated from him or his love.

We are now to consider of this not only as a part of Christ's humiliation, but also as a point in which we must expect to be conformed to him. It may possibly seem strange to us that Christ would suffer all his disciples to forsake him in his extremity; and I doubt it will seem strange to us, when in our extremity, and our suffering for Christ, (and perhaps for them,) we shall find ourselves forsaken by those that we most highly valued, and had the greatest familiarity with. But there are many reasons of this permissive providence open to our observation.

1. No wonder, if when Christ was suffering for sin, he would even then permit the power and odiousness of sin to break forth, that it might be known he suffered not in vain. No wonder, if he permitted his followers to desert him, and show the latent unbelief, and selfishness, and unthankfulness that remained in them, that so they might know that the death of Christ was as necessary for them as for others; and the universality of the disease might show the need that the remedy should be universal. And it is none of Christ's intent to make his servants to seem better than they are, to themselves or others, or to honour himself by the hiding of their faults, but to magnify his pardoning and healing grace, by the means or occasion of the sins which he pardoneth and healeth.

2. Hereby he will bring his followers to the fuller knowledge of themselves, and show them that which all their days should keep them humble and watchful, and save them from presumption and trusting in themselves. When we have made any full confession of Christ, or done him any considerable service, we are apt to say with the disciples, "Behold, we have forsaken all and followed thee: what shall we have?" Matt. xix. 27. As if they had rather been givers to Christ than receivers from him; and had merited at his hands. But when Peter forsweareth him, and the rest shift for themselves; and when they come to themselves, after such cowardly and ungrateful dealings; then they will better understand their weakness, and know on whom they must depend.

3. Hereby also they shall better understand what they would have been if God had left them to themselves, that so they may be thankful for grace received, and may not boast themselves against the miser-

able world, as if they had made themselves to differ, and had not received all that grace by which they excel the common sort. When our falls have hurt us and shamed us, we shall know to whom we must be beholden to support us.

4. Christ would permit his disciples thus far to forsake him, because he would have no support from man, in his sufferings for man. This was part of his voluntary humiliation, to be deprived of all earthly comforts, and to bear affliction even from those few, that but lately were his faithful servants. That men, dealing like men, and sinners, while he was doing like God, and as a Saviour, no man might challenge to himself the honour of contributing to the redemption of the world, so much as by encouraging the Redeemer.

5. Christ did permit the faith and courage of his disciples thus far to fail, that their witness to him might be of the greater credit and authority, when his actual resurrection, and the communication of the Spirit, should compel them to believe. When all their doubts were dissipated, they that had doubted themselves, and yet were constrained to believe, would be received as the most impartial witnesses by the doubting world.

6. Lastly, by the desertion and dissipation of his disciples, Christ would teach us, whenever we are called to follow him in suffering, what to expect from the best of men; even to know that of themselves they are untrusty, and may fail us; and therefore not to look for too much assistance or encouragement from them. Paul lived in a time when christians were more self-denying and stedfast than they are now. And Paul was one that might better expect to be faithfully accompanied in his sufferings for Christ, than any of us: and yet he saith, "At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me," 2 Tim. iv. 16; and prayeth, that it be not laid to their charge. Thus you have seen some reasons why Christ consented to be left of all, and permitted his disciples to desert him in his sufferings.

Yet, note here, that it is but a partial, temporary forsaking that Christ permitteth; and not a total or final forsaking or apostasy. Though he will let them see that they are yet men, he will not leave them to be but as other men: nor will he quite cast them off, or suffer them to perish.

Nor is it all alike that thus forsake him. Peter doth not do as Judas. The sincere may manifest their infirmity; but the hypocrites will manifest their hypocrisy.

And accordingly in our sufferings, our familiars that were false-hearted (as being worldlings and carnal at the heart) may perhaps betray us, and set against us, or forsake the cause of Christ, and follow the way of gain and honour. When our tempted, shrinking friends, that yet may have some sincerity, may perhaps look strange at us, and seem not to know us, and may hide their heads and show their fears; and perhaps also begin to study some self-deceiving arguments and distinctions, and to stretch their consciences, and venture on some sin, because they are afraid to venture on affliction; till Christ shall cast a gracious, rebuking, quickening aspect on them, and shame them for their sinful shame, and fear them from their sinful fears, and inflame their love to him by the motions of his love to them, and destroy the love that turned them from him: and then the same men that dishonourably failed Christ and us, and began to shrink, will turn back and reassume their arms, and by patient suffering overcome, and win the crown, as we have done before.

Use. Christians, expect to be conformed to our Lord in this part of his humiliation also. Are your friends yet fast and friendly to you? For all that expect that many of them, at least, should prove less friendly; and promise not yourselves an unchanged constancy in them. Are they yet useful to you? Expect the time when they cannot help you. Are they your comforters and delight, and is their company much of your solace upon earth? Be ready for the time when they may become your sharpest scourges, and most heart-piercing griefs, or at least when you shall say, "We have no pleasure in them." Have any of them, or all, already failed you? What wonder? Are they not men, and sinners? To whom were they ever so constant as not to fail them? Rebuke yourselves for your unwarrantable expectations from them; and learn hereafter to know what man is, and expect that friends should use you as followeth.

1. Some of them that you thought sincere, shall prove perhaps unfaithful and dissemblers, and upon fallings-out, or matters of self-interest, may seek your ruin. Are you better than David, that had an Ahithophel? Or than Paul, that had a Demas? Or than Christ, that had a Judas? Some will forsake God: what wonder then if they forsake you? "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold," Matt. xxiv. 12. Where pride, and vain-glory, and sensuality, and worldliness are unmortified at the heart, there is no trustiness in such persons: for their wealth, or honour, or fleshly interest, they will part with God and their salvation; much more with their best-deserving friends. Why may not you, as well as Job, have occasion to complain, "He hath put my brethren far from me, and my acquaintance are verily estranged from me. My kinsfolk have failed, and my familiar friends have forgotten me. They that dwell in my house, and my maidens, count me for a stranger: I am an alien in their sight. I called my servant, and he gave me no answer: I entreated him with my mouth: my breath is strange to my wife; though I entreated for the children's sake of my own body: yea, young children despised me: I arose, and they spake against me: all my inward friends abhorred me; and they whom I loved are turned against me," Job xix. 13—19. Why may not you as well as David be put to say, "Yea, mine own familiar friend in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lift up his heel against me," Psal. xli. 9. Those that have been most acquainted with the secrets of your soul, and privy to your very thoughts, may be the persons that shall betray you, or grow strange to you. Those that you have most obliged by benefits, may prove your greatest enemies. You may find some of your friends like birds of prey, that hover about you for what they can get, and when they have caught it fly away. If you have given them all that you have, they will forsake you, and perhaps reproach you, because you have no more to give them. They are your friends more for what they yet expect from you, than for what they have already received. If you cannot still be helpful to them, or feed their covetous desires, or supply their wants, you are to them but as one that they had never known. Many a faithful minister of Christ hath studied, and preached, and prayed, and wept for their people's souls, and after all have been taken for their enemies, and used as such; yea, even because they have done so much for them. Like the patient, that being cured of a mortal sickness, sued his physician at law for making him sick with the physic. (But it is, indeed, our uncured patients only that are offended with us.) Paul was accounted an enemy to the Galatians, because he told them the truth. Ungrateful truth maketh the faith-

fullest preachers most ungrateful. It must seem no wonder to a preacher of the gospel, when he hath entreated, prayed, and wept night and day for miserable souls, and laid his hands as it were under their feet, in hopes of their conversion and salvation, to find them after all his bitter enemies, and seeking his destruction, that could have laid down his life for their salvation. Jeremy seemed too impatient under his affliction, when he said, "Give heed to me, O Lord, and hearken to the voice of them that contend with me. Shall evil be recompensed for good? Remember that I stood before thee to speak good for them, and to turn away thy wrath from them. Therefore deliver up their children to the famine, and pour out their blood by the force of the sword," &c. Jer. xviii. 19, 20.

Thus may ingratitude afflict you, and kindness be requited with unkindness, and the greatest benefits be forgotten, and requited with the greatest wrongs. Your old familiars may be your foes; and you may be put to say as Jeremy, "For I heard the defaming of many: fear on every side. Report, say they, and we will report it. All my familiars watched for my halting, saying, Peradventure he will be enticed, and we shall prevail against him, and we shall take our revenge on him," Jer. xx. 10. Thus must the servants of Christ be used, in conformity to their suffering Head.

2. And some that are sincere, and whose hearts are with you, may yet be drawn by temptation to disown you. When malice is slandering you, timorous friendship may perhaps be silent, and afraid to justify you or take your part. When a Peter in such inbecility and fear can disown and deny his suffering Lord, what wonder if faint-hearted friends disown you, or me, that may give them too much occasion or pretence? Why may not you and I be put to say as David did, "My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my sore, and my kinsmen stand afar off. They that seek after my life lay snares for me: and they that seek my hurt speak mischievous things, and imagine deceits all the day long," Psal. xxxviii. 11, 12. They that in fearfulness will fail their Maker and Redeemer, and hazard their salvation, may by a smaller temptation be drawn to fail such friends as we.

3. Moreover, a hundred things may occasion fallings-out even amongst unfeigned friends. Passions may cause inconvenient actions or expressions, and these may cause passions in their friends; and these may grow so high till friends do seem to one another to be like enemies. Paul and Barnabas may grow so hot, as to fall out to a parting. How easily can Satan set fire on the tinder which he findeth in the best and gentlest natures, if God permit him! No friends so near and dear, that passionate weaknesses may not either alienate or make a grief to one another. How apt are we to take unkindnesses at one another, and to be suspicious of our friends, or offended with them! And how apt to give occasion of such offence! How apt are we to censure one another, and to misinterpret the words and actions of our friends! And how apt to give occasion of such mistakes and cutting censures! And the more kindness we have found in, or expected from, our friends, the more their real or supposed injuries will affect us. We are apt to say, Had it been a stranger, I could have borne it: but to be used thus by my bosom or familiar friend, goes near my heart. And indeed the unkindnesses of friends is no small affliction; the suffering going usually as near the heart, as the person that caused it was near it. Especially when our own weakness causeth us to forget the frailty and infirmities of man, and with what allowances and expectations we must choose and use our friends; and when we forget the love that remaineth in the midst of passions.

4. Also cross interests and unsuitableness may exceedingly interrupt the fastest friendship. Friendship is very much founded in suitableness, and maintained by it: and among mortals, there is no perfect suitableness to be found; but much unsuitableness still remaineth. That which pleaseth one, is displeasing to another. One liketh this place, and the other that; one liketh this habit, and the other that; one is for mirth, and the other for sadness; one for talk, and the other for silence; one for a public, and the other for a private life. And their personality or individuation having self-love as inseparable, will unavoidably cause a contrariety of interests. The creature is insufficient for us; if one have it, perhaps the other must want it: like a covering too narrow for the bed. Sometimes our reputations seem to stand cross, so that one man's is diminished by another's. And then how apt is envy to create a grudge, and raise unfriendly jealousies and distastes! Sometimes the commodity of one is the discommodity of the other; and then *mine* and *thine* (which are contrary to the community of friendship) may divide, and alienate, and make two of those that seemed one. The instances of Abraham and Lot, (upon the difference among their servants,) and of Isaac and Ishmael, and of Jacob and Esau, and of Laban and Jacob, and of Leah and Rachel, and of Joseph and his brethren, and of Saul and David, and of Ziba, Mephibosheth, and David, with many others, tell us this. It is rare to meet with a Jonathan, that will endearedly love that man to the death, who is appointed to deprive him of a kingdom. If one can but say, I suffer by him, or I am a loser by him, it seemeth enough to excuse unfriendly thoughts and actions. When you can gratify the desires of all covetous, ambitious, self-seeking persons in the world, or else cure their diseases, and possess their minds with perfect charity, then all the world will be your friends.

5. Cross opinions also are like to alienate many of your friends. This age hath over and over again given the world as full and sad demonstrations of the power of cross opinions to alienate friends, and make divisions, as most ages of the world have ever had. If your friend be proud, it is wonderful how he will slight you, and withdraw his love, if you be not of his mind. If he be zealous, he is easily tempted to think it a part of his duty to God, to disown you if you differ from him, as taking you for one that disowneth the truth of God, and therefore one that God himself disowneth; or at least to grow cold in his affection toward you, and to decline from you, as he that thinks you do from God. As agreement in opinions doth strangely reconcile affections; so disagreement doth secretly and strangely alienate them: even before you are well aware, your friend hath lost possession of your hearts, because of an unavoidable diversity of apprehensions. When all your friends have the same intellectual complexion, and temperature, and measure of understanding with yourselves, then you may have hope to escape the ruptures which unlikeness and differences of apprehensions might else cause.

6. Moreover, some of your friends may so far overgrow you in wisdom, or wealth, or honour, or worth in their own conceits, that they may begin to take you to be unsuitable for them, and unmeet for their further special friendship. Alas! poor man, they will pity thee that thou art no wiser, and that thou hast no greater light to change thy mind as fast as they, or that thou art so weak and ignorant

as not to see what seems to them so clear a truth; or that thou art so simple to cast away thyself by crossing them that might prefer thee, or to fall under the displeasure of those that have power to raise or ruin thee: but if thou be so simple, thou mayst be the object of their lamentation, but art no familiar friend for them. They think it fittest to close and converse with those of their own rank and stature, and not with such shrubs and children, that may prove their trouble and dishonour.

7. And some of your friends will think that by a more thorough acquaintance with you, they have found out more of your infirmities or faults; and therefore have found that you are less amiable and valuable than at first they judged you. They will think that by distance, unacquaintedness, and an over-hasty love and judgment, they were mistaken in you; and that now they see reason to repent of the love which they think was guilty of some errors and excess: when they come nearer you, and have had more trial of you, they will think they are fitter to judge of you than before: and indeed our defects are so many, and all our infirmities so great, that the more men know us, the more they may see in us that deserveth pity or reproof; and as pictures, we appear less beautiful at the nearest view: though this will not warrant the withdrawing of that love which is due to friends, and to virtue, even in the imperfect; nor will excuse that alienation, and decay of friendship, that is caused by the pride of such as overlook perhaps much greater failings and weaknesses in themselves, which need forgiveness.

8. And perhaps some of your friends will grow weary of their friendship, having that infirmity of human nature, not to be much pleased with one thing long. Their love is a flower that quickly withereth; it is a short-lived thing that soon groweth old. It must be novelty that must feed their love and their delight.

9. And perhaps they may have got some better friends in their apprehensions, they may have so much interest as to take them up, and leave no room for ancient friends. It may be, they have met with those that are more suitable, or can be more useful to them; that have more learning, or wit, or wealth, or power, than you have, and therefore seem more worthy of their friendship.

10. And some of them may think when you are in a low and suffering state, and in danger of worse, that it is part of their duty of self-preservation to be strange to you (though in heart they wish you well). They will think they are not bound to hazard themselves upon the displeasure of superiors, to own or befriend you, or any other: though they must not desert Christ, they think they may desert a man for their own preservation.

To avoid both extremes, in such a case, men must both study to understand which way is most serviceable to Christ and to his church, and withal, to be able to deny themselves, and also must study to understand what Christ meaneth in his final sentence, "Inasmuch as you did it (or did it not) to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it (or did it not) to me." As, if it were to visit the contagious; we must neither cast away our lives to do no good, or for that which in value holdeth no proportion with them; nor yet must we deny to run any hazard when it is indeed our duty; so is it in our visiting those that suffer for the cause of Christ (only here the owning them being the confessing of him, we need more seldom to fear being too forward).

11. And some of your friends may cover their unfaithfulness with the pretence of some fault that you have been guilty of, some error that you hold, or some unhandsome or culpable act that you have done, or some duty that you have left undone or failed in. For they think there is not a better shelter for their unfaithfulness, than to pretend for it the name and cause of God, and so to make a duty of their sin. Who would not justify them, if they can but prove, that God requireth them, and religion obligeth them, to forsake you for your faults? There are few crimes in the world that by some are not fathered on God, (that most hateth them,) as thinking no name can so much honour them. False friends therefore use this means as well as other hypocrites: and though God is love, and commendeth nothing more than uncharitableness and malice, yet these are commonly, by false-hearted hypocrites, called by some pious, virtuous names, and God himself is entitled to them: so that few worldlings, ambitious persons, or time-servers, but will confidently pretend religion for all their falsehood to their friends, or bloody cruelty to the servants of Christ, that comply not with their carnal interest.

12. Perhaps some of your friends may really mistake your case, and think that you suffer as evil-doers, and instead of comforting you, may be your sharpest censurers. This is one of the most notable things set out to our observation in the book of Job: it was not the smallest part of his affliction, that when the hand of God was heavy upon him, and then if ever was the time for his friends to have been his comforters and friends indeed, on the contrary they became his scourge, and by unjust accusations, and misinterpretations of the providence of God, did greatly add to his affliction! When God had taken away his children, wealth, and health, his friends would take away the reputation and comfort of his integrity; and under pretence of bringing him to repentance, did charge him with that which he was never guilty of; they wounded his good name, and would have wounded his conscience, and deprived him of his inward peace: censorious, false accusing friends do cut deeper than malicious, slandering enemies. It is no wonder, if strangers or enemies do misjudge and misreport our actions; but when your bosom friends, that should most intimately know you, and be the chief witnesses of your innocency against all others, shall in their jealousy, or envy, or peevishness, or falling-out, be your chief reproachers and unjust accusers, as it makes it seem more credible to others, so it will come nearest to yourselves. And yet this is a thing that must be expected; yea, even your most self-denying acts of obedience to God may be so misunderstood by godly men, and real friends, as by them to be taken for your great miscarriage, and turned to your rebuke: as David's dancing before the ark was by his wife; which yet did but make him resolve to be yet more vile. If you be cast into poverty, or disgrace, or prison, or banishment, for your necessary obedience to Christ, perhaps your friend or wife may become your accuser for this your greatest service, and say, This is your own doing: your rashness, or indiscretion, or self-conceitedness, or wilfulness, hath brought it upon you. What need had you to say such words, or to do this or that? Why could not you have yielded in so small a matter? Perhaps your costliest and most excellent obedience shall, by your nearest friends, be called the fruits of pride, or humour, or passion, or some corrupt affection, or at least of folly or inconsiderateness. When flesh and blood hath long been striving in you against your duty, and saying, Do not cast away thyself: O serve not God at so dear a rate! God doth not require thee to undo thyself; why shouldst thou not avoid so great incon-

veniences? When with much ado you have conquered all your carnal reasonings, and denied yourselves and your carnal interests, you must expect, even from some religious friends, to be accused for these very actions, and perhaps their accusations may fasten such a blot upon your names, as shall never be washed out till the day of judgment. By difference of interests or apprehensions, and by unacquaintedness with your hearts and actions, the righteousness of the righteous may be thus taken from him, and friends may do the work of enemies, yea, of Satan himself, the accuser of the brethren; and may prove as thorns in your bed, and gravel in your shoes, yea, in your eyes, and wrong you much more than open adversaries could have done. How it is like to go with that man's reputation, you may easily judge, whose friends are like Job's and his enemies like David's, that lay snares before him, and diligently watch for matter of reproach; yet this may befall the best of men.

13. You may be permitted by God to fall into some real crime, and then your friends may possibly think it is their duty to disown you, so far as you have wronged God: when you provoke God to frown upon you, he may cause your friends to frown upon you: if you will fall out with him, and grow strange to him, no marvel if your truest friends fall out with you, and grow strange to you. They love you for your godliness, and for the sake of Christ; and therefore must abate their love, if you abate your godliness; and must, for the sake of Christ, be displeased with you for your sins. And if in such a case of real guilt, you should be displeased at their displeasure, and should expect that your friend should befriend your sin, or carry himself towards you in your guilt as if you were innocent, you will but show that you understand not the nature of true friendship, nor the use of a true friend; and are yet yourselves too friendly to your sins.

14. Moreover, those few friends that are truest to you, may be utterly unable to relieve you in your distress, or to give you ease, or do you any good. The case may be such that they can but pity you, and lament your sorrows, and weep over you: you may see in them that man is not as God, whose friendship can accomplish all the good that he desireth to his friends. The wisest, and greatest, and best of men, are silly comforters, and uneffectual helps. You may be sick, and pained, and grieved, and distressed, notwithstanding any thing that they can do for you; nay, perhaps in their ignorance, they may increase your misery, while they desire your relief; and by striving indirectly to help and ease you, may tie the knot faster and make you worse. They may provoke those more against you that oppress you, while they think they speak that which should tend to set you free: they may think to ease your troubled minds by such words as shall increase the trouble; or to deliver you as Peter would have delivered Christ, and saved his Saviour, first by carnal counsel; "Be it far from thee, Lord; this shall not be unto thee," Matt. xvi. 22; and then by carnal, unjust force (by drawing his sword against the officers). Love and good meaning will not prevent the mischiefs of ignorance and mistake. If your friend cut your throat, while he thought to cut but a vein to cure your disease, it is not his friendly meaning that will save your lives. Many a thousand sick people are killed by their friends, that attend them, with an earnest desire of their life; while they ignorantly give them that which is contrary to their disease, and will not be the less pernicious for the good meaning of the giver. Who have more tender affections than mothers to their children? And yet a great part of the calamity of the world of sickness, and the misery of man's life, proceedeth from the ignorant and erroneous indulgence of mothers to their children, who to please them, let them eat and drink what they will, and use them to excess and gluttony in their childhood, till nature be abused and mastered, and clogged with those superfluities and crudities, which are the dunghill matter of most of the following diseases of their lives.

I might here also remember you how your friends may themselves be overcome with a temptation, and then become the more dangerous tempters of you, by how much the greater their interest is in your affections. If they be infected with error, they are the likest persons to insnare you: if they be tainted with covetousness or pride, there is none so likely to draw you to the same sin: and so your friends may be in effect your most deadly enemies, deceivers, and destroyers.

15. And if you have friends that are never so firm and constant, they may prove (not only unable to relieve you, but) very additions to your grief. If they are afflicted in the participation of your sufferings, as your troubles are become theirs, (without your ease,) so their trouble for you will become yours, and so the stock of your sorrow will be increased. And they are mortals, and liable to distress as well as you. And therefore they are like to bear their share in several sorts of sufferings: and so friendship will make their sufferings to be yours; their sicknesses and pains, their fears and griefs, their wants and dangers, will all be yours. And the more they are your hearty friends, the more they will be yours. And so you will have as many additions to the proper burden of your griefs, as you have suffering friends: when you do but hear that they are dead, you say as Thomas, "Let us also go that we may die with him," John xi. 16. And having many such friends you will almost always have one or other of them in distress; and so be seldom free from sorrow; besides all that which is properly your own.

16. Lastly, if you have a friend that is both true and useful, yet you may be sure he must stay with you but a little while. "The godly men will cease, and the faithful fail from among the children of men; while men of lying, flattering lips and double hearts survive, and the wicked walk on every side, while the vilest men are exalted," Psal. xii. 1, 2, 8. While swarms of false, malicious men are left round about you, perhaps God will take away your dearest friends. If among a multitude of unfaithful ones, you have but one that is your friend indeed, perhaps God will take away that one. He may be separated from you into another country; or taken away to God by death. Not that God doth grudge you the mercy of a faithful friend; but that he would be your All, and would not have you hurt yourselves with too much affection to any creature, and for other reasons to be named anon.

And to be forsaken of your friends is not all your affliction: but to be so forsaken is a great aggravation of it. 1. For they used to forsake us in our greatest sufferings and straits, when we have the greatest need of them.

2. They fail us most at a dying hour, when all other worldly comfort faileth: as we must leave our houses, lands, and wealth, so must we for the present leave our friends: and as all the rest are silly comforters, when we have once received our citation to appear before the Lord, so also are our friends but silly comforters; they can weep over us, but they cannot, with all their care, delay the separating stroke of death one day or hour.

Only by their prayers, and holy advice, remembering us of everlasting things, and provoking us in the work of preparation, they may prove to us friends indeed. And therefore we must value a holy, heavenly, faithful friend, as one of the greatest treasures upon earth. And while we take notice how, as men, they may forsake us, we must not deny but that, as saints, they are precious, and of singular use to us; and Christ useth by them to communicate his mercies; and if any creatures in the world may be blessings to us, it is holy persons, that have most of God in their hearts and lives.

3. And it is an aggravation of the cross, that they often fail us, when we are most faithful in our duty, and stumble most upon the most excellent acts of our obedience.

4. And those are the persons that ofttimes fail us, of whom we have deserved best, and from whom we might have expected most.

Review the experiences of the choicest servants that Christ hath had in the world, and you shall find enough to confirm you of the vanity of man, and the instability of the dearest friends. How highly was Athanasius esteemed; and yet at last deserted and banished by the famous Constantine himself! How excellent a man was Gregory Nazianzen, and highly valued in the church; and yet by reproach and discouragements driven away from his church at Constantinople whither he was chosen, and envied by the bishops round about him. How worthy a man was the eloquent Chrysostom, and highly valued in the church; and yet how bitterly was he prosecuted by Hierom and Epiphanius; and banished, and died in a second banishment, by the provocation of factious, contentious bishops, and an empress impatient of his plain reproofs! What person more generally esteemed and honoured for learning, piety, and peaceableness, than Melancthon; and yet by the contentions of Illyricus and his party, he was made aweary of his life. As highly as Calvin was (deservedly) valued at Geneva, yet once in a popular lunacy and displeasure, they drove him out of their city, and in contempt of him some called their dogs by the name of Calvin (though after they were glad to entreat him to return). How much our Grindal and Abbot were esteemed, it appeareth by their advancement to the archbishopric of Canterbury; and yet who knoweth not that their eminent piety sufficed not to keep them from dejecting frowns! And if you say, that it is no wonder if with princes through interest, and with people through levity, it be thus; I might heap up instances of the like untrustiness of particular friends; but all history, and the experiences of the most, do so much abound with them, that I think it needless. Which of us must not say with David, that "All men are liars," Psal. cxvi.; that is, deceitful and untrusty; either through unfaithfulness, weakness, or insufficiency; that either will forsake us, or cannot help us in the time of need?

Was Christ forsaken in his extremity by his own disciples, to teach us what to expect, or bear? Think it not strange then to be conformed to your Lord, in this, as well as in other parts of his humiliation. Expect that men should prove deceitful: not that you should entertain censorious suspicions of your particular friends; but remember in general that man is frail, and the best too selfish and uncertain; and that it is no wonder if those should prove your greatest grief, from whom you had the highest expectations. Are you better than Job, or David, or Christ? and are your friends more firm and unchangeable than theirs?

Consider, 1. That creatures must be set at a sufficient distance from their Creator. All-sufficiency, immutability, and indefectible fidelity, are proper to Jehovah. As it is no wonder for the sun to set, or be eclipsed, as glorious a body as it is, so it is no wonder for a friend, a pious friend, to fail us, for a time, in the hour of our distress. There are some that will not; but there is none but may, if God should leave them to their weakness. Man is not your rock; he hath no stability but what is derived, dependent, and uncertain, and defectible. Learn therefore to rest on God alone, and lean not too hard or confidently upon any mortal wight.

2. And God will have the common infirmity of man to be known, that so the weakest may not be utterly discouraged, nor take their weakness to be gracelessness, whilst they see that the strongest also have their infirmities, though not so great as theirs. If any of God's servants live in constant holiness and fidelity, without any shakings or stumbling in their way, it would tempt some self-accusing, troubled souls, to think that they were altogether graceless, because they are so far short of others. But when we read of a Peter's denying his Master in so horrid a manner, with swearing and cursing, that he knew not the man, (Matt. xxvi. 74,) and of his dissimulation and not walking uprightly, Gal. ii.; and of a David's unfriendly and unrighteous dealing with Mephibosheth, the seed of Jonathan; and of his most vile and treacherous dealing with Uriah, a faithful and deserving subject; it may both abate our wonder and offence at the unfaithfulness of our friends, and teach us to compassionate their frailty, when they desert us; and also somewhat abate our immoderate dejectedness and trouble, when we have failed God or man ourselves.

3. Moreover, consider, how the odiousness of that sin, which is the root and cause of such unfaithfulness, is greatly manifested by the failing of our friends. God will have the odiousness of the remnants of our self-love, and carnal-mindedness, and cowardice appear: we should not discern it in the seed and root, if we did not see and taste it in the fruits. Seeing without tasting will not sufficiently convince us. A crab looks as beautiful as an apple; but when you taste it, you better know the difference. When you must yourselves be unkindly used by your friends, and forsaken by them in your distress, and you have tasted the fruits of the remnants of their worldliness, selfishness, and carnal fears, you will better know the odiousness of these vices, which thus break forth against all obligations to God and you, and notwithstanding the light, the conscience, and perhaps the grace, that doth resist them.

4. Are you not prone to overvalue and overlove your friends? If so, is not this the meetest remedy for your disease? In the loving of God, we are in no danger of excess; and therefore have no need of any thing to quench it. And in the loving of the godly, purely upon the account of Christ, and in loving saints as saints, we are not apt to go too far. But yet our understandings may mistake, and we may think that saints have more of sanctity than indeed they have; and we are exceeding apt to mix a selfish common love with that which is spiritual and holy; and at the same time, when we love a christian as a christian, we are apt not only to love him (as we ought) but to overlove him because he is our friend, and loveth us. Those christians that have no special love to us, we are apt to undervalue and neglect, and love them below their holiness and worth; but those that we think entirely love us, we love above their proper worth, as they stand in the esteem of God: not but that we may love those that love us, and add this love to that which is purely for the

sake of Christ; but we should not let our own interest prevail and overtop the interest of Christ, nor love any so much for loving us, as for loving Christ: and if we do so, no wonder if God shall use such remedies as he seeth meet, to abate our exeess of selfish love.

Oh how highly are we apt to think of all that good which is found in those who are the highest esteemers of us, and most dearly love us; when perhaps in itself it is but some ordinary good, or ordinary degree of goodness which is in them! Their love to us irresistibly procureth our love to them: and when we love them, it is wonderful to observe, how easily we are brought to think well of almost all they do, and highly to value their judgments, graees, parts, and works; when greater excellences in another, perhaps, are scarce observed, or regarded but as a common thing. And therefore the destruction or want of love, is apparent in the vilifying thoughts and speeches that most men have of one another; and in the low esteem of the judgments, and performances, and lives of other men (much more in their eontempt, reproaches, and cruel persecutions). Now though God will have us increase in our love of Christ in his members, and in our pure love of christians, as such, and in our common charity to all, yea, and in our just fidelity to our friend; yet would he have us suspect and moderate our selfish and excessive love, and inordinate partial esteem of one above another, when it is but for ourselves and on our own account. And therefore as he will make us know, that we ourselves are no such excellent persons, as that it should make another so laudable, or advance his worth, because he loveth us; so he will make us know, that our friends, whom we overvalue, are but like other men: if we exalt them too highly in our esteem, it is a sign that God must cast them down. And as their love to us was it that made us so exalt them; so their unkindness or unfaithfulness to us is the fittest means to bring them lower in our estimation and affection. God is very jealous of our hearts, as to our overvaluing and overloving any of his creatures: what we give inordinately and excessively to them, is some way or other taken from him, and given them to his injury, and therefore to his offence. Though I know that to be void of natural, friendly, or social affections, is an odious extreme on the other side; yet God will rebuke us if we are guilty of excess. And it is the greater and more inexcusable fault to overlove the creature, because our love to God is so cold, and so hardly kindled and kept alive! He cannot take it well to see us dote upon dust and frailty like ourselves, at the same time when all his wondrous kindness, and attractive goodness, do cause but such a faint and languid love to him, which we ourselves can scarcely feel. If therefore he cure us by permitting our friends to show us truly what they are, and how little they deserve such excessive love, (when God hath so little,) it is no more wonder, than it is that he is tender of his glory, and merciful to his servants' souls.

5. By the failing and unfaithfulness of our friends, the wonderful patience of God will be observed and honoured, as it is showed both to them and us. When they forsake us in our distress (especially when we suffer for the eause of Christ) it is God that they injure more than us: and therefore if he bear with them, and forgive their weakness upon repentance, why should not we do so, that are much less injured? The world's perfidiousness should make us think, how great and wonderful is the patience of God, that beareth with and beareth up so vile, ungrateful, treacherous men that abuse him to whom they are infinitely obliged! And it should make us eonsider, when men deal treacherously with us, how great is that mercy that hath borne with, and pardoned greater wrongs, which I myself have done to God, than these can be which men have done to me! It was the remembrance of David's sin, that had provoked God to raise up his own son against him, (of whom he had been too fond,) which made him so easily bear the curses and reproach of Shimei. It will make us bear abuse from others, to remember how ill we have dealt with God, and how ill we have deserved at his hands ourselves.

6. And I have observed another reason of God's permitting the failing of our friends. It is, that the love of our friends may not hinder us when we are ealled to suffer or die. When we overlove them, it teareth our very hearts to leave them; and therefore it is a strong temptation to draw us from our duty, and to be unfaithful to the cause of Christ, lest we should be taken from our too dear friends, or lest our suffering cause their too much grief. It is so hard a thing to die with willingness and peace, that it must needs be a mercy to be saved from the impediments which make us backward; and the excessive love of friends and relations, is not the least of these impediments: oh how loth is many a one to die, when they think of parting with wife, or husband, or children, or dear and faithful friends! Now I have oft observed, that a little before their death or sickness, it is ordinary with God to permit some unkindness between such too dear friends to arise, by which he moderated and abated their affections, and made them a great deal the willinger to die. Then we are ready to say, It is time for me to leave the world, when not only the rest of the world but my dearest friends have first forsaken me! This helpeth us to remember our dearest, everlasting Friend, and to be grieved at the heart that we have been no truer ourselves to him, who would not have forsaken us in our extremity. And sometimes it maketh us even aweary of the world, and to say as Elias, "Lord, take away my life," &c. (1 Kings xix. 4, 10, 14,) when we must say, I thought I had one friend left, and behold, even he forsaketh me in my distress. As the love of friends entangleth our affections to this world, so to be weaned, by their unkindnesses, from our friends, is a great help to loosen us from the world, and proveth oft a very great mercy to a soul that is ready to depart.

And as the friends that love us most, and have most interest in our esteem and love, may do more than others, in tempting us to be unfaithful to our Lord, to entertain any error, to commit any sin, or to flinch in suffering; so when God hath permitted them to forsake us, and to lose their too great interest in us, we are fortified against all such temptations from them. I have known where a former intimate friend hath grown strange, and broken former friendship, and quickly after turned to such dangerous ways and errors, as convinced the other of the mercifulness of God, in weakening his temptation by his friend's desertion; who might else have drawn him along with him into sin. And I have often observed, that when the husbands have turned from religion to infidelity, familism, or some dangerous heresy, that God hath permitted them to hate and abuse their wives so inhumanly, as that it preserved the poor women from the temptation of following them in their apostasy or sin; whenas some other women with whom their husbands have dealt more kindly, have been drawn away with them into pernicious paths.

Therefore still I must say, we were undone if we had the disposing of our own conditions. It would

be long before we should have been willing ourselves to be thus unkindly dealt with by our friends; and yet God hath made it to many a soul a notable means of preserving them from being undone for ever. Yea, the unfaithfulness of all our friends, and the malice and cruelty of all our enemies, doth us not usually so much harm, as the love and temptation of some one deluded erring friend, whom we are ready to follow into the gulf.

7. Lastly, consider that it is not desirable or suitable to our state, to have too much of our comfort by any creature: not only becausc it is most pure and sweet, which is most immediately from God; but because also we are very prone to overlove the creature; and if it should but seem to be very commodious to us, by serving our necessities or desires, it would seem the more amiable, and therefore be the stronger snare. The work of mortification doth much consist in the annihilation or deadness of all the creatures, as to any power to draw away our hearts from God, or to entangle us and detain us from our duty. And the more excellent and lovely the creature appeareth to us, the less it is dead to us, or we to it; and the more will it be able to hinder or insnare us.

When you have well considered all these things, I supposc you will admire the wisdom of God in leaving you under this kind of trial, and weaning you from every creature, and teaching you by his providence, as well as by his word, to cease from man whose breath is in his nostrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of? And you will see that it is no great wonder that corrupted souls, that live in other sins, should be guilty of this unfaithfulness to their friends: and that he that dare unthankfully trample upon the unspeakable kindness of the Lord, should deal unkindly with the best of men. You make no great wonder at other kind of sins, when you see the world continually commit them; why then should you make a greater or a stranger matter of this, than of the rest? Are you better than God? Must unfaithfulness to you be made more heinous, than that unfaithfulness to him, which yet you daily see and slight? The least wrong to God is a thousandfold more than the greatest that can be done to you, as such. Have you done that for your nearest friend, which God hath done for him, and you, and all men? Their obligations to you are nothing in comparison of their great and manifold obligations to God.

And you know that you have more wronged God yourselves, than any man ever wronged you: and if yet, for all that, he bear with you, have you not great reason to bear with others?

Yea, you have not been innocent towards men yourselves. Did you never wrong or fail another? Or rather, are you not apter to see and aggravate the wrong that others do to you, than that which you have done to others? May you not call to mind your own neglects, and say as Adonibezek, "Threescore and ten kings having their thumbs and their great toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table: as I have done so God hath requited me," Judges i. 7. Many a one have I failed or wronged, and no wonder if others fail and wrong me.

Nay, you have been much more unfaithful and injurious to yourselves, than ever any other hath been to you. No friend was so near you, as yourselves; none had such a charge of you; none had such helps and advantages to do you good or hurt; and yet all the enemies you have in the world, even in earth or hell, have not wronged and hurt you half so much as you have done yourselves! Oh, methinks the man or woman that knoweth themselves, and knoweth what it is to repent, that ever saw the greatness of their own sin and folly, should have no great mind or leisure to aggravate the failing of their friends, or the injuries of their enemies, considering what they have proved to themselves! Have I forfeited my own salvation, and deserved everlasting wrath, and sold my Saviour and my soul for so base a thing as sinful pleasure, and shall I ever make a wonder of it, that another man doth me some temporal hurt? Was any friend so near to me as myself; or more obliged to me? O sinful soul, let thy own, rather than thy friend's, deceit and treachery, and neglects, be the matter of thy displeasure, wonder, and complaints!

And let thy conformity herein to Jesus Christ, be thy holy ambition and delight: not as it is thy suffering, nor as it is caused by men's sin; but as it is thy conformity and fellowship in the sufferings of thy Lord, and caused by his love.

I have already showed you that sufferers for Christ are in the highest form among his disciples. The order of his followers usually is this: 1. At our entrance, and in the lowest form, we are exercised with the fears of hell, and God's displeasure, and in the works of repentance for the sin that we have done. 2. In the second form, we comc to think more seriously of the remedy, and to inquire what we shall do to bc saved, and to understand better what Christ hath done and suffered, and what he is and will be to us; and to value him, and his love and grace. And here we are much inquiring how we may know our own sincerity, and our interest in Christ, and are labouring for some assurance, and looking after signs of grace. 3. In the next form or order we are searching after further knowledge, and labouring better to understand the mysteries of religion, and to get above the rudiments and first principles: and here if we escape turning bare opinionists or herctics, by the snare of controversy or curiosity, it is well. 4. In the next form we set ourselves to the fuller improvement of all our further degrees of knowledge; and to digest it all, and turn it into stronger faith, and love, and hope, and greater humility, patience, self-denial, mortification, and contempt of earthly vanities, and hatred of sin; and to walk more watchfully and holily, and to be more in holy duty. 5. In the next form we grow to be more public-spirited: to set our hearts on the church's welfare, and long more for the progress of the gospel, and for the good of others; and to do all thc good in the world that we are able, for men's souls or bodies, but especially to long and lay out ourselves for the conversion and salvation of ignorant, secure, unconverted souls. The counterfeit of this, is, an eager desire to proselyte others to our opinions, or that religion which we have chosen, by the direction of flesh and blood, or which is not of God, nor according unto godliness, but doth subserve our carnal ends. 6. In the next form we grow to study more the purc and wonderful love of God in Christ, and to relish and admire that love, and to be taken up with the goodness and tender mercies of thc Lord, and to be kindling the flames of holy love to him that hath thus loved us; and to keep our souls in the exercise of that love: and withal to live in joy, and thanks, and praise to him that hath redeemed us and loved us; and also by faith to converse in heaven, and to live in holy contemplation, beholding the glory of the Father and the Redeemer in the glass which is fitted to our present use, till we come to see him face to face. Those that are the highest in this form, do so walk with God, and burn in love, and are so much above inferior vanities, and are so conversant by faith in heaven, that their

hearts even dwell there, and there they long to be for ever. 7. And in the highest form in the school of Christ, we are exercising this confirmed faith and love, in sufferings, especially for Christ; in following him with our cross, and being conformed to him, and glorifying God in the fullest exercise and discovery of his graces in us, and in an actual trampling upon all that standeth up against him, for our hearts: and in bearing the fullest witness to his truth and cause, by constant enduring, though to the death. Not but that the weakest that are sincere, must suffer for Christ if he call them to it: martyrdom itself is not proper to the strong believers. Whoever forsaketh not all that he hath for Christ, cannot be his disciple, Luke xiv. 33. But to suffer with that faith and love forementioned, and in that manner, is proper to the strong; and usually God doth not try and exercise his young and weak ones with the trials of the strong; nor set his infants on so hard a service, nor put them in the front or hottest of the battle, as he doth the ripe, confirmed christians. The sufferings of their inward doubts and fears doth take up such: it is the strong that ordinarily are called to sufferings for Christ, at least in any high degree. I have digressed thus far to make it plain to you, that our conformity to Christ, and fellowship with him in his sufferings, in any notable degree, is the lot of his best, confirmed servants, and the highest form in his school among his disciples; and therefore not to be inordinately feared or abhorred, nor to be the matter of impatience, but of holy joy; and in such infirmities we may glory. And if it be so of sufferings in the general, (for Christ,) then is it so of this particular sort of suffering, even to be forsaken of all our best and nearest, dearest friends, when we come to be most abused by the enemies.

For my own part, I must confess that as I am much wanting in other parts of my conformity to Christ, so I take myself to be yet much short of what I expect he should advance me to, as long as my friends no more forsake me. It is not long since I found myself in a low (if not a doubting) case, because I had so few enemies, and so little sufferings for the cause of Christ (though I had much of other sorts): and now that doubt is removed by the multitude of furies which God hath let loose against me. But yet, methinks, while my friends themselves are so friendly to me, I am much short of what I think I must at last attain to.

But let us look further into the text, and see what is the cause of the failing and forsaking Christ in the disciples; and what it is that they betake themselves to, when they leave him.

"Ye shall be scattered every man to his own."

Self-denial was not perfect in them; selfishness therefore in this hour of temptation did prevail. They had before forsaken all to follow Christ; they had left their parents, their families, their estates, their trades, to be his disciples: but though they believed him to be the Christ, yet they dreamt of a visible kingdom, and did all this with too carnal expectations of being great men on earth, when Christ should begin his reign; and therefore when they saw his apprehension and ignominious suffering, and thought now they were frustrate of their hopes, they seem to repent that they had followed him, (though not by apostasy and an habitual or plenary change of mind, yet) by a sudden, passionate, frightful apprehension, which vanished when grace performed its part. They now began to think that they had lives of their own to save, and families of their own to mind, and business of their own to do. They had before forsaken their private interests and affairs, and gathered themselves to Jesus Christ, and lived in communion with him, and one another; but now they return to their trades and callings, and are scattered every man to his own.

Selfishness is the great enemy of all societies, of all fidelity and friendship; there is no trusting that person in whom it is predominant; and the remnants of it, where it doth not reign, do make men walk unevenly and unstedfastly towards God and men. They will certainly deny both God and their friends, in a time of trial, who are not able to deny themselves: or rather he never was a real friend to any, that is predominantly selfish. They have always some interest of their own, which their friend must needs contradict, or is insufficient to satisfy. Their houses, their lands, their monies, their children, their honour, or something which they call their own, will be frequently the matter of contention; and are so near them, that they can for the sake of these cast off the nearest friend. Contract no special friendship with a selfish man; nor put any confidence in him, whatever friendship he may profess. He is so confined to himself, that he hath no true love to spare for others: if he seem to love a friend, it is not as a friend, but as a servant, or at best as a benefactor. He loveth you for himself, as he loveth his money, or horse, or house, because you may be serviceable to him: or as a horse or dog doth love his keeper, for feeding him; and therefore when your provender is gone, his love is gone; when you have done feeding him, he hath done loving you; when you have no more for him, he hath no more for you.

Object. But (some will say) it is not the falseness of my friend that I lament, but the separation or the loss of one that was most faithful: I have found the deceitfulness of ordinary friends; and therefore the more highly prize those few that are sincere. I had but one true friend among abundance of self-seekers; and that one is dead, or taken from me, and I am left as in a wilderness, having no mortal man that I can trust, or take much comfort in.

Answ. Is this your case? I pray you answer these few questions, and suffer the truth to have its proper work upon your mind.

Quest. 1. Who was it that deprived you of your friend? Was it not God? Did not he that gave him you, take him from you? Was it not his Lord and Owner that called him home? And can God do any thing injuriously or amiss? Will you not give him leave to do as he list with his own? Dare you think that there was wanting either wisdom or goodness, justice or mercy, in God's disposal of your friend? Or will you ever have rest, if you cannot have rest in the will of God?

2. How know you what sin your friend might have fallen into, if he had lived as long as you would have him? You will say, that God could have preserved him from sin. It is true; but God preserveth sapientially, by means, as well as omnipotentially: and sometimes he seeth that the temptations to that person are like to be so strong, and his corruption like to get such advantage, that no means is so fit as death itself, for his preservation. And if God had permitted your friend by temptation to have fallen into some scandalous sin, or course of evil, or into errors or false ways, would it not have been much worse than death to him and you? God might have suffered your friend, that was so faithful, to have been sifted and shaken, as Peter was, and to have denied his Lord; and to have seemed in your own eyes as odious as he before seemed amiable.

3. How know you what unkindness to yourself your dearest friend might have been guilty of? Alas!

there is greater frailty and inconstancy in man, than you are aware of. And there are sadder roots of corruption unmortified, that may spring up into bitter fruits, than most of us ever discover in ourselves. Many a mother hath her heart broken by the unnaturalness of such a child, or the unkindness of such a husband, as, if they had died before, would have been lamented by her, with great impatience and excess. How confident soever you may be of the future fidelity of your friend, you little know what trials might have discovered. Many a one hath failed God and man, that once were as confident of themselves, as ever you were of your friend. And which of us see not reason to be distrustful of ourselves? And can we know another better than ourselves? or promise more concerning him?

4. How know you what great calamity might have befallen your friend, if he had lived as long as you desired? When the righteous seem to men to perish, and "merciful men are taken away," it is "from the evil to come" that they are taken, Isa. lvii. 1. How many of my friends have I lamented as if they had died unseasonably, concerning whom some following providence quickly showed me, that it would have been a grievous misery to them to have lived longer! Little know you what calamities were imminent on his person, his family, kindred, neighbours, country, that would have broke his heart. What if a friend of yours had died immediately before some calamitous subversion of a kingdom, some ruins of the church, &c. and if ignorantly, he had done that which brought these things to pass, can you imagine how lamentably sad his life would have been to him, to have seen the church, the gospel, and his country, in so sad a case? especially if it had been long of him? Many that have unawares done that which hath ruined a particular friend, have lived in so much grief and trouble, as made them consent that death should both revenge the injured on them, and conclude their misery. What then would it have been to have seen the public good subverted, and the faithful overwhelmed in misery, and the gospel hindered, and holy worship changed for deceit and vanity; and for conscience to have been daily saying, I had a hand in all this misery; I kindled the fire that hath burned up all!

What comfort can you think such friends, if they had survived, would have found on earth? unless it were a comfort to hear the complaints of the afflicted, to see and hear such odious sins as sometimes vexed righteous Lot to see and hear; or to hear of the scandals of one friend, and the apostasy of another, and the sinful compliances and declinings of a third; and to be under temptations, reproaches, and afflictions themselves? Is it a matter to be so much lamented, that God hath prevented their greater miseries and woe?

5. What was the world to your friends while they did enjoy it? or what is it now, or like to be hereafter, to yourselves? Was it so good and kind to them, as that you should lament their separation from it? Was it not to them a place of toil and trouble, of envy and vexation, of enmity and poison? of successive cares, and fears, and griefs? and worst of all, a place of sin? Did they groan under the burden of a sinful nature, a distempered, tempted, troubled heart, of languishings and weakness of every grace; of the rebukes of God, the wounds of conscience, and the malice of a wicked world? And would you have them under these again? or is their deliverance become your grief? Did you not often join in prayer with them, for deliverance from malice, calamities, troubles, imperfections, temptations, and sin? and now those prayers are answered in their deliverance; and do you now grieve at that which then you prayed for?

Doth the world use yourselves so well and kindly, as that you should be sorry that your friends partake not of the feast? Are you not groaning from day to day yourselves? and are you grieved that your friends are taken from your griefs? You are not well pleased with your own condition: when you look into your hearts, you are displeased and complain; when you look into your lives, you are displeased and complain; when you look into your families, into your neighbourhoods, unto your friends, unto the church, unto the kingdom, unto the world, you are displeased and complain. And are you also displeased that your friends are not under the same displeasure and complaints as you? Is the world a place of rest or trouble to you? And would you have your friends to be as far from rest as you?

And if you have some ease and peace at present, you little know what storms are near! you may see the days, you may hear the tidings, you may feel the griping griefs and pains, which may make you call for death yourselves, and make you say, that a life on earth is no felicity, and make you confess that they are "blessed that are dead in the Lord, as resting from their labours," and being past these troubles, griefs, and fears. Many a poor troubled soul is in so great distress, as that they take away their own lives to have some taste of hell; and yet, at the same time, are grieving because their friends are taken from them, who would have been grieved for their griefs, and for aught they know might have fallen into as sad a state as they themselves are now lamenting.

6. Do you think it is for the hurt or the good of your friend that he is removed hence? It cannot be for his hurt, unless he be in hell. (At least, it is uncertain whether to live would have been for his good, by an increase of grace, and so for greater glory.) And if he be in hell, he was no fit person for you to take much pleasure in upon earth: he might be indeed a fit object for your compassion, but not for your complacency. Sure you are not undone for want of such company as God will not endure in his sight, and you must be separated from for ever. But if they be in heaven, you are scarce their friend if you would wish them thence. Friendship hath as great respect to the good of our friends as of ourselves. And do you pretend to friendship, and yet lament the removal of your friend to his greatest happiness? Do you set more by your own enjoying his company, than by his enjoying God in perfect blessedness? This showeth a very culpable defect either in faith or friendship; and therefore beseemeth not christians and friends. If love teacheth us to mourn with them that mourn, and to rejoice with them that rejoice; can it be an act of rational love to mourn for them that are possessed of the highest everlasting joys?

7. God will not honour himself by one only, but by many: he knoweth best when his work is done: when our friends have finished all God intended them for, when he put them into the world, is it not time for them to be gone, and for others to take their places, and finish their work also in their time? God will have a succession of his servants in the world. Would you not come down and give place to him that is to follow you, when your part is played, and his is to begin? If David had not died, there had been no Solomon, no Jehoshaphat, no Hezekiah, no Josiah, to succeed him and honour God in the same throne. You may as wisely grudge that one day only takes not up all the week, and that the clock striketh not the same hour still, but pro-

ceedeth from one to two, from two to three, &c. as to murmur that one man only continueth not, to do the work of his place, excluding his successors.

8. You must not have all your mercies by one messenger or hand: God will not have you confine your love to one only of his servants; and therefore he will not make one only useful to you; but when one hath delivered his message and done his part, perhaps God will send you other mercies by another hand; and it belongeth to him to choose the messenger, who gives the gift. And if you will childishly dote upon the first messenger, and say you will have all the rest of your mercies by his hand, or you will have no more, your frowardness more deserveth correction than compassion: and if you be kept fasting till you can thankfully take your food, from any hand that your Father sends it by, it is a correction very suitable to your sin.

9. Do you so highly value your friends for God, or for them, or for yourselves, in the final consideration? If it was for God, what reason of trouble have you, that God hath disposed of them according to his wisdom and unerring will? Should you not then be more pleased that God hath them, and employeth them in his highest service, than displeased that you want them?

But if you value them and love them for themselves, they are now more lovely when they are more perfect; and they are now fitter for your content and joy, than they could be in their sin and sorrows.

But if you valued and loved them but for yourselves only, it is just with God to take them from you, to teach you to value men to righter ends, and upon better considerations; and both to prefer God before yourselves, and better to understand the nature of true friendship, and better to know that your own felicity is not in the hands of any creature, but of God alone.

10. Did you improve your friends while you had them? or did you only love them, while you made but little use of them for your souls? If you used them not, it was just with God, for all your love, to take them from you. They were given you as your candle, not only to love it, but to work by the light of it; and as your garments, not only to love them, but to wear them; and as your meat, not only to love it, but to feed upon it. Did you receive their counsel, and hearken to their reproofs, and pray with them, and confer with them upon those holy truths that tended to elevate your minds to God, and to inflame your breasts with sacred love? If not, be it now known to you, that God gave you not such helps and mercies only to talk of, or to look upon and love, but also to improve for the benefit of your souls.

11. Do you not seem to forget where you are yourselves, and where you must shortly and for ever live? Where would you have your friends, but where you must be yourselves? Do you mourn that they are taken hence? Why, if they had staid here a thousand years, how little of that time should you have had their company? When you are almost leaving the world yourselves, would you not send your treasure before you to the place where you must abide? How quickly will you pass from hence to God, where you shall find your friends that you lamented as if they had been lost, and there shall dwell with them for ever! O foolish mourners! would you not have your friends at home? at their home and your home, with their Father and your Father, their God and your God? Shall you not there enjoy them long enough? Can you so much miss them for one day, that must live with them to all eternity? and is not eternity long enough to enjoy your friends in?

Object. But I do not know whether ever I shall there have any distinct knowledge of them, or love to them, and whether God shall not there be so far All in All, as that we shall need or fetch no comfort from the creature.

Answ. There is no reason for either of these doubts: for,

1. You cannot justly think that the knowledge of the glorified shall be more confused or imperfect than the knowledge of natural men on earth. We shall know much more, but not so much less. Heaven exceedeth earth in knowledge, as much as it doth in joy.

2. The angels in heaven have now a distinct, particular knowledge of the least believers, rejoicing particularly in their conversion, and being called by Christ himself "Their angels." Therefore when we shall be equal to the angels, we shall certainly know our nearest friends that there dwell with us, and are employed in the same attendance.

3. Abraham knew the rich man in hell, and the rich man knew Abraham and Lazarus: therefore we shall have as distinct a knowledge.

4. The two disciples knew Moses and Elias in the mount, whom they had never seen before; though it is possible Christ told them who they were, yet there is no such thing expressed; and therefore it is as probable that they knew them by the communication of their irradiating glory: much more shall we be then illuminated to a clearer knowledge.

5. It is said expressly, 1 Cor. xiii. 10—12, that our present knowledge shall be done away only in regard of its imperfection; and not of itself, which shall be perfected: "When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away;" as we put away childish thoughts and speeches, when we become men: the change will be from "seeing in a glass" to "seeing face to face," and from "knowing in part" to "knowing even as we are known."

2. And that we shall both know, and love, and rejoice in creatures, even in heaven, notwithstanding that God is all in all, appeareth further thus:

1. Christ, in his glorified humanity, is a creature; and yet there is no doubt but all his members will there know and love him in his glorified humanity, without any derogation from the glory of his Deity.

2. The body of Christ will continue its union, and every member will be so nearly related, even in heaven, that they cannot choose but know and love each other. Shall we be ignorant of the members of our body? and not be concerned in their felicity with whom we are so nearly one?

3. The state and felicity of the church hereafter, is frequently described in Scripture as consisting in society. It is a kingdom, the city of God, the heavenly Jerusalem; and it is mentioned as part of our happiness to be of that society, Heb. xii. 22—24, &c.

4. The saints are called kings themselves; and it is said that they shall judge the world, and the angels (and judging in Scripture is frequently put for governing); therefore (whether there will be another world of mortals which they shall govern, as angels now govern men; or whether the misery of damned men and angels will partly consist in as base a subjection to the glorified saints, as dogs now have to men, or wicked reprobates on earth to angels; or whether in respect of both these together, the saints shall then be kings, and rule and judge; or whether it be only the participation of the glory of Christ, that is called a kingdom, I will not here

determine; but) it is most clear that they will have a distinct, particular knowledge of the world, which they themselves must judge; and some concernment in that work.

5. It is put into the description of the happiness of the saints, that they shall come from the east, and from the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God. Therefore they shall know them, and take some comfort in their presence.

6. Love (even to the saints, as well as unto God) is one of the graces which shall endure for ever, 1 Cor. xiii. It is exercised upon an immortal object, (the image and children of the Most High,) and therefore must be one of the immortal graces. For grace in the nature of it dieth not; and therefore if the object cease not, how should the grace cease, unless you will call its perfecting a ceasing?

It is a state too high for such as we, and I think for any mere creature, to live so immediately and only upon God, as to have no use for any fellow-creature, nor no comfort in them. God can make use of glorified creatures, in such subserviency and subordination to himself, as shall be no diminution to his all-sufficiency and honour, nor to our glory and felicity. We must take heed of fancying such a heaven itself, as is above the capacity of a creature; as some very wise divines think they have done, that tell us we shall immediately see God's essence (his glory being that which is provided for our intuition and felicity, and is distinct from his essence; being not every where, as his essence is). And as those do, that tell us, because that God will be All in All, therefore we shall there have none of our comfort by any creature. Though flesh and blood shall not enter into that kingdom, but our bodies will then be spiritual bodies; yet will they be really the same as now, and distinct from our souls; and therefore must have a felicity suitable to a body glorified. And if the soul did immediately see God's essence, yet as no reason can conclude that it can see nothing else, or that it can see even created good, and not love it, so the body however must have objects and felicity fit for a body.

Object. But it is said, If we knew Christ after the flesh, henceforth know we him no more.

Answ. No doubt but all the carnality in principles, matter, manner, and ends of our knowledge, will then cease, as its imperfection; but that a carnal knowlege be turned into a spiritual, is no more a diminution to it, than it is to the glory of our bodies, to be made like the stars in the firmament of our Father.

Object. But then I shall have no more comfort in my present friends than in any other.

Answ. 1. If you had none in them, it is no diminution to our happiness, if indeed we should have all in God, immediately and alone. 2. But if you have as much in others that you never knew before, that will not diminish any of your comfort in your ancient friends. 3. But it is most probable to us, that as there is a twofold object for our love in the glorified saints; one is their holiness, and the other is the relation which they stood in between God and us, being made his instruments for our conversion and salvation; so that we shall love saints in heaven in both respects: and in the first respect (which is the chiefest) we shall love those most that have most of God, and the greatest glory (though such as we never knew on earth); and in the second respect we shall love those most, that were employed by God for our greatest good.

And that we shall not there lay by so much respect to ourselves, as to forget or disregard our benefactors, is manifest, 1. In that we shall for ever remember Christ, and love him, and praise him, as one that formerly redeemed us, and washed us in his blood, and hath made us kings and priests to God: and therefore we may also, in just subordination to Christ, remember them with love and thankfulness, that were his instruments for the collation of these benefits.

2. And this kind of self-love (to be sensible of good and evil to ourselves) is none of the sinful or imperfect selfishness to be renounced or laid by, but part of our very natures, and as inseparable from us as we are from ourselves.

Much more, were it not digressive, might be said on this subject; but I shall only add, That as God doth draw us to every holy duty by showing us the excellency of that duty; and as perpetuity is not the smallest excellency; so he hath purposely mentioned that love endureth for ever, (when he had described the love of one another,) as a principal motive to kindle and increase this love. And therefore those that think they shall have no personal knowledge of one another, nor personal love to one another, (for we cannot love personally if we know not personally,) do take a most effectual course to destroy in their souls all holy special love to saints, by casting away that principal or very great motive given them by the Holy Ghost. I am not able to love much where I foreknow that I shall not love long. I cannot love a comely inn, so well as a meaner dwelling of my own, because I must be gone to-morrow. Therefore must I love my Bible better than my law-books, or physic-books, &c. because it leadeth to eternity. And therefore I must love holiness in myself and others, better than meat and drink, and wealth and honour, and beauty and pleasure; because it must be loved for ever, when the love of these must needs be transitory, as they are transitory. I must profess from the very experience of my soul, that it is the belief that I shall love my friends in heaven, that principally kindleth my love to them on earth; and if I thought I should never know them after death, and consequently never love them more, when this life is ended, I should in reason number them with temporal things, and love them comparatively but a little; even as I love other transitory things (allowing for the excellency in the nature of grace). But now I converse with some delight with my godly friends, as believing I shall converse with them for ever, and take comfort in the very dead and absent, as believing we shall shortly meet in heaven: and I love them, I hope, with a love that is of a heavenly nature, while I love them as the heirs of heaven, with a love which I expect shall there be perfected, and more fully and for ever exercised.

12. The last reason that I give you, to move you to bear the loss or absence of your friends, is, that it gives you the loudest call to retire from all the world, and to converse with God himself, and to long for heaven, where you shall be separated from your friends no more. And your forsaken state will somewhat assist you to that solitary converse with God, which it calls you to: but this brings us up to the third part of the text.

"And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me."

Doct. When all forsake us, and leave us (as to them) alone, we are far from being simply alone; because God is with us.

He is not without company that is with the king, though twenty others have turned him off. He is not without light that hath the shining sun, though all his candles be put out. If God be our God, he is our All, and is enough for us; and if he be our

All, we shall not much find the want of creatures while he is with us.

For, 1. He is with us who is every where, and therefore is never from us; and knoweth all the ways and projects of our enemies; being with them in wrath, as he is with us in mercy.

2. He is with us who is almighty, sufficient to preserve us, conquerable by none; and therefore while he is with us, we need not fear what man can do unto us; for they can do nothing but what he will. No danger, no sickness, no trouble or want, can be so great as to make it any difficulty to God to deliver us, when and how he pleases.

3. He is with us who is infinitely wise, and therefore we need not fear the subtlety of enemies; nor shall any of his undertaken works for his church or us miscarry for want of foresight, or through any oversight. We shall be preserved even from our own folly, as well as from our enemies' subtlety; for it is not our own wisdom that our greatest concernments do principally rest upon, nor that our safety and peace are chiefly secured by; but it is the wisdom of our great Preserver. He knoweth what to do with us, and what paths to lead us in, and what is best for us in all conditions. And he hath promised to teach us, and will be our sure, infallible guide.

3. He is with us who is infinitely good, and therefore is only fit to be a continual delight and satisfaction to our souls; that hath nothing in him to disaffect us, or discourage us; whom we may love without fear of overloving; and need not set any bounds to our love, the object of it being infinite.

4. He is with us who is most nearly related to us, and most dearly loveth us; and therefore will never be wanting to us in any thing that is fit for us to have. This is he that is with us when all have left us, and as to man we are alone; and therefore we may well say that we are not alone. Of this I shall say more anon in the application.

Quest. But how is he with us? *Answ.* 1. He is with us not only in his essential presence, as he is every where, but by his gracious fatherly presence: we are in his family attending on him; even as the eye of a servant is to the hand of his master: we are always with him, and (as he phraseth it himself in the parable, Luke xv.) "all that he hath is ours;" that is, all that is fit to be communicated to us, and all the provisions of his bounty for his children. When we awake, we should be still with him; when we go abroad, we should be always as before him; our life and works should be a walking with God.

2. He is always with us sufficiently to do us good. Though we have none else that careth for us, yet will he never cast us out of his care, but biddeth us cast our care on him, as promising that he will care for us. Though we have none else to provide for us, he is always with us, and our Father knoweth what we want, and will make the best provision for us, Matt. vi. 32, 33. Though we have none else to defend us against the power of our enemies, he is always with us to be our sure defence. He is the rock to which we fly, and upon which we are surely built. He gathereth us to himself, as the "hen gathereth her chickens under her wings," Matt. xxiii. 37. And sure while love is thus protecting us, we may well say, that the Father himself is with us. Though in all our wants we have no other to supply us, yet he is still with us to perform his promise, that no good thing shall be wanting to them that fear him. Though we may have none else to strengthen and help us, and support us in our weakness, yet he is always with us, whose grace is sufficient for us, to manifest his strength in weakness. Though we have no other to teach us, and to resolve our doubts, yet he is with us that is our chiefest Master, and hath taken us to be his disciples, and will be our light and guide, and will lead us into the truth. Though we have none else to be our comforter in our agony, darkness, or distress; but all forsake us, or are taken from us, and we are exposed as Hagar with Ishmael in a wilderness; yet still the Father of all consolations is with us; his Spirit who is the Comforter is in us: and he that so often speaketh the words of comfort to us in his gospel, and saith, "Be of good cheer; let not your hearts be troubled, neither be afraid," &c. will speak them (in the season and measure which is fittest for us) unto our hearts. Though all friends turn enemies, and would destroy us, or turn false accusers, as Job's friends in their ignorance or passion; though all of them should add affliction to our affliction; yet is our Redeemer and Justifier still with us; and will lay his restraining hand upon our enemies, and say to their proudest fury, "Hitherto and no further shalt thou go." He is angry with Job's accusing friends, notwithstanding their friendship and good meaning, and though they seemed to plead for God and godliness against Job's sin. And who shall be against us while God is for us? or, who shall condemn us when it is he that justifieth us? Though we be put to say as David, "I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul," Psal. cxlii. 4; yet we may say with him, "I cried unto thee, O Lord: I said, Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living. Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name: the righteous shall compass me about; for thou shalt deal bountifully with me," ver. 5, 7. "I poured out my complaint before him; I showed before him my trouble. When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then thou knewest my path. In the way wherein I walked have they privily laid a snare for me," ver. 2, 3. Thus, "God is our refuge and strength; a very present help in trouble: therefore should we not fear though the earth were removed, and though the mountains were carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled," &c. Psal. xlvi. 1—3. Though, as David saith, "Mine enemies speak evil of me, When shall he die, and his name perish? And if he come to see me, he speaketh vanity: his heart gathereth iniquity to itself; when he goeth abroad he telleth it. All that hate me whisper together against me: against me do they devise my hurt. An evil disease, say they, cleaveth fast unto him: and now that he lieth he shall rise up no more. Yea, my own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, that did eat of my bread, hath lift up his heel against me,——" Psal. xli. 5—7. Yet we may add as he, ver. 12, "And as for me, thou upholdest me in mine integrity, and settest me before thy face for ever." Though, as Psal. xxxv. 7, 11, 15, 16, 20, "Without cause they have hid for me their net in a pit, which without cause they have digged for my soul. And false witnesses did rise up; they laid to my charge things that I knew not; they rewarded me evil for good. In my adversity they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together: the abjects gathered themselves together against me, and I knew it not; they did tear, and ceased not: with hypocritical mockers in feasts, they gnashed upon me with their teeth. For they speak not peace: but they devise deceitful matters against them that are quiet in the land." Yet, "My soul shall be joyful in the Lord: it shall rejoice in his salvation. All my bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto thee, who deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him, yea, the poor and the needy from him that spoileth him?" ver. 9, 10. Though

friends be far off, "The Lord is nigh to them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord delivereth him out of them all. The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants; and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate," Psal. xxxiv. 18, 19, 22. Therefore "I will be glad and rejoice in his mercy: for he hath considered my trouble, and hath known (and owned) my soul in adversity; and hath not shut me in the hand of the enemy.—When my life was spent with grief, and my years with sighing: my strength failed because of mine iniquity, and my bones were consumed. I was a reproach among all mine enemies, but especially among my neighbours, and a fear to my acquaintance: they that did see me without, fled from me. I was forgotten, and as a dead man out of mind. I was like a broken vessel: I heard the slander of many. Fear was on every side: while they took counsel together against me, they devised to take away my life. But I trusted in thee, O Lord: I said, Thou art my God. My times are in thy hand: deliver me from the hand of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me. Make thy face to shine upon thy servant: save me for thy mercies' sake.——Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee, which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men! Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man: thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues," Psal. xxxi. Thus God is with us when men are far from us, or against us. His people find by happy experience that they are not alone. Because he is nigh them, evil shall not come nigh them, unless as it worketh for their good. "He is their hiding-place to preserve them from trouble; the great water-floods shall not come nigh them; he will compass them about with songs of deliverance," Psal. xxxii. 6, 7.

3. And as God is with us thus relatively and efficiently, so also objectively, for our holy converse. Wherever our friends are, God is still at hand to be the most profitable, honourable, and delightful object of our thoughts. There is enough in him to take up all the faculties of my soul. He that is but in a well-furnished library, may find great and excellent employment for his thoughts many years together; and so may he that liveth in the open world, and hath all the visible works of God to meditate upon: but all this were nothing if God were not the sense of books and creatures, and the matter of all these noble studies. He that is alone, and hath only God himself to study, hath the matter and sense of all the books and creatures in the world, to employ his thoughts upon. He never need to want matter for his meditation, that hath God to meditate on. He need not want matter of discourse (whether mental or vocal) that hath God to talk of, though he have not the name of any other friend to mention. All our affections may have in him the highest and most pleasant work. The soul of man cannot have a more sweet and excellent work than to love him: he wanteth neither work nor pleasure, that in his solitude is taken up in the believing contemplations of Eternal Love, and of all his blessed attributes and works. Oh then what happy and delightful converse may a believer have with God alone! He is always present, and always at leisure to be spoken with; and always willing of our access and audience. He hath no interest cross to our felicity, which should move him to reject us (as worldly great ones often have). He never misunderstandeth us, nor chargeth that upon us which we were never guilty of. If we converse with men, their mistakes, and interests, and passions, and insufficiencies, do make the trouble so great, and the benefit so small, that many have become thereby aweary of the world, or of human society, and have spent the rest of their days alone in desert places. Indeed so much of God as appears in men, so much is their converse excellent and delightful; and theirs is the best that have most of God. But there is so much of vanity, and self, and flesh, and sin in the most, or all of us, as very much darkeneth our light, and dampeth the pleasure, and blasteth the fruit of our societies and converse. Oh how oft have I been solaced in God, when I found nothing but deceit and darkness in the world! How oft hath he comforted me, when it was past the power of man! How oft hath he relieved and delivered me, when all the help of man was vain! It hath been my stay and rest, to look to him, when the creature hath been a broken staff, and deceitful friends have been but as a broken tooth, or a foot that is out of joint (as Solomon speaketh of confidence in an unfaithful man in the time of trouble, Prov. xxv. 29.) Verily, as the world were but a horrid dungeon without the sun, so it were a howling wilderness, a place of no considerable employment or delight, were it not that in it we may live to God and do him service, and sometimes be refreshed with the light of his countenance, and the communications of his love. But of this more anon.

Use 1. We see our example, and our encouragements. Let us now, as followers of Christ, endeavour to imitate him in this, and to live upon God when men forsake us, and to know that while God is with us we are not alone, nor indeed forsaken while he forsakes us not.

I shall, 1. Show you here negatively, what you must not do; 2. Affirmatively, what you must do; for the performance of your duty in this imitation of Christ.

1. You must not make this your pretence for the undervaluing your useful friends, nor for your unthankfulness for so great a benefit as a godly friend; nor for the neglect of your duty in improving the company and help of your friends. Two is better than one. The communion of saints and help of those that are wise and faithful, is a mercy highly to be esteemed. And the undervaluing of it, is at least a sign of a declining soul.

2. You must not hence fetch any pretence to slight your friends, and disoblige them, or neglect any duty that you owe them, or any means therein necessary to the continuation of their friendship.

3. You must not causelessly withdraw from human society into solitude. A weariness of converse with men, is oft conjunct with a weariness of our duty; and a retiring voluntarily into solitude, when God doth not call or drive us thither, is oft but a retiring from the place and work which God hath appointed us; and consequently a retiring rather from God than to God. Like some idle servants that think they should not work so hard, because it is but worldly business, and think their masters deal not religiously by them, unless they let them neglect their labour, that they may spend more time in serving God; as if it were not serving God to be faithful in their masters' service.

I deny not but very holy persons have lived in a state of retirement from human converse. In such cases as these, it may become a duty: 1. In case of such persecution as at present leaveth us no opportunity of serving or honouring God so much in any other place or state.

2. In case that natural infirmity, or disability, or any other accident, shall make one less serviceable to God and his church in society than he is in solitude.

3. In case he hath committed a sin so heinous, and of indelible scandal and reproach, as that it is not fit for the servants of Christ any more to receive him into their local communion, though he repent (for as to local communion, I think, such a case may be).

4. In case a man through custom and ill company be so captivated to some fleshly lust, as that he is not able to bear the temptations that are found in human converse; but falleth by them into frequent heinous sinning; in this case the right hand or eye is rather to be parted with, than their salvation. And though a mere restraint by distance of temptations and opportunities of sinning, will not prove a man sanctified, nor save the soul that loveth the sin, and fain would live in it; yet, 1. Grace may sometimes appear in the strength and self-denial which is exercised in the very avoiding of temptations, when yet perhaps the person hath not strength enough to have stood against the temptations if it had not been avoided. And, 2. The distance of temptations, and opportunity of serious and frequent consideration, may be a means to help them to sincerity that want it.

5. In case a man by age or sickness find himself so near to death, as that he hath now a more special call to look after his present actual preparation, than to endeavour any more the good of others; and find withal, that solitude will help him in his preparations, his society being such as would but hinder him. In these five cases, I suppose it lawful to retire from human converse into solitude.

But when there is no such necessity or call, it usually proceedeth from one of these vicious distempers: 1. From cowardice and fear of suffering, when the soldiers of Christ do hide their heads, instead of confessing him before men.

2. From a laziness of mind and weariness of duty; when slothful and unprofitable servants hide their talents, pretending their fear of the austerity of their Lord. It is easier to run away from our work than do it; and to go out of the reach of ignorance, malice, contradiction, and ungodliness, than to encounter them, and conquer them by truth and holy lives. So many persons as we converse with, so many are there to whom we owe some duty: and this is not so easy as it is to overrun our work, and to hide ourselves in some wilderness or cell, whilst others are fighting the battles of the Lord. 3. Or it may proceed from mere impatience. When men cannot bear the frowns, and scorns, and violence of the ungodly, they fly from sufferings, which by patience they should overcome. 4. Or it may come from humour and mutability of mind, and discontent with one's condition. Many retire from human converse to please a discontented, passionate mind; or expecting to find that in privacy, which in public they could not find, nor is any where to be found on earth. 5. And some do it in melancholy, merely to please a sick imagination, which is vexed in company, and a little easeth itself in living as the possessed man among the tombs. 6. And sometimes it proceedeth from self-ignorance, and an unhumbled state of soul. When men think much better of themselves than others, they think they can more comfortably converse with themselves than with others: whereas if they well understood that they are the worst or greatest enemies, or troubles to themselves, they would more fear their own company than other men's. They would then consider what proud, and fleshly, and worldly, and selfish, and disordered hearts they are like to carry with them into their solitude, and there to be annoyed with from day to day; and that the nearest enemy is the worst, and the nearest trouble is the greatest.

These vices or infirmities carry many into solitude; and if they live where popish vanity may seduce them, they will perhaps imagine that they are serving God, and entering into perfection, when they are but sinfully obeying their corruptions: and that they are advanced above others in degrees of grace, while they are pleasing a diseased fancy, and entering into a dangerous course of sin. No doubt but the duties of a public life are more in number, and greater in weight, and of more excellent consequence and tendency, (even to the most public good, and greatest honour of God,) than the duties of privacy or retirement. *Vir bonus est commune bonum:* A good man is a common good. And (saith Seneca) *Nulla essent communia nisi pars illorum pertineret ad singulos.* If every one have not some share or interest in them, how are they common? Let me add these few considerations, to show you the evil of voluntary, unnecessary solitude.

1. You less contribute to the honour of your Redeemer, and less promote his kingdom in the world, and less subserve his death and office, while you do good but to few, and live but almost to yourselves.

2. You live in the poorest exercise of the grace of charity; and therefore in a low, undesirable condition.

3. You will want the communion of saints, and benefit of public ordinances (for I account not a college life a solitary life). And you will want the help of the charity, graces, and gifts of others, by which you might be benefited.

4. It will be a life of smaller comfort, as it is a life of smaller benefit to others. They that do but little good (according to their ability) must expect but little comfort. They have usually most peace and comfort to themselves that are the most profitable to others. *Non potest quisquam bene degere qui se tantum intuetur: alteri vivas oportet, si tibi vis vivere.* Sen. No man can live well, that looketh but to himself: thou must live to another, if thou wilt live to thyself.

Oh the delight that there is in doing good to many! None knoweth it that hath not tried it: not upon any account of merit; but as it pleaseth God; and as goodness itself is amiable and sweet; and as we receive by communicating; and as we are under promise; and as charity makes all the good that is done to another to be to us as our own.

5. We are dark and partial, and heedless of ourselves, and hardly brought or kept in acquaintance with our hearts; and therefore have the more need of the eye of others. And even an enemy's eye may be useful, though malicious; and may do us good, while he intends us evil. Saith Bernard, *Malum quod nemo videt, nemo arguit: ubi autem non timetur reprehensor, securus accedit tentator; licentius perpetratur iniquitas.* The evil that none seeth, none reproveth: and where the reprover is not feared, the tempter cometh more boldly, and the sin is committed the more licentiously. It is hard to know the spots in our own faces, when we have no glass or beholder to acquaint us with them. Saith Chrysostom, Solitude is *velamen omnium vitiorum;* the cover of all vices. In company this cover is laid aside, and vice being more naked, is more ashamed. It is beholders that cause shame; which solitude is not acquainted with: and it is a piece of impenitency not to be ashamed of sin.

6. And we are for the most part so weak and sickly, that we are unable to subsist without the help of others. *Nemo est ex imprudentibus qui relinqui sibi debet.* Sen. Unwise men (or infants, or sick-like men) must not be left to themselves. And God hath left some impotency, insufficiency, and necessity upon all, that should keep men sociable, and make them acknowledge their need of others, and be thankful

for assistance from them, and be ready to do good to others, as we would have others do to us. He that feeleth not the need of others, is so unhumbled as to have the greater need of them.

7. Pride will have great advantage in private, and repentance great disadvantage, while our sins seem to be all dead, because there is not a temptation to draw them out, or an observer to reprove them. *Tam diu patiens quisque sibi videtur et humilis, donec nullius hominum consortio commiscetur: ad naturam pristinam reversurus quum interpellaverit cujuslibet occasionis commotio:* inquit Cassianus. Many a man seems to himself patient and humble, while he keeps out of company; who would return to his own nature, if the commotion of any occasion did but provoke him. It is hard to know what sin or grace is in us, if we have not such trials as are not to be found in solitude.

8. Flying from the observation and judgment of others, is a kind of self-accusation; as if we confessed ourselves so bad as that we cannot stand the trial of the light. *Bona conscientia turbam advocat. Mala in solitudine anxia est et sollicita: si honesta sunt quæ facis, omnes sciant: si turpia, quid refert neminem scire, cum tu scias! O te miserum si contemnis hunc testem:* inquit Seneca. That is, a good conscience will call in the crowd (or witnesses, not caring who seeth): a bad conscience is anxious and solicitous even in solitude. If they be things honest which thou dost, let all men know: if they be dishonest, what good doth it thee that no man else knoweth it, when thou knowest it thyself? O miserable man, if thou despise this witness! Something is suspected to be amiss with those that are always in their chambers, and are never seen. Tell not men that you cannot bear the light: it is he that doth evil that hateth the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

9. Solitude is too like death to be desirable. He liveth that doth good; and he is dead that is useless. *Vivit is qui multis usui est: vivit is qui sentitur: qui vero latitant et torpent, mortem suam antecesserint:* inquit Sen. He liveth that is profitable to many: he liveth that is observed or perceived; but they that lie hid and drowsy, do anticipate their death. And it is the most culpable death, and therefore the worst, to have life and not to use it.

10. And a life of holy communion is likest unto heaven, where none shall be solitary, but all as members of the heavenly Jerusalem, shall in harmony love and praise their Maker.

These reasons seem sufficient to me to satisfy you that no man should choose solitude without a special necessity or call: nor yet should it be taken for a life of greater perfection, than a faithful serving of God in public, and doing good to more.

I shall now come to the affirmative, and tell you for all this, that if God call us into solitude, or men forsake us, we may rejoice in this, that we are not alone, but the Father is with us. Fear not such solitude, but be ready to improve it if you be cast upon it. If God be your God, reconciled to you in Christ, and his Spirit be in you, you are provided for solitude, and need not fear if all the world should cast you off. If you be banished, imprisoned, or left alone, it is but a relaxation from your greatest labours; which though you may not cast off yourselves, you may lawfully be sensible of your ease, if God take off your burden. It is but a cessation from your sharpest conflicts, and removal from a multitude of great temptations. And though you may not cowardly retreat or shift yourselves from the fight and danger, yet if God will dispense with you, and let you live in greater peace and safety, you have no cause to murmur at his dealing. A fruit tree that groweth by the highway side, doth seldom keep its fruit to ripeness, while so many passengers have each his stone or cudgel to cast at it. Seneca could say, *Nunquam a turba mores quos extuli refero. Aliquid ex eo quod composui turbatur; aliquid ex his quæ fugavi redit: inimica est multorum conversatio.* I never bring home well from a crowd the manners which I took out with me: something is disordered of that which I had set in order; something of that which I had banished doth return; the conversation of many I find an enemy to me. Oh how many vain and foolish words corrupt the minds of those that converse with an ungodly world, when your ears and minds who live in solitude are free from such temptations! You live not in so corrupt an air as they. You hear not the filthy, ribald speeches, which fight against modesty and chastity, and are the bellows of lust. You hear not the discontented, complaining words of the impatient; nor the passionate, provoking words of the offended; nor the wrangling, quarrelsome words of the contentious; nor the censorious, or slanderous, or reproachful words of the malicious, who think it their interest to have their brethren taken to be bad, and to have others hate them, because they themselves hate them; and who are as zealous to quench the charity of others, when it is destroyed in themselves, as holy persons are zealous to provoke others to love, which dwelleth and ruleth in themselves. In your solitude with God, you shall not hear the lies and malicious revilings of the ungodly against the generation of the just: nor the subtle, cheating words of heretics, who being themselves deceived, would deceive others of their faith, and corrupt their lives. You shall not there be distracted with the noise and clamours of contending, uncharitable professors of religion, endeavouring to make odious first the opinions, and then the persons of one another: one saying, Here is the church, and another, There is the church: one saying, This is the true church government, and another saying, Nay, but that is it: one saying, God will be worshipped thus, another, Not so, but thus, or thus. You shall not there be drawn to side with one against another, nor to join with any faction, or be guilty of divisions. You shall not be troubled with the oaths and blasphemies of the wicked, nor with the imprudent miscarriages of the weak; with the persecutions of enemies, or the falling-out of friends. You shall not see the cruelty of proud oppressors, that set up lies by armed violence, and care not what they say or do, nor how much other men are injured and suffer, so that themselves may tyrannize, and their wills and words may rule the world, when they do so unhappily rule themselves. In your solitude with God, you shall not see the prosperity of the wicked, to move you to envy; nor the adversity of the just, to be your grief. You shall see no worldly pomp and splendour to befool you, nor adorned beauty to entice you, nor wasting calamities to afflict you. You shall not hear the laughter of fools, nor the sick man's groans, nor the wronged man's complaints, nor the poor man's murmurings, nor the proud man's boastings, nor the angry man's abusive ragings. As you lose the help of your gracious friends, so you are freed from the fruits of their peevishness and passions; of their differing opinions, and ways, and tempers; of their inequality, unsuitableness, and contrariety of minds or interests; of their levity and unconstancy, and the powerful temptations of their friendship, to draw you to the errors or other sins which they are tainted with themselves. In a word, you are there half delivered from the VANITY and

VEXATION of the world; and were it not that you are yet undelivered from yourselves, and that you take distempered, corrupted hearts with you, oh what a felicity would your solitude be! But, alas! we cannot overrun our own diseases, we must carry with us the remnants of our corrupted nature; our deadness and dulness, our selfishness and earthly minds, our impatience and discontents; and worst of all, our lamentable weakness of faith, and love, and heavenly-mindedness, and our strangeness to God, and backwardness to the matters of eternal life. Oh that I could escape these, though I were in the hands of the most cruel enemies! Oh that such a heart could be left behind! how gladly would I overrun both house, and land, and honour, and all sensual delights, that I might but overrun it! Oh where is the place where there is none of this darkness, nor disaffection, nor distance, nor estrangedness from God! Oh that I knew it! Oh that I could find it! Oh that I might there dwell! though I should never more see the face of mortals; nor ever hear a human voice, nor ever taste of the delights of flesh! Alas! foolish soul! such a place there is, that hath all this, and more than this; but it is not in a wilderness, but in paradise, not here on earth, but above with Christ! And yet am I so loth to die? yet am I no more desirous of the blessed day, when I shall be unclothed of flesh and sin? O death, what an enemy art thou even to my soul! by affrighting me from the presence of my Lord, and hindering my desires and willingness to be gone, thou wrongest me much more, than by laying my flesh to rot in darkness. Fain I would know God, and fain I would more love him and enjoy him; but oh this hurtful love of life, oh this unreasonable fear of dying, detaineth my desires from pressing on to the happy place where all this may be had! "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?" this carnal, unbelieving heart, that sometimes can think more delightfully of a wilderness than of heaven; that can go seek after God in desert solitude, among the birds, and beasts, and trees, and yet is so backward to be loosed from flesh that I may find him and enjoy him in the world of glory! Can I expect that heaven should come down to earth? and that the Lord of glory should remove his court, and either leave the retinue of his celestial courtiers, or bring them all down into this drossy world of flesh and sin, and this to satisfy my fleshly, foolish mind? or can I expect the translation of Enoch, or the chariot of Elias? Is it not enough that my Lord hath conquered death, and sanctified the passage, and prepared the place of my perpetual abode?

Well! for all this, though a wilderness is not heaven, it shall be sweet and welcome, for the sake of heaven, if thence I may but have a clearer prospect of it; and if by retiring from the crowd and noise of folly, I may but be more composed and better disposed to converse above, and to use my faith (alas! my too weak, languid faith) until the beatifical vision and fruition come. If there may be but more of God, or readier access to him, or more heart-quickening flames of love, or more heart-comforting intimations of his favour, in a wilderness than in a city, in a prison than in a palace, let that wilderness be my city, and let that prison be my palace, while I must abide on earth. If in solitude I may have Enoch's walk with God, I shall in due season have such a translation as shall bring me to the same felicity which he enjoyeth; and in the mean time, as well as after, it is no disadvantage, if by mortal eyes I be seen no more. If the chariot of contemplation will in solitude raise me to more believing, affectionate converse with heaven, than I could expect in tumults and temptations, it shall reconcile me unto solitude, and make it my paradise on earth, till angels, instead of the chariot of Elias, shall convey me to the presence of my glorified Head, in the celestial paradise.

Object. But it is grievous to one that hath been used to much company, to be alone.

Answ. Company may so use you, that it may be more grievous to you not to be alone. The society of wasps and serpents may be spared; and bees themselves have such stings as make some that have felt them think they bought the honey dear.

But can you say you are alone while you are with God? Is his presence nothing to you? doth it not signify more than the company of all men in the world? Saith Hierom, *Sapiens nunquam solus esse potest; habet enim secum omnes qui sunt, et qui fuerunt boni——et si hominum sit inopia, loquitur cum Deo:* viz. A wise man cannot be alone; for he hath with him the good men that are or have been——and if there be a want of men, he speaketh with God. He should rather have said, There can be no want of man, when we may speak with God; and were it not that God is here revealed to us as in a glass, and that we do converse with God in man, we should think human converse little worth.

Object. O but solitude is disconsolate to a sociable mind.

Answ. But the most desirable society is no solitude. Saith Hierom, *Infinita erimi vastitas te terret? sed tu Paradisum mente deambula; quoties-cunque cogitatione ac mente illuc conscenderis, toties in eremo non eris:* that is, Doth the infinite vastness of the wilderness terrify thee? but do thou (ascend) in mind and walk in Paradise; as oft as thou ascendest thither in thought and mind, so oft thou shalt not be in the wilderness. If God be nothing to thee, thou art not a christian but an atheist. If God be God to thee, he is all in all to thee; and then should not his presence be instead of all? Oh that I might get one step nearer unto God, though I receded many from all the world! Oh that I could find that place on earth, where a soul may have nearest access unto him, and fullest knowledge and enjoyment of him, though I never more saw the face of friends! I should cheerfully say with my blessed Saviour, "I am not alone, for the Father is with me." And should say so for these reasons following.

1. If God be with me, the Maker, and Ruler, and Disposer of all is with me; so that all things are virtually with me in him. I have that in gold and jewels which I seem to want in silver, lead, and dross. I can want no friend, if God vouchsafe to be my friend; and I can enjoy no benefit by all my friends, if God be my enemy: I need not fear the greatest enemies, if God be reconciled to me. I shall not miss the light of the candle, if I have this blessed sun. The creature is nothing but what it is from God, and in God; and it is worth nothing, or good for nothing, but what it is worth in order unto God, as it declareth him, and helps the soul to know him, serve him, or draw nearer to him. As it is idolatry in the unhappy worldling to thirst after the creature with the neglect of God, and so to make the world his god; so doth it savour of the same heinous sin to lament our loss of creatures more than the displeasure of God. If God be my enemy, or I am fallen under his indignation, I have then so much greater matters to lament than the loss, or absence, or frowns of man, as should almost make me forget that there is such a thing as man to be regarded; but if God be my Father, and my Friend in Christ, I have then so much to think of with delight, and to recreate and content my soul, as will proclaim it

most incongruous and absurd to lament inordinately the absence of a worm, while I have his love and presence who is all in all. If God cannot content me, and be not enough for me, how is he then my God? or how shall he be my heaven and everlasting happiness?

2. If God be with me, he is with me to whom I am absolutely devoted. I am wholly his, and have acknowledged his interest in me, and long ago disclaimed all usurpers, and repented of alienations, and unreservedly resigned myself to him; and where should I dwell but with him that is my Owner, and with whom I have made the solemnest covenant that ever I made? I never gave myself to any other, but in subordination to him, and with a *salvo* for his highest, inviolable right. Where should my goods be but in my own house? With whom should a servant dwell but with his master? and a wife, but with her husband? and children, but with their father? I am nearlier related to my God, and to my Saviour, than I am to any of my relations in this world. I owe more to him than to all the world; I have renounced all the world, as they stand in competition or comparison with him; and can I want their company, then, while I am with him? How shall I hate father and mother, and wife and children, and brother and sister, for his sake, if I cannot spare them, or be without them, to enjoy him? To hate them is but to use them as men do hated things, that is, to cast them away with contempt, as they would alienate me from Christ, and to cleave to him, and be satisfied in him alone. I am now married to Christ, and therefore must cheerfully leave father and mother, and my native place, and all, to cleave to him; and with whom should I now delight to dwell, but with him who hath taken me into so near relation, to be, as it were, one flesh with him! O my dear Lord, hide not thou thy face from an unkind, an unworthy sinner! let me but dwell with thee and see thy face, and feel the gracious embracements of thy love, and then let me be cast off by all the world, if thou seest it meetest for me; or let all other friends be where they will, so that my soul may be with thee: I have agreed for thy sake to forsake all, even the dearest, that shall stand against thee; and I resolve by thy grace to stand to this agreement.

3. If God be with me, I am not alone, for he is with me that loveth me best. The love of all the friends on earth is nothing to his love. Oh how plainly hath he declared that he loveth me, in the strange condescension, the sufferings, death, and intercession of his Son! What love hath he declared in the communications of his Spirit, and the operations of his grace, and the near relations into which he brought me! What love hath he declared in the course of his providences! in many and wonderful preservations and deliverances! in the conduct of his wisdom, and in a life of mercies! What love appeareth in his precious promises, and the glorious provisions he hath made for me with himself to all eternity! O my Lord, I am ashamed that thy love is so much lost; that it hath no better return from an unkind, unthankful heart; that I am no more delighted in thee, and swallowed up in the contemplation of thy love. I can contentedly let go the society and converse of all others, for the converse of some one bosom friend, that is dearer to me than they all, as Jonathan to David. And can I not much more be satisfied in thee alone, and let go all if I may continue with thee? My very dog will gladly forsake all the town, and all persons in the world, to follow me alone! And have I not yet found so much love and goodness in thee, my dear and blessed God, as to be willing to converse alone with thee? All men delight most in the company of those that love them best; they choose not to converse with the multitude when they look for solace and content, but with their dearest friends. And should any be so near to me as God? Oh, were not thy love unworthily neglected by an unthankful heart, I should never be so unsatisfied in thee, but should take up or seek my comforts in thee; I should then say, "Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none on earth that I desire besides thee!" Though not only my friends, but my flesh and heart themselves should fail me, it is thou that wilt still be the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever; it is good therefore for me to draw near to thee, how far soever I am from man. O let me there dwell where thou wilt not be strange, for thy loving-kindness is better than life; instead of the multitude of my turmoiling thoughts, let me be taken up in the believing views of thy reconciled face, and in the glad attendance of thy grace; or at least in the multitude of my thoughts within me, let thy celestial comforts delight my soul. Let me dwell as in thy family; and when I awake, let me be still with thee! Let me go no whither but where I am still following thee; let me do nothing but thy work, nor serve any other, but when I may truly call it a serving thee; let me hear nothing but thy voice, and let me know thy voice by whatever instrument thou shalt speak; let me never see any thing but thyself, and the glass that representeth thee, and the books in which I may read thy name; and let me never play with the outside, and gaze on words and letters as insignificant, and not observe thy name which is the sense. Whether it be in company or in solitude, let me be continually with thee, and do thou vouchsafe to hold me by my right hand; and guide me with thy counsel, and afterwards receive me unto thy glory, Psal. lxxiii. 23—26; lxiii. 3.

4. If God be with me I am not alone; for I shall be with him whose love is of greater use and benefit to me, than the love of all my friends in the world. Their love may perhaps be some little comfort, as it floweth from his; but it is his love by which, and upon which, I live. It is his love that gives me life and time, and health and food, and preservation; that gives me books, and giveth me understanding: that giveth me provision, and saveth me from turning it to pernicious fleshliness and excess; that giveth me even my friends themselves, and saveth me from that abuse which might make them to me worse than enemies. The sun, the earth, the air, is not so useful or needful to me as his love. The love of all my friends cannot make me well when I am sick: it cannot forgive the smallest of my sins; nor yet assure me of God's forgiveness: it cannot heal the maladies of my soul, nor give a solid, lasting peace to the conscience which is troubled: if all my friends stand about me when I am dying, they cannot take away the fears of death, nor secure my passage to everlasting life; death will be death still, and danger will be danger, when all my friends have done their best. But my Almighty Friend is all-sufficient; he can prevent my sickness, or rebuke and cure it, or make it so good to me, that I shall thank him for it: he can blot out my transgressions, and forgive all my sin; and justify me when the world and my conscience do condemn me: he can teach me to believe, to repent, to pray, to hope, to suffer, and to overcome: he can quiet my soul in the midst of trouble, and give me a well-grounded, everlasting peace, and a joy that no man can take from me. He can deliver me from all the corruptions and distempers of my froward heart; and ease me and secure me in the trouble-

some war which is daily managed in my breast. He can make it as easy a thing to die, as to lie down and take my rest when I am weary, or to undress me at night and go to bed. He can teach death to lay by its terrible aspect, and speak with a mild and comfortable voice, and to me the joyfullest tidings that ever came unto my ears; and to preach to me the last and sweetest sermon, even the same that our Saviour preached on the cross; "Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with Christ in paradise," Luke xxiii. 43.

And is this the difference between the love of man and of God? And yet do I lament the loss of man? And yet am I so backward to converse with God, and to be satisfied in his love alone? Ah, my God, how justly mayst thou withhold that love which I thus undervalue; and refuse that converse which I have first refused; and turn me over to man, to silly man, to sinful man, whose converse I so much desire, till I have learnt by dear experience the difference between man and God, and between an earthly and a heavenly friend! Alas! have I not tried it oft enough, to have known it better before this day? Have I not oft enough found what man is in a time of trial? Have I not been told it over and over, and told it to the quick, by deceitful friends, by self-seeking friends, by mutable, erroneous, deceived, scandalous, backsliding friends, by proud and self-conceited friends; by passionate, quarrelsome, vexatious friends, by self-grieving, troubled friends, that have but brought me all their calamities and griefs to be additions to my own; by tempting friends, that have drawn me to sin more effectually than enemies; by tender, faithful, but unable friends, that have but fetched fire from my calamities and sorrows, to kindle their own, not equally sharing, but each one taking all my trouble entirely to himself; that have been willing, but insufficient to relieve me, and therefore the greater was their love, the greater was their own, and consequently mine affliction; that would have been with me, but could not; that would fain have eased my pain, and strengthened my languishing body, but could not; that would fain have removed all my troubles, and comforted my cast-down mind, but could not? Oh how often have I found that human friendship is a sweet, desired addition to our woe; a beloved calamity, and an affliction which nature will not be without, not because it loveth evil, nor because it is wholly deceived in its choice, (for there is good in friendship, and delight in holy love,) but because the good which is here accompanied with so much evil, is the beginning of a more high and durable friendship, and pointeth us up to the blessed, delightful society and converse which in the heavenly Jerusalem we shall have with Christ.

But oh how much better have I found the friendship of the all-sufficient God! His love hath not only pitied me, but relieved me: he hath not only been as it were afflicted with me in my afflictions, but he hath delivered me; seasonably, and powerfully, and sweetly hath he delivered me: and when he had once told me that my afflictions were his own, I had no reason to doubt of a deliverance. My burdened mind hath been eased by his love, which was but more burdened by the fruitless love of all my friends. Oft have I come to man for help, and ease, and comfort, and gone away as from an empty cistern, that had no water to cool my thirst; but God hath been a present help: could I but get near him, I was sure of light, how great soever was my former darkness: could I but get near him, I was sure of warming, quickening life, how dead soever I had been before: but all my misery was, that I could not get near him! My darkened, estranged, guilty soul, could not get quieting and satisfying acquaintance: my lumpish heart lay dead on earth, and would not stir, or quickly fell down again, if by any celestial force it began to be drawn up, and move a little towards him: my carnal mind was entangled in diverting vanities; and thus I have been kept from communion with my God. Kept! not by force of human tyranny; not by bars or bolts, or distance of place, or by the lowness of my condition; nor by any misrepresentations or reproach of man; but alas! by myself, by the darkness, and deadness, and sluggishness, and earthliness, and fleshliness, and passions of a naughty heart! These have been my bars, and bolts, and gaolers; these are they that have kept me from my God: had it not been for these, I might have got nearer to him; I might have walked with him, and dwelt with him; yea, "dwelt in him, and he in me;" and then I should not have missed any friends, nor felt mine enemies. And is it my sinful distance from my God that hath been my loss, my wilderness, my woe? And is it a nearer admittance to the presence of his love that must be my recovery and my joy, if ever I attain to joy? O then, my soul, lay hold on Christ the Reconciler, and in him and by him draw near to God; and cease from man whose breath is in his nostrils: love God in his saints, and delightfully converse with Christ in them, while thou hast opportunity. But remember thou livest not upon them, or on their love, but upon God; and therefore desire their company but for his; and if thou have his, be content if thou have not theirs. He wants not man that enjoyeth God. Gather up all the love, and thoughts, and desires which have been scattered and lost upon the creatures, and set them all on God himself, and press into his presence, and converse with him, and thou shalt find the mistake of thy present discontents, and sweet experience shall tell thee thou hast made a happy change.

5. If God be with me, I am not alone, because he is with me with whom my greatest business lieth. And what company should I desire, but theirs with whom I have my daily necessary work to do? I have more to do with God than with all the world; yea, more and greater business with him in one day, than with all the world in all my life. I have business with man about house, or lands, or food, or raiment, or labour, or journeying, or recreations, about society and public peace; but what are these to my business with God? Indeed with holy men I have holy business; but that is but as they are messengers from God, and come to me on his business, and so they must be dearly welcome: but even then my business is much more with God than with them; with him that sent them, than with the messengers. Indeed my business with God is so great, that if I had not a Mediator to encourage and assist me, to do my work and procure me acceptance, the thoughts of it would overwhelm my soul.

O therefore, my soul, let man stand by: it is the eternal God that I have to do with; and with whom I am to transact in this little time the business of my endless life. I have to deal with God through Christ, for the pardon of my sins; of all my great and grievous sins! and woe to me, if I speed not, that ever I was born; I have some hopes of pardon, but intermixed with many perplexing fears: I have evidences much blotted, and not easily understood: I want assurance that he is indeed my Father and reconciled to me, and will receive me to himself when the world forsaketh me: I have many languishing graces to be strengthened; and, alas, what radicated, obstinate, vexatious corruptions to

be cured! Can I look into my heart, into such an unbelicving, dead, and earthly heart; into such a proud, and peevish, and disordered heart; into such a trembling, perplexed, self-accusing heart; and yet not understand how great my business is with God? Can I peruse my sins, or feel my wants, and sink under my weaknesses, and yet not discern how great my business is with God? Can I look back upon all the time that I have lost, and all the grace that I unthankfully resisted, and all the mercies that I trod under foot or fooled away; or can I look before me and see how near my time is to an end, and yet not understand how great my business is with God? Can I think of the malice and diligence of Satan, the number, power, and subtlety of mine enemies, the many snares and dangers that are still before me, the strength and number of temptations, and my ignorance, unwatchfulness, and weakness to resist, and yet not know that my greatest business is with God? Can I feel my afflictions and lament them, and think my burden greater than I can bear, and find that man cannot relieve me; can I go mourning in the heaviness of my soul, and water my bed with tears, and fill the air with my groans and lamentations, or feel my soul overwhelmed within me, so that my words are intercepted, and I am readier to break than speak; and yet not perceive that my greatest business is with God? Can I think of dying; can I draw near to judgment; can I think of everlasting joys in heaven, and of everlasting pains in hell; and yet not feel that my greatest business is with God? O then, my soul, the case is easily resolved, with whom it is that thou must most desirously and seriously converse. Where shouldst thou be but where thy business is, and so great business? Alas, what have I to do with man? What can it do but make my head ache, to hear a deal of senseless chat, about preferments, lands, and dignities; about the words and thoughts of men, and a thousand toys that are utterly impertinent to my great employments, and signify nothing but that the dreaming world is not awake? What pleasure is it to see the bustles of a bedlam world? What a stir they make to prove or make themselves unhappy! How long and of how little weight, are the learned discourses about syllables and words, and names and notions, and mood and figure, yea, or about the highest planets, when all are not referred unto God! Were it not that some converse with men doth further my converse with God, and that God did transact much of his business by his messengers and servants, it were no matter whether ever I more saw the face of man: were it not that my Master hath placed me in society, and appointed me much of my work for others, and with others, and much of his mercy is conveyed by others, man might stand by, and solitude were better than the best society, and God alone should take me up. Oh nothing is so much my misery and shame, as that I am no more willing, nor better skilled in the management of my great, important business! that my work is with God, and my heart is no more with him! Oh what might I do in holy meditation or prayer one hour, if I were as ready for prayer, and as good at prayer, as one that has had so long opportunity and so great necessity to converse with God should be! A prayerless heart, a heart that flieth away from God, is most inexcusable in such a one as I, that have so much important business with him: it is work that must be done; and if well done will never be repented of. I use not to return from the presence of God (when indeed I have drawn near him) as I do from the company of empty men, repenting that I have lost my time, and trembling that my mind is discomposed or depressed by the vanity and earthly savour of their discourse. I oft repent that I have prayed to him so coldly, and conversed with him so negligently, and served him so remissly; but I never repent of the time, the care, the affections, or the diligence employed in his holy work. Many a time I have repented that ever I spent so much time with man, and wished I had never seen the faces of some that are eminent in the world, whose favour and converse others are ambitious of; but it is my grief and shame that so small a part of all my life hath been spent with God, and that fervent prayer and heavenly contemplations have been so seldom and so short. Oh that I had lived more with God, though I had been less with the dearest of my friends! How much more sweet then would my life have been! How much more blameless, regular, and pure! How much more fruitful and answerable to my obligations and professions! How much more comfortable to my review! How many falls, and hurts, and wounds, and griefs, and groans might I have escaped! Oh how much more pleasing is it now to my remembrance, to think of the hours in which I have lain at the feet of God, though it were in tears and groans, than to think of the time which I have spent in any common converse with the greatest, or the learnedest, or the dearest of my acquaintance!

And as my greatest business is with God, so my daily business is also with him. He purposely leaveth me under wants, and suffers necessities daily to return, and enemies to assault me, and affliction to surprise me, that I may be daily driven to him. He loveth to hear from me. He would have me be no stranger with him. I have business with him every hour, I need not want employment for all the faculties of my soul, if I know what it is to converse in heaven. Even prayer, and every holy thought of God, hath an object so great and excellent, as should wholly take me up. Nothing must be thought or spoken lightly about the Lord. His name must not be taken in vain. Nothing that is common beseemeth his worshippers. He will be sanctified of all that shall draw near him. He must be loved with all the heart and might. His servants need not be wearied for want of employment, nor through the lightness or unprofitableness of their employment. If I had cities to build, or kingdoms to govern, I might better complain for want of employment, for the faculties of my soul, than I can when I am to converse in heaven. In other studies the delight abateth when I have reached my desire, and know all that I can know; but in God there is infinitely more to be known, when I know the most. I am never satiated with the easiness of knowing, nor are my desires abated by any uneasiness or unworthiness in the object; but I am drawn to it by its highest excellences, and drawn on to desire more and more by the infiniteness of the light which I have not yet beheld, and the infiniteness of the good which yet I have not enjoyed. If I be idle, or seem to want employment, when I am to contemplate all the attributes, relations, mercies, works, and revealed perfections of the Lord, it is sure for want of eyes to see, or a heart inclined to my business. If God be not enough to employ my soul, then all the persons and things on earth are not enough.

And when I have Infinite goodness to delight in, where my soul may freely let out itself, and never need to fear excess of love, how sweet should this employment be! As knowledge, so love is never stinted here, by the narrowness of the object. We can never love him in any proportion either to his goodness and amiableness in himself, or to his love to us. What need have I then of any other company

or business, when I have Infinite goodness to delight in and to love (further than they subserve this greatest work).

Come home then, O my soul, to God; converse in heaven: turn away thine eyes from beholding vanity; let not thy affections kindle upon straw or briers, that go out when they have made a flash or noise, and leave thee to thy cold and darkness; but come and dwell upon celestial beauties, and make it thy daily and most diligent work, to kindle thy affections on the infinite, everlasting good; and then they will never be extinguished or decay for want of fuel; but the further they go, and the longer they burn, the greater will be the flame. Though thou find it hard while love is but a spark to make it burn, and complain that thy cold and backward heart is hardly warmed with the love of God, yet when the whole pile hath taken fire, and the flame ascendeth, fire will breed fire, love will cause love; and all the maliee of hell itself shall never be able to suppress or quench it unto all eternity.

6. And it is a great encouragement to my eonverse with God, that no misunderstanding, no malice of enemies, no former sin or present frailty, no nor the infinite distance of the most holy, glorious God, can hinder my access to him, or turn away his ear or love, or interrupt my leave and liberty of converse. If I converse with the poor, their wants afflict me, being greater than I can supply; their complaints and expectations, which I cannot satisfy, are my trouble. If I would converse with great ones, it is not easy to get access; and less easy to have their favour, unless I would purchase it at too dear a rate. How strangely and contemptuously do they look at their inferiors! Great friends must be made for a word or smile; and if you be not quickly gone, they are aweary of you: and if you seek any thing of them, or would put them to any cost or trouble, you are as welcome to them as so many vermin or noisome creatures: they please them best that drive you away. With how much labour and difficulty must you climb, if you will see the top of one of these mountains; and when you are there, you are but in a place of barrenness, and have nothing to satisfy you for your pains, but a larger prospeet and vertiginous despect of the lower grounds which are not your own. It is seldom that these great ones are to be spoken with; and perhaps their speech is but a denial to your request, if not some snappish and contemptuous rejection, that makes you glad when you are got far enough from them, and makes you better like and love the accessible, calm, and fruitful plains.

But oh how much greater encouragements hath my soul to converse with God! Company never hindereth him from hearkening to my suit; he is infinite and omnipotent, and is sufficient for every individual soul, as if he had no other to look after in the world: when he is taken up with the attendance and praises of his heavenly host, he is as free and ready to attend and answer the groans and prayers of a contrite soul, as if he had no nobler creatures, nor no higher service to regard. I am oft unready, but God is never unready; I am unready to pray, but he is not unready to hear; I am unready to come to God, to walk with him, and to solace my soul with him, but he is never unready to entertain me. Many a time my conscience would have driven me away, when he hath called me to him, and rebuked my accusing, fearful conscience. Many a time I have called myself a prodigal, a companion of swine, a miserable, hard-hearted sinner, unworthy to be called his son, when he hath called me child, and chid me for my questioning his love. He hath readily forgiven the sins which I thought would have made my soul the fuel of hell. He hath entertained me with joy, with music and a feast, when I better deserved to have been among the dogs without his doors. He hath embraced me in his sustaining, consolatory arms, when he might have spurned my guilty soul to hell, and said, "Depart from me, thou worker of iniquity, I know thee not." Oh little did I think that he could ever have forgotten the vanity and villany of my youth; yea, so easily have forgotten my most aggravated sins. When I had sinned against light; when I had resisted conscience; when I had frequently and wilfully injured love, I thought he would never have forgotten it; but the greatness of his love and mercy, and the blood and intercession of his Son, hath cancelled all. Oh how many mercies have I tasted since I thought I had sinned away all mercies! How patiently hath he borne with me, sinee I thought he would never have put up more! And yet besides my sins and the withdrawings of my own heart, there hath been nothing to interrupt our converse. Though he be God, and I a worm, yet that would not have kept me out: though he be in heaven, yet he is near to succour me on earth, in all that I call upon him for: though he have the praise of angels, he disdaineth not my tears and groans: though he have the perfeet love of perfect souls, he knoweth the little spark in my breast, and despiseth not my weak and languid love: though I injure and dishonour him by loving him no more; though I oft forget him, and have been out of the way when he hath eome or called me; though I have disobediently turned away mine ears, and unkindly refused the entertainments of his love, and unfaithfully played with those whose company he forbad me, he hath not divorced me, nor turned me out of doors. Oh wonderful! that heaven will be familiar with earth! and God with man! the Highest with a worm! and the Most Holy with an unconstant sinner! Man refuseth me, when God will entertain me; man, that is no wiser nor better than myself. Those that I never wronged, or deserved ill of, reject me with reproach; and God, whom I have unspeakably injured, doth invite me, and entreat me, and condescendeth to me, as if he were beholden to me to be saved. Men, that I have deserved well of, do abhor me; and God that I have deserved hell of, doth aecept me. The best of them are briers, and a thorny hedge, and he is love, and rest, and joy. And yet I can be more welcome to him, though I have offended him, than I can to them whom I have obliged: I have freer leave to cast myself into my Father's arms, than to tumble in those briers, or wallow in the dirt. I upbraid myself with my sins, but he doth not upbraid me with them. I condemn myself for them, but he eondemns me not; he forgiveth me sooner than I can forgive myself: I have peaee with him, before I can have peace of eonscience.

O, therefore, my soul, draw near to him that is so willing of thy company; that frowneth thee not away, unless it be when thou hast fallen into the dirt, that thou mayst wash thee from thy filthiness, and be fitter for his converse. Draw near to him that will not wrong thee, by believing misreports of enemies, or laying to thy charge the things thou knewest not; but will forgive the wrongs thou hast done to him, and justify thee from the sins that conscience layeth to thy charge. Come to him that by his word and Spirit, his ministers and mercies, calleth thee to come; and hath promised that those that come to him, he will in no wise shut out. O walk with him that will bear thee up, and lead thee as by the right hand, (Psal. lxxiii. 23,) and carry his infants

when they cannot go! O speak to him that teacheth thee to speak, and understandeth and accepts thy stammering; and helpeth thine infirmities, when thou knowest not what to pray for as thou oughtest; and giveth thee groans when thou hast not words, and knoweth the meaning of his Spirit in thy groans; that cannot be contained in the heaven of heavens, and yet hath respect to the contrite soul, that trembleth at his word, and feareth his displeasure; that pitieth the tears, and despiseth not the sighing, of a broken heart, nor the desires of the sorrowful. Oh walk with him that is never weary of the converse of the upright soul! that is never angry with thee but for flying from him, or for drawing back, or being too strange, and refusing the kindness and felicity of his presence. The day is coming when the proudest of the sons of men would be glad of a good look from him that thou hast leave to walk with; even they that would not look on thee, and they that injured and abused thee, and they that inferiors could have no access to! Oh how glad would they be then of a smile, or a word of hope and mercy, from their Father! Draw near then to him, on whom the whole creation doth depend; whose favour at last the proudest and the worst would purchase with the loudest cries, when all their pomp and pleasure is gone, and can purchase nothing. O walk with him that is love itself, and think him not unwilling or unlovely; and let not the deceiver by hideous misrepresentations drive thee from him: when thou hast felt a while the storms abroad, methinks thou shouldst say, How good, how safe, how sweet is it to draw near to God!

7. With whom should I so desirously converse, as with him whom I must live with for ever? If I take pleasure in my house, or land, or country, my walks, my books, or friends themselves as clothed with flesh, I must possess this pleasure but a little while: henceforth know we no man after the flesh: had we known Christ after the flesh, we must know him so no more for ever (though his glorified, spiritual body we shall know). Do you converse with father or mother, with wives or children, with pastors and teachers; though you may converse with these as glorified saints when you come to Christ, yet in these relations that they stand in to you now, you shall converse with them but a little while; for "the time is short: it remaineth that both they that have wives, be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and those that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusing it (or as though they used it not): for the fashion of this world passeth away," 1 Cor. vii. 29—31.

Why then should I so much regard a converse of so short continuance? Why should I be so familiar in my inn, and so much in love with that familiarity, as to grieve when I must but think of leaving it, or talk of going home, and look forward to the place where I must dwell for ever? Shall I be fond of the company of a passenger that I travel with, (yea, perhaps one that doth but meet me in the way, and goeth to a contrary place,) and shall I not take more pleasure to remember home? I will not be so uncivil as to deny those I meet a short salute, or to be friendly with my fellow-travellers: but remember, O my soul, that thou dost not dwell, but travel here, and that it is thy Father's house where thou must abide for ever; yea, and he is nearer thee than man, (though invisible,) even in thy way. O see him then that is invisible; hearken to him when he speaketh; obey his voice; observe his way; speak to him boldly, though humbly and reverently, as his child, about the great concernments of thy state: tell him what it is that aileth thee; and seeing all thy smart is the fruit of thy own sin, confess thy folly and unkindness, crave his forgiveness, and remember him what his Son hath suffered, and for what; treat with him about thy future course; desire his grace, and give up thyself to his conduct and his care: weep over in his ears the history of thy misdoings and unthankful course; tell it him with penitential tears and groans; but tell him also the advantage that he hath for the honouring of his grace, if it may now abound where sin aboundeth: tell him that thou art most offended with thyself, for that which he is most offended with; that thou art angry with thy disobedient, unthankful heart; that thou art even aweary of that heart that loveth him no more; and that it shall never please thee, till it love him better, and be more desirous to please him: tell him of thy enemies, and crave the protection of his love: tell him of thy frailties, infirmities, and passions, and crave not only his tender forbearance, but his help; tell him that without him thou canst do nothing; and crave the grace that is sufficient for thee, that through him that strengtheneth thee thou mayst do all things: when thou fallest, despair not, but crave his helping hand to raise thee. Speak to him especially of the everlasting things, and thank him for his promises, and for thy hopes; for what thou shalt be, and have, and do among his holy ones for ever. Express thy joys in the promise of those joys; that thou must see his glory, and love him, and praise him, better than thou canst now desire! Begin those praises, and as thou walkest with him, take pleasure in the mention of his perfections; be thankful to him, and speak good of his name: solace thyself in remembering what a God, what a defence and portion, all believers have; and in considering whither he is now conducting thee, and what he will do with thee, and what use he will make of thee for ever: speak with rejoicing of the glory of his works, and the righteousness of his judgments, and the holiness and evenness of his ways: sing forth his praises with a joyful heart, and pleasant and triumphing voice; and frown away all slavish fears, all importune, malicious suggestions and doubts, all peevish, hurtful, nipping griefs, that would mar or interrupt the melody; and would untune or unstring a raised, well-composed soul. Thy Father loveth thy very moans and tears; but how much more doth he love thy thanks and praise! Or if indeed it be a winter-time, a stormy day with thee, and he seem to chide or hide his face because thou hast offended him, let the cloud that is gathered by thy folly come down in tears, and tell him, "Thou hast sinned against heaven, and before him, and art no more worthy to be called his son;" but yet fly not from him, but beg his pardon and the privilege of a servant; and thou wilt find embracements, when thou fearest condemnation; and find that he is merciful and ready to forgive: only return, and keep closer for the time to come. If the breach through thy neglect be gone so far, as that thou seemest to have lost thy God, and to be cast off, and left forsaken, despair not yet; for he doth but hide his face till thou repent: he doth not forsake thee, but only tell thee what it is to walk so carelessly as if thou wouldst forsake him: thou art faster and surer in his love and covenant than thou canst believe or apprehend. Thy Lord was as dear as ever to his Father, when he cried out, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" But yet neglect him not, and be not regardless of his withdrawings, and of thy loss: lift up thy voice and cry but Father; in despite of unbelief, cry out, My Father, my Saviour, my God,

and thou shalt hear him answer thee at last, My child. Cry out, O why dost thou hide thy face? and why hast thou forsaken me? O what shall I do here without thee? O leave me not, lose me not in this howling wilderness! Let me not be a prey to any ravening beast! to my sin, to Satan, to my foes and thine! Lift up thy voice and weep, and tell him they are the tears and lamentations of his child. O beg of him, that thy wanderings and childish folly may not be taken as acts of enmity, or at least that they may be pardoned; and though he correct thee, that he will return and not forsake thee, but still take thee and use thee as his child: or if thou hast not words to pour out before him, at least smite upon thy breast, and though thou be ashamed or afraid to look up towards heaven, look down and say, "O Lord, be merciful to me a sinner;" and he will take it for an acceptable suit, that tendeth to thy pardon and justification, and will number such a sentence with the prayers which he cannot deny. Or if thou cry and canst not hear of him, and hast long called out upon thy Father's name, and hearest not his voice and hast no return; inquire after him of those thou meetest; ask for him of them that know him, and are acquainted with his way; make thy moan unto the watchmen; and ask them, where thou mayst find thy Lord. And at last he will appear to thee, and find thee first, that thou mayst find him, and show thee where it was that thou didst lose him, by losing thyself and turning from him! Seek him and thou shalt find him; wait and he will appear in kindness; for he never faileth or forsaketh those that wait upon him.

This kind of converse, O my soul, thou hast to prosecute with thy God. Thou hast also the concernments of all his servants, his afflicted ones, to tell him of; tell him also of the concernments of his kingdom, the fury of his enemies, the dishonour they cast upon his name, the matters of his gospel, cause, and interest in the world; but still let his righteous judgment be remembered, and all be terminated in the glorious, everlasting kingdom.

Is it not much better thus to converse with him that I must be with for ever, about the place, and the company, and work, and concernments of my perpetual abode, than to be taken up with strangers in my way, and detained by their impertinences?

I have found myself so long in these meditations that I will but name the rest, and tell you what I had further to have treated on, and leave the enlargement to your own meditations.

8. I have no reason to be weary of converse with God, seeing it is that for which all human converse is regardable. Converse with man, is only so far desirable as it tendeth to our converse with God; and therefore the end must be preferred before the means.

9. It is the office of Christ, and the work of the Holy Ghost, and the use of all the means of grace, and of all creatures, mercies, and afflictions, to reduce our straying souls to God, that we may converse with him, and enjoy him.

10. Converse with God is most suitable to those that are so near to death; it best prepareth for it; it is likest to the work that we are next to do. We had rather, when death comes, be found conversing with God, than with man; it is God that a dying man hath principally to do with; it is his judgment that he is going to, and his mercy that he hath to trust upon; and therefore it concerneth us to draw near him now, and be no strangers to him, lest strangeness then should be our terror.

11. How wonderful a condescension is it that God should be willing to converse with me! with such a worm and sinful wretch! and therefore how inexcusable is my crime, if I refuse his company, and so great a mercy!

12. Lastly, Heaven itself is but our converse with God and his glorified ones (though in a more perfect manner than we can here perceive). And therefore our holy converse with him here is the state that is likest heaven, and that prepareth for it, and all the heaven that is on earth.

It remaineth now that I briefly tell you what you should do to attain and manage this converse with God, in the improvement of your solitude. (For directions in general for walking with God, I reserve for another place.) At present let these few suffice.

Direct. 1. If you would comfortably converse with God, make sure that you are reconciled to him in Christ, and that he is indeed your Friend and Father. "Can two walk together except they be agreed?" Can you take pleasure in dwelling with the consuming fire? or conversing with the most dreadful enemy? Yet this I must add, that every doubting or self-accusing soul may not find a pretence to fly from God. 1. That God ceaseth not to be a Father whenever a fearful soul is drawn to question or deny it. 2. That in the universal love and grace of God to miserable sinners, and in the universal act of conditional pardon and oblivion, and in the offers of grace, and the readiness of God to receive the penitent, there is glad tidings that should exceedingly rejoice a sinner; and there is sufficient encouragement to draw the most guilty, miserable sinner to seek to God, and sue for mercy. But yet the sweetest converse is for children, and for those that have some assurance that they are children.

But perhaps you will say, that this is not easily attained. How shall we know that he is our Friend?

In brief, I answer, If you are unfeignedly friends to God, it is because he first loved you. Prefer him before all other friends, and all the wealth and vanity of the world; provoke him not by wilfulness or neglect; use him as your best Friend, and abuse him not by disobedience or ingratitude; own him before all, at the dearest rates, whenever you are called to it; desire his presence; lament his absence; love him from the bottom of your hearts; think not hardly of him; suspect him not; misunderstand him not; hearken not to his enemies; receive not any false reports against him; take him to be really better for you, than all the world: do these, and doubt not but you are friends with God, and God with you. In a word, Be but heartily willing to be friends to God, and that God should be your chiefest Friend, and you may be sure that it is so indeed, and that you are and have what you desire. And then how delightfully may you converse with God.

Direct. 2. Wholly depend on the mediation of Christ, the great Reconciler. Without him there is no coming near to God; but in his Beloved you shall be accepted. Whatever fear of his displeasure shall surprise you, fly presently for safety unto Christ; whatever guilt shall look you in the face, commit yourself and cause to Christ, and desire him to answer for you: when the doors of mercy seem to be shut against you, fly to him that bears the keys, and can at any time open to you and let you in: desire him to answer for you to God, to your own consciences, and against all accusers; by him alone you may boldly and comfortably converse with God; but God will not know you out of him.

Direct. 3. Take heed of bringing a particular guilt into the presence of God, if you would have sweet communion with him. Christ himself never reconciled God to sin; and the sinner and sin are so nearly related, that notwithstanding the death of Christ,

you shall feel that iniquity dwelleth not with God, but he hateth the workers of it, and the foolish shall not stand in his sight; and that if you will presume to sin because you are his children, "be sure your sin will find you out." Oh what fears, what shame, what self-abhorrence, and self-revenge will guilt raise in a penitent soul, when it comes into the light of the presence of the Lord! It will unavoidably abate your boldness and your comforts; when you should be sweetly delighting in his pleased face, and promised glory, you will be befooling yourselves for your former sin, and ready even to tear your flesh, to think that ever you should do as you have done, and use him as you would not have used a common friend, and cast yourselves upon his wrath. But an innocent soul, or pacified conscience, doth walk with God in quietness and delight, without those frowns and fears which are a taste of hell to others.

Direct. 4. If you would comfortably converse with God, be sure that you bring not idols in your hearts. Take heed of inordinate affection to any creature. Let all things else be nothing to you, that you may have none to take up your thoughts but God. Let your minds be further separate from them than your bodies; bring not into solitude or contemplation a proud, or lustful, or covetous mind: it much more concerneth thee, what heart thou bringest, than what place thou art in, or what work thou art upon. A mind that is drowned in ambition, sensuality, or passion, will scarce find God any sooner in a wilderness than in a crowd (unless he be there returning from those sins to God); wherever he seeth him, God will not own and be familiar with so foul a soul. Seneca could say, *Quid prodest totius regionis silentium, si affectus fremunt?* What good doth the silence of all the country do thee, if thou have the noise of raging affections within? And Gregory saith, *Qui corpore remotus vivit*, &c. He that in body is far enough from the tumult of human conversation, is not in solitude, if he busy himself with earthly cogitations and desires: and he is not in the city, that is not troubled with the tumult of the worldly cares and fears, though he be pressed with the popular crowds. Bring not thy house, or land, or credit, or carnal friend along with thee in thine heart, if thou desire and expect to walk in heaven, and to converse with God.

Direct. 5. Live still by faith; let faith lay heaven and earth as it were together. Look not at God as if he were far off; set him always as before you, even as at your right hand, Psal. xvi. 8. Be still with him when you awake, Psal. cxxxix. 18. In the morning thank him for your rest; and deliver up yourself to his conduct and service for that day. Go forth as with him, and to do his work; do every action with the command of God and the promise of heaven before your eyes, and upon your hearts: live as those that have incomparably more to do with God and heaven, than with all this world; that you may say with David, (as afore cited,) "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none on earth that I desire besides thee," Psal. xxxvii. 25, 26. And with Paul, "To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain," Phil. i. 21. You must shut up the eye of sense, (save as subordinate to faith,) and live by faith upon a God, a Christ, and a world that is unseen, if you would know by experience what it is to be above the brutish life of sensualists, and to converse with God. O christian, if thou hast rightly learned this blessed life, what a high and noble soul-conversation wouldst thou have! How easily wouldst thou spare, and how little wouldst thou miss, the favour of the greatest, the presence of any worldly comfort! City or solitude would be much alike to thee, saving that the place and state would be best to thee, where thou hast the greatest help and freedom to converse with God. Thou wouldst say of human society as Seneca, *Unus pro populo mihi est, et populus pro uno; mihi satis est unus, satis est nullus.* One is instead of all the people to me, and the people as one; one is enough for me, and none is enough. Thus being taken up with God, thou mightest live in prison as at liberty, and in a wilderness as in a city, and in a place of banishment as in thy native land; "for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof;" and every where thou mayst find him, and converse with him, and lift up pure hands unto him: in every place thou art within the sight of home; and heaven is in thine eye, and thou art conversing with that God, in whose converse the highest angels do place their highest felicity and delight.

How little cause then have all the church's enemies to triumph, that can never shut up a true believer from the presence of his God, nor banish him into such a place where he cannot have his conversation in heaven! The stones that were cast at holy Stephen, could not hinder him from seeing the heavens opened, and Christ sitting at the right hand of God. A Patmos allowed holy John communion with Christ, being there in the Spirit on the Lord's day, Rev. i. 9, 10. Christ never so speedily and comfortably owneth his servants, as when the world disowneth them, and abuseth them for his sake, and hurls them up and down as the scorn and offscouring of all. He quickly found the blind man that he had cured, when once the Jews had cast him out, John ix. 35. Persecutors do but promote the blessedness and exceeding joy of sufferers for Christ, Matt. v. 11 12.

And how little reason then have christians to shun such sufferings, by unlawful means, which turn to their so great advantage! and to give so dear as the hazard of their souls by wilful sin, to escape the honour, and safety, and commodity of martyrdom!

And indeed we judge not, we love not, we live not, as sanctified ones must do, if we judge not that the truest liberty, and love it not as the best condition, in which we may best converse with God. And oh how much harder is it to walk with God in a court, in the midst of sensual delights, than in a prison or wilderness where we have none to interrupt us, and nothing else to take us up! It is our prepossessed minds, our earthly hearts, our carnal affections and concupiseence, and the pleasures of a prosperous state, that are the prisons and jailers of our souls. Were it not for these, how free should we be, though our bodies were confined to the straitest room! He is at liberty that can walk in heaven, and have access to God, and make use of all the creatures in the world, to the promoting of this his heavenly conversation. And he is the prisoner whose soul is chained to flesh and earth, and confined to his lands and houses, and feedeth on the dust of worldly riches, or walloweth in the dung and filth of gluttony, drunkenness, and lust; that are far from God, and desire not to be near him; but say to him, Depart from us, we would not have the knowledge of thy ways: that love their prison and chains so well, that they would not be set free, but hate those with the cruellest hatred that endeavour their deliverance. Those are the poor prisoners of Satan, that have not liberty to believe, nor love God, nor converse in heaven, nor seriously to mind or seek the things that are high and honourable; that have not liberty to meditate or pray, or seriously to speak of holy things, nor to love and converse with those that do so: that are tied so hard to the

drudgery of sin, that they have not liberty one month, or week, or day, to leave it, and walk with God so much as for a recreation! But he that liveth in the family of God, and is employed in attending him, and doth converse with Christ, and the host of holy ones above, in reason should not much complain of his want of friends, or company, or accommodations, nor yet be too impatient of any corporal confinement.

Lastly, be sure then most narrowly to watch your hearts, that nothing have entertainment there which is against your liberty of converse with God. Fill not those hearts with worldly trash, which are made and new-made to be the dwelling-place of God. Desire not the company which would diminish your heavenly acquaintance and correspondence. Be not unfriendly, nor conceited of a self-sufficiency; but yet beware lest under the honest, ingenuous title of a friend, a special, prudent, faithful friend, you should entertain an idol, or an enemy to your love of God, or a corrival or competitor with your highest Friend; for if you do, it is not the specious title of a friend that will save you from the thorns and briers of disquietment, and from greater troubles than ever you found from open enemies.

Oh blessed be that high and everlasting Friend, who is every way suited to the upright souls; to their minds, their memories, their delight, their love, &c. by surest truth, by fullest goodness, by clearest light, by dearest love, by firmest constancy, &c.—— Oh why hath my drowsy and dark-sighted soul been so seldom with him? Why hath it so often, so strangely, and so unthankfully passed by, and not observed him, nor hearkened to his kindest calls? Oh what is all this trash and trouble that hath filled my memory, and employed my mind, and cheated and corrupted my affections, while my dearest Lord hath been days and nights so unworthily forgotten, so contemptuously neglected and disregarded, and loved as if I loved him not! Oh that these drowsy and those waking nights, those loitered, lost, and empty hours, had been spent in the humblest converse with him, which have been dreamed and doted away upon——now I know not what! O my God, how much wiser and happier had I been, had I rather chosen to mourn with thee, than to rejoice and sport with any other! Oh that I had rather wept with thee, than laughed with the creature! For the time to come let that be my friend, that most befriendeth my dark, and dull, and backward soul, in its undertaken progress, and heavenly conversation! or if there be none such upon the earth, let me here take no one for my friend! O blot out every name from my corrupted heart, which hindereth the deeper engraving of thy name! Ah, Lord, what a stone, what a blind, ungrateful thing, is a heart not touched with celestial love! Yet shall I not run to thee, when I have none else that will know me? shall I not draw near thee, when all fly from me? when daily experience crieth out so loud, NONE BUT CHRIST; GOD OR NOTHING? Ah foolish heart, that hast not thought of it. Where is that place, that cave or desert, where I might soonest find thee, and fullest enjoy thee? is it in the wilderness that thou walkest, or in the crowd; in the closet, or in the church? where is it that I might soonest meet with God? But, alas! I now perceive, that I have a heart to find, before I am like to find my Lord! O loveless, lifeless, stony heart! that is dead to him that gave it life, and to none but him! Could I not love, or think, or feel at all, methinks I were less dead than now! less dead, if dead, than now I am alive! I had almost said, Lord, let me never love more till I can love thee! nor think more on any thing till I can more willingly think of thee! But I must suppress that wish; for life will act; and the mercies and motions of nature are necessary to those of grace. And therefore in the life of nature and in the glimmerings of thy light, I will wait for more of the celestial life! My God, thou hast my consent! it is here attested under my hand: Separate me from what and whom thou wilt, so I may but be nearer thee! Let me love thee more, and feel more of thy love, and then let me love or be beloved of the world as little as thou wilt.

I thought self-love had been a more predominant thing; but now I find that repentance hath its anger, its hatred, and its revenge! I am truly angry with my heart that hath so oft and foolishly offended thee! Methinks I hate that heart that is so cold and backward in thy love, and almost grudge it a dwelling in my breast! Alas! when love should be the life of prayer, the life of holy meditation, the life of sermons and of holy conference, and my soul in these should long to meet thee, and delight to mention thee, I straggle, Lord, I know not whither! or I sit still and wish, but do not rise and run and follow thee, yea, I do not what I seem to do. All is dead, all is dead, for want of love! I often cry, Oh where is that place where the quickening beams of heaven are warmest, that my frozen soul might seek it out? but whither can I go, to city or to solitude, alas, I find it is not place that makes the difference. I know that Christ is perfectly replenished with life, and light, and love divine; and I hear him as our Head and Treasure proclaimed and offered to us in the gospel! This is my record, that "he that hath the Son hath life." Oh why then is my barren soul so empty? I thought I had long ago consented to thy offer; and then, according to thy covenant, both head and life in him are mine! and yet must I still be dark and dead?

Ah! dearest Lord, I say not that I have too long waited; but if I continue thus to wait, wilt thou never find the time of love, and come and own thy gasping worm? wilt thou never dissipate these clouds, and shine upon this dead and darkened soul? Hath my night no day? Thrust me not from thee, O my God! for that is a hell, to be thrust from God. But sure the cause is all at home, could I find it out, or rather could I cure it! It is sure my face that is turned from God, when I say, His face is turned from me. But if my life must here be out of sight, and hidden in the root, (with Christ in God,) and if all the rest be reserved for that better world, and I must here have but these small beginnings, oh make me more to love and long for the blessed day of thine appearing, and not to fear the time of my deliverance, nor unbelievingly to linger in this Sodom, as one that had rather stay with sin than come to thee! Though sin hath made me backward to the fight, let it not make me backward to receive the crown; though it hath made me a loiterer in thy work, let it not make me backward to receive that wages, which thy love will give to our pardoned, poor, accepted services. Though I have too oft drawn back, when I should have come unto thee, and walked with thee in thy ways of grace, yet heal that unbelief and disaffection, which would make me to draw back, when thou callest me to possess thy glory! Though the sickness and lameness of my soul have hindered me in my journey, yet let their painfulness help me in my desire to be delivered from them and to be at home, where (without the interposing nights of thy displeasure) I shall fully feel thy fullest love, and walk with thy glorified ones in the light of thy glory, triumphing in thy praise for evermore. Amen.

But now I have given you these few directions for the improvement of your solitude for converse with God, lest I should occasion the hurt of those that are unfit for the lesson I have given, I must conclude with this caution, (which I have formerly also published,) That it is not melancholy or weak-headed persons, who are not able to bear such exercises, for whom I have written these directions. Those that are not able to be much in serious, solitary thoughtfulness, without confusions and distracting suggestions, and hurrying, vexatious thoughts, must set themselves for the most part to those duties which are to be done in company by the help of others; and must be very little in solitary duties: for to them whose natural faculties are so diseased or weak, it is no duty, as being no means to do them the desired good; but while they strive to do that which they are naturally unable to endure, they will but confound and distract themselves, and make themselves unable for those other duties which yet they are not utterly unfit for. To such persons, instead of ordered, well-digested meditations, and much time spent in secret thoughtfulness, it must suffice that they be brief in secret prayer, and take up with such occasional abrupter meditations as they are capable of, and that they be the more in reading, hearing, conference, and praying and praising God with others; until their melancholy distempers are so far overcome, as that (by the direction of their spiritual guides) they may judge themselves fit for this improvement of their solitude.

THE

DIVINE APPOINTMENT OF THE LORD'S DAY,

PROVED;

AS A SEPARATED DAY FOR HOLY WORSHIP, ESPECIALLY IN THE CHURCH ASSEMBLIES: AND CONSEQUENTLY THE CESSATION OF THE SEVENTH-DAY SABBATH.

THE PREFACE.

READER,

IF thou think this Treatise both superfluous and defective, when so many larger have better done the work already, I shall not at all gainsay the latter, nor much the former. The reason of my writing it, was the necessity and request of some very upright, godly persons, who are lately fallen into doubt or error, in point of the sabbath day, conceiving, that because the fourth commandment was written in stone, it is wholly unchangeable, and consequently the seventh-day sabbath in force, and that the Lord's day is not a day separated by God to holy worship. I knew that there was enough written on this subject long ago: but, 1. Much of it is in Latin. 2. Some writings which prove the abrogation of the Jewish sabbath, do withal treat so loosely of the Lord's day, as that they require a confutation in the latter, as well as a commendation for the former. 3. Some are so large, that the persons that I write for, will hardly be brought to read them. 4. Most go upon those grounds, which I take to be less clear; and build so much more than I can do on the fourth commandment and on many passages of the Old Testament, and plead so much for the old sabbatical notion and rest, that I fear this is the chief occasion of many people's errors; who when they find themselves in a wood of difficulties, and nothing plain and convincing that is pleaded with them, do therefore think it safest to stick to the old Jewish sabbath. The friends and acquaintance of some of these persons importuning me, to take the plainest and nearest way to satisfy such honest doubters, I have here done it according to my judgment: not contending against any that go another way to work, but thinking myself that this is very clear and satisfactory; viz. to prove, 1. That Christ did commission his apostles to teach us all things which he commanded, and to settle orders in his church. 2. And that he gave them his Spirit to enable them to do all this infallibly, by bringing all his words to their remembrance, and by leading them into all truth. 3. And that his apostles by this Spirit did *de facto* separate the Lord's day for holy worship, especially in church assemblies, and declared the cessation of the Jewish sabbaths. 4. And that as this change had the very same author as the holy Scriptures, (the Holy Ghost in the apostles), so that fact hath the same kind of proof that we have of the canon and the integrity and uncorruptness of the particular Scripture books and texts: and that if so much Scripture as mentioneth the keeping of the Lord's day, expounded by the consent and practice of the universal church from the days of the apostles, (all keeping this day as holy, without the dissent of any one sect, or single person, that I remember to have read of,) I say, if history will not fully prove the point of fact, that this day was kept in the apostles' times, and consequently by their appointment, then the same proof will not serve to evince that any text of Scripture is canonical, and uncorrupted; nor can we think that any thing in the world, that is past, can have historical proof.

I have been put to say something particularly out of antiquity for this evidence of the fact, because it is that which I lay the greatest stress upon. But I have not done it so largely as might be done: 1. Because I would not lose the unlearned reader in a wood of history, nor overwhelm him instead of edifying him. 2. Because it is done already in Latin by Dr. Young in his "Dies Dominica" (under the name of Theophilus Loncardiensis); which I take to be the moderatest, soundest, and strongest Treatise on this subject that I have seen: though Mr. Cawdry and Palmer (jointly) have done well, and at greater length; and Mr. Eaton, Mr. Shephard, Dr. Bound, Wallæus, Rivet, and my dear friend Mr. George Abbot, against Broad, have said very much: and in their way, Dr. White, Dr. Heylin, Bishop Ironside, Mr. Brierwood, &c. 3. I chose most of the same citations which Dr. Heylin himself produceth, because he being the man

that I am most put to defend myself against, his concessions are my advantage. 4. And if I had been willing, I could not have been so full in this as the subject will bespeak, because I have almost eleven years been separated from my library, and long from the neighbourhood of any one's else.

I much pity and wonder at those godly men, who are so much for stretching the words of Scripture, to a sense that other men cannot find in them, as that in the word *graven images* in the second commandment, they can find all set forms of prayer, all composed, studied sermons, and all things about worship of man's invention, to be images or idolatry; and yet they cannot find the abrogation of the Jewish sabbath in the express words of Col. ii. 16, nor the other texts which I have cited; nor can they find the institution of the Lord's day in all the texts and evidences produced for it. But though Satan may somewhat disturb our concord, and tempt some men's charity to remissness, by these differences, he shall never keep them out of heaven, who worship God through Christ, by the Spirit, even in spirit and truth. Nor shall he, I hope, ever draw me to think such holy persons as herein differ from me, to be worse than myself, though I think them in this to be unhappily mistaken: much less to approve of their own separation from others, or of other men's condemning them as heretics, and inflicting severities upon them, for these their opinions' sake.

CHAPTER I.

THOUGH the principal thing desired by the inquirers is, That I would prove to them the cessation of the seventh-day sabbath, yet because they cast off the Lord's day, which I take to be a far greater error and sin than the observation of both days; and because that when I have proved the institution of the Lord's day, I shall the more easily take them off the other, by proving that there are not two weekly days set apart by God for holy worship; therefore I will begin with the first question, Whether the Lord's day, or first day of the week, be separated, by God's institution, for holy worship, especially in public church conventions? Aff.

And here, for the right stating of the question, let it be noted, 1. That it is not the name of a sabbath that we now meddle with, or stand upon. Let us agree in the thing, and we shall easily bear a difference about the name. Grant that it is a day separated by God's institution for holy assemblies and worship, and then call it a sabbath, or the Lord's day, as you please; though for myself I add, that the Lord's day is the name that the Holy Ghost hath set upon it, and the name which the first churches principally used; and that they call it also sometimes by the name of the christian sabbath; but that is only analogically, as it is resembled to the Jewish Sabbath; and as they used the names sacrifice and altar, (I speak only *de facto* how the ancients used these words,) at the same time for the christian's commemoration of Christ's sacrifice in the sacrament of the Lord's supper, and for the table; or, as Dr. Young saith, page 23, as in Scripture, baptism is called circumcision. And that very rarely too.

2. That the question of the manner of observing the Lord's day, and what exercises of worship it must be spent in, and what diversions are lawful or unlawful, as also when the day beginneth, are not to be here meddled with in the beginning, but afterwards, when the divine institution of the day itself is first sufficiently proved. Which is done as followeth:

Arg. That day which was separated to holy worship by the Holy Ghost, was separated to holy worship by God the Father and the Son. But the first day of the week was separated to holy worship by the Holy Ghost; therefore the first day of the week was separated to holy worship by God the Father and the Son.

The minor only needeth proof among christians.

That day which was separated to holy worship by the apostles, by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, was separated to holy worship by the Holy Ghost. But the first day of the week was separated to holy worship by the apostles, by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost; therefore the first day of the week was separated to holy worship by the Holy Ghost.

The minor which only needeth proof, is thus proved.

That day which was separated to holy worship by the apostles who had the Holy Ghost promised them by Christ, and given them, to lead them into all truth, and to bring all its doctrines to their remembrance, and to teach the churches to do all his commands, and to feed, and guide, and order them, as his principal commissioned church ministers, was separated to holy worship by the apostles by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost.

But such is the first day of the week:

Therefore the first day of the week is separated to holy worship by the apostles by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost.

I have five propositions now distinctly to be proved: four for the proof of the major, and one for the proof of the minor.

The first proposition is, That Christ commissioned his apostles as his principal church ministers, to teach the churches all his doctrine, and deliver them all his commands and orders, and so to settle and guide the first churches.

The second proposition is, That Christ promised them his Spirit, to enable them to do what he had commissioned them to do, by leading them into all truth, and bringing his words and deeds to their remembrance, and by guiding them as his churches' guides.

The third proposition is, That Christ performed this promise, and gave his Spirit accordingly to his apostles, to enable them to all their commissioned work.

The fourth proposition is, That the apostles did actually separate or appoint the first day of the week for holy worship, especially in church assemblies.

The fifth proposition is, That this act of theirs was done by the guidance or inspiration of the Holy Ghost, which was given them.

And when I have distinctly proved these five things, no sober understanding christian can expect that I should prove any more towards the proof of

the question in hand, Whether the first day of the week be separated by God's institution for holy worship, especially in church assemblies.

CHAPTER II.

PROP. 1. THAT CHRIST COMMISSIONED HIS APOSTLES, OR HIS PRINCIPAL CHURCH MINISTERS, TO TEACH THE CHURCHES ALL HIS DOCTRINE, AND DELIVER THEM ALL HIS COMMANDS AND ORDERS, AND SO TO SETTLE AND GUIDE THE FIRST CHURCHES.

THIS I prove, 1. By their commission itself: 2. By their performance with its proper seal: 3. By the consent of all the christian world.

1. "He called to him his disciples, and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles," Luke vi. 13. Their first commission is recited Matt. x. at large.

"All authority is given me both in heaven and in earth: Go ye therefore, and discipline all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen," Matt. xxviii. 18—20.

"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as the Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained," John xx. 21.

Even of the seventy it is said, "He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me," Luke x. 16. And to the twelve, "He that receiveth you, receiveth me," &c. Matt. x. 40.

"Delivering thee from the people, and from the gentiles, to whom now I send thee, to open their eyes," Acts xxvi. 17.

"For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received," &c. 1 Cor. xv. 3.

"For I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you," 1 Cor. xi. 23.

"Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God," 1 Cor. iv. 1, 2.

"But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me, is not after man; for I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ," Gal. i. 11, 12.

"Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me.——Feed my lambs," John xxi. 15—17.

"I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven," Matt. xvi. 19.

"As thou hast sent me into the world," John xvii. 18; see John xiii. 16, 20.

"Show whether of these two thou hast chosen, that he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell," Acts i. 24, 25.

"Paul, an apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father," Gal. i. 1.

"After he, through the Holy Ghost, had given commandment to the apostles whom he had chosen; to whom also he presented himself alive after his passion, by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God," Acts ii. 2.

"They continued stedfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship," &c. Acts ii. 42.

"He gave some apostles, some prophets," &c. Eph. iv. 11—16.

"First apostles, secondarily prophets," &c. "Are all apostles?" &c. 1 Cor. xii. 28, 29.

"Being built upon the foundation of the apostles," &c. Eph. ii. 20.

"That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandments of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour," 2 Pet. iii. 2.

"Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, &c. and he shall tell thee," &c. Acts x. 5.

They that will not take all this plain evidence of Scripture for a proof of this first proposition, I suppose would not be ever the more moved by it, if I should be so needlessly tedious, as to stay to fetch arguments from each text.

2. The apostles exercised such power as the proposition mentions, and God set to it the seal of miracles. Therefore such a power or office was given them by Christ.

The consequence is undeniable. The antecedent of this enthymeme is so plainly expressed in Scripture, that I am loth to take up much of my own or the reader's time, in proving so known a thing.

They founded the churches; they delivered them the doctrine and commands of Christ; they settled the churches, as to officers, orders, and discipline, according to Christ's commands and the Spirit's determinations: Thus they ordained the new office of deacons, and deaconnesses or widows; and they ordained them elders in every church, or city, and they determined of church controversies: and gave the church decrees, and delivered the will of Christ about the sacrament, church assemblies, prophesyings, &c. Acts ii.; xiv. 23; vi. 3, 4, &c.; 1 Tim. iii.; Titus i.; Acts xv.; 1 Cor. xi.; xiv. &c.

3. That all christians (save heretics) did acknowledge their power, and acquiesce in their decrees and conduct, being a matter of fact, needs no other proof, than the common history of former ages, and practice of this. Which are so well known, that I will not injure the reader by proving it.

CHAPTER III.

PROP. 2. CHRIST PROMISED HIS SPIRIT TO HIS APOSTLES, TO ENABLE THEM TO DO WHAT HE HAD COMMISSIONED THEM TO DO, BY LEADING THEM INTO ALL TRUTH, AND BRINGING HIS WORDS AND DEEDS TO THEIR REMEMBRANCE, AND BY GUIDING THEM AS HIS CHURCH'S GUIDES.

IN the Old Testament it is prophesied and promised, "And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding," Jer. iii. 15.

See all the texts that promise the pouring out of the Spirit, Isa. xliv. 3; Ezek. xxxvi. 27; xxxvii. 14; xxxix. 29; Joel ii. 28, 29; which were principally fulfilled on the apostles.

"And behold I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high," Luke xxiv. 49.

"But when the Advocate is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, he shall testify of me: and ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning," John xv. 26, 27.

"It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Advocate will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. ——I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he shall show you things to come. He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine. Therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and show it unto you," John xvi. 7, 12—15.

"I have given to them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them.—Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, so have I sent them also into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth," John xvii. 8, 17—19.

"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," Matt. xxviii. 20.

"And being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth," Acts i. 4, 8.

By these texts it is most evident, that Christ promiseth the apostles an extraordinary Spirit, or measure of the Spirit, so to enable them to deliver his commands, and execute their commission, as that he will own what they do by the guidance thereof; and the churches may rest upon it as the infallible revelation of the will of God.

CHAPTER IV.

PROP. 3. CHRIST PERFORMED ALL THESE PROMISES TO HIS APOSTLES, AND GAVE THEM HIS SPIRIT TO ENABLE THEM FOR ALL THEIR COMMISSIONED WORK.

THIS is proved both from the fidelity of Christ, and from the express assertions of the Scripture. "He is faithful that hath promised," Heb. x. 23. "God that cannot lie, hath promised," Titus i. 2. "As God is true,—" 2 Cor. i. 18. "How long, O Lord, holy and true,—" Rev. vi. 10. "He was called Faithful and True,—" Rev. xix. 11. "Let God be true, and every man a liar,—" Rom. iii. 4. "He that believeth not God, hath made him a liar," 1 John v. 10.

"He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost," John xx. 22.

Acts ii. containeth the narrative of the coming down of the Holy Ghost upon them, at large.

"It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us,—" Acts xv. 28.

"God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers mighty works, and distributions of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will," Heb. ii. 4.

"The things which are now reported unto you, by them that have preached the gospel unto you, by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven,—" 1 Peter i. 12.

"Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ," Rom. xv. 19.

Read all the texts in Acts and elsewhere, that speak of all the apostles' miracles, and their giving of the Holy Ghost, &c; and 1 Cor. vii. 40; Acts iv. 8, 31; v. 3; vi. 3; vii. 51, 55; viii. 15, 17—19; ix. 17; x. 44, 45, 47; xi. 15, 16, 24; xiii. 2, 4, 9, 52; xvi. 6; Rom. v. 5; ix. 1; 1 Cor. ii. 13; 2 Tim. i. 1, 14; 1 Cor. xii.; Ephes. iv. 7, 8, &c.; and iii. 5. But this proposition is confessed by all christians.

CHAPTER V.

PROP. 4. THE APOSTLES DID ACTUALLY SEPARATE AND APPOINT THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK FOR HOLY WORSHIP, ESPECIALLY IN CHURCH ASSEMBLIES.

HERE the reader must remember, that it is mere matter of fact that is to be proved in the proof of this proposition; and that all till this is clearly and undeniably proved; so that the whole controversy resteth upon the proof of the fact, That indeed the apostles did set apart this day for ordinary (public) worship.

And in order to the fuller proof of this, I have these subordinate propositions to prove.

Prop. 1. Matter of past fact is to be known to us by history (written, verbal, or practical.)

This is evident in the nature of the thing. History is the narration of facts that are past. We speak not of the fact of mere natural agents, but of moral human facts. It may be known without history what eclipses there have been of the sun, what changes of the moon, &c.; but not what in particular morals have been done by man.

The necessity of other distinct ways of knowledge, are easily disproved. 1. It need not be known by divine supernatural revelation. Otherwise no men could know what is past, but prophets or inspired persons: nor prophets, but in few things; for it cannot be proved, that God ever revealed to prophets or inspired persons, the general knowledge of things past; but only some particulars of special use (the creation to Moses, &c.); so that if revelation by inspiration, voice, or visions, were necessary, Scripture itself could be understood by none but inspired persons, or that had such revelation.

2. It is not known by natural causes, and by arguing from the natural cause to the effects. It is no more possible to know all things past this way (by knowing the causes,) than all things future. Therefore it must be ordinarily knowing by human report, which we call history or tradition.

Prop. 2. Scripture history is not the only certain history; much less the only credible.

Without Scripture history we may be certain that there was in 1666 a great fire in London, and a great plague in 1665; and that there were wars in England in 1642, 1643, &c.; and that there have been parliaments in England which have made the statutes now in force; and that there have been such kings of England for many ages, as our records and histories mention, &c.

Prop. 3. Scripture history is not the only certain history of the things of the ages in which it was

written, or of former ages; much less the only credible history of them.

We may know by other history certainly that there were such persons as Cyrus, Alexander, &c. That the Macedonians had a large extended empire; that the Romans after by many victories obtained a spacious empire; that there were such persons as Julius Cæsar, Augustus, Tiberius, Nero, Cicero, Virgil, Horace, Ovid, &c.

Prop. 4. Scripture history is not the only means appointed by God, to help us to the knowledge of ecclesiastical matters of fact, transacted in Scripture times.

1. For if human history be certain or credible in other cases, it is certain or credible in these. There being no reason why these things, or much of them, should not be as capable of a certain delivery to us by human history, as other matters. As that there were christians in those times, may be known by what Tacitus, Suetonius, &c. say. And the ancient writers often appeal in many cases to the heathen's own history. And no man pretendeth, as to the civil matters mentioned in the Scriptures, that no other history of the same is credible or certain. As of the government of Augustus, Tiberius, Herod, Pilate, Felix, Festus, &c.

2. There are other certain means known to us; of which I must refer the reader to what I have written in my "Reasons of the Christian Religion," part 2. chap. vii.

3. No man can doubt but that the christians of that same age (as till the year one hundred) might easily and certainly know such a matter of public fact, as whether the Lord's day was constantly set apart and observed by all the christian churches for holy worship. For, 1. It is certain that they did know it by sight and sense, and therefore had no need of history. 2. It is certain that they knew it before the Scriptures were written, which we now speak of; for it is not possible that for all those years' time before any of the New Testament was written, the christians who assembled to worship God, should not know on what day they used to assemble.

And if they knew it in the year 100, they must needs know it as well in the year 101, and 102, and 103, and so on. For those that were young christians fifty years after Christ, would be aged at a hundred: and those that were young at a hundred, would be aged at a hundred and fifty, and so on. So that an age of people, not ending at the age of a single person, congregations and societies are like rivers, that keep the same channel, and name, while one part of water followeth another. Nay, some of the same men are there anno 100, who were there anno 50; some anno 150, who were there anno 100, and so on. Ten thousand thousand men, women, and children, can tell on what day the congregations of England use to assemble; whereas if the apostle were among us, and should write on what day we assemble, fewer would know it by that means; and they that knew it but by his writing, would know it less confidently, than they who knew it by sense and experience.

Yet forget not, that I am far from ascribing a certainty or a credibility to all human history; much more from equalling any with the credit of divine history; but only I say, 1. That sense is more assuring, as to the subject, than any history whatever. 2. And that this instance of the day on which all churches in the world assembled for holy worship, is one of the most palpable for certainty that possibly could be imagined.

4. And I add, that if some human history or tradition be not certain, there can be no certainty of much of the divine history, to any but the persons who were themselves inspired, or that saw the visions, or miracles that confirmed them. For as internal sense or intuition must assure the inspired persons themselves, and external sense must assure those that saw the matters of fact; so the rest have no way to know them, but either still by a succession of new revelations from heaven, (which God doth not give,) or else by report. And I can no otherwise know what was revealed to an apostle, nor what was done in those times. (Of which more anon.)

Prop. 5. The first institution of church offices, and orders, and so of the Lord's day, was not by Scripture.

The proof is undeniable; because the Old Testament did not contain the institution, (*e. g.*) of particular churches, sacraments, presbyters, deacons, deaconesses, and the Lord's day, &c.; and the New Testament was none of it written till anno 40, at soonest, when some (as Bucholtzer, Bellarmine, &c.) think Matthew's Gospel was written, (though others say many years after,) and it was not all written till anno 99. Now it is certain that the church was not all these days without the orders now in question, nor without a day to meet on for public worship. Even as baptism and the Lord's supper were instituted by Christ himself, long before the writing of any part of the New Testament, and the church was in long possession of them, upon the bare verbal declaration of the apostles.

Prop. 6. Therefore it is certain that no part of the New Testament was written to any such end as to institute sacraments, or church offices, or standing orders; but to instruct men about those that were already instituted (as to the use of those times).

For it could not be written to institute that which was instituted before, so many years.

Prop. 7. No part of the New Testament was written to make known to the churches of those times the said sacraments, offices, stated orders, and time of worship. (Still observe that by a part, I mean any book; and I except the decree, written in a letter of the apostles, elders, and brethren, Acts xv. concerning circumcision, not to be imposed on the gentiles; which yet made no new institution, nor declared any, but only determined of the continued forbearance of some things forbidden before of God, in the precepts called Noah's, and Paul's epistles, which reduce the churches to orders before settled, and urge them to duty, and decide some doubts about particular cases of conscience.)

The proof is visible; 1. In the writings themselves. 2. In that all the churches were in the possession and use of all the things in question, long before (for mutual orders and circumstances are none of the things in question). It would be vain to write a history now to tell the Englishmen of this present age, that the Lord's day is used in England, as a day set apart for public worship; or that persons are baptized, or receive the Lord's supper in England. For seeing it is the common usage of all the christians almost of the land, it is needless to tell men among us by writing that it is so (unless it be to infer somewhat else from it).

Prop. 8. Yet these holy Scriptures which were written to men of those times, were also intended for the instruction of all succeeding ages; and so the four evangelists wrote the history of Christ, and Luke wrote the history of Paul till his coming to Rome, and longer, and of some more of the apostles; and on the by, in the epistles extant, the church's customs of those times are much intimated; and all this together with the subordinate history and the universal tenor and practice of the churches, is that

history by which we must know the matter of fact of those times; nor is there any room left for a rational pretence of Rome, or any other church, to produce divine institutions, which were committed only to them, or intrusted to their particular keeping only, and were not delivered in Scripture, nor in common to the whole church.

Prop. 9. Thus according to the use of the writings of the New Testament, the matter of fact in question (of the Lord's day's separation) is historically touched on, and proved; though but briefly and on the by, as a thing as well known to the church before, as what day goeth over their head.

The historical hints of the New Testament must be taken together, and not apart only; that they may prove a usage. And, 1. That Christ rose on that day, is past doubt among christians, John xx. 1; Luke xxiv. 1; Mark xvi. 2; Matt. xxviii. 1.

2. On that same day he taught the two disciples, Luke xxiv. 13; and the same day he appeared to the disciples and instructed them, and did eat with them, Luke xxiv. 33, 36. Then the disciples were assembled, and then he blessed them, gave them their commission and the Holy Ghost, John xix. 20—22.

3. The next first day of the week Christ chose to appear to them again, when Thomas was with them, and convinced him, John xx. 26.

In Acts xx. 7, it is mentioned as the day of their assembling to break bread (which though they did oft on other days, yet no day else was particularly appointed for it). As for the dissenters' cavil about the translation of Ἐν τῇ μιᾷ τῶν σαββάτων, Beza hath given them reason enough against it; and Grotius and almost all expositors are against them: and most that translate it literally *una sabbatorum*, take *una* and *prima* here to be all one. And Calvin with others noteth, that the same phrase being used of the day of the resurrection, Matt. xxvi. 1; Luke xxiv. 1; John xx. 1, will direct us to expound this; unless you mean also to deny the resurrection to have been on the first day.

And κατὰ μίαν, 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2, must needs have the same signification; and Mark xvi. 9, compared with the other two evangelists, so expounds them as Beza noteth; who also telleth us that in one old copy he found added "the Lord's day," and citeth Jerome adv. Vigilant. saying, *Per unam sabbati; hoc est in die Dominico*, &c. And Dr. Hammond well noteth that it plainly relateth to the christian assemblies, to which they were not to come empty, but to deposit what they brought into the treasury of the church; or if it were in their private repositories, it doth not much difference the case. Calvin's exception against Chrysostom here is groundless, as the reasons before evince. So that by this text the custom of holding church meetings on the Lord's day, as a peculiar day, is intimated, though but on the by, as most expositors agree.

And the denomination of the Lord's day, John i. 10, being the same which the christian churches ever used of the first day, puts it yet further out of doubt. As for his conjecture, who doubteth whether it may be meant of the anniversary day of Christ's resurrection, whenas the constant use of the name by all the churches, showeth that it was taken ever since for the weekly day, it deserveth no refutation.

Now though all this set together show that Scripture is not silent of the matter of fact; yet it is the full and unquestionable expository evidence of the practice of all churches in the world, since the very days of the apostles, which beyond all doubt assureth us that *de facto* the Lord's day was by the apostles separated for holy worship, especially in public church assemblies, But these several intimations being seconded with so full an exposition, tell us that the Scripture is not silent in the case, nor doth pass it by. I was loth to name the day of the sending down of the Holy Ghost as a proof; because that some do controvert it; but it seemeth to me a very considerable thing: 1. That the day (that year) of Pentecost on which the Holy Ghost was given, was indeed the first day of the week, even Dr. Heylin granteth, without any question or stop. And the church's observation of Whitsunday as the day, and that so very early, as Epiphanius and many others say, from the apostles, doth seem a very credible history or tradition of it. 2. It is agreed on that the passover that year fell on the sabbath day, and that Pentecost was fifty days after the passover: which falleth on the Lord's day. And Grotius noteth from Exod. xix. 1, that it was the day the law was given on, and so on which the Spirit was given for the new law. 3. And considering that this great gift of the Holy Ghost, which was to make the apostles infallible, and to enable them for their commission work, and bring all Christ's doctrines and commands to their remembrance, was so memorable a thing, that it was as it were the beginning of the full gospel state of the church and kingdom of Christ (which through all Christ's abode on earth, was as the infant, existent indeed, but in the womb, and on this day was as it were born before the world, and brought into the open light); the Lord's day also seemeth to me to be as it were conceived on the day of Christ's resurrection, but born on this day of the Holy Ghost's descent.

But Dr. Heylin hath one poor reason against it, viz. Because it was an accidental thing that the day fell out that year on the first day.

Answ. 1. Was it not according to the course of nature? How then can that be called accidental? 2. But, however, it was no contingent, accidental thing (in his sense) that the Holy Ghost was sent down on that day rather than on another. If a sparrow fall not unto the ground without God's providence, did God choose that day he knew not why? or did it fall out hap-hazard, or by chance?

I need not insist on the confutation of his cavils about the other texts forecited. Note only, 1. That as to his exception about Christ's travel on his resurrection day, I have after answered it. 2. That he freely granted that μία τῶν σαββάτων, signifieth the first day of the week, both in Acts xx. 7; 1 Cor. xvi. 2, 3. That he himself citeth afterward many testimonies that oblations and contributions were in the churches a usual Lord's-day work. 4. That he confesseth that Rev. i. 10, is meant of the Lord's day, as by that time grown into reputation. 5. That he thinketh it was in small reputation before, because Paul chose the sabbath so often to preach on, to the Jews and Hellenists, or Greeks; whereas he himself is forced to confess that it was not for the day's sake, but the assemblies, to do them good. 6. That he vainly conceiteth, (that because the Lord's day was kept on the account of Christ's resurrection,) it implieth that it was not kept by God's command; which needeth no confutation. 7. That his labour to prove that Paul meant the Jewish sabbath as abrogated, is vain; for we deny it not. That he cannot deny that christians had all that time of the apostles a stated day (as Pliny himself witnesseth) for solemn worship, above other days. 9. That he vainly snatcheth a little countenance from Calvin and Beza, &c. whenas no man, since Cochlæus, writeth more detestably of them. 10. That after he confesseth that it is no doubt but the religious observation of the day began in the apos-

tles' age, with their approbation and authority, and hath since continued in the same respect. And what needs he more for confutation?

And as to his allegations of the judgment of the reformed, Lutheran, and Roman church, 1. We take none of them for our rule (so impartial are we). But, 2. He himself citeth Beza, Mercer, Paræus, Cuchlinus, Simler, Hospinian, Zanchius, &c. as holding that it was an apostolical and truly divine tradition, that the apostles turned the sabbath into the Lord's day, that it was an apostolical custom, or a custom received in the apostles' times, &c.

And whereas afterward he would persuade us that they spent but a little of the day in holy worship, he himself cited Mr. George Sandys's Travels, saying of the Coptics, that "On Saturday, presently after midnight, they repair unto their churches, where they remain well nigh till Sunday at noon, (of the evening he speaketh not, but of their first meeting,) during which time they neither sit nor kneel, but support themselves on crutches: and they sing over the most part of David's psalms at every meeting, with divers parcels of the New Testament." (This is the old way; and such a liturgy we do not contradict or scruple.)

Sandys also informeth us of the Armenian christians, that "coming into the place of the assembly on Sunday, in the afternoon, (no doubt they had been there in the morning,) he found one sitting in the midst of the congregation, in habit not differing from the rest, reading in a Bible in the Chaldean tongue; that anon after, came the bishop in a hood or vestment of black, with a staff in his hand; that first he prayed, and then sung certain psalms assisted by two or three. After all of them singing jointly, at interims praying to themselves, the bishop all this while with his hands erected, and his face towards the altar; that service being ended, they all kissed his hand, and bestowed their alms, he laying his other hand on their heads, and blessing them," &c.

And of the Abassines he reciteth out of Brierwood, (and he from Damianus a Goes,) that they honour the Lord's day as the christian sabbath, and the Saturday as the Jews' sabbath, because they receive the Canons called the Apostles', which speak for both.

And King Edgar in England ordained that the sabbath should begin on Saturday, at three o'clock in the afternoon, and continue till break of day on Monday. These laws for the sabbath of Alfred, Edgar, &c. were confirmed by Ethelred, and more fully by Canutus.

But of these things I shall say more anon under the proposition following: in the mean time only remembering you, 1. That it is well that we are required after the fourth commandment to pray, Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law. And we accept his concession, that this includeth all of that commandment which is the law of nature (though I have told you that it reacheth somewhat further). 2. That we approve of the plain doctrine of the English homilies on this point, and stand to the exposition of sober impartiality.

Prop. 10. It hath been the constant practice of all Christ's churches in the whole world, ever since the days of the apostles to this day, to assemble for public worship on the Lord's day, as a day set apart thereunto by the apostles. Yea, so universal was this judgment and practice, that there is no one church, no one writer, or one heretic, (that I remember to have read of,) that can be proved ever to have dissented or gainsaid it, till of late times.

The proof of this is needless to any one that is versed in the writings of the ancients; and others cannot try what we shall produce. I have been these ten years separated from my library, and am therefore less furnished for this task than is requisite; but I will desire no man to receive more, than the testimonies produced by Dr. Peter Heylin himself, which with pitiful weakness he would pervert. And he being the grand adversary with whom I do now contend, I shall only premise these few observations, as sufficient to confute all his cavils and evasions.

1. When his great work is to prove that the Lord's day was not called the sabbath, (unless by allusion,) we grant it him, (as to a Jewish sabbath,) as nothing to the purpose.

2. Whereas he strenuously proveth that the Lord's day was not taken for a sabbath, *de re*, we grant it him also, taking the word in the primitive Jewish sense.

3. When he laboureth to prove that christians met on other days of the week besides the Lord's day, (though not for the Lord's supper,) we grant it him, as nothing to the purpose. So Calvin preached or lectured daily at Geneva, and yet kept not every day as a holy day separated to God's worship, as they did the Lord's day, though too remissly. So we do still keep week-day lectures, and the church of England requireth the reading of common-prayer on Wednesdays and Fridays, and holy-day evens; do they therefore keep them holy as the Lord's day?

4. When he tells us that Clemens Alexandrinus and Origen, plead against them that would hear and pray on that day only, we grant it him; and we are ready to say as they do, that we should not confine God's service to one day only, as if we might be profane and worldly on all other days; but should take all fit opportunities for religious helps, and should all the week keep our minds as near as we can in a holy frame and temper. Of the rest of his objections I shall say more in due place.

5. But I must note in the beginning, that he granteth the main cause which I plead for, acknowledging (Hist. Sab. l. 2, page 30) it thus; So that the religious observation of this day, beginning in the age of the apostles, no doubt but with their approbation and authority, and since continuing in the same respect for so many ages, may be very well accounted among those apostolical traditions, which have been universally received in the church of God. And what need we more than the religious observation, in the apostles' time, by the apostles' approbation and authority, and this delivered to us by the universal church, as an apostolical tradition.

But yet he saith that the apostles made it not a sabbath. *Answ.* Give us the religious observation, and call it by what name you please. We are not fond of the name of the sabbath.

6. And therefore we grant all that he laboriously proveth of the abolition of the Jewish sabbath, and that the ancients commonly consent, that by the abolished sabbath, (Col. ii. 16,) is meant inclusively the weekly Jewish sabbath: Epiphan. l. 1. Hæres. 33. n. 11; Ambros. in loc.; Hieron. Epist. ad Algus. qu. 10; Chrysost. Hom. 13. in Hebr. 7; August. cont. Jud. cap. 2. and cont. Faust Manich. l. 16. c. 28. I recite the places for them that doubt of it.

Now let us peruse the particular testimonies.

1. I begin with Ignatius, (though Dallæus hath said so much to prove the best copy of him of later date and spurious; because others think otherwise, and that copy is by him thought to be written cent. 3,) who saith, Let us not keep the sabbath in a Jewish manner, in sloth and idleness, but after a spiritual manner; not in bodily ease, but in the study of the law; not eating meat dressed yesterday, or drinking warm drinks, and walking out a limited

space, but in the contemplation of the works of God. ——And after the sabbath, let every one that loveth Christ keep the Lord's-day festival, the resurrection day, the queen and empress of all days, in which our life was raised again, and death was overcome by our Lord and Saviour.

Either these epistles of Ignatius (ad Philip. &c.) are genuine or spurious. If genuine, then note how clearly it is asserted that the Lord's day was to be observed as the queen of all days, by all that were lovers of Christ. And that the seventh-day sabbath was kept with it then and there (in Asia so near the apostles' days) no wonder; when it was but the honourable, gradual receding from the Mosaical ceremonies, with an avoiding the scandalous hinderance of the Jews' conversion. And Doctor Heylin well noteth, that it was only the Eastern churches next the Jews that for a time kept both days, but not the Western, who rather turned the sabbath to a fast.

But if Ignatius's epistle be spurious, written cent. 3, then as Dallæus would prove, that they were written by some heretical or heterodox person; and so it will be no wonder that holy days are pleaded for, when (as Doctor Heylin observeth) Cerinthus and his followers in the apostles' times, stood up for the Jewish sabbath and ceremonies, and so were for both days: but it will be our confirmation that even the heretics held with the universal church for the Lord's day.

2. The great controversy about the day of Easter, which spread so early through all the churches, is a full confirmation of our matter of fact. For when the Western churches were for the passover day, (the better to content the Jews, saith Heylin,) the Eastern thought it intolerable that it should not be kept on a Lord's day, because that was the weekly day observed on the same account of the resurrection. The Eastern churches never questioned their supposition of the Lord's day; and the Western (after Victor's rash excommunicating the Asian bishops) never rested till they brought them to keep it on the Lord's day: Pius, Anicetus, Victor, &c. prosecuting the cause.

3. The book (though perished) which Melito wrote of the Lord's day, (Euseb. l. 4, c. 25,) by the title may be well supposed to confirm at least the matter of fact of usage.

4. All those little councils, mentioned by Heylin, p. 48, held at Osroena, Corinth, in Gaul, in Pontus, in Rome, prove this, "The canons of them all," saith Heylin, "being extant in Eusebius's time, and in all which it was concluded for the Sunday."

But saith Heylin by this, "You see that the Sunday and the sabbath were long in striving for the victory," p. 49. *Answ.* I see that some men can outface the clearest light. Here was no striving at all which day should be the weekly day set apart for holy worship, but only whether Easter should follow the time of passover, or be confined to the Lord's day.

5. Justin Martyr's testimony is so express, and so commonly cited, that I need not recite the words at large. Upon the Sunday all of us assemble in the congregation.——Upon the day called Sunday all within the cities, or in the country, do meet together in some place, where, &c. He proceedeth to show the worship there performed.

Now, 1. Here being mention of no other day, no man can question but that this day was set apart for these holy assemblies in a peculiar manner, as the other week days were not. 2. This being the writing of one of the most learned and ancient of all the christian writers. 3. And being purposely written to one of the wisest of all the emperors, as an apology for all the christians. 4. And being written in Rome, where the matter of fact was easily known, and deserveth as much credit as any christian history or writing since the apostles can deserve. Nor hath Heylin any thing to say against it.

6. The next remembered by Heylin is Dionysius Corinth. who lived 175, cited out of Eusebius Hist. l. 4, c. 22. To-day we keep the holy Lord's day, wherein we read the epistle you wrote to us, &c. Against this Heylin saith not a word.

7. The next is Clemens Alexandrinus, who expressly asserteth the matter of fact, that the Lord's day was then kept by christians. Yea, Heylin derideth him for fetching it as far as Plato, Strom. l. 7. But Heylin thinks he was against keeping any days: but he that will examine his words shall find, that he speaketh only against them that would be ceremonious observers of the day, more than of the work of the day, and would be religious on that day alone. And therefore he saith, He that leadeth his life according to the ordinances of the gospel, doth keep the Lord's day, when he casteth away every evil thought; and doing things with knowledge and understanding, doth glorify the Lord in his resurrection. This is not to speak against the day, but to show how it ought to be sincerely kept. But if he had been against it, it is all one to my cause, who only prove that *de facto* all christian churches kept it.

8. The next witness is Tertullian, who oft asserteth this to be holy day of the christians' church assemblies, and holy worship: his testimony in Apolog. cap. 16, is so commonly known, that I need not recite it. It is the same in sense with Justin Martyr's, and written in an apology for the christians, purposely describing their custom of meeting and worshipping on the Sunday, (as he calls it there,) as Justin did. And that it was not an hour's work, he shows in saying, that The day was kept as a day of rejoicing, and then describeth the work. And de Idolol. c. 14, he saith, that every eighth day was the christians' festival. And de Coron. Mil. c. 3, and oft he calleth it the Lord's day, and saith it was a crime to fast upon it. And the work of the day described by Justin, and by him, Apolog. c. 39, is just the same that we desire now the day to be spent in: we plead for no other.

But most grossly saith Heylin, page 55, "But sure it is that their assemblies held no longer than our morning service; that they met only before noon; for Justin saith, that when they met, they used to receive the sacrament, and that the service being done, every man went again to his daily labours. *Answ.* Is this a proof to conclude a *certainty* from? Most certainly abundance of testimonies might be produced to prove that they came together early in the morning, and stayed till evening, if not till within night. The former, Pliny and many others witness; and the latter, many accusations of the heathens, that censured them for night crimes at their meetings: and all that report it almost tell us of the sacrament administered, and Tertullian and others, of their feasting together, (their love-feasts,) as a supper, before they parted. Now let the time be measured by the work: by that time the Scriptures of the Old Testament and New were read, and all the prayers then made, and all the preaching and exhortations, and then all the prayers and praises at the celebrations of the Lord's supper, (especially if they were half as long as the Liturgies ascribed to Basil, Chrysostom, and the rest of the Biblioth. Patrum,) and by that time the sacrament itself was administered, with all the action and singing of psalms, and all the oblations and collections made; and besides this, all the church discipline on particular persons exercised,

where questions and answers and proofs must take up a great deal of time, sure one day must be at an end, or very near it. And after when the love-feasts were left off, and the church met twice, and made an intermission, they did as we do now. And the very custom of preaching all the morning to the audientes and catechumens, till almost noon, when they were dismissed with a *missa est*, and spending the rest of the day in teaching the church, and celebrating the sacrament, with all the larger eucharistical acts, do fully show how the day was spent; which I would quickly show by particular testimonies, but that I am separated from my library; and Dr. Young hath fully done it to my hand. The very context of these testimonies, with what Albaspinæus hath of their catechising and church order, will soon satisfy the impartial searcher.

As for what he saith out of Justin, of returning to their labours, I can find no such word in him; nor do I believe there is any such to be found, unless of returning to their six days' weekly labour, when the religious work was ended with the day: and I imagine that the reader will find no more, if so much.

9. The next proof is universal, even the consent of all the christian churches, without one contradicting vote that ever I read of, that the Lord's-day worship was to be performed standing, and that it was not allowed them to pray or worship kneeling, upon any Lord's day in the year (or any week day between Easter and Whitsuntide): and the difficulty of these stations is expressed, (see Albaspinæus of it,) which showeth that it was for a long time. Whatever they did in hearing, (it is like they sat, for Justin saith, We rise to pray,) but it is certain they stood in worshipping acts, as prayer and praise. This Justin Martyr hath before mentioned: Tertullian hath it expressly, and Heylin himself citeth him, de Coron. Mil. et Basil l. de Spir. S. c. 27, and Hieron. advers. Luciferian. August. Epist. 118; Hilar. Præf. in Psal. Ambros. Serm. 62. To which he may add Epiphanius, and divers councils, especially Nic. I, and Trul. of which after. (I once pleaded this ancient custom with them that would have all excluded from the sacrament that kneel not, to prove that kneeling at the sacrament on the Lord's days could not be in the church of many hundred years after the apostles, when the universal church condemned kneeling on all Lord's-day worship.) And Dr. Heylin himself saith, What time this custom was laid by, I can hardly say; but sure I am, it was not laid aside in long time after; not till the time of Pope Alexander the third, who lived about the year 1160, &c. Now from all this it is most evident, that the Lord's day was then observed.

10. In this place, though by anticipation, I add the two general councils now named: The first general council at Nice, (Can. 20,) which reneweth and confirmeth this ancient custom of not kneeling in prayer on the Lord's days, that there might be a uniformity kept in the churches. And the Canon Concil. Trul. have the same again; which proveth what we seek, the matter of fact of the day's general observation.

11. The next is Origen, who is not denied to witness to the matter of fact; but Heylin thinks he was against the right of it: but his mistake is the same as about Clemens Alexandrinus; Origen did but desire that other days might be kept also as profitably as they could; as our lecture days are.

12. Cyprian is the next, whose testimonies for matter of fact are full, and Heylin hath nothing to say against him, but that it is his private opinion, that the Lord's day was prefigured in the eighth day destined to circumcision. Which is nothing at all to our business in hand.

13. And he himself cites Pope Fabian's Decretal, anno 237, (a testimony therefore that he is not to refuse,) for every man and woman on the Lord's days to bring a quantity of bread and wine to be first offered on the altar, and then distributed in the sacrament.

The Canon of Clement before mentioned I now pretermit.

But saith Dr. Heylin, "1. All days between Easter and Whitsunday had adoration by genuflexion also prohibited on them. 2. And the church had other festivals also."

Answ. 1. The reason of station was to signify Christ's resurrection and ours; therefore it continued for these days: but that was for the short occasional meetings of those days, which he himself will not say were separated to worship. 2. And the other festivals of the church make nothing against us. For, 1. Some of them (as Easter and Whitsunday) were but the same Lord's day. 2. And some of them were but anniversary, and not weekly holidays; as the nativity, &c. 3. And he confesseth even these were brought in long after the apostles' days, and therefore can lay no claim to apostolical institution. Page 62, he himself saith that The feast of Christ's nativity was ordained or instituted in the second century, and that of his incarnation in the third. And besides Easter and Whitsunday, (which are the Lord's day,) Christmas is all that he nameth out of Beda, (so long after,) as the Majora Solennia. The eves were but hours for preparation.

14. To these (though in the fourth century) I may add Epiphanius, who recorded the station (and adoration to the East) on the Lord's days, as traditions received by the universal church.

And here I would have it specially noted, that when Tertullian, Epiphanius, and others, note standing on the Lord's days to be an unwritten tradition received by the whole church, they do not say the same of the Lord's day itself (though the ancients oft say, that we received it from the apostles). Now by this it is plain, that they took the Lord's day to be of apostolical institution past all question, and the unwritten, universal traditions to be somewhat lower (which there was no Scripture for at all). (Among which the white garment, and the milk and honey to the baptized, and the adoration toward the East, are numbered). For he that is appointed to worship on the Lord's day standing, or towards the East, is supposed to know that on that day he is to worship. If the mode on that day be of universal tradition as a ceremony, the day is supposed to be somewhat more than of unwritten tradition.

15. I add here also (though in the fourth century, because it looks back to the institution) the words of Athanasius, cited by Heylin himself, Homil. de Semente, (though Nannius question it,) That our Lord transferred the sabbath to the Lord's day. But saith Dr. Heylin, "This must be understood, not as if done by his commandment, but on this occasion: the resurrection of our Lord on that day, being the principal motive which did influence his church to make choice thereof for the assemblies.——For otherwise it would cross what formerly had been said by Athanasius in his Τιμῶμεν, &c." *Answ.* It expresseth the common judgment of the church, that Christ himself made the change by these degrees: 1. Fundamentally, and as an exemplar, by his own resurrection on that day; giving the first cause of it, as the creation-rest did of the seventh day. 2. Secretly commanding it to his apostles. 3. Commissioning them to promulgate all his commands. 4. Sending down

the Spirit on that very day. 5. And by that Spirit determining them by promulgation to determine publicly of the day, and settle all the churches in long possession of it before their death. That which is thus done, may well be said to be done by Christ. 6. And what show of contradiction hath his Τιμῶμεν, to this? It was commanded first that the sabbath day should be observed in memory of the accomplishment of the world: so do we celebrate the Lord's day, as a memorial of the beginning of a new creation. Had not he a creating head here, that out of these words could gather, that we celebrate the Lord's day without a command voluntarily? One would think "so" should signify the contrary.

But ib. page 8, he citeth Socrates for the same, saying that The design of the apostles was not to busy themselves in prescribing festival days, but to instruct the people in the ways of godliness.

Answ. Socrates plainly rebuketh the busy ceremonious arrogancy of after-ages for making new holidays; and doth not at all mean the Lord's day; but saith that to make festivals, that is, other and more, as since they did, was none of the apostles' business. Nor is this any thing at all to the matter of fact, which none denied.

16. I will add that as another testimony which (p. 9) he citeth against it. The council at Paris, anno 829, c. 50, which, as he speaketh, ascribeth the keeping of the Lord's day to apostolical tradition, confirmed by the authority of the church. The words are, *ut creditur apostolorum traditione, immo ecclesiæ authoritate descendit*, &c. Now I have proved that if the apostles did it, they did it by the Holy Ghost, and by authority from Christ.

But he citeth (p. 7, 8) the words of Athanasius, Maximus, Taurinensis, and Augustine, saying that We honour the Lord's day for the resurrection, and because Christ rose, and (Aug.) The Lord's day was declared to christians by the resurrection of our Lord, and from that (or from him rather) began to have its festivity. From whence he gathereth that it was only done by the authority of the church, and not by any precept of our Saviour.

Answ. As if Christ's resurrection could not be the fundamental occasion, and yet Christ's law the obliging cause? Would any else have thus argued, The Jews observed the seventh-day sabbath, because the Creator rested the seventh day: therefore they had no command from God for it? Woe to the churches that have such expositors of God's commands! Or, as if Christ, who both commissioned and inspired the apostles by the Holy Ghost, to teach all his commands, and settle church orders, were not thus the chief Author of what they did by his commission and Spirit. What church can show the same commission, or the like miraculous and infallible Spirit, as they had?

See further August. de Civitat. Dei, l. 22, c. 30; and Serm. 15, de Verb. Apostol.

But saith he, Christ and two of his disciples travelled on the day of his resurrection from Jerusalem to Emmaus, seven miles, and back again, which they would not have done, if it had been a sabbath.

Answ. 1. They would not have done it if it had been a Jewish sabbath of ceremonial rest; but those that you count too precise, will go as far now in case of need to hear a sermon; and remember that they spent the time in Christ's preaching and their hearing and conferring after of it. 2. But we grant that though the foundation was laid by Christ's resurrection, yet it was not a law fully promulgate to and understood by the apostles, till the coming down of the Holy Ghost, (nor many greater matters neither,) who was promised and given to teach them all things, &c.

And it is worth the noting, how Heylin beginneth his chap. iii. l. 2. "The Lord's day taken up by the common consent of the church, not instituted or established by any text of Scripture, or edict of emperor, or decree of council, save that some few councils did reflect upon it. In that which follows we shall find both emperors and councils very frequent in ordering things about this day and the service of it."

Answ. Note, reader, What could possibly, besides Christ and the Holy Ghost in the apostles, be the instituter of a day, which neither emperor nor council instituted, and yet was received by the common consent of all churches in the world, even from and in the apostles' days? yea, as this man confesseth, by their approbation and authority?

But henceforward in the fourth century I am prevented from bringing in my most numerous witnesses, by Heylin's confession, that now emperors, councils, and all were for it. But yet let the reader remember, 1. How few and small records be left of the second century, and not many of the third. 2. And that historical copious testimonies of the fourth century, that is, emperors, councils, and the most pious and learned fathers, attesting that the universal church received it from the apostles, is not vain, or a small evidence; whenas the fourth century began but two hundred years after St John's death, or within less than a year.

And that the first christian emperor finding all christians unanimous in the possession of the day, should make a law (as our kings do) for the due observing of it; and that the first general council should establish uniformity in the very gesture of worship on that day; are strong confirmations of the matter of fact, that the churches unanimously agreed in the holy use of it, as a separated day, even from and in the apostles' days.

Object. But the emperor Constantine's edict alloweth husbandmen to labour.

Answ. Only in case of apparent hazard, lest the fruits of the earth be lost; as we allow seamen to work at sea, in case of necessity. And so though by his second edict manumission was allowed to the judge, as an act of charity, yet they were forbidden judging in all other ordinary causes, lest the day be profaned by wrangling.

Gratian, Valentinian, and Theodosius, by their edict forbad public spectacles or shows on the Lord's day. And afterward Valentinian and Valens made an edict that no christian should on that day be convented by the exactors or receivers.

Object. "But," saith Heylin, "for three hundred years there was no law to bind men to that day."

Answ. The apostles' institution was a law of Christ by his Spirit, Matt. xxviii. 20. And how should there be a human law, before there was a christian magistracy?

Object. Saith Heylin, p. 95, "The powers which raised it up, may take it lower if they please, yea, take it quite away," &c.

Answ. True; that is, Christ may; and when he doth it by himself, or by new apostles, who confirm their commission by miracles, we will obey; but we expect his presence with the apostolical constitution to the end of the world, Matt. xxviii. 20.

Theodosius also enacted that on the Lord's day, and in the Christmas, and on Easter, and to Whitsuntide, the public cirques and theatres should be shut up. (For we grant that when christian magistrates took the matter in hand, other holy days were brought in by degrees; whereas before the christians indeed met (yea, and communicated) as oft as they could, even most of the days in the week; but

did not separate the days as holy to God's service, as they did the Lord's day: only Christmas day, and the memorials of those martyrs, that were near them, (to encourage the people to constancy,) they honoured somewhat early; but those were anniversary, and not weekly. And the Wednesdays and Fridays were kept by them but as we keep them now, or as a lecture day.

I grant also that when christian magistracy arose, as the holy days multiplied, the manner of the day's observation altered. For whereas from the beginning, the christians used to stay together from morning till night, (partly through devotion, and partly for fear of persecution, if they were noted to go in and out,) afterward being free, they met twice a day, with intermission, as we do now. Not that their whole day's service was but an hour or two, as Heylin would prove from a perverted word of Chrysostom's, and another of Origen's, (or Ruffinus,) and from the length of their published homilies; for he perverteth what was spoken of the length of the sermon, as spoken of the length of the service of the whole day; whereas there was much more time spent in the eucharistical and liturgic offices, of prayer, praise, sacraments, and exhortations proper to the church, than was in the sermon. When I was suffered to exercise my ministry myself, having four hundred, or five hundred, if not six hundred, to administer the sacrament to, (though twice the number kept themselves away,) it took up the time of two sermons usually to administer it, besides all the ordinary readings, prayers, and praises, morning and evening.

Heylin noteth by the way, 1. That now officiating in a white garment begun. 2. And kneeling at the sacrament; which last he proveth from two or three words where adoration only is named. But, 1. A late Treatise hath fully proved that the *white garment* was not a religious ceremony then at all, but the ordinary splendid apparel of honourable persons in those times, which were thought meet for the honour of the ministry when christian princes did advance them. 2. And he quite forgot that adoration on the Lord's day was ever used standing; and that he had said before, that it was above a thousand years before the custom was altered.

The inclinations to over-much strictness on the Lord's day. The destruction of the Gothish army by the Romans in Africa, because they would not fight on that day, &c. See in Heylin, p. 112, 113, &c. His translation of the words of the Synod or Council at Mascon, 588, I think worthy the transcribing.

"It is observed that christian people do very rashly slight and neglect the Lord's day; giving themselves thereon, as other days, to continual labours, &c. Therefore let every christian, in case he carry not that name in vain, give ear to our instruction; knowing that we have care that you should do well, as well as the power to bridle you, that you do not ill. It followeth, *Custodite diem Dominicum qui nos denuo peperit*, &c. Keep the Lord's day, the day of our new birth, whereupon we were delivered from the snares of sin. Let no man meddle in litigious controversies, or deal in actions or lawsuits; or put himself at all on such an exigent, that needs he must prepare his oxen for their daily work; but exercise yourselves in hymns, and singing praises unto God; being intent thereon both in mind and body. If any have a church at hand, let him go unto it, and there pour forth his soul in tears and prayers; his eyes and hands being all that day lifted up to God. It is the everlasting day of rest, insinuated to us under the shadow of the seventh day or sabbath, in the law and prophets: and therefore it is very meet that we should celebrate this day with one accord, whereon we have been made what at first we were not. Let us then offer to God our free and voluntary service, by whose great goodness we are freed from the gaol of error; not that the Lord exacts it of us, that we should celebrate this day in a corporeal abstinence or rest from labour, who only looks that we do yield obedience to his holy will, by which contemning earthly things, he may conduct us to the heavens of his infinite mercy. However, if any man shall set at nought this our exhortation, be he assured, that God shall punish him as he hath deserved; and that he shall be also subject unto the censures of the church. In case he be a lawyer, he shall lose his cause; if that he be a husbandman, or servant, he shall be corporally punished for it; but if a clergyman or monk, he shall be six months separated from the congregation."

His reproof of Gregorius Tauronensis for his strictness for the Lord's day, showeth but his own dissent from him, and from the churches of that age.

King Alfred's laws for the observation of the Lord's day, and against dicing, drinking, &c. on it, are visible in our own constitutions, in Spelman and others. And many more edicts and laws are recited by Heylin himself of other countries.

Two are worthy of observation for the reasons of them. 1. A law of Clotharius king of France, forbidding servile labours on the Lord's day, Because the law forbids it, and the holy Scripture wholly contradicteth it. 2. A constitution of the emperor Leo Philosophus, to the same purpose, *Secundum quod Spiritui sancto ab ipsoque institutis apostolis placuit;* as it pleased the Holy Ghost and the apostles instructed by him. You see that then christian princes judged the Lord's day to be of divine institution. Yea, to these he addeth two more princes of the same mind, confessing that Leo was himself a scholar, and Charles the Great had as learned men about him as the times then bred, and yet were thus persuaded of the day; yea, and that many miracles were pretended in confirmation of it; yet he affirmeth, that the church and the most learned men in it were of another mind. Let us hear his proofs.

1. Saith he, "Isidore a bishop of Sevil makes it an apostolical sanction only, no divine commandment: a day designed by the apostles for religious exercises in honour of our Saviour's resurrection; and it was called the Lord's day therefore: to this end and purpose, that resting in the same from all earthly acts, and the temptations of the world, we might intend God's holy worship, giving this day due honour for the hope of the resurrection which we have therein." The same verbatim is repeated by Beda, l. de Offic. and by Rabban. Maurus, l. de instit. Chr. l. c. 2, 24, and by Alcuinus, de Div. Offic. c. 24, which plainly shows, that all these took it only for an apostolical usage, &c.

Answ. Reader, is not here a strange kind of proof? This is but just the same that we assert, and I am proving; save that he most grossly puts an apostolical usage and sanction *(sanxerunt)* as distinct from and exclusive of a command, which I have fully proved to be Christ's own act and law to us, by virtue of, 1. Their commission; 2. And the infallible Spirit given them.

And having brought the history to so fair an account by our chief adversary's own citations and confessions, I will not tire myself and the reader any more; but only wish every christian to consider, whether they that thus distinguish between apostolical sanctions and divine institutions, as this man doth, do not teach men to deny all the holy Scrip-

tures of the New Testament, as being but apostolical writings; and go far to deny or subvert christianity itself; by denying the divine authority of these commissioned, inspired men, who are foundations of the church, and sealed their doctrine by miracles, and from whom it is that our christian faith, and laws, and church constitutions, which are universal and divine, are received.

I only remember you of Pliny, a heathen's testimony of the christian's practice *stato die*. No man can question Pliny on the account of partiality; and therefore though a heathen, his historical testimony, as joined with all the christian church history, hath its credibility. He telleth Trajan, that it was the use of christians, on a stated day, before it was light, to meet together, to sing a hymn to Christ as to God *secum invicem*, among themselves by turns; and to bind themselves by a sacrament, not to do any wickedness, but that they commit not thefts, robberies, adulteries; that they break not their word (or trust); that they deny not the pledge (or pawn); which being ended, they used to depart, and to come again together to take meat, but promiscuous and harmless. Epist. 79, p. 306, 307.

Where note, 1. That by a stated day, he can mean no other than the Lord's day, as the consent of all other history will prove. 2. That this is much like the testimonies of Justin and Tertullian (and supposing what they say of the use of reading the Scripture, and instructing the church); it showeth that their chief work on that day, was the praising of God for our redemption by Christ, and the celebration of the Lord's supper; and the disciplinary exercises of covenanters thereto belonging. 3. That they had at that time, where Pliny was, two meetings that day, that is, they went home, and came again to their feast of love in the evening. (Which, no doubt, was varied, as several times, and places, and occasions required; sometimes departing and coming again, and sometimes staying together all day.) 4. That this epistle of Pliny was written in Trajan's days, and it is supposed in his second year; and Trajan was emperor in the year that St. John the apostle died, if not a year before; so that it is the church's custom in the end of the apostles' days, which Pliny here writeth of. 5. That he had the fullest testimony of what he wrote, it being the consent of the christians whom he, as judge, examined; even of the timorous that denied their religion, as well as of the rest. And many of them upon his prohibition forbore these meetings. 6. And the number of them he telleth Trajan in city and country was great, of persons of all degrees and ranks.

So that when, 1. Christian history, 2. And heathen, acquaint us with the matter of fact, that the day was kept in the apostles' time; 3. Yea, when no heretics or sects of christians are found contradicting it, but the churches then and after universally practised it without any controversy; what fuller historical evidence can there be? And to say that, 1. The apostles would not have reproved this, if it had not been their own doing; 2. Or that it could be done, and they not know it: 3. And that all christians who acknowledged their authority, would have consented in such a practice superstitiously before their faces, and against their wills, and no testimony be left us of one faithful church or christian that contradicted it, and stuck to the apostolical authority, even where the churches received their writings, and publicly read them; all this is such, as is not by sober christians to be believed.

But the great objection will be, That other things were then taken for apostolical traditions, and were customs of the universal church, as well as this; which things we now renounce as superstitious.

Answ. Though I answered this briefly before, I now give you this fuller answer: 1. It is but few things that come under this charge, viz. the unction, white garment, with the taste of milk and honey at baptism, adoration towards the east, and that standing; and not kneeling on the Lord's days, and the anniversary observation of Easter and Whitsuntide: and the last is but the keeping of one or two Lord's days in the year with some note of distinction from the rest, so far as there was any agreement in it. 2. That these are not usually by the ancients called apostolical traditions, but customs of the universal church. 3. That when they are called traditions from the apostles, it is not with an assertion that the apostles instituted them, but that they are supposed to be from their times, because their original is not known. 4. That the ancients join not the Lord's day with these, but take the Lord's day for an apostolical institution written in Scripture, though the universal practice of all churches more fully deliver the certain history of it: but the rest they take for unwritten customs, as distinct from Scripture ordinances. (As Epiphanius justly showeth.) 5. That most christians are agreed, that if these latter could be proved apostolical institutions for the church universal, it would be our duty to use them, though they were not in Scripture. So that we reject them only for want of such proof; but the proof of the Lord's day's separation being far better, (by concurrence of Scripture and all ancient history,) it followeth not that we must doubt of that which hath full and certain proof, because we must doubt of that which wants it. 6. And if it were necessary that they stood or fell together, (as it is not,) it were necessary that we did receive those three or four ceremonies, for the sake of the Lord's day, which hath so great evidence, rather than that we cast off the Lord's day, because of these ceremonies. Not only because there is more good in the Lord's day, than there is evil to be any way suspected by a doubter in these ceremonies; but especially because the evidence for the day is so great, that if the said ceremonies had but the same, they were undoubtedly of divine authority or institution. In a word, I have showed you somewhat of the evidence for the Lord's day; do you show me the like for them, and then I will prove that both must be received; but if you cannot, do not pretend a parity. 7. And the same churches laying by the customs aforesaid, or most of them, did show that they took them not indeed for apostolical institutions, as they did the Lord's day, which they continued to observe, not as a ceremony, but as a necessary thing. 8. And the ancient churches did believe, that even in the apostles' days some things were used as indifferent, which were mutable, and not laws, but temporary customs. And some things were necessary, settled by law for perpetuity. Of the former kind they thought were, the greeting one another with an holy kiss, the women's praying covered with a veil, (of which the apostle saith, that it was then and there so decent, that the contrary would have been unseemly, and the churches of God had no such custom, by which he answereth the contentious,) yet in other countries, where custom altereth the signification, it may be otherwise: also that a man wear not long hair; and that they have a love-feast on the Lord's day, (which yet Paul seemeth to begin to alter in his rebuke of the abusers of it, 1 Cor. xi.) And if these ancient churches thought the milk and honey, and the white garment, and the station and adoration eastwards, to be also such-like indifferent, mutable customs, as

it is apparent they did, this is nothing at all to invalidate our proof, that the Lord's day was used (and consequently appointed) in the days of the apostles.

Object. At least it will prove it mutable as they were.

Answ. No such matter: because the very nature of such circumstances, having no stated necessity or uneasiness, showeth them to be mutable. But the reason of the Lord's day's use is perpetual; and it is founded partly in the law of nature, which telleth us that some stated days should be set apart for holy things; and partly in the positive part of the fourth commandment, which telleth us, that once God determined of one day in seven, yea, and this upon the ground of his own cessation of his creation work, that man on that day might observe a holy rest in the worshipping of the great Creator, which is a reason not belonging to the Jews only, but to the whole world. Yea, and that reason (whatever Dr. Heylin says to the contrary, from the mere silence of the former history in Genesis) doth seem plainly to intimate that this is but the repetition of that law of the sabbath which was given to Adam; for why should God begin two thousand years after to give men a sabbath upon the reason of his rest from the creation of it, if he had never called man to that commemoration before.

And it is certain that the sabbath was observed at the falling of manna before the giving of the law; and let any considering christian judge between Dr. Heylin and us in this: 1. Whether the not falling of manna, on the rest of God after the creation, was like to be the orginal reason of the sabbath. 2. And whether, if it had been the first, it would not have been said, "Remember to keep holy the sabbath day;" for on six days manna fell, and not on the seventh, rather than "for in six days God created heaven and earth, &c. and rested the seventh day." And it is causally added, "Wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it." Nay, consider whether this annexed reason intimate not, that the day on this ground being hallowed before, therefore it was that God sent not down the manna on that day, and that he prohibited the people from seeking it.

And he that considereth the brevity of the history in Genesis, will think he is very bold, that obtrudeth on the world his negative argument: The sabbath is not there mentioned; therefore it was not then kept.

And if it was a positive law given to Adam on the reason of the creation rest, it was then such a positive, as must be next to a law of nature, and was given to all mankind in Adam, and Adam must needs be obliged to deliver it down to the world.

So that though the Mosaical law (even as given in stone) be ceased, yea, and Adam's positives too, formally as such; yet this is sure, that once God himself determined by a law, that one stated day in seven was the fittest proportion of time to be separated to holy worship. And if it was so once, yea, to all the world from the creation, it is so still: because there is still the same reason for it; and we are bound to judge God's determination of the proportion to be wiser than any that we can make. And so by parity of reason consequentially even those abrogated laws do thus far bind us still; not so far as abrogated; but because the record and reason of them is still a signification of the due proportion of time, and consequently of our duty.

Now the Lord's day, supposing one weekly day to be due, and being but that day determined of, and this upon the reason of the resurrection, and for the commemoration of our redemption, and that by such inspired and authorized persons, it followeth clearly, that this is no such mutable ceremony, as a love-feast, or the kiss of love, or the veil, or the washing of feet, or the anointing of the sick, which were mostly occasional actions and customs taken up upon reasons proper to those times and places.

Object. But by the reason aforesaid, you will prove the continuance of the seventh-day sabbath, as grounded on the creation rest.

Answ. This is anon to be answered in another place. I only prove that it continued, till a successive dispensation, and God's own change, did put an end to it; but no longer.

Object. But to commemorate the creation, and praise the Creator, is a moral work, and therefore ceaseth not.

Answ. True, but that it be done on the seventh day, is that which ceaseth. For the same work is transferred to the Lord's day; and the Creator and Redeemer to be honoured together in our commemoration. For the Son is the only way to the Father; who hath restored us to peace with our Creator: and as no man cometh to the Father but by the Son, and as we must not now worship God, as a Creator and Father never offended, but as a Creator and Father reconciled by Christ, so is it the appointment of Christ by the Holy Ghost; that we commemorate the work of creation now, as repaired and restored by the work of redemption, on the Lord's day, which is now separated to these works.

That the sabbath was appointed to Adam, Wallæus on the Fourth Commandment, cap. 3, and Rivet dissert. de sab. c. 1, have most copiously proved. And Clem. Alexandr. Strom. l. 5, out of Homer, Hesiod, Callimaehus, and others, proveth that the heathens knew of it.

We may therefore sum up the prerogatives of the Lord's day, as Leo did, Ep. 81, cap. 1. On this day the world began; on this day, by Christ's resurrection, death did receive death, and life its beginning; on this day the apostles take the trumpet of the gospel to be preached to all nations; on this day the Holy Ghost came from the Lord to the apostles, &c. See more in Athanas. de Sab. et Circ. and August. Serm. 154, de Tempore. Therefore saith Isychius in Levit. l. 2, c. 9. The church setteth apart the Lord's day for holy assemblies. And in the times of heathenish persecution, when men were asked, whether they were christians, and kept the Lord's days; they answered that they were, and kept the Lord's day; which christians must not omit: as you may see, Act. Martyr. apud. Baron. an. 303, n. 37—39. They would die rather than not keep the holy assemblies on the Lord's days: for, saith Ignatius, After the sabbath, every lover of Christ celebrateth the Lord's day, consecrated to (or by) the Lord's resurrection, the queen and chief of all days (as is aforecited). For saith Austin, The Lord's resurrection hath promised us an eternal day, and consecrated to us the Lord's day, which is called the Lord's day, and properly belongeth to the Lord, Serm. 15, de Verb. Apost. And saith Hilary, Proleg. in Psalm, Though the name and observance of a sabbath was placed to the seventh day, yet is it the eighth day, which is also the first, on which we rejoice with the perfect festivity of the sabbath.

Of the full keeping of the whole day, and of the several exercises in which it was spent, and of the more numerous testimonies of antiquity hereupon, Dr. Young in his "Dies Dominica" hath said so much, with so much evidence and judgment, that I purposely omit abundance of such testimonies, because I will not do that which he hath already done: the learned reader may there find unanswerable

proof of the matter of fact, that the Lord's day was kept in the apostles' days, and ever since, as by their appointment; and for the unlearned reader, I fear lest I have too much interrupted him with citations already. I only tell him the conclusion, that, if Scripture history, interpreted and seconded by fullest practice and history of all the churches of Christ, and by the consent of heathens and heretics, and not contradicted by any sect in the world, be to be believed, then we must say, that the Lord's day was commonly kept by the christians in and from the apostles' times.

Prop. 11. This evidence of the church's universal constant usage, is a full and sufficient proof of the matter of fact, that it was a day set apart by the apostles for holy worship, especially in the public church assemblies.

1. It is a full proof, that such assemblies were held on that day above others, as a separated day. For if it was the usage in anno 100, (in which the apostle John died,) it must needs be the usage in the year 99, in which he wrote his Revelation, where he calleth it the Lord's day: for all the churches could not silently agree on a sudden to take up a new day, without debate and public notice, which could not be concealed. And if it was the universal usage in the days of Ignatius or Justin Martyr, it was so also in the days of St. John (and so before). For the churches were then so far dispersed over the world, that it would have taken up much time to have had councils and meetings or any other means for agreement on such things.

And it is utterly improbable that there would have been no dissenters; for, 1. Did no christians in the world so near to the apostles' days make any scruple of superstition, or of such an addition to divine institutions? 2. Was there no country, nor no persons, whose interest would not better suit with another day, or an uncertain day, or at least their opinions; when we find it now so hard a matter to bring men in one country, to be all of one opinion? 3. And there was then no magistrates to force them to such a union; and therefore it must be voluntary. 4. And they had in the second age such pastors as the apostles themselves had ordained, and as had conversed with them, and been trained up by them, and knew their mind, and cannot soberly be thought likely to consent all on a sudden to such a new institution, without and contrary to the apostles' sense and practice. 5. Yea, they had yet ministers that had that extraordinary Spirit which was given by the laying on of the apostles' hands: for if the aged apostles ordained young men, it is to be supposed that most of those young men (such as Timothy) overlived them. 6. Yea, and the ordinary christians in those times had those extraordinary gifts by the laying on of the apostles' hands, as appeareth evidently in the case of Samaria, Acts viii. and of the Corinthians, 1 Cor. xii. and xiv. and of the Galatians, Gal. iii. 1—3. And it is not to be suspected that all these inspired ministers and people would consent to a superstitious innovation, without and against the apostles' minds.

2. Therefore this history is a full proof, that these things were done by the consent and appointment of the apostles. For, 1. As is said, the inspired persons and churches could not so suddenly be brought to forsake them universally in such a case. 2. The churches had all so high an esteem of the apostles, that they took their authority for the highest, and their judgment for infallible, and therefore received their writings as canonical and divine. 3. The churches professed to observe the Lord's day as an apostolical ordinance, and they cannot be all supposed to have conspired in a lie, yea, to have belied the Holy Ghost. 4. The apostles themselves would have controlled this course, if it had not been by their own appointment. For I have proved that the usage was in their own days. And they were not so careless of the preservation of Christ's ordinances and churches, as to let such things be done, without contradiction; when it is known how Paul strove to resist and retrench all the corruptions of church order in the churches to which he wrote. If the apostles silently connived at such corruptions, how could we rest on their authority? Especially the apostle John in an. 99, would rather have written against it as the superstition of usurpers, (as he checked Diotrephes for contempt of him,) than have said that he was in the Spirit on the Lord's day when he saw Christ, and received his revelation and message to the churches. 5. And if the churches had taken up this practice universally without the apostles, it is utterly improbable that no church writer would have committed to memory either that one church that begun the custom, or the council or means used for a sudden confederacy therein. If it had begun with some one church, it would have been long before the rest would have been brought to an agreeing consent. It was many hundred years before they all agreed of the time of Easter; and it was not till the middle of Chrysostom's time (for he saith it was but ten years ago, when he wrote it) that they agreed of the time of Christ's nativity.

But if it had been done by confederacy at once, the motion, the council called about it, the debates, and the dissenters, and resistances, would all have been matter of fact, so notable, as would have found a place in some author or church history; whereas there is not a syllable of any such thing; either of council, letter, messenger, debate, resistance, &c. Therefore it is evident, that the thing was done by the apostles.

Prop. 12. They that will deny the validity of this historical evidence, do by consequence betray the christian faith, or give away or deny the necessary means of proving the truth of it, and of many great particulars of religion.

I suppose that in my book, called, "The Reasons of the Christian Religion," I have proved that christianity is proved true, by the Spirit, as the great witness of Christ, and of the christian verity; but I have proved withal, the necessity and certainty of historical means, to bring the matters of fact to our notice, as sense itself did bring them to the notice of the first receivers. For instance:

I. Without such historical evidence and certainty, we cannot be certain what books of Scripture are truly canonical and of divine authority, and what not. This protestants grant to papists in the controversy of tradition. Though the canon be itself complete, and tradition is no supplement to make up the Scriptures, as if they were, *in suo genere*, imperfect; yet it is commonly granted that our fathers' and teachers' tradition is the hand to deliver us this perfect rule, and to tell us what parts make up the canon.

If any say that the books do prove themselves to be canonical or divine, I answer, 1. What man alive could tell without historical proof that the Canticles, or Esther, are canonical? yea, or Ecclesiastes, or the Proverbs, and not the books of Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus?

2. How can any man know that the Scripture histories are canonical? The suitableness of them to a holy soul, will do much to confirm one that is already holy, of the truth of the doctrines. But if the Spirit within us assure us immediately of the truth of the history, it must be by inspiration and revelation,

which no Christians have, that ever I was yet acquainted with. For instance, that the books of Chronicles are canonical, or the book of Esther, or the books of the Kings, or Samuel, or Judges. And how much doth the doctrine of christianity depend on the history? As of the creation, of the Israelites' bondage and deliverance, and the giving of the law, and Moses' miracles, and of chronology, and Christ's genealogy; and of the history of Christ's own nativity, miracles, and life; and the history of the apostles afterwards? To say, that the very history so far proveth its own truth, as that without subsequent history we can be sure of it, and must be, is to reduce all Christ's church of right believers into a narrow room: when I never knew the man (as far as I could perceive) did know the history to be divine by its proper evidence, without tradition, and subsequent history.

3. And how can any man know the ceremonial law to be divine, by its proper evidence alone? Who is he that readeth over Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, that will say that without knowing by history that this is a divine record, he could have certainly perceived by the book itself, that all these were indeed divine institutions or laws?

4. And how can any mere positive institutions of the New Testament be known *proprio lumine*, by their own evidence, to be divine? As the institution of sacraments, officers, orders, &c. What is there in them that can infallibly prove it to us?

5. And how can any prophecies be known by their own evidence to be divine (till they are fulfilled, and that shall prove it)?

I know that the whole frame together of the christian religion hath its sufficient evidence, but we must not be guilty of a peevish rejecting it. The moral part hath its witness within us, in that state of holiness which it imprinteth on the soul; and the rest are witnessed to, or proved, partly by that and partly by miracles, and those and the records by historical evidence. But when God hath made many things necessary to the full evidence, and wranglers, through partiality and contention against each other, will some throw away one part, and some another, they will all prove destroyers of the faith (as all dividers be). If the papist will say, it is tradition, and not inherent evidence; or if others will say, that it is inherent evidence alone, and not history or tradition, where God hath made both needful hereunto, both will be found injurious to the faith.

II. Without this historical evidence, we cannot prove that any of the books of Scripture are not maimed or depraved; that they come to our hands as the apostles and evangelists wrote them, uncorrupted. It is certain by history, that many heretics did deprave and corrupt them, and would have obtruded those copies or corruptions on the churches. And how we shall certainly prove that they did not prevail, or that their copies are false, and ours are true, I know not without the help of history. Mahomet and his followers (more numerous than the christians) pretend that Mahomet's name was in the Gospel of John as the Paraclete or Comforter promised by Christ, and that the christians have blotted it out, and altered the writings of the Gospel. And how shall we disprove them but by historical evidence? As the Arians and Socinians pretend that we have added 1 John v. 7, for the Trinity, so others say of other texts; and how shall we confute them without historical evidence?

III. Therefore we cannot make good the authority of any one single verse or text of Scripture which we shall allege, without historical evidence. Because we are not certain of that particular text, (or words,) whether it have been altered, or added, or corrupted, by the fraud of heretics, or the partiality of some christians, or the oversight of scribes; for if a custom of setting apart one day weekly, even the first, for public worship, might creep into all the churches in the world, and no man know how, nor when; much more might one or a few corrupt copies, become the exemplar of those that follow. For, what day all the churches meet, men, women, and children know; learned and unlearned know; the orthodox and heretics know; and they so know, as that they cannot choose but know. But the alterations of a text may be unknown to all save the learned, and the observing, diligent part of the learned only, and those that they tell it to. And besides Origen (called a heretic) and Jerome, alas! how few of the fathers were able and diligent examiners of such things! Therefore in the case of various readings (such as Ludovicus Capellus treats of in his Critica Sacra, contradicted in many things by bishop Usher and others,) who are those divines that have hitherto appealed either to the Spirit, or to the proper light of the words, for a decision? Who is it that doth not presently fly to historical evidence? And what that cannot determine, we all confess to be uncertain. And if copies and history had delivered to us as various readings of every text, as they have done of some, every text would have remained uncertain to us.

Let none say, that this leaveth the christian religion or the Scriptures uncertain. 1. Christian religion, that is, the material parts of the Scripture, on which our salvation lieth, hath much fuller evidence than each particular text or canonical book hath; and we need not regard the perverse zeal for the Scriptures of those men that would make all our christianity as uncertain, as the authority of a particular text or book is. And therefore God in mercy hath so ordered it, that a thousand texts may be uncertain to us, or not understood, (no, not by any or many divines,) and yet the christian faith be not at all shaken, or ever the more uncertain for this: whenas he that understandeth not, or believeth not, every essential article of the faith, is no christian. 2. And those books and texts of Scripture, are fully certain by the subservient help of history and usage, which would be uncertain without them. Therefore it is the act of an enemy of the Scriptures, to cast away and dispute against that history which is necessary to our knowledge of its certainty, and afterwards to plead, that they who take in those necessary helps, do make it uncertain: even as if they should go about to prove that all writings are uncertain, and therefore that they make Christ's doctrine uncertain, who rest upon the credit of writings, that is, the sacred Scriptures.

IV. Without historical notice, how should we know that these books were written by any of the same men that bear their names; as Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, Peter, &c.? Especially when the hereties did put forth the Gospel of Thomas, Nicodemus, the Itinerary of Peter, and many books under venerable names? Or, when the name of the author is not notified to all christians certainly, either by the Spirit within us, or by the matter? And though our salvation depend not on the notice of the penman, yet it is of great moment in the matter of faith.

V. And how should we be certain that no other sacred books are lost, the knowledge of which would tell us of that which these contain not, and would help us to the better understanding of these? I know that *a priori* we may argue from God's goodness, that he will not so forsake his church; as a

Jew might have done before Christ's incarnation, that the gospel should be written, because it is best for the world or church. But when we consider how much of the world and church God hath forsaken since the creation, and how dark we are in such prognostics, and how little we know what the church's sins may provoke God to, we should be less confident of such reasonings, than we are of historical evidence, which tells us *de facto* what God hath done. So much of the use of the history, as to the cause of the Scriptures themselves.

Next you may observe that the denial of the certainty of human history, and usage, doth disadvantage christianity in many great particular concernments. As, I. Without it we should not fully know whether *de facto* the church and ministry died, or almost died, with the apostles? And whether there have been any true churches since then, till our own days? Christ's promise indeed tells us much; but if we had no history of the performance of it we should be ready to doubt that it might be yet unperformed; as far as the promise to Adam, (Gen. iii. 15, (and to Abraham, ("In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed,") were till the coming of Christ. Nor could we easily confute the Roman or any herctical usurpation, which would pretend possession since the apostles' days, and that all that are since gone to heaven, have gone thither by their way, and not by ours.

II. Nor could we much better tell *de facto*, whether baptism have been administered in the form appointed by Christ, "In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Indeed we may well and truly argue *a priori*, Christ commanded it, *ergo* the apostles obeyed him: but, 1. That argument would hold good as to none or few but the apostles: and, 2. It would as to them be, though true, yet much more dark than now it is; because, 1. We read that Peter disobeyed his command, in Gal. ii. And, 2. That after he had commanded them to preach the gospel to every creature, and all the world, Peter scrupled still going to the gentiles, Acts x. And, 3. That when he said to them, "Pray thus, Our Father," &c. yet we never read that they after used that form of words; so when he said to them, "Baptize in the name of the Father," &c. yet the Scripture never mentioneth that they or any other person ever used that form of words. But yet usage and history assureth us that they did.

III. Nor have we any fuller Scripture proof, that the apostles used to require of those that were to be baptized any more than a general profession of the substance of the christian faith, in God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; or of the ancient use of the christian creed, either in the words now used, or any of the same importance. From whence many would infer, that any one is to be baptized, who will but say that, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God," with the eunuch, Acts viii. 37, or that Christ is come in the flesh, 1 John iv. 2, 3.

But historical evidence assureth us, that it was usual in those times, to require of men a more explicit understanding profession of the christian faith before they were admitted to baptism; and that they had a summary or symbol, fitted to that use, commonly called the Apostles' Creed; at least as to the constant tenor of the matter, though some words might be left to the speaker's will, and some little subordinate articles may be since added. And that it was long after usual to keep men in the state of catechised persons, till they understood that creed. And it is in itself exceeding probable, that though among the intelligent Jews, who had long expected the Messiah, the apostles did baptize thousands in a day, Acts ii.; yet where the miraculous communication of the Spirit did not antecede, (as it did Acts x.) they would make poor heathens who had been bred in ignorance, to understand what they did first, and would require of them an understanding profession of their belief in God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; which could not possibly contain much less than the *symbolum fidei*, the apostles' creed.

IV. Nor have we any Scripture proof, (except by inferring obedience from the precept,) that ever the Lord's prayer was used in words, after Christ commanded or delivered it: whence some infer, that it should not be so used. But church history putteth that past doubt. Other such instances I pretermit.

I think now that I have fully proved to sober, considerate christians, that the matter of fact (that the Lord's day was appointed by the apostles peculiarly for church worship) is certain to us by historical evidence, added to the historical intimations in Scripture, as a full exposition and confirmation of it; and that this is a proof, that no christian can deny without unsufferable injury to the Scriptures and the christian cause.

CHAPTER VI.

PROP. 5. THIS ACT OF THE APOSTLES' APPOINTING THE LORD'S DAY FOR CHRISTIAN WORSHIP, WAS DONE BY THE SPECIAL INSPIRATION OR GUIDANCE OF THE HOLY GHOST.

THIS is proved, 1. Because it is one of those acts or works of their office, for which the Holy Ghost was promised them.

2. Because that such-like or smaller things are by them ascribed to the Holy Ghost, (Acts xv. 28,) "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and us," when they did but declare an antecedent duty, and decide a controversy thereabout. See also Acts iv. 8; v. 3; vi. 3; vii. 55; xiii. 2, 4; xvi. 6, 7; xx. 23, 28; xxi. 11; 2 Tim. i. 14; Jude 20; Acts xi. 12, 28; xix. 21; xx. 22; 1 Cor. v. 3, 4; xiv. 2, 15, 16; and vii. 40. When Paul doth but counsel to a single life, he ascribeth it to the Spirit of God.

3. And if any will presume to say, that men properly endued with the Spirit, for the works of their commission, did notwithstanding do such great things as this, without the conduct of that Spirit, they may by the same way of proceeding pretend it to be as uncertain, of every particular book and chapter in the New Testament, whether or no they wrote it by the Spirit: for if it be a sound inference, They had the promise and gift of the Spirit, that they might infallibly leave in writing to the churches, the doctrines and precepts of Christ; *ergo*, whatever they have left in writing to the churches, as the doctrine and precepts of Christ, is infallibly done by the guidance of that Spirit: then it will be as good an inference, They had the promise and gift of the Spirit, that they might infallibly settle church orders for all the churches universally; *ergo*, whatever church orders they settled for all the churches universally, they settled them by the infallible guidance of that Spirit.

But this few christians will deny, except some papists, who would bring down apostolical constitutions to a lower rank and rate, that the pope and general council may be capable of laying claim to the like themselves; and so may make as many more laws for the church as they please, and pretend

such an authority for it as the apostles did for theirs. By which pretence many would make too little distinction between God's laws given by his Spirit, and the laws of a pope and popish council, and call them all but The laws of the church. Whereas there is no universal head of the church but Christ, who hath reserved universal legislation to himself alone, to be performed by himself personally, and by his advocate, the Holy Ghost, in his authorized and infallibly inspired apostles, who were the promulgators and recorders of them; all following pastors being but (as the Jewish priests were to Moses and the prophets) the preservers, the expositors, and the appliers of the law.

CHAPTER VII.

QUEST. 2. WHETHER THE SEVENTH-DAY SABBATH SHOULD BE STILL KEPT BY CHRISTIANS, AS OF DIVINE OBLIGATION? NEG.

I SHALL here premise, That as some superstition is less dangerous than profaneness, (though it be troublesome, and have ill consequents,) so the error of them who keep both days, as of divine appointment, is much less dangerous than theirs that keep none: yea, and less dangerous, I think, than theirs who reject the Lord's day, and keep the seventh day only. Because these latter are guilty of two sins, the rejecting of the right day, and the keeping of the wrong; but the other are guilty but of one, the keeping of the wrong day. Besides, that if it were not done with a superstitious conceit, (that it is God's law,) in some cases a day may be voluntarily set apart for holy duties, as days of thanksgiving and humiliation now are.

But yet, though the rejecting of the Lord's day be the greater fault, (and I have no uncharitable censures of them that through weakness keep both days,) I must conclude it as the truth, that We are not obliged to the observation of the Saturday, or seventh day, as a sabbath, or separated day of holy worship.

Arg. I. That day's observation which we are not obliged to, either by the law of nature, the positive law given to Adam, the positive law given to Noah, the law of Moses, or the law of Christ incarnate, we are not obliged to by any law of God (as distinct from human laws): but such is the observation of the seventh-day sabbath; therefore we are not obliged to the observation of it by any law of God.

The minor I must prove by parts (for I think none will deny the sufficient enumeration in the minor).

And, 1. That the law of nature bindeth us not to the seventh day, or any one day of the seven more than other, appeareth, 1. In the nature and reason of the thing; there is nothing in nature to evidence it to us to be God's will. 2. By every christian's experience: no man findeth himself convinced of any such thing by mere nature. 3. By all the world's experience: no man can say that a man of that opinion can bring any cogent evidence or argument from nature alone to convince another, that the seventh day must be the sabbath. Nor is it any where received as a law of nature, but only as a tradition among some few heathens, and as a law positive by the Jews, and some few christians. I am not solicitous to prosecute this argument any further; because I can consent that all they take the seventh day for the sabbath, who can prove it to be so by mere natural evidence, which will not be done.

II. That the positive law made to Adam, (before or after the fall,) or to Noah, bindeth not us to keep the seventh day as a sabbath, is proved.

1. Because we are under a more perfect subsequent law; which being in force, the former more imperfect ceaseth. As the force of the promise of the incarnation of Christ is ceased by his incarnation, and so is the precept which bound men to believe that he should *de futuro* be incarnate; and the law of sacrificing; (which Abel doubtless received from Adam, though one of late would make it to be but *will worship;*) so also is the sabbath day, as giving place to the day in which our redemption is primarily commemorated, as the imperfect is done away when that which is more perfect cometh.

2. Because that the law of Christ containeth an express revocation of the seventh-day sabbath, as shall be shown anon.

3. Because God never required two days in the seven to be kept as holy; therefore the first day being proved to be of divine institution, the cessation of the seventh is thereby proved: for to keep two days is contrary to the command which they themselves do build upon, which obligeth us to sanctify a sabbath, and labour six days.

4. And when it is not probable that most or many infidels are bound to Adam's day, for want of notice (at least); for no law can bind without promulgation (though I now pass by the question, how far a promulgation of a positive law to our first parents may be said to bind their posterity, that have no intermediate notice). It seemeth less probable that christians should be bound by it, who have a more perfect law promulgated to them.

5. Nor is it probable that Christ and his apostles, and all the following pastors of the churches, would have passed by this positive law to Adam without any mention of it, if our universal obligation had been thence to be collected. Nay, I never yet heard a sabbatarian plead this law, any otherwise than as supposed to be implied or exemplified in the fourth commandment.

III. And that the fourth commandment of Moses's law bindeth us not to the seventh-day sabbath is proved,

1. Because that Moses's law never bound any to it but the Jews, and those proselytes that made themselves inhabitants of their land, or voluntarily subjected themselves to their policy. For Moses was ruler of none but the Jews, nor a legislator or deputed officer from God to any other nation. The decalogue was but part of the Jewish law, if you consider it not as it is written in nature, but in tables of stone; and the Jewish law was given as a law to no other people but to them. It was a national law, as they were a peculiar people and holy nation. So that even in Moses' days it bound no other nations of the world. Therefore it needed not any abrogation to the gentiles, but a declaration that it did not bind them.

2. The whole law of Moses, formally as such, is ceased or abrogated by Christ. I say, as such; because, materially, the same things that are in that law, may be the matter of the law of nature, and of the law of Christ: of which more anon. That the whole law of Moses as such is abrogated, is most clearly proved, 1. By the frequent arguings of Paul, who ever speaketh of that law as ceased, without excepting any part; and Christ saith, Luke xvi. 16, "The law and the prophets were until John," that is, were the chief doctrine of the church till then. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth

cometh by Jesus Christ," John i. 17. No Jew would have understood this, if the word law had not contained the decalogue. So John vii. 19, 23; Acts xv. 5, 24. It was the whole law of Moses, as such, which by circumcision they would have bound men to, Gal. v. 3. The gentiles are said to "sin without law," even when they broke the law of nature, meaning, without the law of Moses, Rom. ii. 12, 14—16. In all these following places it is not part but the whole law of Moses, which Paul excludeth, (which I ever acknowledged to the antinomians, though they take me for their too great adversary,) Rom. iii. 19—21, 27, 28, 31; iv. 13—16; v. 13, 20; vii. 4—8, 16; ix. 4, 31, 32; x. 5; Gal. ii. 16, 19, 21; iii. 2, 10—13, 19, 21, 24; iv. 21; v. 3, 4, 14, 23; vi. 13; Eph. ii. 15; Phil. iii. 6, 9; Heb. vii. 11, 12, 19; ix. 19; x. 28; 1 Cor. ix. 21.

2. More particularly, there are some texts which express the cessation of the decalogue as it was Moses' law. "Not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.——But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which was to be done away," (or is done away,) 2 Cor. iii. 3, 7. They that say the glory, and not the law, is here said to be done away, speak against the plain scope of the text; for the glory of Moses' face, and the glorious manner of deliverance, ceased in a few days, which is not the cessation here intended, but as Dr. Hammond speaketh it, That glory, and that law so gloriously delivered, is done away. And this the eleventh verse fullier expresseth, "For if that which is done away was glorious, (or, by glory,) much more that which remaineth is glorious" (or, in glory); so that as it is not only the glory, but the glorious law, gospel, or Testament which is said to remain, so it is not only the glory, but the law which was delivered by glory, which is expressly said to be done away; and this is the law which was written in stone.——Nothing but partial violence can evade the force of this text.

"Under it (the Levitical priesthood) the people received the law,——And the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law. For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before, for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. For the law made nothing perfect; but the bringing in of a better hope.—— By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament," Heb. vii. 11, 12, 18, 22. In all this it is plain that it is the whole frame of the Mosaical law that is changed, and the New Testament set up in its stead.

"Neither was the first dedicated without blood; for when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law," &c. Heb. ix. 18, 19. Here the law, which is before said to be changed, is said to contain every precept.

And Eph. ii. 15 "It is the law of commandments contained in ordinances," which Christ abolished in his flesh; which cannot be exclusive of the chief part of that law.

Object. This is the doctrine of the antinomians, that the law is abrogated, even the moral law.

Answ. It is the doctrine of the true antinomians that we are under no divine law, neither of nature nor of Christ; but it is the doctrine of Paul and all christians, that the Jewish Mosaical law, as such, is abolished.

Object. But do not all divines say that the moral law is of perpetual obligation?

Answ. Yes; because it is God's law of nature, and also the law of Christ.

Object. But do not most say that the decalogue written in stone, is the moral law, and of perpetual obligation?

Answ. Yes; for by the word *moral* they mean *natural;* and so take moral, not in the large sense as it signifieth a law *de moribus*, as all laws are whatsoever, but in a narrower sense, as signifying that which by nature is of universal and perpetual obligation. So that they mean not that it is perpetual as it is Moses' law, and written in stone formally, but as it is moral, that is, natural; and they mean that materially the decalogue containeth the same law which is the law of nature, and therefore is materially still in force: but they still except certain points and circumstances in it, as the prefatory reason, "I am the Lord that brought thee out of the land of Egypt," &c.; and especially this of the seventh-day sabbath.

Quest. 1. How far then are we bound by the decalogue?

Answ. 1. As it is the law of nature. 2. As it is owned by Christ, and made part of his law. Therefore no more of it bindeth directly, than we can prove to be either the law of nature, or the law of Christ. 3. As it was once a law of God to the Jews, and was given them upon a reason common to them with us, or all mankind, we must still judge that it was once a divine determination of what is most meet, and an exposition of a law of nature; and therefore consequentially, and as that which intimateth by what God once commanded, what we should take for his will, and is most meet, it obligeth still. And so when the law of nature forbiddeth incest, or too near marriages, and God once told the Jews what degrees were to be accounted too near, this being once a law to them directly, is a doctrine and exposition of the law of nature still to us; and so is consequently a law, by parity of reason. And so we shall show anon that it is by the fourth commandment.

IV. The law of Christ bindeth us not to the observation of the seventh-day sabbath. Proved.

1. Because it is proved that Christ abrogated Moses' law, as such, and it is no where proved that he reassumed this, as a part of his own law. For it is no part of the law of nature (as is proved) which we confess now to be part of his law.

Object. Christ saith, that he came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfil them, and that a jot or tittle shall not pass till all be fulfilled.

Answ. "He is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth," Rom. x. 4. "The law was a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ," Gal. iii. 24. He hath therefore fulfilled the law according to his word, by his incarnation, life, death, and resurrection. It is passed away, but not unfulfilled; and fulfilling it, is not destroying it.

The ends of it are all attained by him: 2. And though having attained its end, it ceaseth formally, as Moses' law; yet materially, all that is of natural obligation continueth under another form; that is, as part of his perfect law. Therefore as our childish knowledge is said, as knowledge, to be increased, and not done away, when we come to maturity; but as childish, to be done away; so the Mosaical Jewish law, as God's law in general, is perfected by the cessation of the parts which were fitted to the state of bondage, and by addition of more perfect parts (the natural part of it is made a part of a better covenant or frame): but yet as Mosaical and imperfect, it is abolished.

Briefly this much sufficeth for the answer of all the allegations, by which any would prove the continuation of Moses' law, or any part of it, formally as such. I only add, That all Moses' law, even in

the decalogue was political, even God's law for the government of that particular theocratical policy, as a political body. Therefore when the kingdom or policy ceased, the law as political could not continue.

2. It is proved that Christ by his Spirit in his apostles did institute another day. And seeing the Spirit was given them to bring his words to remembrance, and to enable them to teach the churches all things whatsoever he commanded them, it is most probable that this was at first one of Christ's own personal precepts.

3. And to put all out of doubt, that neither the law of nature, nor any positive law, to Adam, Noah, or Moses, or by Christ, doth oblige us to the seventh-day sabbath, it is expressly repealed by the Holy Ghost; "Let no man therefore judge you in meats or in drink, or in respect of an holy-day, (or feast,) or of the new moon, or of the sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come: but the body is of Christ," Col. ii. 16. I know many of late say, that by sabbath here, is not meant the weekly sabbath, but only other holy days, as monthly or jubilee rests. But, 1. This is to limit without any proof from the word of God. When God speaks of sabbaths in general, without exception, what is man that he should put in exceptions, without any proof of authority from God? By such boldness we may pervert all his laws. Read Dr. Young upon this text. 2. Yea, when it was the weekly sabbath, which then was principally known by the name of a sabbath, above all other festivals whatsoever, it is yet greater boldness without proof to exclude the principal part, from whence the rest did receive the name. 3. Besides, the feasts and new moons being here named as distinct from the sabbath, are like to include so much of the other separated days, as will leave it still more unmeet to exclude the weekly sabbath in the explication of that word *sabbaths*, when so many feasts are first distinguished: ἐορ ταὶ inquit Grotius, *hic sunt Azyma, dies omer, scenopegia, dies* ἁλασμοῦ.

Object. But the sabbath mentioned in the decalogue could not be included.

Answ. This is spoken without proof, and the contrary is before proved.

Object. By this you will make the christian sabbath also to be excluded. Is not the Lord's day a sabbath?

Answ. I am here to speak but of the name; of which I say, that the common sense of the word sabbath was, a day so appointed to rest, as that the bodily rest of it was a primary part of its observation, to be kept for itself; and such the Jewish sabbaths were. Though spiritual worship was then also commanded, yet the corporal rest was more expressly or frequently urged in the law, and this not only subordinately as an advantage to the spiritual worship, but for itself, as an immediate and most visible and notable part of sabbatizing. Even as other ceremonies under the law were commanded, not only as doctrinal types of things spiritual, but as external acts of ceremonious operous obedience suited to the Jews' minority, which is after called the "yoke which they and their fathers were unable to bear," Acts xv. Whereas the Lord's day is appointed but as a seasonable time subserviently to the spiritual work of the day; and the bodily rest, not required as primary obedience for itself, but only for the spiritual work's sake: and therefore no bodily labour is now unlawful, but such as is a hinderance to the spiritual work of the day (or accidentally a scandal and temptation to others); whereas the breach of the outward rest of the Jews' sabbath, was a sin directly of itself, without hinderance of, or respect to, the spiritual worship. So that the first notion and sense of a sabbath in those days being (in common use) a day of such ceremonial corporal rest, as the Jewish sabbath was, the Lord's day is never in Scripture called by that name; but the proper name is, *The Lord's day*. And the ancient churches called it constantly by that name, and never called it the sabbath, but when they spake analogically by allusion to the Jews' sabbath; even as they called the holy table, *the altar*, and the bread and wine, *the sacrifice*. Therefore it is plain, that Paul is to be understood of all proper sabbaths, and not of the Lord's day, which was then, and long after, distinguished from the sabbath.

And this ceremonial sabbatizing of the Jews, was so strict, that the ceremoniousness made them the scorn of the heathens, as appeareth by the derisions of Horat. lib. i. sat. 9; Persius, sat. 5; Juvenal, sat. 6; Martial, lib. iv. and others: whereas they derided not the christians for the ceremonious rest, but for their worship on that day. The Lord's day being not called a sabbath in the old sense, then only in use, but distinguished from the sabbath, cannot be meant by the apostle in his exclusion of the sabbath.

Object. But the apostles then met in the synagogue with the Jews on the sabbaths; therefore it is not those days that he meaneth here, Col. ii. 16.

Answ. 1. You might as well say, that therefore he is not for the cessation of the Jewish manner of worship, or communion with them in it, because he met with them.

2. And you may as well say, that he was for the continuance of circumcision and purification, because he purified himself and circumcised Timothy.

3. Or that he was for the continuance of their other feasts, in which also he refused not to join with them.

4. But Paul did not keep their sabbaths formally as sabbaths, but only took the advantage of their assemblies, to teach them and convince them; and to keep an interest in them; and not scandalize them by an unseasonable violation and contradiction.

5. And you must note also, that the text saith not, Observe not sabbath days, but "Let no man judge you;" that is, let none take it for your sin, that you observe them not; nor do you receive any such doctrine of the necessity of keeping the law of Moses. The case seemeth like that of "things strangled and blood," which were to be forborne among the Jews while they were offensive, and the use of them hindered their conversion.

Object. But the ancient christians did observe both days.

Answ. 1. In the first ages they did as the apostles did; that is, 1. They observed no day strictly as a sabbath in the notion then in use. 2. They observed the Lord's day, as a day set apart by the Holy Ghost for christian worship. 3. They so far observed the Jews' sabbath materially, as to avoid their scandal, and to take opportunity to win them.

2. But those that lived far from all Jews, and those that lived after the law was sufficiently taken down, did keep but one day, even the Lord's day, as separated to holy uses: except some christians, who differed from the rest, as the followers of Papias did in the millenary point.

3. And note, that even these dissenters did still make no question of keeping the Lord's day, which showeth that it was on foot from the times of the apostles. So Ignatius (whoever it was, and whenever he wrote) saith that, after the sabbath we keep the Lord's day. And Pseudo Clemens, Can. 33, saith, Servants work five days, but on the sabbath and Lord's day, they keep holy day in the church, for the doctrine (or learning) of godliness.

The text of Gal. iv. 10, is of the same sense with

Col. ii. 16, against the Jews' sabbath, and therefore needeth no other defence.

And I would have you consider, whether as Christ's resurrection was the foundation of the Lord's day, so Christ's lying dead and buried in a grave on the seventh-day sabbath, was not a fundamental abrogation of it: I say, not the actual and plenary abrogation; for it was the command of Christ by his word, Spirit, or both, to the apostles before proved, which fully made the change: but as the resurrection was the ground of the new day, so his burial seemeth to intimate, that the day with all the Jewish law, which it was the symbolical profession of, lay dead and buried with him. Sure I am that he saith, When the Bridegroom is taken from them, then shall they fast and mourn; but he was most notably taken from them, when he lay dead in the grave: and if they must fast and mourn that day, they could not keep it as a sabbath, which was a day of joy. Therefore as by death he overcame him that had the power of death, (Heb. ii. 14,) and as he nailed the hand-writing of ordinances to his cross; so he buried the sabbath in his grave, by lying buried on that day.

And therefore the Western churches, who had fewer Jews among them, did fast on the sabbath day, to show the change that Christ's burial intimated; though the Eastern churches did not, lest they should offend the Jews.

And that the ancient christians were not for sabbatizing on the seventh day, is visible in the writings of most, save the Eastern ones before mentioned. Tertull. Cont. Marcion. lib. i. cap. 20, and Chrysost. Theodoret, Primasius, &c. on Gal. iv. expound that text, as that by days is meant the Jewish sabbath, and by months, the new moons, &c.

Cyprian 59. Epist. ad Hidum saith, that the eighth day is to christians what the sabbath was to the Jews, and called the sabbath, the image of the Lord's day. Athanasius de Sab. et Circumcis. is full and plain on it. See Tertullian Advers. Judæ. cap. 4; Ambros. in Eph. 2; August. Ep. 118; Chrysost. in Gal. 1; and Hom. 12. ad pop. Hilary, before cited; Prolog. in Psalm.; Origen Hom. 23. in Num.; Item Tertull. de Idol. cap. 14; Epiphan. lib. i. Num. 30; noting the Nazaræi and Ebionæi heretics, that they kept the Jews' sabbath. In a word, the council of Laodicea doth anathematize them that did judaize by forbearing their labours on the sabbath or seventh day. And as Sozomen tells us, That at Alexandria and Rome they used no assemblies on the sabbath, so where they did, in most churches they communicated not in the sacrament.

Yea, that Ignatius himself, (true or false,) who saith as aforecited, After the sabbath let every lover of Christ celebrate the Lord's day, doth yet in the same epistle (ad Magnes.) before say, Old things are passed away, behold all things are made new: for if we live after the Jewish law, and the circumcision of the flesh, we deny that we have received grace.——Let us not therefore keep the sabbath (or sabbatize) Jewishly, as delighting in idleness (or rest from labour). For he that will not labour, let him not eat. In the sweat of thy brows thou shalt eat thy bread. I confess I take the cited texts to have been added since the body of the epistle was written; but though the writer savour of the Eastern custom, yet he showeth they did not sabbatize on the account of the fourth commandment, or supposed continuation of the Jewish sabbath, as a sabbath; for bodily labour was strictly forbidden in the fourth commandment.

Dionysius Alexandr. hath an epistle to Basilides, a bishop, on the question, When the sabbath fast must end, and the observation of the Lord's day begin, (Biblioth. Patr. Græc. Lat. vol. i. p. 306,) in which he is against them that end their fast too soon. And plainly intimateth that the seventh day was to be kept, but as a preparatory fast, (being the day that Christ lay in the grave,) and not as a sabbath, or as the Lord's day.

I cite not any of these, as a human authority to be set against the authority of the fourth commandment; but as the certain history of the change of the day which the apostles made.

Quest. How far then is the fourth commandment moral? You seem to subvert the old foundation, which most others build the Lord's day upon.

Answ. Let us not entangle ourselves with the ambiguities of the word *moral*, which most properly signifieth ethical, as distinct from physical, &c. By moral here is meant that which is (on what ground soever) of perpetual or continual obligation; and so it is all one as to ask how far it is still obligatory or in force: to which I answer,

1. It is a part of the law of nature, that God be solemnly worshipped, in families and in holy assemblies.

2. It is a part of the law of nature, that where greater things do not forbid it, a stated time be appointed for his service, and that it be not left at random to every man's will.

3. It is of the law of nature, that where greater matters do not hinder it, this day be one and the same in the same countries; yea, if it may be, through the world.

4. It is of the law of nature, that this day be not so rarely as to hinder the ends of the day, nor yet so frequently as to deprive us of opportunity for our necessary corporal labour.

5. It is of the law of nature, that the holy duties of this day be not hindered by any corporal work, or fleshly pleasure, or any unnecessary thing which contradicteth the holy ends of the day.

6. It is of the law of nature, that rulers, and in special masters of families, do take care that their inferiors thus observe it.

In all these points the fourth commandment being but a transcript of the law of nature, which we can yet prove from the nature or the reason of the thing, the matter of it continueth (not as Jewish, but) as natural.

7. Besides all this, when no man of himself could tell, whether one day in six, or seven, or eight, were his duty to observe, God hath come in, and, 1. By doctrine or history told us, that he "made the world in six days, and rested the seventh." 2. By law; and hath commanded one day in seven to the Jews; by which he hath made known consequentially to all men, that one day in seven is the fittest proportion of time. And the case being thus determined by God, by a law to others, doth consequently become a law to us, because it is the determination of divine wisdom; unless it were done upon some reasons in which their condition differeth from ours. And thus the doctrine and reasons of an abrogated law, continuing, may induce on us an obligation to duty. And in this sense the fourth commandment may be said still to bind us to one day in seven.

But in two points the obligation (even as to the matter) ceaseth: 1. We are not bound to the seventh day, because God our Redeemer, who is the Lord of the sabbath, hath made a change. 2. We are not bound to a sabbath in the old notion, that is, to a day of ceremonial rest for itself required; but to a day to be spent in evangelical worship.

And though I am not of their mind who say, that the seventh day is not commanded in the fourth

commandment, but a sabbath only; yet, I think that it is evident in the words, that the *ratio sabbati*, and the *ratio diei septimi*, are distinguishable; and that the sabbath as a sabbath, is first in the precept, and the particular day is there but secondarily, and so mutably: as if God had said, I will have a particular day set apart for a holy rest, and for my worship; and that day shall be one in seven, and the seventh also on which I rested from my works.

And thus I have said as much as I think needful to satisfy the considerate about the day: again professing, 1. That I believe that he is in the right that maketh conscience of the Lord's day only. 2. But yet I will not break charity with any brother, that shall in tenderness of conscience keep both days; especially in times of profaneness, when few will be brought to the true observation of one. 3. But I think him that keepeth the seventh day only, and neglecteth the Lord's day, to sin against very evident light, with many aggravations. 4. But I think him that keepeth no day (whether professedly, or practising contrary to his profession; whether on pretence of avoiding superstition, or on pretence of keeping every day as a sabbath) to be far the worst of all. I shall now add somewhat to some appendant questions.

CHAPTER VIII.

OF THE BEGINNING OF THE DAY.

Quest. 1. WHEN doth the Lord's day begin?

Answ. 1. If we can tell when any day beginneth, we may know when that beginneth. If we cannot, the necessity of our ignorance will shorten the trouble of our scruples by excusing us.

2. Because the Lord's day is not to be kept as a Jewish sabbath ceremoniously, but the time and the rest are here commanded subserviently for the work's sake, therefore we have not so much reason to be scrupulous about the hours of beginning and ending, as the Jews had about their sabbath.

3. I think he that judgeth of the beginning and ending of the day according to the common estimation of the country where he liveth, will best answer the ends of the institution. For he will keep still the same proportion of time; and so much as is ordinarily allowed on other days for work, he will spend this day in holy works; and so much in rest as is used to be spent in rest on other days (which may ordinarily satisfy a well-informed conscience). And if any extraordinary occasions (as journeying or the like) require him to doubt of any hours of the night, whether they be part of the Lord's day or not; 1. It will be but his sleeping time, and not his worshipping time, which he will be in doubt of: and, 2. He will avoid all scandal and tempting others to break the day, if he measure the day by the common estimate: whereas, if the country where he liveth do esteem the day to begin at sunsetting, and he suppose it to begin at midnight, he may be scandalous by doing that which in the common opinion is a violation of the day. If I thought that this short kind of solution were not the fittest to afford just quietness to the minds of sober christians in this point, I would take the pains to scan the controversy about the true beginning of days: but lest it more puzzle and perplex, than edify or resolve and quiet the conscience, I save myself and the reader that trouble.

CHAPTER IX.

Quest. 2. How should the Lord's day be kept or used?

Answ. The practical directions I have given in another treatise. I shall now give you but these generals.

I. The day being separated or set apart for holy worship, must accordingly be spent therein. To sanctify it, is to spend it in holy exercises: how else should it be used as a holy day? "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day," saith St. John, Rev. i. 10.

II. The principal work of the day is, the communion of christians in the public exercises of God's worship. It is principally to be spent in holy assemblies. And this is the use that the Scripture expressly mentioneth, Acts xx. 7, and intimateth, 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2; and as most expositors think, John xxi. when the disciples were gathered together with the door shut, for fear of the Jews. And all church-history assureth us, that in these holy assemblies principally, the day was spent by the ancient christians: They spent almost all the day together.

III. It is not only to be spent in holy exercises, but also in such special holy exercises as are suitable to the purposes of the day. That is, it is a day of commemorating the whole work of our redemption; but especially the resurrection of Christ. Therefore it is a day of thanksgiving and praise; and the special services of it must be laudatory and joyful exercises.

IV. But yet because it is sinners that are called to this work, who are not yet fully delivered from their sin and misery, these praises must be mixed with penitent confessions, and with earnest petitions, and with diligent learning the will of God.

More particularly, the public exercises of the day are, 1. Humble and penitent confessions of sin. 2. The faithful and fervent prayers of the church. 3. The reading, preaching, and hearing of the word of God. 4. The communion of the church in the Lord's supper. 5. The laudatory exhortations which attend it; and the singing and speaking of the praises of our Creator, and Redeemer, and Sanctifier; with joyful thanksgiving for his wonderful benefits. 6. The seasonable exercise of holy discipline on particular persons, for comforting the weak, reforming the scandalous, casting out the obstinately impenitent, and absolving and receiving the penitent. 7. The pastor's blessing the people in the name of the Lord. 8. And as an appurtenance in due season, oblations or contributions for holy and charitable uses, even for the church and poor, which yet may be put off to other days, when it is more convenient so to do.

Quest. But who is it that must be present in all these exercises?

Answ. Where there is no church yet called, the whole day may be spent in preaching to and teaching the unconverted infidels: but where there is a church, and no other persons mixed, the whole exercises of the day must be such as are fitted to the state of the church. But where there is a church and other persons (infidels and impenitent ones) with them, the day must be spent proportionably in exercises suitable to the good of both; yet so that church exercises should be the principal work of the day. And the ancient laudable practice of the churches was, to preach to the infidel auditors and catechumens in the morning, on such subjects as were most suitable to them, and then to dismiss them, and retain the faithful (or baptized) only; and to teach them all the commands of Christ; to stir them

up to the joyful commemoration of Christ and his resurrection, and to sing God's praises, and celebrate the Lord's supper with the eucharistical acknowledgments and joy. And they never kept a Lord's day in the church, without the Lord's supper; in which the bare administration of the signs was not their whole work; but all their thanksgiving and praising exercises, were principally then used, and connexed to the Lord's supper: which the liturgies yet extant do at large express.

And I know no reason but thus it should be still; or at least but that this course should be the ordinary celebration of the day.

Quest. But seeing the sabbath was instituted in the beginning to commemorate the work of the creation, must that be laid by now, because of our commemoration of the work of our redemption?

Answ. No: our Redeemer's work is to restore us to the acknowledgment and love of our Creator. And the commemoration of our redemption fitteth us to a holy acknowledgment of the Almighty Creator in his works: these therefore are still to go together, according to their several proper places, even as the Son is the way to the Father; and we must never separate them in the exercise of our faith, obedience, or love. A christian is a sanctified philosopher: and no man knoweth or acknowledgeth God's works of creation and providence aright, in their true sense, but he that seeth God the Creator and Redeemer, the Beginning, the Governor, and the End of all. Other philosophers are but as those children, that play with the book and letters, but understand not the matter contained in it; or like one that teacheth boys *nitide linguas pingere*, to write a curious hand, while he understands not what he writeth.

Object. But to spend so much of the day in public as you speak of, will tire out the minister by speaking so long: few men are able to endure it.

Answ. 1. How did the christians in the primitive churches? They met in the morning, and often (as far as I can gather) parted not till night, and when they did go home between the morning and evening service, it was but for a little time.

Object. Then they made it a fast and not a festival.

Answ. It was not the use then to eat dinners in those hot countries; much less three meals a-day, as we do now. And they accounted it a sufficient feasting, to eat once, at supper; which they did at the first altogether at their church meeting, with the sacrament; but afterward finding the inconvenience of that, they feasted at home, and used only the sacrament in the church: which change was not made without the allowanee of the apostles; Paul saying, "Have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God?" 1 Cor. xi. 22.

2. I further answer, that the work of the day being done according to the primitive use, it will be no excessive labour to the ministers, because, in the celebration of the Lord's supper, he is not still in one continued speech, but hath the intermission of action, and useth shorter speeches, which do not so much spend him. And the people bear a considerable part, to wit, in God's praises, which were spoken then in their laudatory tone, and are now uttered by their singing of psalms (which should not be the least part of the work). And though their manner of singing was not like ours, in rhymes and tunes melodiously (as neither were the Hebrew, Greek, or Latin poems so sung); but as most think, more like to our cathedral singing, or saying; yet it followeth not that this is the best way for us, seeing use hath made our tunes and metre, and way of singing, more meet for the ends to which we use them, that is, for the cheerful consent of all the church; neither should any think that it is a human, unlawful invention, and a sinful change, to turn the old way of singing (used in Scripture times and long after) into ours; for the old way of singing was not a divine institution, but a use; and several countries had their several uses herein: and God commandeth us but to praise him, and sing psalms, but doth not tell us what metre or tunes we shall use, or manner of singing, but leaveth this to the use and convenience of every country: and if our way and tunes be to us by custom more convenient than those of other nations in Scripture times, we have no reason to forsake them, and return to the old (though yet the old way is not to be judged a thing forbidden). And we see that custom hath so far prevailed with us, that many thousand religious people do cheerfully sing psalms in the church in our tunes and way, who cannot endure to sing in the cathedral, or the ancient Scripture or primitive way, nor to use so much as the laudatory responses.

3. And I further answer, That every church should have more ministers than one, as the ancient churches had, besides their readers; and then one may in speaking ease another.

4. But lastly I answer, That these circumstances being alterable according to the state of countries and conveniences, I do not discommend the custom of our country, and of most christian churches in our times, in making an intermission, and going home to dinner, as being fittest to our condition. And then there remaineth the less force in the objection, as to the weakness of the ministers or the people.

I forbear to say more of the public church performances, having described them all in a small book called "Universal Concord," and having exemplified all except preaching, in our "Reformed Liturgy" given in to the bishops at the Savoy.

Only here I will answer them who object much that the ancient churches spent not the whole day in exercises of religion, nor forbad other exercises out of the time of public worship, because we read of little other observation of it by them, but what was done by them in the public assemblies.

Answ. 1. We find that they took it to be a sanctified or separated day; and they never distinguish, and say, that part of the day only was separated and sanctified to such uses. If they did, which part is the sanctified part of the day? What hours were they which they thought thus separated? But there is no such distinction or limitation in the writings of the ancient doctors. 2. What need you find much mention what they did out of the time of public worship, when they spent all the day frequently at first, and almost all the day in after-times (with small intermission) in public worship? Do you stay but as long at church as they did, even almost from morning till night, and then you will find but little time to dance or play in. But yet, 3. There want not testimonies that they thought it unlawful to spend any part of the day in unnecessary diversions from holy things, as Dr. Young hath showed.

V. So much of the day as can be spared from public church worship (and diversions of necessity) should be next spent most in holy family exercises. And in those unhappy places where the public worship is slenderly and negligently performed, (on some small part only of the day,) or not at all, or not so as it is lawful to join in it, (as in idolatrous worship, &c.) there family worship must take up the most of the day: and in better places, it must take up so much as the public worship spareth.

And here the sum of holy exercises in families is

this (which having elsewhere directed you in, I must but briefly name):

1. To see that the family rise as early on this day as on others, and make it not a day of sleep and idleness. And not to suffer them to violate, profane, or neglect the day by any of the sins hereafter named.

2. To call them together before they go to the solemn assembly, and to pray with them and praise God, and if there be time, to read the Scripture, and tell them what they have to do in public.

3. To see that dinner, and other common employments, make no longer an intermission than is needful; and to advise them that at their meat and necessary business, they show by their holy speeches, that their minds do not forget the day, and the employments of it.

4. To sing God's praises with them, if there be time, and bring them again together to the church assembly.

5. When they return, either to take some account of them what they have learned, or call them together to pray for a blessing on what they have heard, and to sing praises to God, and to urge the things which they have heard upon them.

6. At supper to behave themselves soberly and piously: and after supper to shut up the day in prayer and praise; and either then or before, either to examine or exhort inferiors, according as the case of the persons and families shall require, (for in some families it will be best on the same day to take an account of their profiting, and to catechise them; and in other families that have leisure, other days may be more convenient for catechising and examinations,) that the greater works of the Lord's day may not be shortened.

VI. So much of the day as can be spared from public and family worship, must be spent in secret, holy duties: such as are, 1. Secret prayer. 2. Reading of the Scriptures and good books. 3. Holy meditation. 4. And the secret conference of bosom friends. Of which I further add,

1. That where public or family worship cannot be had, (as in impious places,) there secret duties must be the chief, and make up the defect of others. And it is a great happiness of good christians who have willing minds, that they have such secret substitutes and supplies; that they have Bibles, and so many good books to read; that they have a friend to talk with, of holy things; but much more that they have a God to go to, and a heaven to meditate on, besides so many sacred verities.

2. That my judgment is, that in those places where the public worship taketh up almost all the day, it is no sin to attend upon it to the utmost, and to omit all family and secret exercises, as cannot be done without omission of the public. And that where the public exercises allow but a little time at home, the family duty should take up all that little time, except what some shorter, secret prayers or meditations may have, which will not hinder family duties. And that it is a sinful disorder to do otherwise; because the Lord's day is prineipally set apart for public worship, and the more private or secret is as it were included in the public. Your families are at church with you; the same prayers which you would put up in secret, you may (usually) put up in public, and in families: and it is a turning God's worship into ceremony and superstition, to think that you must necessarily put up the same prayers in a closet, which you put up in the family or church, when you have not time for both. (Though when you have time, secret prayer hath its proper advantages, which are not to be neglected.) And also, what secret or family duty you have not time for on that day, you may do on another day, when you cannot come to church assemblies. And therefore it is an error to think that the day must be divided in equal proportions, between public, family, and secret duties: though yet I think it not amiss that some convenient time for family and secret duties be left on that day; but not so much as is spent in public, nor nothing near it.

If any shall now object, I do not believe that we are bound to all this ado, nor so to tire out ourselves in religious exercises. Where is all this ado commanded us?

I answer, 1. I have proved to you that in nature and Scripture set together, as great a proportion of time as this for holy exercises is required.

2. But oh what a carnal heart doth this objection signify! What! do you count your love to God, and the commemoration of his love in Christ, a toil? What if God had only given you leave to lay by your worldly business, and idle talk and childish play, for one day's time, and to learn how to be like Christ and angels, and how to make sure of a heavenly glory, should you not gladly have accepted it as an unspeakable benefit? Oh! what hearts have these wretched men, that must be constrained by fear to all that is good, and holy, and spiritual; and will have none of God's greatest mercies, unless it be for fear of hell (and they shall never have them indeed till they love them)! What hearts have those men, that had rather be in an ale-house, or a play-house, or asleep, than to be in heart with God! that can find so much pleasure in jesting, and idle talking, and foolery, that they can better endure it, than to peruse a map of heaven, and to read and hear the sacred oracles! who think it a toil to praise their Maker and Redeemer, and a pleasure to game, and dance, and drink! who turn the glass upon the preacher, and grudge if he exceed his hour; and can sit in a tavern or ale-house, or hold on in any thing that is vain, many hours, and never complain of weariness! Do they not tell the world what enemies they are to God, who love a pair of cards, or dice, or wanton dalliance, better than his word and worship? who think six days together little enough for their worldly work and profit, and one day in seven too much to spend in the thoughts of God and life eternal? who love the dung of this present world, so much better than all the joys above, as that they are weary to hear of heaven above an hour at a time, and long to be wallowing in the dirt again? Is it not made by the Holy Ghost, a mark not only of wicked men, but of men notoriously wicked, to be "lovers of pleasures more than of God?" 2 Tim. iii. 4.

O sinner, that in these workings of the wickedness and malignity of your hearts, you would at last but know yourselves! Is it not the "carnal mind that is thus at enmity with God; and neither is nor can be subject to his law?" Rom. viii. 6—8. Which will you take to be your friend, him that loveth your company, or him that is weary of it, and is glad when he hath done with you, and is got away? What would you think of wife, or child, or friend, if they should reason as you do, and say, What law doth bind me to so many hours in the house, or company, or service of my husband, my father, or my friend? You do not use, if you have a feast, or a cup of wine before you, to ask, Where doth God command me to eat or drink it? You can do this without a command. If you hear but of a gainful market, you ask not, Where doth God make it my duty to go to it? If one would give you money or land, you would scarcely ask, How prove you that I am bound to take it? You would be glad of leave, without commands. If

the king should say to you, Ask what you will, and I will give it you, you would not say, Where am I bound of God to ask? And when God saith, Ask and it shall be given you, you say, How prove you that I am bound to ask? You can sing ribald songs and dance without a command; you can feast, and play, and prate, and sleep, and loiter in idleness without a command; but you cannot learn how to be saved, nor praise your Redeemer, without a command. A thief can steal, a fornicator can play the brute, a drunkard can be drunk, an oppressor can make himself hateful to the oppressed, not only without law, but against it! But you cannot rejoice in God, nor live one day together in his love and service, without a law, no nor with it neither. For because you had rather not love him, it is certain that you do not love him; and because you had rather play than pray, and serve the flesh than serve your Maker, it is a certain sign that you do not serve him, with any thing which he will accept as service. For while he hath not your hearts, he hath nothing which he acceepteth. Your knee and tongue only is forced against your will, to that which you call serving him; but your hearts or wills cannot be forced. When you had rather be elsewhere, and say, When will the sermon and prayer be done, that I may be at my work or play? God taketh it as if you were there where you had rather be.

I pray you deal openly, and tell me, you that think a day too long for God, and are weary of all holy work, what would you be doing that while, if you had your choice? Is it any thing which you dare say is better? Dare you say, that playing is better than praying, or a piper or dancing better than praising God with psalms? Or that your sleep, or games, or chat, or worldly business, is better than the contemplation of God and glory? And will those deceivers of the people also say this, who teach them that it is a tedious, uncommanded thing to serve God so long? I think they dare not speak it out. If they dare, let them not grudge that they must for ever be shut out of heaven, where there will be nothing else but holiness. But if you dare not say so, why will you be weary of well-doing, that you may do ill? Why are you not more weary of every thing than of holiness, unless you think every thing better than holiness?

Especially those men, 1. Whose judgment is for will-worship, should not ask, Where is there a command, for any good which they are willing of? But doth not this show that you had rather there were no command for it? Be judges yourselves. 2. And they that are for making the churches a great deal more work than God hath made them, (oh what abundance hath popery made, and what a multitude of new religious particles!) methinks should not for shame say that God hath tired them out, and made them too much work already. Do you cry out, What a weariness is this one day, when you would add of your own such a multitude of more days and more work?

Yet though I talk of doing it willingly, if you had no forcing law of God, but bare leave to receive such benefits, my meaning is not that God hath left any such thing indifferent, or made them only the matter of counsels and not commands; for he hath made it our duty to receive our own benefits, and to do that which tendeth to our own good and salvation. But if it had been so, that we had only leave to receive so great mercies without any other penalty for refusing than the loss of them, it should be enough to men that love themselves, and know what is for their good. Much more when commands concur.

CHAPTER X.

HOW THE LORD'S DAY SHOULD NOT BE SPENT; OR WHAT IS UNLAWFUL ON IT.

As to the resolving this question also, I would wish for no greater advantage on him that I dispute with, but that he be a man that loveth God and holiness, and knoweth somewhat of the difference between things temporal and things eternal; and knoweth what is for the good of his soul, and preferreth it before his body; and hath an appetite to relish the delights of wisdom, and of things most exeellent and divine. And that he be one that knoweth his own necessities, and repenteth of his former loss of time; and liveth in a daily preparation for death; that is, that he be a real christian: and then by all this it will appear, how the Lord's day must not be spent; or what things are unlawful to be done thereon.

I. Undoubtedly it must not be spent in wickedness; in gluttony or drunkenness, chambering or wantonness, strife or envying, or any of those works of the flesh, which are at all times sinful. An evil work is most unsuitable to a holy day: and yet, alas, what day hath more rioting and excess of meat, and drink, and wantonness, and sloth, and lust, than it?

II. It ought not to be spent in our worldly businesses, which are the labours allowed us on the six days; unless necessity or mercy make them at any time beeome such duties of the law of nature, as positives must for that time give place to. For how is it a day separated to holy employments, if we spend it in the common business of the world? It is the great advantage that we have by such a separated day, that we may wholly cast off our minds from this world, and set them on the world to come, and exercise them in holy communion with God and his church, without the interruptions and distractions of any earthly cogitations. A divided mind doth never perform any holy work with that integrity and life, as the nature of it requireth. Heavenly contemplations are never well managed with the intermixture of diverting, worldly thoughts: so great a work as to converse in heaven, to be wrapped up in the admirations of the divine perfections, to kindle a fervent love to God, by the contemplation of his love and goodness, to triumph over sin and Satan with our triumphing, glorified Head, to commemorate his resurrection, and the whole work of our redemption with a lively, working faith, doth require the whole heart, and will not consist with alien thoughts, and the diversion of fleshly employments or delights. Nay, had we no higher work to do than to search our hearts, and lament our sins, and beg for mercy, and learn God's word, and treat with our Redeemer about the saving of our souls, and to prepare for death and judgment, surely it should challenge all our facultics, and tell us that voluntary diversions do too much savour of impiety and contempt. It is the great mercy of God that we have leave to lay by these clogs and impediments of the soul, and to seek his face with greater freedom than the encumbrances of our week-day labours will allow us. No slave can be so glad of a sabbath's ease from his sorest toil and basest drudgery, as a believer should be to be released from his earthly thoughts and business, that he may freely, entirely, and delightfully converse with God.

III. The Lord's day must not be spent in tempting, diverting, unneeessary recreations, or pleasures of the flesh. 1. For these are as great an impediment to the holy employment of the soul, as worldly

labours, if not much more. It is easier for a man to be exercised in heavenly meditations at the plough or cart, or other such labours of his place and calling, than at bowls, or hunting, or cards, or dice, or stage-plays, or races, or dancing, or bear-baitings, or cock-fights, or any such sensual sports. I need no proof of this to any man that hath himself any experience of the holy employments of a believing soul, or that ever knew what it was to spend one day of the Lord aright; and no proof will suffice them that have no experience, because they know not effectually what it is that they talk of.

2. We find that even on other days, the worst men are most addicted to these sports, and are the greatest pleaders for them, and that the more they use them, the worse they grow; yea, that the times of using them are frequently the times of the eruption of many heinous sins. I have lived in my youth in many places where sometimes shows or uncouth spectacles have been their sports at certain seasons of the year, and sometimes morrice-dancings, and sometimes stage-plays, and sometimes wakes and revels; and all men observed that these were times of the most flagitious crimes; and that there was then more drunkenness, more fighting, more horrid oaths and curses uttered, than in many weeks at other times. Then it was that the enraged sensualists did act the part of furious devils, in scorning and reviling all that were soberer and better than themselves, and railing at those that minded God and their everlasting state, as precisians, puritans, and hypocrites; then it was that they were ready in their fury, if they durst, to assault the very persons and houses of them that would not do as they did. Whatever is done in such crowds and tumults, is done with the impetuosity of rage and passion, and with the greatest audacity, and the violation of all laws and regulating restraints. As many waters make a furious stream, and great fires where much fuel is conjunct do disdain restraint and quickly devour all before them, so is it with the raging folly of youth, when voluptuous persons once get together, and their lusts take fire, and they fall into a torrent of profuse sensuality. Yea, those that at other times are sober, and when they come home do seem of another mind, yet do as the rest when they are among them, and seem as bad and furious as they. As we see among the London apprentices on the day called Good-tides Tuesday, or May-day, when they once get out together and are in motion, they seem all alike, and those that are most sober and timorous alone, in the rout are heightened to the audacity of the rest: and as in an army the sight of the multitude, and the noise of drums and guns, put valour into the fearful, and they will go on with others, that else would run away from a proportionable single combat and danger; and as boys at school that fear to offend singly, yet fear not to bar out their master in a combination when all concur; so all seem wicked in a crowd and rout of wicked persons; and sensuality and licentiousness is not the smallest part of the wickedness.

Oh how unfit is youth in such a crowd to think of God, or eternity, or death, or to hear the sober warnings of the preacher, in comparison of what the same persons be, when they are at church, and congregated purposely to hear God's word! Go among them and try them then, with any grave and wholesome counsel: ask them whether they are penitent converts, and whether they are prepared for another world. Try what answer they will give you, and whether they will not deride you more than at another time. I would those that write and plead for this, under the name of *harmless recreations*, would go amongst them sometimes with sober counsel, and learn to be wise by their own experience, that their errors might not be of such pernicious consequence to men's souls as they have been. Reason itself hath no place or audience in the noise of youthful, furious lusts. They will laugh at reason as well as at Scripture; and scorn sobriety as well (though not so much) as holiness. If even in the meetings of grave persons it have ever been observed that individual persons are apt to be carried by the stream, and otherwise than their talk importeth at other times when they are single, what wonder if it be so in evil with unbridled youth?

If you say that the law forbiddeth routs and riots, and it is no such unruly assemblies that we defend:

Answ. Disclaim not the name only while you defend the thing. Be not like them that say, We persuade men to voluntary untruths, but not to lying; to break their vows and oaths in lawful matters, but not to perjury; to kill those that anger them, but not to murder; to take other men's goods by force, but not to robbery, &c. Are not wakes, and revels, and morrice-dances, and dancing-assemblies, and spectacles, stage-plays, and the like, such a concourse as I am speaking of? Do you limit dancers and players to any numbers? I speak not of the laws; I am too much unacquainted with them. If they say, that above four meeting to dance or drink on the Lord's day shall be accounted a conventicle or unlawful assembly, it is more than ever I heard of. But I am speaking of the common practice of the country, and of those that ordinarily defend it, and labour to bring both godly ministers and sober people under the scorn of foolish preciseness and superstition, because they would hinder the sin and ruin of the people. If you will allow them to assemble for their dancings, shows, and sports, you will encourage them to break the laws both of God and man, though you pretend never so much care that they be observed. You may as well allow them to be drunk, and when you have done, forbid them to break God's laws and the king's in their drunkenness. There are few in such sportful assemblies that are not drunk with concupiscence, and whose reason is not drowned in voluptuous and vain imaginations. Let those divines (if I may so call the advocates of sensuality and sin) which are otherwise minded, give us leave to oppose against all their cavils, and the false names of *harmless recreations*, but, 1. Our own experience, who in our youth have always found such sports and revelling assemblies to be corrupters of our minds, and temptations to evils, and quenchers of holy motions, and enemies of all that is good. 2. The experience of the visibly corrupted, undone, sensual youth that are round about us, in all countries where we have lived. 3. And the judgment of Solomon, (who saith as much for pleasure as any sacred writer,) "It is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting; for that is the end of all men, and the living will lay it to his heart: sorrow is better than laughter, for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better. The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth." (I pray you do not say I rail at you by the reciting of these words, nor that I diminish the honour of the reverend advocates for wakes and Lord's-day sports and dancings.) "It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools; for as the sound of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of fools," Eccles. vii. 2—6.

3. Moreover, these sports, and pleasures, and riotings, are worse than ploughing and labouring on the

Lord's day, because (as they are more adverse to spiritual and heavenly joys, so) they do less good to recompense hurt. A carpenter, a mason, a ploughman, &c. may do some good by his unlawful, unseasonable labour, some one may be the better for it; but dancing, and sports, and gaming, do no good, but hurt. They corrupt the fancy; they imprint upon the thinking faculty so strong an inclination to run out after such things, and upon the appetite so strong a list and longing for them, that carnality is much increased by them; mortification hindered; concupiscence gratified; the flesh prevaileth; the Spirit is quenched; and the soul made as unfit for heavenly things, as a school-boy is for his book, whose heart is set upon his play; yea, abundance more; as nature by corruption is more averse to spiritual things, than to the things of art or nature.

4. These dancings, and plays, and wakes, and other sports, are a strong temptation also to them that are not of the riotous societies, but have convictions on their hearts that they should have greater and better things in their mind. Without accusing others, I may say that I know this by bad experience. I cannot forget, when my conscience was against their courses, and called me to better things, how hardly, when I was young, I passed by the dancing and the playing congregations, and especially when in the passage I must bear their scorn. And I was one year a school-master, and found how hard it was for the poor children to avoid such snares, even when they were sure to be whipped the next day for their pleasures.

5. And those riots and plays are injurious to the pious and sober persons who dislike them. For it is they that shall be made the rabble's scorn, and the drunkard's song; besides that the noise ofttimes annoyeth them when they should be calmly serving God. And they are hindered from governing and instructing their families, while their children and servants are thus tempted to be gone, and their hearts are all the while in the playing-place. Never did a hungry dog more grudge at his restraint from meat, than children and young servants usually grudge to be catechised or kept to holy exercises, when they hear the pipe, or the noise of the licentious multitude in the streets. I cannot forget that in my youth in those late times, when we lost the labours of some of our conformable godly teachers for not reading publicly the Book of Sports and Dancing on the Lord's Days, one of my father's own tenants was the town-piper, hired by the year, (for many years together,) and the place of the dancing-assembly was not a hundred yards from our door, and we could not on the Lord's day either read a chapter, or pray, or sing a psalm, or catechise, or instruct a servant, but with the noise of the pipe and tabor, and the shoutings in the street, continually in our ears; and even among a tractable people, we were the common scorn of all the rabble in the streets, and called puritans, precisians, and hypocrites, because we rather chose to read the Scriptures than to do as they did (though there was no savour of nonconformity in our family). And when the people by the book were allowed to play and dance out of public service-time, they could so hardly break off their sports, that many a time the reader was fain to stay till the piper and players would give over; and sometimes the morrice-dancers would come into the church in all their linen and scarfs, and antic-dresses, with morrice-bells jingling at their legs. And as soon as common-prayer was read, did haste out presently to their play again. Was this a heavenly conversation? Was this a help to holiness and devotion; or to the mortification of fleshly lusts? Was this the way to train up youth in the nurture and admonition of the Lord? And were such assemblies like to the primitive churches; or such families governed christianly and in the fear of God? O Lord, set wise and holy pastors over thy poor flocks, that have learned themselves the doctrine which they preach, and who love (or at least abhor not) the service and imitation of a crucified Christ, and the practice of that religion which they themselves profess.

Object. But poor labouring people must have some recreation, and they cannot through their poverty have leisure any other day.

Answ. 1. A sad argument to be used by them that by racking of rents do keep them in poverty. They that cannot live without all those superfluities, which requireth many hundred pounds a year to maintain them, must for this gratifying pride and fleshly lusts, set such bargains to their poor tenants, as that they confess they cannot live, without taking the Lord's day to recreate them from the toil and weariness of their excessive labours: and will not God judge such self-condemning oppressors as these are?

2. But is this an argument fit for the mouth of a minister or any christian, who knoweth how much the soul is more worth than the body? and eternity more valuable than the pleasures of this little time? If poverty deny the people liberty to play on the week days, doth it not as much deny them liberty to pray, and to read the Scriptures, and to learn their catechisms, and the word of God? Surely it better beseemeth any man that believeth another life, a heaven and a hell, to say, Poor labourers have so little time to learn, to meditate, to read, to pray, on the week days, that if they do not follow it close upon the Lord's day, they are like to perish in their ignorance; ("For if the gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost," 2 Cor. iv. 3.) Which do you think it better to leave undone, if one of them must be left undone? whether the learning of God's word, or the pleasures and recreations of the flesh?

3. Is it their bodies or their minds that need recreation? When the body is tired with toilsome labour, it is ease, rather than toilsome dancings or plays, that are fit to recreate it. Or else God will be charged with mistake in the reasons of the ancient sabbath. But if it be the mind that needeth recreation, why should not the learning of heavenly truth, and the joyful commemoration of our redemption, and the foresight of heaven, and the praises of God, be more delightful than the noise of thorns under a pot; even than the laughter and sport of fools, or than the dancings and games that now you plead for? But the truth is, it is not the minds of poor labouring men, that are overworked and tired on the week days, but it is their bodies; and therefore there is no recreation so suitable to them as the ease of the body, and the holy and joyful exercise of the mind, upon their Creator, their Redeemer, and their everlasting rest.

4. But if you will needs have days of temptation and sinful sports and pleasures for them, let landlords abate their tenants as much rent, as one day's vacancy from labour in a month or a fortnight will amount to, or let the common saints' days, which of the two are more at man's disposal, be made their sporting days, and rob not their souls of that one weekly day, which God hath separated for his worship.

Object. But there are students, and lawyers, and ministers, and gentlemen, whose labour is most that of the brain, and not the ploughman's bodily toil; and these have need of bodily recreation.

Answ. And there are few of these so poor but they can take their bodily recreation on the week

days: and many of them need as much the whole Lord's day for their soul's edification as any others; and no one that knoweth himself will say that he needs it not. If any men need remission of studies, and bodily exercise, it is ministers themselves. And is it themselves that they plead for sports and dancing for? Would they be companions for the vain in such-like vanities?

Object. But the mind of man is not able to endure a constant intention and elevation of devotion all the day long without recreation and intermission; and putting men upon more than they can do, will but hinder them; when a little recreation will make them more fresh and fervent when they return God.

Answ. Oh what an advantage is it to know by experience what one talketh of! and what an inconvenience to talk of holiness and heavenliness by hearsay only! 1. To poor people that have but one day in seven, that one day should not seem too long. 2. If it be from a carnal enmity to God and spiritual things, shortness and seldomness will be no cure. But they have need rather to be provoked to diligence till they are cured, than to be indulged in that averseness and sloth, which till it is cured will prevail, when you have done your best against it. 3. But if it be a weariness of the flesh, as the disciples, when they slept while Christ was praying, or a weariness through such imperfection of grace and remnant of carnality, which the sincere are liable to, then giving way to it will increase it, and resisting it is the way to overcome it. 4. How many necessary intermissions are there, which confute this pretence of weakness? Some time is taken up in dressing; and some with poor servants in waiting on their masters and mistresses, and preparing meat and drink; some in going to church and coming home; some in eating, usually more than once; some in preparing again for sleep; besides what cattle and by-occasions will require. And is the remainder of one day in a week yet too much for the business which we are created, preserved, and redeemed for, and on which our endless life dependeth? Oh that we knew what the love of God is! and what it is to regard our souls according to their worth! Would not a soul that loveth God rather say, Alas! how short is the Lord's day! How quickly is it gone! How many interruptions hinder my delight! Shall I think a week short enough for my worldly labour, and one day (thus parcelled) too long to seek the face of God? I see blind worldlings and sensualists can be longer unwearied at market, in their shops and fields, especially when their gain comes in; and at cards, and dice, and bowling, and idle prating, &c. And shall I be weary so soon of the most noble and necessary work, and of the sweetest pleasures upon earth?

A hypocrite that draweth near to God but with the lips, while his heart is far from him, as he never truly seeketh God, so he never truly findeth him, and hath none of the true spiritual delights of holiness, nor ever feeleth the delights of exercising his love to God by the help of faith, in the hopes of heaven: and therefore no wonder if he be weary of such unprofitable, sapless, and unpleasant work, as his dead formalities and affections are. But it is not so with the sincere, experienced christian, who serving God in spirit and in truth, hath true and spiritual recreation, pleasure, and benefit in and by his service. And therefore we see that the holy, experienced believers are still averse to these sensual diversions, and do not think the Lord's day or his service too long. And, O christian! what a happy advantage in such controversies have you, in your holy sincerity and sweet experience!

5. But yet I am not such a stranger to a man, to myself or others, as to deny that our naughty hearts are inclined to be weary of well-doing; but mark what a cure God in wisdom and mercy hath provided for us; as it is but one day in seven which is thus to be wholly employed with God, and as much of this day is taken up with the bodily necessities aforesaid; so for the rest, God appointeth us variety of exercises, that when we are weary of one, another may be our recreation. When we have heard, we must pray; and when we have prayed, we must hear again: we must read, we must sing and speak God's praises; we must celebrate the memorial of Christ's death in the sacrament; we must meditate; we must confer, we must instruct our families: and we have variety of subjects for each of these. As a student that is weary hath a variety of books and studies to recreate his mind; so hath every christian variety of holy employment on the Lord's day; and all of it excellent, profitable, and delightful!

Christian, believe not that minister or man, whatever he be, that telleth thee that Christ's yoke is heavy, or that his commandments are grievous. Hath he done so much to deliver us from the strait yoke, the heavy burden, and the grievous commandments? And now shall we accuse him of bringing us under a toilsome task? Is it a toil to love or count your money? to love and look upon your corn and cattle? to love and converse with your friend? to feast your body on the pleasantest food? If not, why should it be a toil to any but a wicked heart, to spend a day in loving God, and hearing the messages of his love to us, and in the foresight and foretastes of everlasting love?

Caviller, come but unto Christ, and cast off the wearisome, toilsome burden of thy sin, and Satan's drudgery, and take Christ's yoke and burden on thee, and learn of him, and try then whether his days and work be grievous. Come and spend but a day in loving God, as thou dost in talking of him, and try whether love, and the holiest love, be a wearisome work. But if thou wilt make a religion of all shell and no kernel, all carcass and no life, like that which the Jansenists charge the Jesuits with, that say, We are bound to love God but once in four or five years, or once in all our lives, no wonder if thou be weary of such a religion.

But I will tell them that are the teachers of the people, an honester way to cure the people's weariness, than to send them to a piper or to a play to cure it. Preach with such life and awakening seriousness, preach with such grateful, holy eloquence, and with such easy method, and with such variety of wholesome matter, that the people may never be weary of you. Pour out the rehearsal of the love and benefits of God; open so to them the privileges of faith, and the joys of hope, that they may never be angry. How oft have I heard the people say of such as these, I could hear him all day and never be weary! They are troubled at the shortness of such sermons, and wish they had been longer. Pray with that heavenly life and fervour as may wrap up the souls of those that join with you, and try then whether they will be weary. Praise God with that joyful alacrity which beseemeth one that is ready to pass into glory, and try whether this will not cure the people's weariness.

Misunderstand me not. I am now speaking to none but guilty hypocrites, and not to any faithful, holy ministers. And to such I say, when you have done nothing but coldly read over the public prayers, or as coldly and crudely added your own, and tired the hearers with a dry, a sapless, lifeless, unexperienced discourse, and then send them as a wearied people, to dancing and sports for a needless recrea-

tion; is this like the work of a pastor of souls? When you have cried down other men's praying and preaching, and tell the people that the praying and preaching which you recommend to them as better, will not digest well, without a dance or recreation after it, to expel the people's weariness; is not this to disgrace your own prayers and preaching which you before commended to them? And when you have done, if after this you speak against others for their long praying, and for so much preaching and hearing, as if they never had enough, is not this to commend what you discommend? and to tell the people that those men's praying and preaching whom you revile, is such as doth not weary their auditors; when yours is such as will tire men, if it be long, or if they be not recreated after it with a piper, a fiddler, or a dance? Oh that the Ithacian bishops of the world, and all the clergy of their mind, would at least hear Hooker in the preface to his "Ecclesiastical Polity," how little their cause is beholden to such patrons, and how well it might spare them!

For my own part, as my flesh is weak, so my heart is too bad, too backward to these divine and heavenly works! and yet I never have time to spare. God knoweth that it is my daily groans, How great is the work, yea, and how sweet! and how short is the day, the week, the year! How quickly is it night! How fast do weeks and years roll away! And shall any man that is called a minister of Christ, persuade poor labourers and servants who have but one day for retirement from the world, to converse with God without distraction, that this one day is too long, and that their work must be eased by carnal sports? Nay, shall a man that would be called a minister or a christian, persuade men against all the experience of the world, that the diversions and interruptions of a dance or May-game, or a race, or a comedy, will dispose their minds to return to God with more heavenly alacrity and purity than before, or than variety of holy exercises will do? Or rather, are we constrained to say (though it displease) that hypocrites are all for imaginary and hypocritical religion; and that whether he be at church or at home, in praying, or in drinking, and sensuality, and voluptuousness, a worldling is every where a worldling still, and a hypocrite is a hypocrite still; and it is not his book or pulpit that maketh him another man. And that as the man is, such will be his work. *Operari sequitur esse.* And that the Jesuits are not the only men in the world that would make a religion to suit men's lusts, and would serve Satan and the flesh in the livery of Christ. But I fear I have been too long on this objection.

IV. The Lord's day must not be spent in idleness; not in unnecessary sleep, or in vain walking, or long dressings, or too long feastings, or any thing unnecessary which diverteth our souls from their sacred, seasonable work. It is not a Jewish ceremonious sabbath of bodily rest which we are to keep; but it is a day of holy and spiritual works; of the needfullest work in all the world; to do that which is ten thousand times more necessary and excellent, than all our labours and provisions for the flesh. And if no man hath time to spare on the week day, but he that knoweth not aright what it is to be a christian, or a man, or why God maintaineth and upholdeth him in the world; what shall we think of them that can find time to spare on the Lord's day, and can walk and idle away the most precious of all their time? If it be folly to cast away your silver, it is not wisdom to cast away your gold. Oh that God would but open men's eyes, to see what is before them, and how near to eternity they stand, and awaken men's sleepy, sensual souls, to live as men that do not dream of another world, but unfeignedly believe it; and then a little reasoning would serve turn to convince them, that the Lord's day should be spent in the duties of serious holiness, and not in idleness, or unnecessary works, or sports.

Object. But by all this you seem to cast a great reproach to Calvin, Beza, and most of the great divines of the foreign churches, who have not been so strict for the observation of the Lord's day.

Answ. Let these things be observed by the impartial reader: 1. It cannot be proved to be most of them that were so faulty herein as the objection intimateth. 2. Many of them have written much for the holy spending of the day in spiritual exercises. 3. And you must remember that they came newly out of popery, and had seen the Lord's day, and a superabundance of other human holy days, imposed on the churches to be ceremoniously observed; and they did not all of them, so clearly as they ought, discern the difference between the Lord's day and those holy days, or church festivals, and so did too promiscuously conjoin them in their reproofs of the burdens imposed on the church. And it being the papist's ceremoniousness, and their multitude of festivals, that stood altogether in their eye, it tempted them to too undistinguishing and unaccurate a reformation. 4. And for Calvin, you must know that he spent every day so like to a Lord's day, in hard study, and prayer, and numerous writings and public preaching, or lecturing and disputings, either every day in the week, or very near it, scarce allowing himself time for his one only spare meal a day, that he might the easilier be tempted to make the less difference in his judgment between the Lord's day and the other days, than he should have done, and to plead for more recreation on that day for others, than he took on any day himself. 5. And then his followers having also many of the same temptations, were apt to tread in his steps, through the deserved estimation of his worth and judgment, and lest they should seem to be of different minds. But as England hath been the happiest in this piece of reformation, so all men are unexcusable that encourage idleness, sensuality, or neglect of the important duties of the day.

CHAPTER XI.

WHAT THINGS SHOULD NOT BE SCRUPLED AS UNLAWFUL ON THE LORD'S DAY.

As I have told you the Lord's day is not a sabbath in the Jewish sense, or a day of ceremonial rest, but a day of worshipping our Creator and Redeemer with thankful commemorations and with holy joy, &c; and a day of vacancy from such earthly things as may be any hinderance to this holy work: so now I must resolve the question first in the general, that nothing lawful at another time, is unlawful on this day, which hath not the nature of an impediment to the holy duties of the day; unless it be accidentally on the account of scandal or ill example unto others, or disobeying the laws of magistrates, or crossing the concord of the churches, or such like. Therefore hence I deduce these particular resolutions following.

I. It is not unlawful to be at such bodily or mental labours as is needful to the spiritual duties of the day. If the "priests in the temple (saith Christ)

did break the sabbath and were blameless," (that is, not the command of God to them for keeping the sabbath, but the external rest of the sabbath, which was commanded to others, with an exception to their case,) we may well say that it is no sin for a minister now to spend his strength in laborious preaching and praying; or for the people to travel as far as is needful, to the church assemblies: nor do we need to tie ourselves to a sabbath day's journey (that is, according to the scribes, 2000 cubits, which is 3000 feet, and *quinque stadia*): it is lawful to go many miles when it is necessary to the work of the day.

II. It is not unlawful to be at the labour of dressing ourselves somewhat more ornately or comely than on another day; because it is suitable to the rejoicing of a festival. But to waste time needlessly in curiosity, and proud attiring, to the hinderance of greater things, is detestable.

III. It is not unlawful to dress meat, even in some fuller and better manner than on other days; because it is a festival, or day of thanksgiving. And it is a vain self-contradiction of some men, who think that another day of thanksgiving is not well kept, if there be not two feasting meals at least, and yet think it unlawful to dress one on the Lord's day: but yet to make it a day of gluttony, or to waste more of the day in eating or dressing meat than is agreeable to the spiritual work of the day, which is our end; or to make ourselves sleepy by fulness; or to use our servants like beasts, to provide for our bellies, with the neglect of their own souls; or to pamper the flesh to the satisfaction and irritation of its lusts; all this is to be detested.

IV. It is not unlawful to do the necessary works of mercy to ourselves or others, to man or beast; those which must be done, and cannot be delayed without more hurt than the doing of them will procure (for that is the description of a necessary work). As to eat and drink and clothe ourselves, and our children; to carry meat to the poor that are in present necessity; to give or take physic; and to go for advice to the physician or surgeon: to travel upon a business of importance and necessity; to quench a fire; or prop a house that is about to fall; to march or fight in a necessary case of war; to sail or labour at sea in cases of necessity; to boat men over a river, that go to church; to pursue a robber, or defend him that is assaulted; to pull a man out of fire or water; to dress a man's sores, or give physic to the sick; to pull an ox, or horse, or other cattle out of a pit or water; to drive or lead them to water, and to give them meat; to save cattle, corn, or hay, from the sudden inundations of the sea, or of rivers, or from floods; to drive cattle or swine out of the grounds where they break in to spoil; such necessary actions are not unlawful, but a duty; it being a moral or natural precept, which Christ twice bid the ceremonious Pharisees learn, "I will have mercy and not sacrifice."

And it is not only works of necessity to a man's life, that are here meant by necessary works; but such also as are necessary to a smaller and lower end or use.

And yet it is not all such necessity neither, that will allow us to do the thing. Otherwise a tradesman or ploughman might say that his labour is necessary to the getting or saving of this or that small commodity; I shall be a loser if I do not work. And on the other side, if it were only a necessity for life, limbs, or livelihood that would allow us labour, then it would be unlawful to dress meat, and to drive cattle out of the corn, and many such things before mentioned; and then it would be lawful to give meat only to oxen or horses of great price, and not to hens, ducks, geese, dogs, and other animals of little value.

Therefore there is a great deal of prudent discretion necessary to the avoiding of extremes. God hath not enumerated all the particulars which are allowed or forbidden in their generals. What then shall we do? Shall we violate the outward rest of the day for the worth of a groat or two-pence (as the feeding of hens or such-like may be)? or shall we suffer the loss of many pounds rather than stir to save them? As for instance, is it lawful to open, or turn, or carry in corn or hay, which in all probability (though not certainly) is like to be lost or very much spoiled, if it be let alone till the next day? The corn or hay may be of many pounds value, when the feeding of swine, or hens, may be little: the corn or hay is like to be lost; when the swine, or hens, or horses, or oxen, may easily recover the hunger or abstinence of a day. What must be done in such cases as these?

I answer, 1. It is necessary to know that where God hath not made particular determinations, yet general laws do still oblige us.

2. And that christian prudence is necessary to the right discerning how far our actions fall under those general laws of God.

3. That he that will discern these things must be a man that truly understandeth, valueth, and loveth the true ends and work of the Lord's day, and not a man that hateth it, or careth not for it; and a man that hath a right estimation also of those outward things, which stand in question to be meddled with. And he must be one that hath no superstitious Jewish conceits of the external rest of the day: and he must be one that looketh, not only to one thing or a few, but to all things, how numerous soever, which the determination of his case dependeth on.

4. And because very few are such, it is needful that those few that are such, be casuists and advisers to the rest; and that the more ignorant consult with them (especially if they be their proper pastors) as they do with physicians and lawyers for their health and their estates.

5. It must be known that ofttimes the laws of the land do interpose in such cases; and if they do determine so strictly, as to forbid that which else would to some be lawful, they must be obeyed; because bad men cannot be kept from doing ill by excesses, unless some good men be hindered by the same laws from some things that are to them indifferent, nay, possibly, eligible, if there were no such law.

6. And accordingly the case of scandal or temptation to others, that will turn our example to their sin, must be considered in our practice. Yea, it is not only things merely indifferent that we must deny our liberty in, to prevent another's fall, but ofttimes that which would else be a duty may become a sin, when it will scandalize another, or tempt him to a far greater and more dangerous sin. As it may be my duty to speak some word, or do some action, as most useful and beneficial, when there is nothing against it; and yet if I may foresee that another will turn that speech or action to his ruin, to the hatred of piety, or to take occasion from it to exercise cruelty upon other christians, &c. it may become my heinous sin. So it must here be considered, who will know of the action which you do; and what use they are like to make of it.

7. And a little public hurt must be more regarded, than more private benefit; and the hurt of a man's soul cannot be countervailed by your corporal commodities.

8. These things being premised, I suppose that the great rule to guide you in such undetermined

circumstances is the interest of the end; all things must be done to the glory of God, and to edification. A truly impartial, prudent man can discern by comparing all the circumstances, whether his action (as if it were carrying endangered corn) were likely to do more good or harm. On one side you must put in the balance the value of the thing to be saved; your own necessity of it; the poor's necessity of it; and Christ's command, "Gather up the fragments that nothing be lost." On the other side, you must consider, how far it will hinder your spiritual benefit and duty; and how far the example may be like to encourage such as will do such things without just cause; and so try which is the way of God's honour and your own and your neighbour's good; and that is the way which you must take (as in the disciples' rubbing the ears of corn, &c.): for the rule is, that your labour is then lawful and a duty, when in the judgment of a truly judicious person, it is like to do more good than hurt; and it is then sinful, when it is like to do more hurt than good. Though all cannot discern this, yet (as far as I know) this is the true rule, to judge such actions. As for them that suppose our Lord's day to be under the laws of rest with the Jewish sabbath, and so think that they have a readier way to decide these doubts, I will not contend with them, but I have told you why I am not of their mind.

V. From hence I further conclude, that whereas there are such actions which bring some little benefit, but yet are no apparent hinderances of any of the work of the day, it seemeth to me too much ceremoniousness, and too ungospel-like, to trouble our own or other men's consciences, by concluding such things to be unlawful. If one have a word to speak of some considerable worldly business, which may be forgotten if it be not presently spoken; or if I meet one with whom I must speak the next day about some worldly business, and if I then wish him to come to speak with me, I must send a great way to him afterwards, I will not say that it is a sin to speak such a word. I will first look at a man's positive duties on the Lord's day, how he heareth, and readeth, and prayeth, and spendeth his time, and how he instructeth and helpeth his family; and if he be diligent in seeking God, (Heb. xi. 6,) and ply his heavenly business, I shall be very backward to judge him for a word or action about worldly things that falls in on the by, without any hinderance to his spiritual work. And if another speak not a word of any common thing, and yet do little in spiritual things, for his own or other's edification, I shall think him a great abuser or neglecter of the Lord's day. A few words about a common thing that falleth in the way, may be spoken without any hinderance of any holy duty; but still we must see that it be not a scandalous temptation to others. If I see a man that unexpectedly findeth some uncomely hole or rent in his clothes, either pin it up or sew it up, before he goeth abroad, I will not blame him; but if he do it so as to imbolden another who useth needlessly to mend his clothes on the Lord's day, it will be a sin of scandal. If I see one cut some undecent straggling hairs before he go forth, I will not blame him; but if he do it before one who will be encouraged by it to be barbed needlessly on that day, he will offend. And so in other cases.

VI. By these same rules also we may judge of recreations on the Lord's day. The recreations of the mind must be the various holy employments of the day. No bodily recreations are lawful which needlessly waste time, or hinder our duty, or divert our minds from holy things, or are a snare to others. Unless it be some weak persons whose health requireth bodily motion, few persons need any other than holy recreations on that day. I know no one man that so much needeth it as myself, who these twenty years cannot digest one day's meat, unless I walk, or run, or exercise my body before it, till I am hot, or sweat; and therefore necessity requireth me to walk or fast; but I do it privately on that day, lest I tempt others to sin. But I will not censure one whom I see walking at fit hours, when for aught I know he may be taken up in some fruitful meditation. But if persons will walk in the streets or fields in idleness, or for vain delight, or discourse, as if the day were too long for them, and they had no business to do for their souls, this is not only a sin, but a very ill sign of one that is senseless of his soul's necessity and his duty.

VII. To read history, philosophy, or common things, unnecessarily on the Lord's day, is a sinful diversion from the more spiritual work of it, and unsuitable to the appointed uses of the day (much more romances, play-books, or idle stories); yea, or those parts of divinity itself, which are less practical and useful to the raising of thankful and heavenly affections. But yet sometimes such other matter may fall in, at a sermon, or conference, or in meditation, which will require a present satisfaction in some point of history, philosophy, or controversial divinity, which may be subserviently used to edification, without sin. Here therefore we must judge prudently.

VIII. A thing that may be lawful singly in itself, unless it be of great necessity, is unlawful when he that serveth us in it is drawn or encouraged to make a trade of it. As to use a barber to cut your hair, or a tailor to mend your clothes, or a cobbler to mend your shoes. Because if you may use him, so may others as well as you, and so he will follow his calling on the Lord's day. And yet I dare not say, if when you are to travel to church, you find your shoes or boots by breaking something, to make you uncapable of going out, but you may get them mended privately, where it may be done without this inconvenience. And though cooks and barbers should not be unnecessarily used in their trade, yet it is not always unlawful, but sometimes very well. Because as one servant in the kitchen may be used to dress meat for all the family, so one baker or cook may serve many families, and save ten times as many persons the labour which else they must be at; and perhaps with easier and quicker despatch than others. The trade of the apothecary, surgeon, and physician, is ordinarily used but for necessity.

IX. There is no sufficient avoidance of such abuses, but by careful foresight, and prevention, and preparation the week before; which therefore must be conscionably done.

CHAPTER XII.

OF WHAT IMPORTANCE THE DUE OBSERVATION OF THE LORD'S DAY IS.

THE singular benefits of keeping the Lord's day aright, should make all that love God, or holiness, or the church, or their own or other men's souls, take heed how they grow into a neglect of it; much more that they plead not for such negligence or abuse.

I. The due observation of the Lord's day is needful to keep up the solemn worship of God and public owning and honouring him in the world: if all men were left to themselves, what time they should

bestow in the worshipping of God, the greatest part would cast off all, and grow into atheism or utter profaneness; and the rest would grow into confusion. And if all princes and rulers, or churches, in the world were left to their own wills, to appoint the people on what days to meet, some kingdoms and churches would have one day in eight, or nine, or ten, or twenty, and some only now and then an hour, and some one day, and some another, and some next to none at all. For there is no one universal monarch on earth to make laws for them all (whatever the pope or his nominal general councils may pretend to); and they would never all come to any reasonable agreement voluntarily among themselves. Therefore the light of nature telleth us, that as a day is meet and needful to be stated; so it is meet that God himself, the true Universal Monarch, should determine of it; which accordingly he hath done. And this is the very hedge and defensative of God's public worship. When he hath made a law that one whole day in seven shall be spent in it, men are engaged to attend it.

Oh what a happy acknowledgment of God and our Creator and Redeemer is it, and an honouring of his blessed name, when all the churches throughout all the world are at once praising the same God, with the same praises, and hearing and learning the same gospel, and professing the same faith, and thankfully commemorating the same benefits: the church is then, indeed, like an army with banners. And were it not for this day's observation, alas! how different would the case be! And what greater thing can man be bound to, than thus to keep up the solemn acknowledgment and worship of God and our Redeemer in the world?

II. The due sanctification of the Lord's day, doth tend to make religion universal, as to countries and individual persons, which else would be of narrower extent. When all the world are under a divine obligation, to spend one day every week in the exercises of religion, (and superiors see to the performance of their subjects' obedience to this law,) it will make men to be in some sort religious whether they will or not: though they cannot be truly religious against their will, it will make them visibly religious. Yea, God's own law, if man's did nothing, would lay an awe on the consciences of most, who believe that there is a God that made that law. And the weekly assemblies keep up the knowledge and profession of the christian faith, and keep God and heaven in the people's remembrance, and keep sin under constant rebukes and disgrace. And were it not for this, heathenism, infidelity, and profaneness would quickly overspread the world. The Lord's day keepeth up the christian religion in the world.

III. The lamentable ignorance of the generality in the world, doth require the strict and diligent observation of the whole Lord's day. Children and servants, and ordinary country people, yea, and too many of higher quality, are so exceeding ignorant of the things of God and their salvation, that all the constant diligence that can be used with them, in preaching, exhorting, catechising, &c. will not overcome it with the most. The most diligent masters of families lament it, how ignorant their families are when they have done the best they can. Let those that plead for dancing and sporting away much of the day, but do like men that do not secretly scorn christianity, nor despise their servants' souls, and let them but try what measure of knowledge the bare hearing of common prayer, yea, and a sermon or two with it, will beget in their servants, if the rest of the day be spent in sports; and let them judge according to experience. If ever knowledge be propagated to such, and families made fit to live like christians, it is likest to be by the holy improvement of this day, in the diligent teaching and learning the substance of religion, and in the sacred exercises thereof.

IV. The great carnality, worldliness, and carelessness of the most, and their great averseness to the things of God, doth require that they be called and kept to a close and diligent improvement of the Lord's day. Whatever unexperienced or carnal persons may pretend, that such constant duty so long together will make them worse and more averse, reason, experience, and Scripture all are against them. If there be some backwardness at the first, it is not sports and idleness that will cure it; but resisting of the slothful humour, and keeping to the work. For there is that in religion that tendeth to overcome men's averseness to religion; and it must be overcome by religion, and not by playing or idleness, if ever it be overcome. It is want of knowledge and experience of it, which maketh them loathe it, or be weary of it: when they have tried it more, and know it better, they will (if ever) be reconciled to it. Six days in a week are a sufficient diversion. Apprentices, and pupils, and school-boys will hold on in learning, though they be averse; and you think not all the six days too much to hold them to it. A school-boy must learn daily eight hours in a day; and yet some wretched men (yea, teachers) would persuade poor souls that must learn how to be saved or perish for ever, that less than eight hours, one day in seven, is too much to be spent in the needfullest, excellentest, and pleasantest matters in all the world.

If you say that the sublimity or difficulty maketh it wearisome; I answer, that philosophers do much longer hold on in harder speculations.

If you say divinity being unsuitable to carnal minds, their sick stomachs must take no more than they can digest. I answer, 1. Cannot a carnal preacher for his gain, and honour, and fancy, hold on all the year in the study even of divinity, perhaps eight or ten hours every day in the week? And may not ignorant people be brought one day to endure to be taught as long? 2. That which you call digesting, is but understanding, and believing, and receiving it: and one truth tendeth to introduce another; and he that cannot learn with an hour's labour, may learn more in two. 3. And it is hearing and exercise that must cure their want of appetite. Experience telleth us, that when people take the liberty of plays, and sports, and idleness for a recreation, they come back with much more want of love to holy exercises, than they that continue longer at them. Gratifying sloth and sensuality increaseth it, and increaseth an averseness to all that is good; for who are more averse than they that are most voluptuous? If ever people be made seriously holy, it is a due observation of the whole Lord's day, that is like to bring them to it (I mean, observing it in such learning and seeking duties as they are capable of, till they can do better). For when the mind long dwelleth on the truth, it will sink in and work; and many strokes will drive the nail to the head.

Let the adversaries of this day and diligence but observe, and if true experience tell not the world that more souls are converted on the Lord's days than all the other days besides, and that religion best prospereth both as to the number and the knowledge and serious holiness of the professors of it, where the Lord's day is carefully sanctified, rather than where idleness and playing do make intermission, then I will confess that I am uncapable of knowing any thing of this nature by experi-

ence. But if it be so, fight not against the common light.

V. The poverty, servitude, and worldly necessity of the most, do require a strict observation of the whole Lord's day. Tenants and labourers, carters and carriers, and abundance of tradesmen, are so poor, that they can hardly spare any other proportion of time; much less all their children and servants, whose subjection, with their parents' and masters' poverty, restraineth them. Alas! they are fain to rise early and hasten to their work, and scarce have leisure to eat and sleep as nature requireth: and they are so toiled and wearied with hard labour, that if they have at night a quarter of an hour to read a chapter and pray, they can scarce hold open their eyes from sleeping. What time hath the minister then to come and teach them? (if we had such ministers again as would be at the pains to do it). And what time have they to hear or learn? You must teach them on the Lord's day, or scarcely at all. Almost all that they must learn must be then learned.

I deny not but in those former years, when the law forbad me not to preach the gospel, the people came to me on the week day, house by house; and also that they learned much in their shops while they were working. But, 1. It came to one family's turn but one hour, or little more in a whole year (for about fourteen families a week so catechised and instructed, did no sooner bring their course about). 2. And our people were mostly weavers, whose labour was not like ploughmen's, masons', carpenters', carriers', &c. to take up their thoughts; but they would lay a book before them, and read, or meditate, or discourse to edification whilst they were working. But this is not the case of the multitude.

And let any sober man but consider, whether with people so ignorant and averse as the most are, should he be never so diligent on the Lord's day, the six days' intermission be not a great cooling of their affection; and a great delayer of their growth in knowledge; when they are like by the week's end to forget all that they had learned on the Lord's day. What then would these poor people come to, if the Lord's day itself must be also loitered or played away?

VI. The tyranny of many masters maketh the Lord's day a great mercy to the world: for if God had not made a law for their rest and liberty, abundance of worldly, impious persons, would have allowed them little rest for their bodies, and less opportunity for the good of their souls. Therefore they have cause with great thankfulness to improve the holy liberty which God hath given them, and not cast it away on play or idleness.

VII. The full improvement of the Lord's days doth tend to breed and keep up an able, faithful ministry in the churches (on which the preservation and glory of religion much dependeth). When there is a necessity of full ecclesiastical performances imposed on ministers, they are also necessitated to prepare themselves with answerable abilities and fitness. But when no more is required of them, but to read the liturgy, or to say a short and dry discourse, they that know no more is necessary (to their ends) are so strongly tempted to get ability and preparations for no more, that few will overcome the temptation. And therefore the world knoweth that in Moscovy, Abassia, and for the most part of the Greek and Armenian churches, as nothing or little more than reading is required, so little more ability than to read is laboured after, and the ministers are ordinarily so ignorant and weak, as is the scorn and decay of the christian religion.

VIII. Yea, it will strongly incline masters of families to labour more for abilities to instruct and catechise their families, and pray with them, and guide them in the fear of God, when they know that the whole day must be improved to the spiritual good of their families. And so knowledge, abilities, and family holiness will increase: whereas those that think themselves under no such obligations, what ignorant, profane, and ungodly families have they! because, for the most part, they are such themselves.

IX. A multitude of gross sins will be prevented by the due observation of the Lord's day. Nothing more usual than for the sports, riots, idleness, and sensuality of that day, to be nurseries of oaths, curses, ribaldry, fornication, gluttony, drunkenness, frays, and bloodshed. And is not God's service better work than these?

X. Lastly, This holy order and prosperity of the churches, and this knowledge and piety in individual subjects, will become the safety, beauty, order, and felicity of kingdoms, and all civil societies of men. For when the people are fit but duly to use and sanctify the Lord's day, they are fit to use all things in a sanctified manner, and to be an honour to their country, and an ease and comfort to their governors, and a common blessing to all about them.

CHAPTER XIII.

WHAT OTHER CHURCH FESTIVALS OR SEPARATED DAYS ARE LAWFUL?

I SHALL conclude this discourse with a brief answer of this question.

I. No sober christian doubteth, but that some part of every day is to be spent in religious exercises; and that even our earthly business must be done with a spiritual intent and mind. And that every day must be kept as like to the Lord's day, as our weakness, and our other duties, which God hath laid upon us, will allow.

II. Few make any question but that whole days of humiliation and thanksgiving may and must be kept upon great and extraordinary occasions, of judgments or of mercies. And that many churches may agree in these. And I know no just reason why the magistrate may not (with charity and moderation to the weak) impose them, and command such an agreement among his subjects.

III. Few doubt but the commemoration of great mercies or judgments may be made anniversary, and of long continuance. As the Powder-plot day (November 5) is now made among us, to preserve the memorial of that deliverance. And why may it not be continued, whilst the great sense of the benefit should be continued? And so the second of September is set apart for the anniversary humbling remembrance of the firing of London. And so in divers other cases.

IV. The great blessing of an apostolic ministry, and of the stability of the martyrs in their sufferings for Christ, being so rare and notable a mercy to the church, I confess I know no reason why the churches of all succeeding ages may not keep an anniversary day of thanksgiving to God for Peter or Paul, or Stephen, as well as for the Powder-plot deliverance. I know not where God hath forbidden it, directly or indirectly. If his instituting the Lord's day were a virtual prohibition for man to separate any more, or if the prohibition of adding to God's word were against it, they would be against other days of humi-

liation and thanksgiving, especially anniversary; which we confess they are not. If the reason be scandal, lest the men should have the honour instead of God, I answer, 1. An honour is due to apostles and martyrs in their places, in meet subordination to God. 2. Where the case of scandal is notorious, it may become by that accident unlawful, and yet not be so in other times and places.

V. The devil hath here been a great undoer by overdoing: when he knew not how else to cast out the holy observation of the Lord's day, with zealous people, he found out the trick of devising so many days called holy-days to set up by it, that the people might perceive that the observation of them all as holy, was never to be expected. And so the Lord's day was jumbled in the heap of holy-days, and all turned into ceremony, by the papists, and too many other churches in the world. Which became Calvin's temptation (as his own words make plain) to think too meanly of the Lord's day with the rest.

VI. In the lawful observation of days, it is most orderly to do as the churches do which we live among and are joined to.

VII. But if church tyranny would overwhelm any place with over-numerous days (or ceremonies) which are (singly considered) lawful, we should do nothing needlessly to countenance and encourage such usurpation.

VIII. Yet it is lawful to hear a sermon, which shall be preached on a human holy-day, which is imposed by usurpation. Seeing such a moral duty may be done, and so great a benefit received, without any approbation of the inconvenient season.

IX. And when we think it unlawful to join in the positive celebration of unlawful days, (as the Mahometan sabbath,) yet it may become a duty for the civil peace and our own safety, to obey the magistrate in forbearing open opposition or contempt, or working upon that day. And so Paul justifieth himself against the Jews' accusations, that they "found him not in the temple disputing with any man, nor raising up the people, nor in the synagogues, nor in the city," Acts xxiv. 12. Unless it be when we have a special call, to reprove the error which we forbear complying with.

X. It is long ago decided by the Holy Ghost, (Rom. xiv. xv.) that we must not be contentious, contemptuous, nor censorious against one another, about things of no greater moment, than the Jewish days were, though some observed them without just cause: because the kingdom of God consisteth not in meats and drinks, and days, but in "righteousness, and peaceableness, and joy in the Holy Ghost. And he that in these things serveth Christ, is acceptable to God (and received by him) and approved of (wise) men," and should be received to communion with them, Rom. xiv. 17, 18; xv. 7. We must therefore "follow after the things that make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another," Rom. xiv. 19.

XI. The controversy, Whether it be lawful to separate an anniversary day for the commemoration of Christ's nativity, circumcision, and such like things, which were equally existent in the apostles' days, and the reason for observing them equal with following times, (and so the apostles had the same reason to have appointed such days had they thought it best, as we have,) I acknowledge too hard for me to determine: not being able to prove it lawful, I cannot own and justify it; and not seeing a plain prohibition, I will not condemn it, nor be guilty of unpeaceable opposing church customs or authority in it, but behave myself as a peaceable doubter.

XII. But that earthly power may appoint a weekly day, in commemoration of any part of our redemption, besides the Lord's day, and so make another separated weekly stated holy-day, I think plainly unlawful, because it is a doing the same thing for one day, which God hath done already by another; and so seemeth to me, 1. A usurpation of a power not given; and, 2. An accusation of Christ and the Holy Ghost, as if he had not done his work sufficiently, but man must come after and do it better.

But especially if such (or any day or ceremony) be by a universal law imposed on the universal church, it is arrogant usurpation of the divine authority; there being no vicarious head or monarch under Christ of all the world, or all the church, nor any universal governor, who may use such legislation, whether personal or collective.

The same I may say of any that would presume to abrogate the Lord's day.

And so much shall suffice, in great haste, of this subject.

And to Thee, O most glorious and gracious Creator and Redeemer, I humbly return my unfeigned thanks, for the unspeakable mercies which I have received on thy day; and much more for so great a mercy to all thy churches and the world: and craving the pardon (among the rest) of the sins which I have committed on thy day, I beseech thee to continue this exceeding mercy to thy churches and to me; and restore me and other of thy servants, to the privileges and comforts of this day, which we have forfeited and lost; and let me serve thee in the life, and light, and love of thy Spirit, in these thy holy days on earth, till I be prepared for, and received to, the everlasting rest in heavenly glory. Amen.

AN APPENDIX

FOR

FURTHER CONFIRMATION OF GOD'S OWN SEPARATION OF THE LORD'S DAY, AND DISPROVING THE CONTINUATION OF THE JEWISH SEVENTH-DAY SABBATH.

CHAPTER I.

AN ANSWER TO CERTAIN OBJECTIONS AGAINST THE LORD'S DAY.

Though they are answered before, the reader must pardon me, if upon the particular urgences of some objectors, I again make answer to these that follow.

Object. Acts xx. 7, "The first day of the week;" (Gr. one of the sabbaths.) That the breaking of bread there was common eating, compare the like Greek phrase, Acts xxvii. 35; ii. 42. See Isa. lviii. 7. However, it was but an example of preaching, and breaking bread, upon a special occasion.

Answ. 1. That Ἐν τῇ μιᾷ τῶν σαββάτων signifieth on the first day of the week, the generality of the ancients, both Greek and Latin, agree, whose testimony about the sense of a word, is the best dictionary and evidence that we can expect. And the same phrase used of the day of Christ's resurrection by the evangelists, proves it. Though I am sorry to hear of one that denieth that also, and asserteth that Christ rose on the second day morning, because else he could not, as Jonah, be three days and nights buried. But I am not so proud as to think myself capable of convincing that man in such a matter of fact, who will not believe the historical witness of the whole church of Christ, and expecteth to be believed against them all, at such a distance in the end of the world.

2. There is no doubt but that κλάσις τοῦ ἄρτου, breaking of bread, was both a common and a sacred action: and the phrase is to be interpreted by the context, to know when it signifieth the common, and when the sacred. In Acts xxvii. 35, the context teacheth us to interpret it of common eating: but that it doth not so, Acts ii. 42, 46; or Acts xx. 7; is plain to him that considereth, 1. That it was then usual to communicate sacramentally in all their church assemblies. 2. That these mentioned were church assemblies; the church being met purposely for sacred works. Yet it is to be remembered, that the love-feasts did usually concur in the beginning with the sacrament, and the name might be used with respect to both.

3. That it was not a mere occasional meeting, is apparent to the unprejudiced, 1. Because they staid at Troas seven days, (ver. 6,) and in all the seven make no mention of this exercise, but on the one only, which was the first. 2. Because, as is said, it was not a family or by-meeting, but a church meeting; "The disciples came, or assembled together." 3. Because it is said that they assembled for this very end, "to break bread," συνηγμένων τῶν μαθητῶν τοῦ κλάσαι. 4. The great length of time which was spent in the holy exercises: besides the rest of the worship, and breaking of bread, Paul preaching till midnight; which intimateth that such work took up the day. 5. Because it is mentioned as a matter of custom: they did not assemble because Paul called them to hear him only, as being to depart to-morrow; but Paul assembled with them at the time of their assembling to break bread; and it seemeth that he deferred his journey for that opportunity. 6. Because other texts, as joined with this, and infallible church history following, do prove, past all doubt, that it was the constant custom of all the churches so to do.

Object. 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2, "The first day of the week," &c. (Gr. one of the sabbaths.) It is an ordinance to lay aside for charitable uses; but not one word about changing the sabbath.

Answ. The abolition of the sabbath we prove not by this text, but by others: all that we bring this for, is but to show in conjunction with others, as part of the sacred history, that the first day was the church's separated day. And I pray mark the strength of the proof, that the apostle did give order that all the churches of Galatia, as well as the Corinthians, should deposit their alms on one and the same day, viz. on the first day. Was it not enough to tie them to the contribution, but he must tie them all to one set day to lay it by, or deposit it; if it had not been because the churches used to assemble on this day, and not to appear before God empty (as Dr. Hammond noteth on the text)? Whoever heard else that God or man tied several countries to one set day, for the private depositing of their own monies afterward to be distributed? "With such sacrifices God is well pleased;" and therefore it was ever accounted by christians a fit work for the sanctified day; but no other day was ever appointed peculiarly for the set time of laying by men's gifts of charity.

Object. Rev. i. 10, "John was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." Compare Exod. xx. 10, &c.; Isa. lviii. 13, &c.; Luke vi. 5; Mark ii. 28; Matt. xii. 8, &c. And if the Scripture be the rule to judge, resolve whether that day be not the Lord's day, of which day (and of which only, as distinguished from the other days of the week) the Son of man is Lord.

Answ. We are not upon a controversy of title or property, whether God be Lord of other days: for so no doubt he is Lord of all, and therefore no more of one than another, because his propriety in each one is absolute; and it can be no more in any. Thus also he is absolute Lord of all things, all places, all persons, &c. And yet some things, some places, some persons have been separated to his service by a peculiar dedication and relation; and thence have been particularly called *the Lord's*. And the texts cited by you out of the Old Testament prove that

such was the seventh-day sabbath then: but not that it is so now; or was to be so for perpetuity.

And the words of the New Testament cited, "The Son of man is Lord also, or even, of the sabbath day," shows no more than that it was in his power: he giveth it as a reason for his doing that which the Pharisees counted sabbath-breaking, (by which he oftentimes offended them,) and not as a reason of his establishing it. And it seemeth plainly to mean, that being but a positive law, and a law of Moses, he had power to change it, and dispense with it, as well as with other positives and Mosaical laws. As it is said, Eph. i. 22, 23, "he hath made him head over all things to the church," not head to all things; so he is Lord over, or of, all days, but all are not separated to his worship. As it is said, John xvii. 2, "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him;" so it may be said he hath power over all days, that he may sanctify one to his peculiar service, and use the rest in more common works.

But that which we bring this text for, is but to know what day is notified to the world by this title of *the Lord's day*, and consequently was then accounted his separated, peculiar day. Now the signification of words is known but by use: they are not natural signs, but arbitrary: you know not the sense of one word of Hebrew, Greek, or Latin, but by the history of their use, by dictionaries, authors, or other tradition. Now it is unquestionable to any man versed in antiquity, that all the churches and authors, Greek and Latin, Syriac, Æthiopic, Persian, Arabic, that have been known among us, and speak of such things, do unanimously call the first day of the week by the name of *the Lord's day*, as being so called from the beginning, even from the apostles; and all old expositors so interpret this text. And you may as well question what day the word sabbath signified in the Old Testament almost, as what day the name of the Lord's day signified in the New; or what sort of people they were, that were called christians first at Antioch, when only one sort hath ever since been notified by that name; even the disciples of Christ. The Greek, with the Syriac translation, the Arabic, the vulgar Latin, have all *the Lord's day;* and the Ethiopic as equipollent, hath *the first day.* And Dr. Heylin, (who would find something against it, if any thing were to be found,) speaking of some of late that otherwise expound it, is so ingenuous as to say, (part 2, cap. i. p. 37,) "Touching this we will not meddle; let them that own it, look to it: the rather since St. John hath generally been expounded in the other sense, by Aretas, and Andr. Cæsariensis on the place, and by Beda, de Rat. Temp. c. 6, and by the suffrage of the church, the best expositor of the word of God; wherein this day hath constantly, since the time of the apostles, been honoured with that name above other days." And I know no one man (nor many) that at sixteen hundred years' distance almost, is so worthy to be believed for the bare sense of a word, as the constant use and universal testimony of all ages from that time till now.

As Christ is the Lord of all our suppers, yet all are not called the Lord's supper; so is it in this case.

I must needs conclude therefore, that if I should cast off the evidence of this text, upon no greater reason than you offer me, I think I should resist the Holy Ghost, and use violence against God's word, which I should obey.

Object. There is no law in the Scripture to observe the first day; no promise made to the observers of it, no threatening against the breakers of it, &c. show it. And if no law, no transgression. "Sin is a transgression of the law," Rom. iv. 15.

Answ. I have showed you full proof of a law for it before. Though it was not Christ's way to enact his laws in that majestic, commanding form as God did to Moses on the mount; but as he condescended to come in flesh, to be a Teacher and Saviour, in the form of a servant, under the law himself, to redeem those that were under it, so he maketh his laws in a merciful, teaching style. All that is revealed by him as his will, appointing our duty, is his law. But that we observe the Lord's day, is revealed by him as his will, making it our duty.

These are his laws requiring us to hear and obey his Spirit in his apostles: "As the Father hath sent me, so send I you: and when he had said this he breathed on them, and said, Receive ye the Holy Ghost," &c. John xx. 21, 22. "He that heareth you, heareth me," Luke x. 16.

And this is his law requiring his apostles by that Spirit to promulgate his laws, and make known his will: Go, disciple me all nations, baptizing them, &c. "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," (or age,) Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; with the other texts fore-cited.

And that the Spirit in the apostles hath settled the Lord's day, as the separated day for holy assemblies and worship, I have proved to you, both by the texts which you now sought in vain to make void, and the unquestionable practice and history of the universal church, from that age until this. And withal by other texts which you omit: which (not alone, but) all set together make up the proof, because it is historical evidence of a matter of fact, which we have to seek after.

1. Christ's resurrection laid the foundation, or gave the cause; as God's ceasing from his works did the sabbath. 2. Christ's appearing to them assembled on that day, began the actual separation. 3. The Holy Ghost coming down on them, on that day, did more notably sanctify it. 4. The Holy Ghost as an infallible Spirit in them, did cause them to make a public settlement of that day in all the churches, which was the full and actual establishment. 5. This settlement is fully proved *de facto* in Scripture and infallible history. 6. And that there are promises and threatenings, to the obeyers and rejecters of Christ's commands, (whom the Father commanded us to hear, and who is the great Prophet of the church,) I hope you believe. "Happy are they who do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life," &c. Rev. xx. 14. "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh; for if they escaped not who refused him that spoke on earth, much more," &c. Heb. xii. 25. "It shall come to pass that every soul that will not hear that Prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people," Acts iii. 23. "We are of God: he that heareth God, heareth us: he that is not of God, heareth not us: hereby know we the Spirit of truth, and the spirit of error," 1 John iv. 6.

If besides this, you must have particular precepts, promises, threatenings, in the form which you imagine to be fittest, you may, for want of those, deny many other gospel laws, as well as this. Have you not much more for the separation of the Lord's day, than you have for infants' baptism, for a christian magistrate, for christians' waging war, for prohibited degrees as to marriage, &c.

I am persuaded the sober study of these points would do much to convince the contrary-minded, 1. How much of Christ's work, as to the settlement of church orders, was committed to the apostles to be

done; and how little he publicly settled himself in person, before his resurrection.

2. How much the gospel administration excelleth that of the law. And what eminent glory God designeth to himself by the work of man's redemption; and how much more now he calleth man to read, and study, and know him in the face of Jesus Christ, than in the creation; and how largely the change of the covenant is proved in the epistle to the Hebrews.

3. What a change is made herein as to man's duty, since the fall of man under the wrath of the Creator, who is not now his rest, but his terror, and a consuming fire, till reconciled and adopting us in Christ; and since the earth is cursed to us as a punishment for our sins.

4. How much of the certainty and glory of the christian faith, and of all our rest and consolation in it, is laid in the gospel on the RESURRECTION of our Lord, as beginning a new world, or creation, as it were, and as conquering and triumphing over death and Satan, and sealing the promise, and bringing life and immortality to light, and opening the kingdom of heaven to believers.

5. How much of Christ's legislation and administration of his church settlement and government was to be done by the Holy Ghost; and how glorious this office of the Holy Ghost is, and of what grand importance to be understood: as he was the promised Paraclete, or advocate, or agent of our glorified Lord, to do his work on earth in his bodily absence; to whom the infallibility of the Scriptures, the sealing operation of miracles, the sanctification of believers, and forming them for glory in the image of God, is to be ascribed: whom to blaspheme, is the unpardonable sin.

6. How dangerous a thing it is made by the Holy Ghost to seek to set up Moses' law, (as the whole epistle to the Galatians, besides most of the other epistles, testify,) as intimating a denial of Christ, and a falling away from grace, and a perverse setting up of that which Christ came to take down, as part of our own redemption. And how large and plain Paul is upon this subject; and how the Spirit in all the apostles did determine it, Acts xv. And how the Corinthians, Nicolaitans, Ebionites, Nazaræans, and many more of the condemned heresies of that age, which troubled the churches, and whom the apostles wrote against, went all that way of mingling the Jewish law with the gospel.

7. How plainly and expressly Paul numbereth sabbaths with the shadows that cease, Col. ii. 16, (to pass by other texts,) and what violence men's own wits must use, in denying the evidence of so plain a text. Their reason, that he saith not sabbath but sabbaths, is against themselves; the plural number being most comprehensive, and other sabbaths receiving their name from this; and the word sabbath always used in Scripture, for a rest which was partly ceremonial. See what Dr. Young in his excellent "Dies Domin." saith of this text (though I know some say otherwise, to the injury of their own cause).

8. How many years together the churches had been in possession, and consequently in the undoubted knowledge, of the true established day of holy worship, before a word of the New Testament was written. And therefore that it was not written to be the first enacting of this day or change; but for other uses.

9. And yet how much evidence of the fact there is in Scripture itself, that really such a day was used for the ordinary church assemblies, as a peculiar, separated day; even by the common order of the apostles in the churches, as 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2, speaks.

10. And how impossible it is that all the churches in the world should from their beginning keep this as the separated day, even by the apostles and from their times, if it had not been so ordered by them indeed. And whether it be possible that in no age near the original hereof, no pastor, no christian, no heretic, no enemy would have detected the fraud or common error, or once have written, that this day was not separated or used by the apostles, or apostolical churches; no, nor any one (that I know of, that denied not the resurrection) ever to have scrupled or opposed the day.

11. Whether they that can reject such historical evidence as this is, do not unwittingly cast away the holy Scriptures, what zeal soever they pretend to have for their honour and perfection.

12. Whether they that can reject all this evidence, and yet can find in the second commandment, the prohibition of all forms of prayer, sermons, catechisms, and all modal inventions of men, as images, if not idols, are without partiality, or do not walk as men, by very different measures, and partial conceptions.

I would on my knees entreat some dear and worthy friends, on their knees to ponder these twelve particulars.

But because by their passing by the text, Acts ii. 1, 2, I perceive they observe not that the Holy Ghost came down on the Lord's day; let them consider that the passover was on the sabbath day that year, and therefore it must needs be just fifty days to that Lord's day, and it must be the day of Pentecost.

And it is not a trifle, that the first sermon to the people was preached by Peter on that day, and three thousand converted by it, and baptized.

Dr. Heylin's own words are these, (part 2, p. 13,) "The first particular passage which did occur in holy Scripture touching the first day of the week, is that upon that day the Holy Ghost did first come down on the apostles, and that on the same day St. Peter preached his first sermon to the Jews, and baptized such as believed, there being added to the church that day three thousand souls." And to prove the day, he saith, p. 14, "The rule being this, that on what day soever the second of the passover did fall, on that also fell the great feast of Pentecost (as Scaliger de Emend. Temp. l. 2.) So that as often as the passover did fall on the sabbath, as this year it did, then Pentecost fell on the Sunday."

The last part of our objections are from history; and it is said,

Object. Quest. Whether the observation of the first day was not brought into this island by antichrist, about 408 or 409 years ago? Roger Hoveden about 1202 (above 1200 years after Christ,) mentioneth a council held in Scotland for the initiation or first bringing in that which he calls the Dominical day: see this testimony mentioned by Binius in his councils, and somewhat enlarged by Matthew Paris, the old impression, fol. 192, 193, and the last edition, fol. 200, 201; and how the king of England and nobility would not then receive this alteration.——I conceive that in the first centuries the great controversy relating to this was about translating the keeping the passover, which they now call Easter, from the fourteenth day of the first moon, &c. (under the colour of honouring Christ,) to the first day of the week, as the Dominical day; which the popes first set themselves with great vehemency to introduce. ——And as the pope obtained his purpose for one day in the year, so by degrees in some places, came in one day in a week; the first day to be observed, and the seventh day, by one of the popes, turned from a fes-

tival to a fast; whilst many of the Eastern, and some of the Western, churches did still retain withal the observation of the seventh-day sabbath together with the first day, and others of the churches in the East and West kept only to the seventh day as the christian's sabbath, &c.

Answ. How much more desirable an adversary is Heylin by his acquaintance with history! 1. Were any of the authors I before cited either antichristian, or 1200 years after Christ?

Ignatius, if genuine, was about anno 102; if not, as Dalæus thinks, then he was about 300.

The canons called the apostles', and the constitutions called the apostles', very ancient.

Justin Martyr wrote his Apol. anno 150, about fifty years after St. John's death; where his testimony is as plain as can be spoken. To which Pliny's, who wrote about 107, some seven years after St. John's death, may be joined, that he may be understood of the day.

Clemens Alexand. about ninety-four years after St. John, anno 194.

Tertullian, who is most express, and full, and frequent, about 198, that is, ninety-eight years after St. John.

Origen about 206 began his teaching.

Cyprian about anno 250.

Athanasius, who wrote largely of it, about anno 330.

To what purpose should I mention again Eusebius, Gregory Nazianzen, Nyssen, and all the rest. It was but about anno 309 that Constantine began his reign, who made laws for the Lord's day; which other christian emperors enlarged. But how much earlier were all those synods which Eusebius mentioned, which in the determination of Easter owned the Lord's day! And that of Nice was but about anno 327. The council of Laodicea, but about anno 314, or 320.

The council of Eliberis about anno 307, Can. 21, saith, If any that live in the cities shall stay from the church three Lord's days, let him be so long suspended from the sacrament, till he be sensible of his punishment.

After this, how many councils and how many imperial laws take care of the Lord's days! It is tedious to cite them.

To these may be added, 1. The common agreement that is founded in the resurrection, and was from that time. 2. The early contest for keeping Easter only on that day, which you note, as being a day by all christians received. 3. The common detestation of fasting on that day. 4. And the universal custom of not kneeling in adoration on that day: which all show that the day was specially observed.

Athanasius saith, de Sab. et Circ. Even as at the first it was commanded that the sabbath should be observed in memory of the finishing of the world, so do we celebrate the Lord's day, as the commemoration of the beginning of a new creation. And Hom. de Sem. The Lord transferred the sabbath to the Lord's day. Though Nannius question the Hom. de Semente, so do few others, and none that I know of, question that de Sab. et Circ.

Greg. Nyss. Orat. in s. Pasc. saith, As God rested on the sabbath from all his works which he had done in the creation, so did the only begotten Son of God rest in truth from all his works, &c.

August. Epist. 119. The Lord's day was declared to christians by the Lord's resurrection. From that time (or thence) it began to have its festivity.

Maximus Taurinensis saith, Hom. 3, de Pentec. The Lord's day is therefore set apart, because on it our Saviour, as the rising sun, discussing the infernal darkness, did shine forth in his resurrection.

And for fasting, Tertul. de Cor. Mil. c. 3, saith, We account it unlawful to fast on the Lord's day. And though the Montanists fasted excessively, they excepted the Lord's day, Tertul. adv. Psych. c. 15.

Ignatius and the Apost. Const. et Can. are forecited of this.

Austin saith, Ep. 86, It is a great scandal to fast on the Lord's day. (Which the Manichees were accused of.)

The Concil. Gangr. Can. 18, saith, If any on pretence of abstinence fast on the Lord's day, let him be anathema.

The Concil. Cæsar August. c. 2, is against fasting on the Lord's day, either for the sake of any time, (as Lent,) or persuasion, or superstition whatsoever. So the Concil. Agath. c. 12; Concil. Aurel. 4, c. 2. And the Concil. Carth. anno 398, Can. 64, Let him be taken for no catholic who purposely fasteth on the Lord's day.

And the prohibition of kneeling in adoration, I have opened before, ex Concil. Nic. c. 20, Concil. Trul. Epiphan. &c. To which I add Collect. Can. Johan. Antioch. sub titulo L. Tertul. de Cor. Mil. c. 3 (now cited), Hieronym. adv. Lucifer. cap. 4, *Per omnem Pentecosten nec de geniculis adorare, et jejunium solveres, multaque alia quæ non Scripta sunt, rationabilis sibi observatio vindicavit.* (Yet Paul kneeled (Acts xx.) in that time, vide Justell. ad Can. 20. Conc. Nic.) Question. ad Orthod. inter. Justin. opera qu. 115, p. 283, *Die Dominico genua non flectere symbolum est resurrectionis*, &c. Germanus Constantinop. in Theoria Eccles. p. 149, Our not kneeling on the Lord's day signifieth our erection from our fall, by Christ's resurrection, &c. See also Basil de Spir. Sanc. c. 27, tom. 2, p. 112, 113; et Balsamon thereon, p. 1032; et Zonar. in c. 20, Conc. Nic. p. 66. See Casp. Suicerus de hisce sacr. observ. c. 6.

2. Your historical observations are utterly mistaken. The observation of the Lord's day was in all the churches past all controversy from the beginning, while the time of Easter was in controversy, as I have proved. Why would you not name those churches in East and West, (which I never read or heard of,) yea, or that person, that was for the seventh day alone? I am confident because you could not do it. Indeed all churches called the seventh day alone by the old name sabbath, while they maintained the sabbath to be ceased; but under the name of the Lord's day, the first was solemnly observed.

3. In Hoveden and Mat. Paris, there is not a word of what you say; so much do you miscite history. There is indeed, anno 1201, (which as I remember is Hoveden's last,) the story that many authors talk of and Heylin mentioneth, of one that found a letter, pretended from heaven, upon the altar, reproving the crying sins of the times, and especially the profanation of the Lord's day, and requiring them to keep it strictly for the time to come; which was so far from being the initiation of the Lord's day, that it was about 1167 years after it. And how could men pretend such a divine reproof for such a sin, if the day had not been received before? I pray read Heylin's history against us, which will set you righter in the matter of fact. And there is no mention of any such council as you talk of, for the initiation of the Lord's day, nor any resistance of the kings, or Scots. There is nothing of all this in Hoveden or Matth. Paris.

4. But what if England had been ignorant of the Lord's day till then, (which is utterly untrue,) it followeth not that they kept the sabbath on the seventh day; nor would a barbarous, remote corner of the

world, prejudice the testimony of all Christ's churches in every age.

5. But that you may see how greatly you mistake the case of England; read but our eldest English historian, Beda Hist. Eccles. as l. 1, 26, he mentioneth an old church named St. Martin's built in the Romans' time; and, cap. 33, a church built by the ancient, faithful Romans (and by the way, I think it most probable that the Roman soldiers first brought christianity into Britain); so he oft describeth the worship as agreeable to other churches: and l. 2, c. 2. he begins his reproof of the Britons, for not keeping Easter on the due Lord's day, but never reproveth them for not keeping the Lord's day itself. And though the Britons and Scots had so little regard of the English bishops sent from Rome, that they awhile refused so much as to eat with them, yea, or to eat in the same inn, (cap. 4, l. 2,) yet about the Lord's day there was no controversy. Lib. 3, cap. 4, he tells you that the Scots' difference about Easter-day continued till anno 716, for want of intelligence from other churches, though Columbanus and his followers were very holy persons. And (that you may see your error) he there tells you that they did not keep Easter-day with the Jews on the fourteenth day still, as some thought, but on the Lord's day; but not in the right week: for (saith he) they knew (as being christians) that the Lord's resurrection, which was on the first day of the week, was always to be celebrated on the first day of the week; but being barbarous and rustics, they had not yet learned when that same first day of the week, which is now called the Lord's day, did come.

Here you see that it was past controversy with them that the Lord's day must be celebrated in memorial of Christ's resurrection; and the Scots keep not Easter on any other week day; and they had not been like christians, if they had not owned and kept the Lord's day; only they had not skill enough in calculating the times, so as to know when the true anniversary Lord's day came about, but kept Easter on a wrong Lord's day.

The same he saith again in the praise of Finan, lib. 3, cap. 17, that though he kept not Easter at the due time, yet he did not, as some falsely think, keep it on any week day in the fourteenth moon with the Jews; but he always kept it on the Lord's day, from the fourteenth moon to the twentieth, because of the belief of the Lord's resurrection, which the church truly believed was on the first day of the week for the hope of our resurrection, and which (they believed) will fall out on the same first day of the week, which is now called the Lord's day.

So, cap. 25, the king and the queen kept Easter on several Lord's days, and the difference made the stir: and Wilfrid in his speech there saith the same, and the Scots kept Easter only on the Lord's day; (by whom the king at that time was changed).

And lib. 3. cap, 26, Beda saith that Tuda (another holy follower of the Scots) being made bishop,

On the Lord's days the people flocked by crowds together, either to the church, or to the monasteries, not to refresh their bodies, but to learn the word of God; and if any priest happened to come into a village, presently the inhabitants, *congregati in unum*, gathered together, took care from him to seek the word of life.

Cap. 2, lib. 4, Theodorus's consecration on the Lord's day is mentioned.

Lib. 4, cap. 5, In the Synod at Hcrudford, thc first canon is, that all keep Easter on the Lord's day next after the fourtecnth moon of the first month.

Lib. 5, cap. 22, Ceolfridus sendeth an epistle to the king of the Picts, in which are these words, *Postquam vero Pascha nostrum immolatus est Christus, Diemque nobis Dominicam, quæ apud antiquos una vel prima sabbati sive sabbatorum vocatur, gaudio suæ resurrectionis fecit esse solennem; ita hanc nunc apostolica traditio festis Paschalibus inseruit.* That is, But when Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us, and by the joy of his resurrection made the Lord's day, which by the ancients was called one or the first of the sabbath or sabbaths, to be a solemn day to us; so now apostolical tradition hath ingraffed it into the Paschal festivals. Where you see that the Lord's day settled as solemn by the resurrection, he takcth for uncontroverted, but the graffing it into the Easter festivals, he ascribeth to apostolical tradition, meaning St. Peter's.

And after in the same epistle, *Qui tertia post immolationem suæ passionis die resurgens a mortuis, hanc dominicam vocari, et in ea nos, annuatim Paschalia ejusdem resurrectionis voluit festa celebrare;* that is, Christ rising from the dead, the third day after the sacrifice of his passion, would have this called the Lord's day, and would have us on it to celebrate the Paschal feast of his resurrection. The like is after again in that epistle, with this addition, that, We hold that our resurrection will be on the Lord's day. By this epistle the king of the Picts was brought to conformity in that day, and made laws for it: and cap. 23, the Scots of Hy, who stood out so long, were brought to it by the persuasion of Egbertus. Judge now of your historical notc of England.

But that you may see more of this, you may read Bcda's mind that lived in England, in other of his works. On Acts xx. *In una Sabbathi cum convenissemus ad frangendum panem; id est, Die Dominico qui est primus a sabbato, cum ad mysteria celebranda congregati essemus;* that is, On the Lord's day, which is the first from the sabbath, when we were congregated to celebrate the mysteries.——And he thinks it called the Lord's day, because it is the remembrance of the Lord's resurrection, or ours.

And on Luke vi. fol. 78, he saith, The observation of the legal sabbath ought of itself to cease, and the natural liberty of a sabbath to be restored, which till Moses' time was like other days. That as it is not circumcision, or the ceremonies of the law, that save the church, but the faith of Abraham working by love, by which being uncircumcised he was justified; so he calleth the second sabbath after the first, no other but the spiritual sabbath, in which, as on other days, it is lawful to do any profitable work, for distinction from the Jewish sabbath, in which it was not lawful to travel, to gather wood, nor to do other needful things. Pardon his error about that word; I only cite it for the historical use.

And on Luke xxiv. 1, fol. 143, One of the sabbaths, or the first of the sabbaths, is the first day after the sabbath, which the christian custom hath called the Lord's day, because of the Lord's resurrection.

And ibid. fol. 143, Whence ecclesiastical custom hath obtained, that either in memory of Christ's resurrection, or for hope of ours, we pray not with bended knees, but only with faces declined towards the earth, on every Lord's day, and all the quadragesimæ.

And in Acts ii. 1, The Holy Ghost sent——the example of the ancient sign returning, did himself by his own coming most manifestly consecrate the Lord's day.

And on Col. ii. fol. 308, he showeth that the sabbath was a shadow, and Christ that made it was Lord of it, and ended it; and that to abstain from sin is now our sabbath. See him also on Rev. i. 10; Heb. iv. fol. 308; 2 Cor. ii. fol. 176. D.

And because he was a Scot, I will add Sedulius, who lived 430. In Col. ii. fol. 91, The sabbath being a shadow, ceased when the body came, because the truth being present the image is needless. And on Heb. iv. 9, There remaineth a rest, that is, the eternal rest, which the Jewish sabbath signified.

See Philastrius Hæres. 8. Abundance more of this kind I might cite, but for making the book tedious to those that need it not. And so much for the history, to satisfy your objections and mistakes.

CHAPTER II.

AN ANSWER TO MORE ARGUMENTS FOR THE SEVENTH-DAY SABBATH.

Reasons.	*Answers.*
1. That the Lord Jesus Christ is Jehovah, Zech. xi. 13; xii. 4—10; Gen. xix. 24; Acts ii. 25; compared with Psal. xvi. 8, &c. The Lord our Righteousness, Jer. xxiii. 6.	1. This is no controversy among us, meaning of Christ's divine nature; and his person in respect thereof.
2. That the world was made by Jehovah Christ, John i. 3, 10; Heb. i. 2, 3, 10; Col. i. 14—17; Eph. iii. 9; Psal. cii. 22, 24, 25; Heb. iii. 4; Rom. xi. 36; 1 Cor. viii. 6; Gen. ii. 4, &c.	2. Nor is this any controversy, if meant of the second person in the eternal trinity, nor yet incarnate, nor in the flesh anointed (Christ).
3. The seventh-day sabbath was instituted by Jehovah Christ, and kept by him, (Gen. ii. 2—4,) whilst man was in innocency, before the fall, (Gen. iii. 6,) and before any types.	3. Though this have long been doubted in the church, some thinking it mentioned but by anticipation, yet I deny it not, but believe that it was sanctified and kept from the beginning, because the reason of the consecration was from the beginning. But, 1. The second person is not called Christ before the fall, nor without respect to his human nature. 2. It is uncertain whether it was before the fall; because we know not whether man fell on the same day in which he was created, which is the commonest opinion (though unproved). Whereupon Mr. G. Walker in his Treatise of the Sabbath maintaineth, that the fall and promise went before the sabbath, and so that God's rest had respect to Christ promised, as the perfection of his works, and that the sabbath was first founded on Christ and the promise. But because all this is unproved opinion, I incline to the objectors, and the common sense.
4. The seventh-day sabbath was kept by Abraham, (Gen. xxvi. 5,) by the Israelites, Exod. v. 5. The law for the seventh day was repeated, Exod. xvi. 22, 23.	4. I am of the same opinion, but it is uncertain whether it was instituted actually at first. But the rest, (Exod. v. 5,) seemeth plainly to refer to no sabbath, but to the people's neglect of their tasks, while Moses kept them in hopes of deliverance, and treated for them. And their tasks, with their desire to go into the wilderness to sacrifice, maketh it probable that Pharaoh never allowed them the sabbath's rest.
5. The decalogue was spoken by Jehovah Christ Exod. xx. 1. (See the Assemblies' lesser catechism on the preamble to the commands.) Because the Lord is our God, &c. Redeemer, &c. therefore we are bound to keep, &c. Exod. xix. 3, compared with Acts vii. 38; Isa. lxiii. 9; Exod. xix. 17. The decalogue written by his finger, Exod. xxxi. 18. On tables of stone, Exod. xxxii. 15, 16, 19; xxxiv. 2, 28; and kept by all the prophets.	5. All true, and uncontroverted, with these suppositions: 1. That the Father, as well as the Son, gave the decalogue: 2. That the second person was not yet incarnate (Christ). 3. That the law was given by the ministration of angels, who, it is like, are called the voice and finger of God. 4. That God our Redeemer did variously govern his kingdom, by his law and covenant in various editions: of which more anon.
6. The decalogue was confirmed by Jehovah Christ, Matt. v. 17—19; Luke xvi. 17; Matt. xxviii. 20; John xiv. 25; xv. 14; Rom. iii. 31; vii. 12; James ii. 8, 12. New covenant, Heb. viii. 10; 1 John iii. 22, 24; 1 John v. 3; 2 John v. 6; Rev. xii. 17; xiv. 12; xxii. 14, 18; compared with Mal. iv. 4.	6. Here beginneth our fundamental difference: I shall first tell you what we take for the truth, and then consider of what you allege against it. 1. We hold that every law is the law of some one; some law-maker or sovereign power: and therefore Christ being now the head over all things to the church, (Eph. i. 22, 23,) whatever law is now in being to the church, must needs be the law of Christ. 2. We hold that Christ's redeemed kingdom hath been governed by him, with variety of administrations, by various editions of his law or covenant. That, I. Universally to mankind, viz. 1. Before his incarnation: which was; First, to Adam, and secondly, to Noah, and to mankind in them both: 2. After his incarnation. II. Particularly to the seed of Abraham, even the Jews as a particular political society; chosen out of the world (not as the only people or church of God on earth, but) for peculiar extraordinary mercies, as a peculiar people. 3. We believe that each of these administrations was fittest for its proper time and subject, according to the manifold wisdom of God: but yet the alterations were many and great, and all tended towards perfection: so that the last edition of the covenant by Christ incarnate and his Holy Spirit, much excelled all that went before, in the kingdom of the Mediator. And all these changes were made by God-Redeemer himself. 4. As it was the work of the Redeemer to be the repairer of nature, and the recoverer of man to God; so in all the several administrations, the great laws of nature containing man's duty to God, resulting from, and manifested in, our nature as related to God, and the *natura rerum* or the works of God, was still made the chief part of the Redeemer's law: so that this law of nature, whose sum is the love of God, and of his image, is ever the primitive, unchangeable law; and the rest are secondary, subservient laws, either positive or remedying, or both; and no tittle of this shall ever cease, if nature cease not. 5. But yet there are temporary laws of nature, which are about temporary things; or where the nature of the thing itself is mutable, from whence the natural duty doth result. As it was a duty by the then law of nature itself, for Adam's sons and daughters to marry, *Increase and multiply* being made a natural benediction, and the means a natural duty; and yet now, it is incest, against the law of nature, for brother and sister to marry. So it was a natural

duty for Adam and Eve before the fall to love each other as innocent; but not so when they ceased to be innocent: for *cessante materia, cessat obligatio.*

6. So also some positive commands made to Adam in innocence ceased on the fall, and sentence (as to dress that garden). And some positives of the first administrations of grace, did cease by the supervening of a more perfect administration. As the two symbolical or sacramental trees in the garden, were no longer such to man, when he was turned out; so no positive ordinance of grace was any longer in force, when God himself repealed it, by the introduction of a more perfect administration.

7. Accordingly we hold, that a change is now made of the sanctified day. Where note, 1. That we take not the seventh day (no, nor one day in seven, though that be nothing to our controversy) to be a duty by the proper law of nature, but by a positive law. 2. That the seventh day is never called a sabbath till Moses' time, but only a sanctified and blessed day; the word sabbath being ever taken in Scripture for a day of ceremonial rest, as well as of spiritual rest and worship. 3. That Christ himself hath continued a seventh day, but changed the seventh day to the first; not as a sabbath, that is, a day of ceremonial rest, for he hath ended all sabbaths, as shadows of things that were to come, even of rest which remained for the people of God, Heb. iv. 9; Col. ii. 16. And this is it which is incumbent upon us to prove, and I think I have fully proved already. 4. That having proved the thing done, (the positive law of the seventh day changed by the Holy Ghost to the first day,) it concerneth us not much to give the reasons of God's doings: but yet this reason may secondarily be observed; That God having made the whole frame of nature very good, did thereby make it the glass in which he was to be seen by man, and the book which he would have man chiefly study, for the knowledge of his Maker and his will. But sin having introduced disorder, confusion, and a curse upon part of the creation for man's sake, God purposed at once, both to notify to man, what he had done by sin, in bringing disorder and a curse upon the creature, and blotting the book of nature which he should have chiefly used, and also that it was his good pleasure to set up a clearer glass, even Christ incarnate, in which man might see his Maker's face, in representation suitable to our need; not now as smiling upon an innocent man, nor as frowning on a guilty man, but as reconciled to redeemed man; and to write a book in which his will should be more plainly read, than in the blotted book of nature: yea, in which he that in the creature appeared most eminently in power, might now appear most eminently in love, even redeeming, reconciling, adopting, justifying, saving love. So that, though God did not change the day, till the person of the incarnate Mediator, with his perfect last edition of the covenant, was exhibited and set up as this clearer glass and book, yet then, as the seasonable time of reformation, (Heb. ix. 10, 11,) he did it. To teach man that though still he must honour God as the Creator, and know him in the glass and book of the creature, yet that must be now but his secondary study; for he must primarily study God in Christ; where he is revealed in love, even most conspicuous, wondrous love.

And how suitable this is to man after sin, and curse, and wrath, may thus evidently appear.

1. We were so dead in sin, and utterly deprived of the spiritual life, that the book of the creatures was not a sufficient means of our reviving: but as we must have the QUICKENING SPIRIT of Jesus the Mediator, so we must have a suitable means for that Spirit to work by; which that the cursed, mortified creature is not, appeareth in the experience of the case of heathens.

2. We were so dark in sin, that the creature was not a sufficient means of our illumination: but as we must have the ILLUMINATING SPIRIT of Jesus, so we must have a glass and a book that was suited to that illuminating work.

3. We are so alienated from God, by enmity and malignity, and loss of LOVE, that as it must be the Spirit of Jesus which must regenerate us unto LOVE, so it must be a clearer demonstration of LOVE than the creature maketh in its cursed state, which must be the fit means for the Spirit to work by in the restitution of our LOVE.

Where further note, 1. That LOVE is holiness and happiness itself; and the operations of divine love are his perfective operations, and so fit for the last perfective act. 2. That man had many ways fallen from LOVE: as he had actually and habitually turned away his own heart from God; and as he had fallen under God's wrath, and so lost those fullest emanations of God's love, which should cherish his own love to God; and as he had forfeited the assistance of the Spirit which should repair it; and as he was fallen in love with the accursed creature; and lastly, as he was under the curse or threatening himself, and the penalties begun; it being impossible to human nature, to love a God who we think will damn us, and feel doth punish us in order thereunto. So that nothing could be more to lapsed man, or more perfective of the appearance and operations of God, than this demonstration of reconciling saving love, in our incarnate, crucified, raised, glorified, interceding Redeemer. All which showeth that God's removal of the sanctified day from the seventh to the first day of the week, and his preferring the commemoration of redemption, and our use of the glass and book of an incarnate Saviour before that of the now accursed creature, is a work of the admirable wisdom of God, and exceeding suitable to the nature of the things.

II. Now I come to consider of what you say against all this. You cite the numbers of many chapters and verses (contrary to your grand principles, these divisions being human inventions); in all which there is nothing about the controversy in hand. The texts speak not of the decalogue only, but of the law, and of God's commandments, and Christ's commandments. Now I must tell you beforehand, that I will take no man's word for the word of God, nor believe any thing that you say God speaketh, without proof. Prove it, or it goeth for nothing with me. For as I know that adding to God's word is cursed, (Rev. xxii. 18,) as well as taking away; so if I must once come to believe that God saith this or that without proof, I shall never know whom to believe; for twenty men may tell me twenty several tales, and say that God saith them all.

I expect your proof then of one of these two assertions (for which it is that you hold, no man can gather by your own words, or citations). 1. That all the law which was in being at Christ's incarnation, was confirmed or continued by him (which yet I do not imagine you to hold, because all Paul's epistles, and especially the epistle to the Hebrews, do so fully plead against it). 2. Or else that by the law in all those texts is meant all the decalogue, and the decalogue alone.

The texts cited by you prove no more than what we hold as confidently as you: viz. 1. That all the law of nature (where the matter or nature of the things continue) is continued by Christ, and is his principal law. 2. That the decalogue, as to the mat-

ter of it, is continued as it is the law of nature, (which is almost all that is in it,) but not as the Jewish law given by Moses's hands to that political body. 3. That the natural part of all the rest of Moses' law is continued as well as the decalogue. 4. That all Moses' law, as well as the decalogue, shall be fulfilled, and heaven and earth shall sooner pass away, than one jot or tittle of it shall pass till it be fulfilled. 5. That the elements, shadows, predictions, preparations, &c. are all fulfilled by the coming of Christ, and by a more perfect administration. For Christ fulfilled all righteousness, Matt. iii. 15; δικαιοσύνην is sometimes put materially for δικαιώματα. 6. That a change may be two ways made: 1. By destroying a thing. 2. By perfecting it. And that by the law in Matt. v. 17, &c. Christ meaneth, the whole of God's law then in force to the Jews, considered as one frame, consisting of natural and positive parts. Of which he saith, that he came not καταλῦσαι τον νόμον, to dissolve, pull in pieces, or destroy the law, as a licentious teacher, that would take off God's obligations, and leave the wills and lusts of men to a lawless liberty (which was it that the Pharisees imputed to such as were against the law): but that he came to bring in a greater strictness, a righteousness not only exceeding that of his accusers, (ver. 20,) but instead of destroying it, to perfect the law itself, that is, to bring in a perfecter administration and edition of the law. So that as generation turneth *semen in suppositum*, and so doth do away the seed, not by destroying it, but by changing it into a perfecter being: and as Paul saith, (1 Cor. xiii. 16—18,) "When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood (or was affected) as a child, I thought (or reasoned) as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things," &c.: not that the child or his knowledge is destroyed, but perfected and changed into better; and yet many acts of his childish reasonings may cease: and as he that would repair the temple to a greater glory, may take away the brass, and put gold instead of it, and so not change one pin of the temple by a destructive change, but by a perfective change, which (to the frame) is to edify and not destroy; even so Christ professeth that he came not to gratify the lusts of men, nor to destroy the law in the smallest point. But, 1. Himself to fulfil it in the very letter. And, 2. To accomplish the shadows, predictions, and types, by coming himself as the truth and end, which when they had attained, they were fulfilled. And, 3. By a more perfect edition and spiritual administration, advancing the law to a higher degree of excellency; by which not the law is said to be put away, or destroyed, but the imperfections or weaknesses of it to be done away. Not but that all God's laws are perfect as to the time and subject which they are fitted to; but not in comparison of the future time, and degrees to be added. It is a better testament that Christ bringeth in, Heb. vii. 22; viii. 6; established on better promises, and procured by better sacrifice, and bringing a better hope, (Heb. viii. 6; vii. 19,) and "better things that are provided for us, that they without us should not be made perfect," Heb. xi. 40. So that when Moses' law is considered as such, in that imperfect state, it is essentially or formally all done away; but not materially, for it is done away but by changing it into a better testament and more perfect administration, which retaineth all that is natural in it, and addeth better positives suited to riper times.

So that the law as denominated from the nobler natural part, and as signifying the whole law or system of precepts then in force, is not destroyed, but perfected: but the law, as called Jewish, delivered by Moses, to that republic, as such, though part of the said system, yet is the imperfect part, and is taken down, and is now no law, though it be not destroyed, but fulfilled, and turned into a more perfect testament and administration.

Now that by the law and commandments I am not to understand the decalogue only, in any of your cited texts, I thus prove:

1. From the notation of the name. The word *law* in its usual proper sense, doth signify the whole, or other parts as well as that; and not that one part only. Therefore I must so take it, till you prove that in any text it hath a limited sense. Else I shall turn God's universal or indefinite terms into particular, and pervert his word, by limiting by my own invention where God hath not limited.

2. Because the common sense in which the Jews (against whom Christ spake) did take the word *law*, was not for the decalogue only, but for the pentateuch, or all Moses' law. And if Christ speak to them, he is to be supposed to speak intelligibly, and therefore in their sense.

3. Because Christ in this very chapter, Matt. v. extendeth the sense further than the decalogue; as, verse 17, he adjoins the prophets equally with the law, which he came not to destroy. And thus he speaketh as the Jews, who distributed the Old Testament into the law and prophets, when by the law they meant the pentateuch. Now it is certain that all the prophecies that say, The Messiah is not yet come, but shall come, and be incarnate, and that show the time and manner, &c. are not now true, *de futuro*, as they then spake; and yet they are not destroyed but fulfilled, and so cease as prophecies of things yet future. And so it is with the positives of Moses' law. 2. Verse 18, he saith universally, "Till all be fulfilled," and not the decalogue only. 3. Verse 19, he extendeth it to the least command. 4. Verse 20, he extendeth it to all the Pharisees' righteousness, which was righteousness indeed. 5. Verse 21, "Whosoever shall kill, shall be in danger of the judgment," hath the political penalty in it, above the bare sixth commandment. 6. Verse 31, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement," is not the bare seventh commandment, but fetched from Deut. xxiv. 1. And this instance itself expoundeth ver. 17, 18. For when Christ had protested against destroying an iota or tittle of the law, yet he changeth this very law now cited by himself so far as it indulgeth putting away; so that it is hence evident that he meaneth not that he came not to make a perfective change, but that he came not to indulge licentiousness and lust, by a destructive change, Luke xvi. 18; 1 Cor. vii. 10; Matt. xix. 9. So, 7. Verse 43, "Thou shalt not forswear thyself," &c. 8. Verse 38, "An eye for an eye," &c. is fetched from Exod. xxi. 24; Lev. xxiv. 20; Deut. xix. 21; and not from the decalogue alone. 9. So, verse 43, is from Lev. xix. 18, and other places.

4. Because in all Paul's epistles, and commonly in all the New Testament, the word law is ordinarily, if not always, taken more extensively than the decalogue; therefore to expound it for the decalogue only, is to contradict the constant use of the Scripture, under pretence of expounding the Scripture.

If then by the law, be meant either the whole system of God's laws, natural and positive, or all Moses' law, or the pentateuch, then I may thus argue: It is most certain that much of this law of Moses is ceased or abrogated. Therefore it is certain, that it was none of Christ's meaning that he would abrogate none of that law which he speaketh of, nor change it for a better.

That all and every word of the decalogue is not of the durable law of nature, I shall prove anon.

That by the word *law* the Scripture meaneth more than the mere decalogue, these texts among others prove, Exod. xiii. 9; xxiv. 12; Deut. i. 5; iv. 8; xvii. 18, 19; xxviii. 61; xxix. 29; xxxi. 9; 2 Kings xvii. 37; xxiii. 24, 25; 2 Chron. xxxi. 21; xxxiii. 18; xxxiv. 10; Ezra vii. 6; xiv. 26; x. 3; Neh. viii. 2, 7, 8, 13, 14; x. 29; xiii. 3; Mal. ii. 6—9; iv. 4; Matt. xi. 13; xii. 5; xxvi. 36, 40; xxiii. 23; Luke ii. 22, 27; John i. 17, 45; vii. 19, 23, 51; viii. 5; x. 34; xii. 34; xv. 25; Acts vi. 13; xiii. 15, 39; xv. 5, 24; xxi. 20, 28; xxii. 3, 12; xxiii. 3, 29; xxviii. 23; Rom. ii. 12—14, 17, 18, 20, 23; iii. 19—21, 28, 31; iv. 13—16; v. 13; vii. 1—6, &c. and so to the end of the New Testament, which I need not further number.

7. That the seventh-day sabbath was kept by the Lord Jehovah Christ during his life, Mark i. 21; vi. 2; Luke iv. 31; vi. 6; i. 5; xiii. 10; Matt. xii. 1, 9; xiii. 1, 2; and constantly, Luke iv. 16, 17. See Christ's counsel, which was to come to pass above forty years after his death, Matt. xxiv. 20.

7. 1. So Christ was circumcised, and joined in the synagogue worship, and held communion with the Jewish church and priesthood, and observed all the law of Moses, never violating any part; for he was "made under the law to redeem them that were under the law," Gal. iv. 4, 5. Do you think that all this is established for us? 2. And his counsel Matt. xxiv. 20, had respect to the Jews' misery and not to their duty. He therefore foretelleth their destruction because they would reject him and his law, in a perverse zeal for Moses' law; and therefore intimateth that even Moses should condemn them, and their misery should be increased by their zeal for their law; for their city was taken on the sabbath day, which increased their calamity, who scrupled on that day to fight or fly. And can you think Christ approved of that opinion, who had so oft before condemned the like, about their over-rigid sabbatizing? Or as Dr. Hammond thinks, it is liker to be spoken of a sabbath year, when the war and famine would come together. However it be, it only supposeth their adherence to their law and sabbath, but justifieth it not at all; though yet the total and full abrogation of the Jewish law, was not fully declared, till, at that time of the destruction of their city and temple, their policy more fully ceased.

8. That after Jehovah had finished the work of redemption, (John xix. 30,) his body rested in the grave, (Matt. xxvii. 66,) and himself in heaven, (Luke iii. 42, 43,) as he rested when he ended the work of creation, Gen. ii. 2, 4.

8. You again add to the word of God: it is not said that he had finished the work of redemption, but only "It is finished," which seemeth to mean but that, 1. This was the last act of his life, in which he was actively to fulfil the law, and offer himself a sacrifice for man: 2. And in which all the law and prophets were fulfilled, which foretold this sacrifice. For that it is not meant of the whole work of redemption as finished, when he spoke those words, is evident, 1. Because after those words he was to die; 2. Because his state in death, and his burial, were part of his humiliation, as is implied, 1 Cor. xv. 4; John xii. 7; Rom. vi. 4; Col. ii. 12; Isa. liii. 9; 1 Cor. xv. 15; Acts ii. 24; 1 Cor. xv. 26; Phil. iii. 10; 2 Tim. i. 10; Heb. ii. 14, 15. 3. Because his resurrection was his victorious act, and a part of the work of man's redemption; 4. And so is his intercession. For redemption is larger than humiliation or sacrifice for sin. As, Exod. vi. 6; Luke xxiv. 21; Rom. iii. 24; viii. 23; 1 Cor. i. 30; Eph. i. 14; Luke xxi. 28. It is the resurrection by which we are made righteous, and receive our hope of life, and victory over death and Satan, Rom. i. 4; Phil. iii. 10, 11; 1 Pet. i. 3; iii. 21; Rom. iv. 25.

2. The clean contrary therefore to your collection is true: viz. That God did indeed end the work of his creation on the sixth day, and rested in it, as finished on the seventh. But Christ was so far from ending his on the sixth, and resting in it on the seventh, that on that day, above all other, he seemed conquered by men, and by him that had the power of death, (Heb. ii. 14,) and was held as captive by the grave, so that his disciples' hopes did seem dead with him, Luke xxiv. 21. This state of death being not the least, if not the lowest part of his humiliation: whence came the church's article that he descended into Hades. 3. I did more probably before prove from Christ's own words, compared with his burial, a casting down of the seventh-day sabbath, thus: That day on which the disciples are to fast, is not to be kept as a sabbath (for that is a day of thanksgiving). But on the day of Christ's burial, the disciples were to fast (that is, to walk heavily): which appeareth from Mark ii. 20, "When the bridegroom is taken from them, then they shall fast." Now though this meant not to command any one day for fasting, much less the whole time of his bodily absence, yet both the sense of the words themselves, and the interpretation of the event, tells us, that as there was no day in which he was so sadly taken from them as that sabbath day, which almost broke their hearts and hopes (for the next day he was restored to them); so there was no day in which they were so dejected, and unlike to the celebraters of a gospel day of joy, or sabbath. Do you call the day of Satan's power and triumph, and of the disciples' greatest fear and grief that ever befell them, the celebration of a sabbath rest? It had indeed somewhat like an outward rest, but so as seemed plainly to bury in his grave the seventh-day ceremonial sabbath. And from the reasons now pleaded it was, that the Western churches kept the seventh day as a fast.

9. Whilst the Lord Jehovah Christ rested, private believers rested according to the commandment, Luke xxiii. 55, 56; Mark xv. 42; xvi. 1, compared.

9. They did indeed keep the Jewish sabbath, till Christ's resurrection, and the coming down of the Holy Ghost: and so they did the rest of the Jewish law; for they yet knew not that it was abrogated. But must we do so too? You may as well argue from their keeping the sabbath before Christ's death, as on that day when he was dead. The change of the day was made by degrees, by three several acts or means. 1. The resurrection of Christ, was the founding act, which gave the cause of changing it; like God's finishing his works of creation at first. 2. The inspiration of the Holy Ghost in the apostles doth teach them, and bring all things to their remembrance which Christ commanded, and was the authorizing means of the change; and the apostles' actual settlement thereupon was the promulgation. 3. The gradual notification by the preachers to the churches, and finally the destruction of the Jewish polity, and temple, and priesthood, were the fuller proclamation of it, and the way of bringing the change that was made by command into fuller execution.

10. The seventh-day sabbath was observed by the apostles after the re-

10. But withal, in this time they established the Lord's day, as soon as (on

surrection and ascension, Acts xiii. 14—16, 42, 44; xvi. 13, 14, and constantly, Acts xvii. 2; (the same Greek phrase with that, Luke xiv. 16, for Christ's constant keeping the seventh-day sabbath as before;) Acts xviii. 1, 4, &c.

that day) the Holy Ghost came down upon them.

2. So all that while they kept other parts of the Jewish law: They scrupled, yea refused awhile, communion with the gentiles, as Acts x. shows. They so carried it to the Jews, that Paul made it his defence, that he "had not offended any thing at all, either against the law of the Jews, or against the temple," Acts xxv. 8. And when he circumcised Timothy, purified himself, shaved his head, for his vow, &c. do you think that all these are duties to believers?

3. None of the texts cited by you do prove, that the apostles kept the sabbath at all as a sabbath, that is, a day on which it was their duty to rest; but only that they preached on that day in the synagogues, and to the people; for when should they preach, but when they were congregated, and capable of hearing? They took it for no sin to preach on the sabbath, no more than I would do to preach Christ on Friday, which is their sabbath, to the Turks, if they would hear me. But sabbatizing according to the law, was something else than preaching.

4. And it is most evident that for a long time the christian Jews did still keep the law of Moses; and that all the apostles did against it then, was but, 1. To declare that Christ was the end of the law, and so to declare the keeping of it to be unnecessary to salvation, but not unlawful, laying by the opinion of necessity. 2. That the gentile christians should not be brought to use it, because it was unnecessary; for the apostles (Acts xv.) do not forbid it to the Jews, but only to the gentiles (who were never under it). Therefore the apostles who lived among the Jews no doubt did so far comply with them to win them, as to keep the law externally, though not as a necessary thing, that is, not as a law in force obliging them, but as a thing yet lawful, to further the gospel. And therefore no wonder if Peter went so far as to withdraw from the gentiles, when the Jews were present; when even Paul, the apostle of the gentiles, who speaketh so much more than all the rest against the law, doth yet as aforesaid circumcise Timothy, shave his head, purify himself, &c. and as he became all things to all men, so to the Jews he became a Jew. But when the Jews' policy and temple ceased, the change was executively yet further made, and the Jewish christians themselves were weaned from their law. In the mean time Paul and John (Rev. ii. iii.) do openly rebuke the judaizing hereties, the Ebionites, and Cerinthians, and Nicolaitans, and show the perniciousness of their conceits.

11. The Holy Spirit calls the seventh day (and no other day) the sabbath, throughout the Scriptures, before and after the death, resurrection, and ascension of the Lord Jehovah Christ, Gen. ii. 2—4; Exod. xx. 10, &c.; Acts xiii. 14—16, 42, 44; xvi. 13, 14; xvii. 2; xviii. 1, 4.

11. Though it be not true that the seventh is called the sabbath, Gen. ii.; and though others deny the sufficiency of your enumeration, yet I grant your assertion as true. And therefore am satisfied that it is the seventh day which is put down, when sabbatizing was put down; and that it could be none but the seventh day which Paul meant; "Let no man judge you in meats, &c. and sabbaths, which were shadows of things to come," Col. ii. 16. For the first day is never called a sabbath, as you truly say; therefore it was not put down with the sabbath. See Dr. Young's Dies Dom. on Col. ii. 16.

12. The seventh-day sabbath was profaned by the church heretofore and reformed, Neh. x. 28, 29, 31; xiii. 15, 17, 18, 22. See Belg. Annot. on Dan. vii. 25, &c.; as prophesied who would change it.

12. This is all granted. Sacrificing also was then profaned and reformed, and polluted and destroyed by Antiochus; and yet we are not still under the obligation of sacrificing. We are not under the law, but under grace.

CHAPTER III.

WHETHER THE SEVENTH-DAY SABBATH BE PART OF THE LAW OF NATURE, OR ONLY A POSITIVE LAW.

It is but few that I have any controversy with on this point: but yet one there is, who objecteth and argueth as followeth.

God hath put this into nature: Exod. xx. 10, "Thy stranger," Deut. v. 14. The three first chapters of Romans; particularly chap. ii. 14, 15, 26, 27; iii. 9, 21; 1 Cor. xi. 14. Nature hath its teachings. The human nature in the first Adam was made and framed to the perfection of the ten words; some notions whereof are still retained, even in the corrupt state of fallen man, Gen. i. 26, 27; Eccles. vii. 29; Eph. iv. 20; Col. iii. 10. The law of the seventh-day sabbath was given before the ten words were proclaimed at Sinai, Exod. xvi. 23; even from the creation, Gen. ii. 2, 3: given to Adam in respect of his human nature, and in him to all the world of human creatures, Gen. i. 14; Psal. civ. 19; Lev. x. 23; Numb. xxviii. 2, 9, 10. It is the same word in the original. Set times of divine appointment for solemn assembling, and for God's instituted service, are directed to, and pointed at, by those great lights which the Creator hath set up in the heavens, Psal. xix. with Rom. x. 4—8, 18—20; Deut. xxx. 10, 15; John i. 9. Every man hath a light and law of nature which he carrieth about him, and is born and bred together with him. These seeds of truth and light, though they will not justify in the sight of God, and bring a soul throughly and safely home to glory, Rom. i. 20; yet there are even since Adam's fall, these relics and dark letters of this holy law of the ten words, to preserve the memory of our first created dignity, and for some other ends, though those seeds are utterly corrupted now, Titus i. 15. Natural reason will tell men, that seeing all men in all nations do measure their time by weeks, and their weeks by seven days, they should (besides what of their time they offer up as due to God every day) give one whole day of every week to their Maker, who hath allowed them so liberal a portion of time, wherein to provide for themselves and their families. There being no other proportion of time that can so well provide for the necessities of families, as six days of every week, and that is so well fitted to all functions, callings, and employments. And the light of nature (when cleared up) will tell men, that all labour and motion being in order to rest, and rest being the perfection and end of labour, into which labour, work, and motion doth pass, that therefore the seventh day, which is the last day in every week, is the fittest and properest day for a religious rest unto the Creator, for his worship, Gen. ii. 1, &c.; Exod. xx. 9; Deut. v. 13, 14; Heb. iv. 1, 11;

Exod. xxxi. 17; Rom. xiv. 13; Exod. xxiii. 12; xxxiv. 21.

Answ. How far a day is of natural due, I have showed before. In all the words of this reason (which I set down as I received them) there is much which is no matter of controversy between us; as that there is a light and law of nature (which few men doubt of, who are worthy to be called men); and that by this law of nature God should be solemnly worshipped, and that at a set or separated time. I hope the reader will not expect that I weary him with examining the texts which prove this, before it is denied. But the thing denied by us is, that the seventh-day sabbath, as the seventh, is of natural obligation. The proofs which are brought for this I must examine: for indeed this is the very hinge of all our controversies; for if this be once proved, we shall easily confess that it is not abrogated; for Christ came not to abrogate any of the law of nature, though, as I have said, such particles of it may cease, whose matter ceaseth, by a change in nature itself.

The first proof is Exod. xx. 10, "The stranger." To which I answer, Our question is not, whether the sabbath was to be rested on by strangers that are among the Jews, but whether it was part of the law of nature? If it be intended that whatever such strangers were bound to, was of the law of nature: but strangers were bound to keep the sabbath; *ergo.* I deny the major, which they offer not to prove. And I do more than deny it: I disprove it by the instances of Exod. xii. 19. Was eating leavened bread forbidden by the law of nature? "One law shall be to him that is home-born, and to the stranger that sojourneth among you," ver. 48, 49. Circumcision was not of the law of nature, Lev. xvi. 29. Resting from all work on the tenth day of the seventh month, was not of the law of nature, though made also the stranger's duty. So eating blood, and that which dieth, or was torn, Lev. xvii. 12, 15: so Lev. xxv. 6; Numb. xv. 14—16, 26, 29; xix. 10; xxxv. 15; Deut. xxxi. 12; Josh. viii. 33—35; xx. 9, &c.

The next pretended proof is Rom. ii. 11, &c.; where there is not one syllable mentioning the decalogue as such, but only in general, *the law*, so far as it was written in the gentiles' hearts. But where is it proved that the law or the decalogue are words of the same signification or extent; any more than the whole and a part are? Or where is it proved that none of the rest of the law is written in nature, but the decalogue only? Or else that every word in the decalogue itself is part of the law of nature, (which is the question). I shall prove the contrary anon: in the mean time the bare numbering of chapters and verses is no proof.

3. It is next said, that Adam was made and framed to the perfection of the ten words. *Answ.* Adam was made in the image of God, before the ten words were given in stone: but so much of them as is the law of nature, and had matter existent in Adam's days, no doubt, was a law to him as well as it is to us. But that is nothing to the question, Whether all things in the ten words are of natural obligation?

4. It is said, That the law of the seventh-day sabbath was given before the ten words were proclaimed in Sinai.

Answ. So was circumcision; and so was sacrificing; yea, so was the law about the dressing of the garden of Eden, and about the eating or not eating of the fruit thereof, even in innocency; which yet were no parts of nature's law, but positives, which now cease.

5. It is said, That it was given to Adam in respect of his human nature, and in him to all the world of human creatures.

Answ. So was the covenant of works, or innocency, which yet is at an end. But what respect is it (to his human nature) that you mean? If you suppose this position, Whatever law is given with respect to human nature, and to all men, is of natural and perpetual obligation, I deny it. The law of sacrifices and oblations was given with respect to human nature, that is, in order to its reparation, and it was given to mankind, and yet not of natural, perpetual obligation. The law of distinguishing clean beasts from unclean, and the law against eating blood, were given to Noah, and to all mankind, with respect to human nature, Gen. viii. 20; ix. 4; and yet not wholly of nature or perpetual obligation. All common laws have some respect to human nature. But if your meaning be, that this law was given in and with the nature of man himself, or that it is founded in, and probably by, the very essentials of man's nature, or any thing permanent, either in the nature of man, or the nature of the world, I still deny it, and call for your proof. Positives may have respect to human nature as obliged by them; and yet not be written in human nature, nor provable by any mere natural evidence.

6. It is said, Set times of divine appointment for solemn assemblies, &c. are directed by the great lights, &c. Psal. xix.; Rom. x. &c. *Answ.* But the question is not of set times in general, (that some there be,) but of this set time, the seventh day in particular. It will be long before you can fetch any cogent evidence from the lights of heaven for it. Nor do any of the texts cited mention any such thing, or any thing that can tempt a man into such an opinion. It must be the divine appointment and institution (which you mention) that must prove our obligation to a particular day, and not any nature within us or without us.

7. The only appearance of a proof is at the end, that time being measured by weeks, and the end of the weeks being fitted for rest, therefore nature points us to the last day.

Answ. But, 1. You do not at all prove, that nature teacheth all men to measure their time by weeks. 2. Nor is your philosophy true, that all motion is in order to rest. Indeed all labour is, that is, all the motion of any creature which is out of its proper place, and moveth towards it. But if you will call the action of active natures, such as our souls are, by the name of spiritual motion, or metaphysical motion, as many do, then no doubt but cessation is as contrary to their nature, as corporal motion is to the nature of a stone: and the rest, that is, the perfection, pleasure, and felicity of spirits, consisteth in their greatest activity in good; "They rest not saying, Holy, holy," &c. 3. You transfer the case from a day of worship to a day of rest. And so make your cause worse: because nature saith much for one stated day of worship; but not for one stated day of rest from labour, further than the worship itself must have a vacancy from other things. For reason can prove no necessity to human nature of resting a whole day, any more than for a due proportioning of rest unto labour every day. The rest of one hour in seven, is as much as the rest of one day in seven. Or if some more additional conveniences may be found for days than hours, there being no convenience without its inconvenience, this will but show us, that the law is well made when it is made, but not prove *a priori* that there is or must be such a universal law. As you can never prove, that nature teaches men the distribution of time by weeks (1. It being a thing of tradition, custom, and con-

sent. 2. And no man naturally knoweth it, till others tell him of it. 3. And many nations do not so measure their time. 4. And no man can bring a natural reason to prove that it must be so, which they might do if it were a law of natural reason); so also that every family, or country at least, should not have leave to vary their days of rest, according to diversity of riches and poverty, health and sickness, youth and age, peace and war, and other such cases, you cannot prove necessary by nature alone, though you may prove it well done when it is done. 4. You cannot prove the last day more necessary for rest, than the first, or any other. For there are few countries, where wars, or some other necessities, have not constrained them sometimes to violate the sabbath's rest; which, when they have done, it is as many days from the third day to the third, as from the seventh to the seventh. 5. If time were naturally measured by weeks, yet it followeth not, that rest must be so: some countries are strong and can labour longer, and others tender and weak, and can labour less. 6. And seeing that the reason of a day for worshipping assemblies is greater and more noble than the reason of a day for bodily rest, nature will rather tell us, that God should have the first day, than the last: *a Jove principium;* a God was to have the first-born, the first-fruits, &c. 7. If we might frame laws for divine worship by such conceits of convenience, as this is of the last day in seven as fittest for rest, and call them all the laws of nature, what a multitude of additions would be made, and of how great diversity! whilst every man's conceit went for reason, and reason for nature, and so we should have as many laws of nature as there are diversities of conceits. And yet that there is such a thing as a law of nature in which all reason should agree, we doubt not. But having in vain expected your proof, that the seventh-day sabbath is the law of nature, or of universal obligation, I shall briefly prove the negative (that it is not.)

1. That which is of natural obligation may be proved by natural reason (that is, by reason arguing from the nature of the thing) to be a duty. But that the seventh day must be kept holy as a sabbath, cannot be proved from the nature of the thing; therefore it is not of natural obligation. He that will deny the minor, let him instance in his natural proof.

2. That is not a universal law of nature, which learned, godly men, and the greatest number of these, yea, almost all the world, know no such thing by, and confess they cannot prove by nature. But such is the seventh day-sabbath,—&c. It is not I alone that know nothing of any such law, nor am able by any natural evidence to prove it, but also all the divines and other christians that I am or ever was acquainted with: nay, I never knew one man that could say, that he either had such a law in his own nature, (unless some one did take his conceit for a law,) nor that he could show such a law *in natura rerum.* And it is a strange law of nature, which is to be found in no one's nature, but perhaps twenty men's, or very few in a whole age; nor is discerned by all the rest of the world. If you say, that few understand nature, or improve their reason: I answer, 1. If it be such a law of nature as is obliterated in almost all mankind, it is a very great argument that nature being changed, the law is changed. How can that oblige which cannot be known? 2. Are not we men as well as you? Have not several ages had as great improvers of nature as you? If grace must be the improver, are there, or have there been, none as gracious? If learning must be the improver, have there been none as learned? If diligence or impartiality must be the improvers of nature, have there not been many as diligent, studious, and impartial as yourselves? Let all rational men judge which of these is the better argument: I and twenty men more in the world do discern in nature an universal obligation on mankind to keep the seventh-day sabbath: therefore it is the law of nature: or, The world of mankind, godly and ungodly, learned and unlearned, discern no such natural obligation, except you, and the few of your mind; therefore it is no law of nature.

3. That is not like to be a universal law of nature, which no one man since the creation can be proved to have known and received, as such, by mere natural reason, without tradition. But no one man since the creation can be proved to have known and received the seventh-day sabbath by mere natural reason, without tradition; therefore it is not like to be a universal law of nature. If you know any man, name him and prove it; for I never read or heard of such a man.

4. If the text mention it only as a positive institution, then it is not to be accounted a law of nature. But the text mentioneth it only as a positive institution—As is plain, Gen. ii. 3, "God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it, because that in it he rested from all his work," &c. If it had been a law of nature, it had been made in nature, and the making of nature would have been the making of the law. But here are two reasons against that in the text.

1. *Blessing* and *sanctifying* are positive acts of supernatural institution, superadded to the works of nature: they are not divine *creating* acts, but divine *instituting* acts.

2. That which is blessed and sanctified, "Because God rested in it from all his works," is not blessed and sanctified merely by those works or that rest; and if neither the works of nature, nor the rest of God from those works, did sanctify it, then it is not of natural sanctification, and so not of natural obligation.

5. If the very reason of the day be not of natural but of supernatural revelation, then the sanctification of the day is not of natural but supernatural revelation and obligation. But the former is certain. For no man breathing ever did or can prove by nature, without supernatural revelation, that God made and finished his works in six days, and rested the seventh. Aristotle had been like to have escaped his opinion of the world's eternity, if he could have found out this by nature.

6. The distinction of weeks is not known by nature, to be any necessary measure of our time; therefore, much less that the seventh day of the week must be a sabbath. The antecedent is sufficiently proved, in that no man can give a cogent reason for the necessity of such measure. And because it hath been unknown to a great part of the world. The Peruvians, Mexicans, and many such others, knew not the measure of weeks. And Heylin noteth out of Jos. Scaliger de Emend. Temp. lib. 3, and 4, and Rossinus Antiq. and Dion, that neither the Chaldees, the Persians, Greeks, nor Romans, did of old observe weeks; and that the Romans measured their time by eights, as the Jews did by sevens; Hist. Sab. part 1, chap. iv. p. 83, 84, and p. 78, he citeth Dr. Bound's own words, p. 65, ed. 2. confessed the like, citing Beroaldus for it, as to the Roman custom. Yea, he asserteth, that till near the time of Dionys. Exig. anno 500, they divided not their time into weeks as now. In which he must needs except the christians, and consequently, the ruling powers since Constantine. And if they were

so unsettled through the world in their measure by months, as bishop Usher at large openeth in his Dissert. de Macedonum et Asianorum anno solari, (see especially his Ephemeris in the end, where all the days of each month are named without weeks,) the other will be no wonder.

I conclude therefore, 1. That one day in seven, rather than in six or eight, may by reason be discerned to be convenient when God hath so instituted it: but cannot by nature be known to be of natural universal obligation.

2. That this one day should be the seventh, no light of nature doth discover: therefore Dr. Bound, Dr. Ames, and the generality of the defenders of one day in seven against the anti-sabbatarians, do unanimously assert it to be of supernatural institution, and not any part of the law of nature; though stated days at a convenient distance is of the law of nature.

CHAPTER IV.

WHETHER EVERY WORD IN THE DECALOGUE BE OF THE LAW OF NATURE, AND OF PERPETUAL OBLIGATION? AND WHETHER ALL THAT WAS OF THE LAW OF NATURE, WAS IN THE DECALOGUE?

But the great argument to prove it the law of nature is, because it was part of the ten words written in stone. To which I say, that the decalogue is an excellent summary of the generals of the law of nature, as to the ends for which it was given; but that,

I. It hath *more* in it than the law of nature.

II. It hath *less* in it than the law of nature: and therefore was never intended for a mere or perfect transcript of the law of nature; but for a perfect general summary of so much of that law as God thought meet to give the Jews by supernatural revelation, containing the chief heads of nature's law, (lest they should not be clear enough in nature itself,) with the addition of something more.

I. That the decalogue written in stone hath *more* than the law of nature, is proved, 1. By these instances: 1. That "God brought them out of the land of Egypt, and out of the house of servants," and that he is to be worshipped in that relation, is none of the law of nature, universally so called.

2. That God is merciful (and therefore reconciled) to a thousand generations of them that love him, notwithstanding man's natural state of sin and misery, and all men's actual sin, this is of supernatural grace, and not the law of mere nature.

3. The great difference between the ways of justice and mercy, expressed by the third and fourth generation, compared to thousands, is more than the mere law of nature.

4. Those divines who take all God's positive institutions of worship, to be contained in the affirmative part of the second commandment, must needs think that it containeth more than the law of nature. (Though I say not as they; but only that as a general law, it obligeth us to perform them, when another law hath instituted them.)

5. To rest one day in seven, is more than the law of nature.

6. To rest the seventh day rather than the sixth, or first, is more than the law of nature.

7. The strictness of the rest to do no manner of work, is more than a law of nature.

8. That there be man-servants, and maid-servants, besides natural inferiors, is not of the primitive or universal law of nature.

9. The distinction of the Israelites from strangers within their gates, was not by the law of nature.

10. That cattle should do no manner of work, (as for a dog to turn the spit in a wheel, or such like,) is more than a law of nature.

11. That God made heaven and earth in six days and rested the seventh, is not of natural revelation.

12. That this was the reason wherefore God blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it, is not of natural revelation.

13. Some will say that more relations than natural being meant in the fifth commandment, maketh it more than a law of nature.

14. That the land of Canaan is made their reward, is a positive respecting the Israelites only.

15. That length of days in that land should be given by promise, is an act of grace, and not of nature only.

16. That this promise of length of days in that land, is made more to the honouring of superiors, than to the other commanded duties, is more than natural.

2. I prove it also by the abrogation of the law written in stone, which I proved before: if the decalogue had been the only and perfect law of nature, it would not have been so far done away, as the apostle saith it is (of which before).

II. All the law of nature was not in the tables of stone. Here I premise these suppositions.

1. That a general law alone, obligeth not to all particulars, without a particular law; e. g. If the second command say, that, Thou shalt perform all God's instituted worship; or, Thou shalt worship me, as I appoint thee; this bindeth no man to baptism, the Lord's supper, &c. till another law appoint them. Therefore there is not so much in the general law alone, as in that and the particular also.

2. All that is presupposed in a particular law, is not part of that law.

3. It is not so much to infer a duty indirectly and by far-fetched consequences, as to command it directly.

Now I prove the assertion by instances. All these following are natural duties, and commanded also in other parts of Scripture, and yet are not in the law of Moses as written in stone.

1. To believe that the soul is immortal. 2. To believe that there is a heaven, where we shall be perfectly blessed in the knowledge, love, and fruition of God. 3. To believe that there is a hell, or life of future punishment for all the impenitent. 4. To love ourselves, with a just and necessary love, as such. 5. To take greatest care to save our souls, above our bodies. 6. To tame and mortify all our fleshly lusts, in order to our own salvation. 8. To forbear all outward acts of gluttony, drunkenness, sloth, &c. as they tend to our damnation. 9. To rejoice in persecution, because of our great reward in heaven. 10. To pray constantly and fervently for heaven, as the means of our obtaining it.

Let none say that many of these same things are commanded in order to God, and our neighbour. For I grant that the same material acts be so; as they are expressions of love to God and man. But to do them in love to ourselves, and for our own salvation, is another principle and end, not contrary to, but necessarily conjunct with, the former two: and indeed all the duties of self-love, as such, are passed by (as supposed) in Moses' decalogue; because they are deeply written in man's nature, and because the law was written as political, for another use.

Object. But these are all supposed in the first

command of loving God, and in the second table, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

Answ. 1. These last were not the words of the decalogue; but a part of the summary of all the law. 2. Both tables indeed suppose the love of ourselves, but that which is supposed, is not a part of them.

Object. But it is the Socinians that say, the Old Testament speaketh of no reward or punishment but in this life.

Answ. True; but Camero *(de tripl. fœd.)* and others that rightly understand the matter, affirm, that, 1. The law of nature containeth future rewards and punishments in another life. 2. And so doth the covenant of grace made with Adam, and all mankind in him, and renewed to Noah, Abraham, and the Israelites, which by Paul is called the promise, as distinct from the law. 3. But the law of Moses, in its own proper nature, as such, was only political, and spake but of temporal rewards and punishments. 4. Though yet all the faithful were bound to take the law and promise together, and so to have respect both to temporal and eternal things. For the law itself connoted and supposed things eternal, as our great concernment.

III. There is more of the law of nature in other parts of Moses' law, conjunct with the decalogue, than is in the decalogue alone.

I will stay no longer in the proof of this, than to cite the places as you do, Exod. xxiii. 13, 32; xxii. 18, 20; Lev. xx. 1, 4, 6; Deut. xiii.; xvii.; Exod. xxiii. 24; Deut. xii.; xxiii.; Lev. xxiv.; xxiii. 3; Exod. xii. 16; Deut. xxiii. 18; Exod. xxii. 28; xxiii. 20; xxi. 15, 17; Lev. xix. 32; Deut. xxi.; i.; xvi.; vi.; xi.; Exod. xxi. 12, 13, 18, 20, 22, &c.; xxii. 2, 3; Lev. xiii. 14; xvii.; Deut. xxi.; Exod. xxii. 19; Lev. xviii.; xix. 29; xx.; Deut. xxii.; Exod. xxi. 16, 21, 32, 35; xxii. 1, 4—17; Lev. xix. 30, 35; Deut. xxiv.; xxix. 14; xxi.; xxv.; Exod. xxiii. 1—9; Deut. xxiii.; xxiv.; Lev. xix. 11, 15; Exod. xxii. 21, 22; xxv.; xxvi.; xxiii. 4; Lev. xix. 14, 16, 18, &e.

By all this I show you why, 1. I allow not of your making the word *law* in the New Testament to signify the decalogue only, or taking them for equipollent terms. 2. Why I take not the decalogue and the law of nature for equipollent terms, or their matter to be of the same extent; and consequently why I take it for no proof that all things in the decalogue are perpetual, because all things in the law of nature are so.

CHAPTER V.

WHETHER THE TRUEST ANTIQUITY BE FOR THE SEVENTH-DAY SABBATH, AS KEPT BY THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST?

It is here further objected that the seventh-day sabbath hath the truest testimonies of antiquity; that it is controvertible when and how the Lord's day come in; but the antiquity of the seventh-day sabbath is past controversy: that the Eastern christians long observed it, and antichrist in the West did turn it into a fast: that the empire of Abassia keepeth it to this day.

Answ. There is enough said of this before, were it not that some objectors causelessly look for more. I answer therefore, 1. That it is true that the sabbath is more ancient than the Lord's day; and so is Moses more ancient than Christ incarnate, and his law than the gospel as delivered by Christ and his apostles, and circumcision than baptism, and the passover than the Lord's supper; and so every man's conception, nativity, infancy, and ignorance, was before his maturity and knowledge. And what can you gather from all this? Thus the papists say that their way of religion was in England before ours, and that the relics of it in our monuments, *(Orate pro animabus*, &c.) is their standing witness, which we cannot totally deface: and it is true, if by our way they mean the reformation of theirs, as such; for the cure is ever after the disease: though it is false, if they speak of our religion itself; which was here before their errors, as health is before sickness. But they should consider, that by this prerogative the heathens excel us both: and that they may say, you have yet many monuments of our more ancient religion, which you have not been able to obliterate. You still call your week days by our ancient names, Sunday, Monday, &c. Your adoration towards the east was fetched from us, and so were abundance of your customs; which we hope may recover the reputation of our religion.

2. I have showed you already how and why the Eastern christians kept the sabbath: 1. They kept it not as a sabbath, but only met on that day as they did on the fourth and sixth days, (Wednesdays and Fridays,) as it is used in England to this day. And for the most part they celebrated not the Lord's supper on that day. And they abhorred the keeping it as a day of rest.

2. They met on that day for all these reasons. 1. Because having been used in the beginning to meet every day in the week, (when they had all things common, and were to show the power of the evangelical doctrine to the height, Acts ii. 44—46; iv. 33—35,) as they found cause to retrieve their eommunity, so did they meet seldomer, and yet not so seldom as once a week: and therefore, as we now keep other meetings for lectures and prayers, besides the Lord's day, so did they then on Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays. 2. Because the conversion of the Jews was a great part of their work and hope; and therefore to win them, they would with Paul become Jews; that is, not affect an unnecessary distance, but come as near them as lawfully they could. 3. Because converted Jews were no small part of the Eastern churches; who could not easily be brought off from Jewish customs; and the rest were unwilling to offend them: being taught not to despise the weak that observed meats and days, Rom. xiv.; xv.; Gal. ii. 4. Because the assemblies on the seventh day were taken as fit preparatories to the sanctifying of the Lord's day, on which aceount the church of England now appointeth them. These things one that is acquainted with church history needeth no proof of.

And they are sufficiently proved before. Ignatius's words before cited are full. And those of the council of Laodicea, Can. 29, are more full, who do at once appoint meetings on the seventh day, and yet anathematize them that judaize thereon, by bodily rest; and would have men labour on it, and prefer the Lord's day before it.

Justin Martyr, in his dialogue with Trypho, doth largely show that circumcision and the sabbath are ceased by the coming of Christ, and his institutions, and are not now to be used by christians. And what writer have we of full reputation and credibility more ancient than Justin, from whom any testimony in this case might be sought?

Tertullian, (one of the next,) li. 2, against Marcion, saith, that the sabbath was for that time, and present occasion, or use, and not for perpetuity.

Athanasius was one that was for meeting on the sabbath; and yet writeth his book de Sab. et Circum. purposely to prove that the sabbath is ceased with circumcision, as a shadow, and that now the

Lord's day is the sanctificd day. And the like he hath most expressly in Homil. de Semente, as is cited before, saying, that The master being come, the usher was out of use; and the sun being risen, the lamps are darkened.

Basil, Epist. 74, writeth against Apollinaris for holding that after the resurrection, we should keep sabbaths, and judaize; as if that were the perfection to which Christ would restore men.

See Greg. Nazianz. Orat. 43, and Chrysost. Hom. 19, in Matt. xii. against the use of the sabbath. Cyril. Hieros. cat. 4, and Epiphan. against the Nazaræi, condemn them for keeping the sabbath and circumcision, though withal they kept the Lord's day. The same doth Epiphanius, lib. i. Hær. 30, n. 2, and before him, Euseb. Hist. lib. 3, say of the Ebionites. Augustine oft telleth us, that the observation or keeping of the seventh-day sabbath is ceased, and not to be done by christians. (Qu. ex. N. Test. 69; Ad Bonif. l. 3; Contr. Faust. Manich. l. 6, c. 4; De Genes. ad lit. l. 4, c. 13; de spir. et lit. c. 14; de util. Cred. c. 3.)

3. And as for the Abassians keeping the sabbath: it is true, they keep that day in some sort; but it is as true, that they use circumcision, and many other Jewish ceremonies, besides oft baptizings; and that they profess not to use these as the Jews do, but only as ancient customs, and as Paul did while he complied with them, using the outward action for other ends than judaizers do. And the rather because they think their emperors descended from Solomon. But the Lord's day they keep on the same account as other christians. And if this instance make any thing for sabbatizing, it will make as much for circumcising, and other Jewish rites, but nothing against the sanctifying of the Lord's day.

4. And as for the matter of fasting on the sabbath, the churches greatly varied their customs. The Eastern churches and Millan in the West, were against fasting on the sabbath on two accounts: 1. Because, as is said, they would not offend the Jews. Even as many peaceable nonconformists, who are against many holy-days now established, do yet forbear labouring and opening their shops on those days, because they will not give offence; yea, and go to hear the sermons on those days, though they keep them not holy, as such days. 2. Because there were many sorts of heretics in those times, who held that the world was made by an evil god, and thence came evil, and so they fasted on the seventh day on that reason; which made the christians avoid it, lest they should symbolize with those heretics. And therefore (the real or pretended) Ignatius speaketh so severely against fasting on the sabbath, as well as on the Lord's day. And so do the Constitutions called the Apostles'; yea, and the Canons called theirs. (Can. 65.)

But in the Western churches (as is aforesaid) both Jews and heretics were more distant, or less considerable for numbers; and therefore they fasted on the seventh day, and that the rather, lest they should seem by sabbatizing to judaize. Which was before antichrist's appearing, unless you think all the holy doctors before cited, and all the Western churches, to be antichristian.

Having gone thus far, I here add two more Scripture arguments to prove the abolition of the Jewish sabbath. The first is, because it is frequently made (as circumcision is) a sign of the particular covenant between God and that nation, as they were a political body, and peculiar people. Therefore if their policy cease, and God's relation to them as a political body, and peculiar people, and so that political covenant with them, then also the sign of the covenant and relation ceaseth. And though the word for ever is sometimes added, it is no other than is oft added also to the Jewish law and ceremonies.

2. From Acts xv.: where the case is determined by a council of apostles, elders, and brethren, yea, by the Holy Ghost, ver. 28. It appeareth by ver. 24, that the thing asserted by the false teachers was, that the gentiles must be circumcised and keep the law; that is, of Moses, ver. 1. Now the seventh-day sabbath was part of that law (as sacrificing was, though it was a law before). But the Holy Ghost determineth the case, "to lay on them no greater burden than these nccessary things," after named; where the sabbath is none of them, and therefore hereby shut out. The precepts given to Noah are named (of which the sabbath was not one).

Object. By this exposition you may say that the rest of the decalogue is excluded; for idolatry, murder, &c. are not here forbidden by name. *Answ.* I have fully proved that the decalogue as written in stone, and part of the law or covenant of Moses, is not at all in force, especially to the gentiles; nor yet as part of the covenant (or promise) of works made with Adam in innocency: for the form of the promissory covenant of works ceased upon man's sin, and the promise of a Saviour; and the form of the Mosaical law or covenant never reached to the gentile nations, and is ceased to the Jews: therefore the matter must cease as it constituted the same covenant, when the form ceased. And Paul saith expressly that this law written in stone is done away. But, 1. The law of nature, as a mere law, never ceased. 2. And Christ hath taken it into his covenant, as part of the matter of it. So that it is wholly in force, though not as part of the covenant of works, either Adamical or Mosaical. But the sabbath, as to the seventh day, was no part of the law of nature, as is proved. And Paul expressly saith, that it was a "shadow of things to come," and is therefore vanished away, Col. ii. 16. Had it been part of the law of nature, it had bound us as such, and as Christ's law: or had it been one of the enumerated particulars, Acts xv. it had bound the neighbour gentiles, *pro tempore* at least. But being neither, that council dischargeth christians from the observation of it, as far as I can understand the text.

POSTSCRIPT.

IT is long since the foregoing Treatise was promised to a person of honourable rank who was inclined to the Jewish sabbath; but before it was finished or well begun, I had a sight of a treatise on the same subject, by the late reverend worthy servant of Christ, Mr. Hughes of Plymouth, which inclined me to take my promised work as unnecessary. But yet some reasons moved me to reassume it. Near two months after it went from me to the press, the said treatise of Mr. Hughes first, and after another on the same subject by Dr. J. Owen, came abroad. Yet do I not reverse mine, because many witnesses in an age of enmity and neglect, can be no injury to a truth so serviceable to the cause of christianity, and the prosperity of the church, and the good of souls. Though if I were one that took the church's prosperity to consist in riches, grandeur, ease, and domination, or empire of papal pastors, rather than in the humble, holy, heavenly, self-denying imitation of a crucified Christ, I would have forborne a subject which is all for our preparation for a heavenly

sabbatism, and carrieth men above the sensual rest of fleshly men, and therefore is so much disrelished by them, Rom. viii. 6—8. But supposing it to be my duty to do what I have done, I think meet to advise the reader, that when several men treat of the same subject, though they speak the same things in the main, yet usually each of them bringeth some considerable light, which is omitted by the rest. And as the same Spirit sets them all on work, so all together give fuller evidence to the truth, than any one of them alone. And I hope the concourse of these three tractates doth prognosticate, that (though the devil hath so contrived the business for the profane, that, like papists, they will hear and read none, but those that are not like to change them; yet) God will awaken the sober and serious believers of this age, to a more holy and fruitful improvement of his day; which will greatly tend to the increase of real godliness, and consequently to the recovery of the dying hopes of this apostatizing and divided age.

But that which moveth me to write this Postscript, is to acquaint thee, for the prevention of scandal by any seeming differences in our writings, 1. That it cannot be expected, that all who plead the same cause, should say just the same thing for it, for matter and manner of argumentation.

2. That if I own the name of sabbath less than some others, and adhere more to the name of the Lord's day, I do not thereby oppose the use of the name of sabbath absolutely; nor is that in itself a controversy about the matter, but the name, which though not contemptible, yet is of far less moment than the thing.

3. That if I make not use of so many Old Testament texts as some others, I do not thereby deny the usefulness of them, nor call you off from the consideration of any argumentation or evidence thence offered you.

4. That if I seem to be more for the cessation of Moses' law, than some others, even of that part which was written in stone, yet no part of the law of nature is thereby denied by me, any more than by any of them; and they that are angry with me, for writing so much against the antinomians, should not also be angry with me for going no further from them, than the force of truth constraineth me.

5. That you must pardon me for my purposely avoiding the name of the moral law; Mr. Cawdry and Mr. Palmer, who have written most largely of the sabbath, have told you the reason. I love not such names, as are not fitted to the nature of things, but are fitted to signify almost what the speaker pleaseth.

I know no law which is not formally moral, as being *regula actionum moralium*. And men may, if they will, as well confine the signification of the word law itself, as of a moral law. Nor doth use itself sufficiently notify the distinguishing signification of it. For one meaneth by that name all the law of nature as such. Another meaneth only so much of the law of nature as is common to all mankind. Another meaneth all positive laws of supernatural revelation, which are perpetual and universal, as well as the law of nature. Therefore without finding fault with others, it sufficeth me to distinguish laws by such names as plainly signify the intended difference. And though by the law of nature, I mean not formally the same thing that some others do, I have sufficiently opened my sense and the reasons of it, in my "Reasons of the Christian Religion."

6. That they who say, that the old covenant, or the covenant of works made by Moses with the Jews, is abrogated or ceased, and the decalogue as a part of or belonging to that covenant, do say the same thing that I do, when I maintain that the decalogue and whole law, as Mosaical, is ceased, but that all the natural part is by Christ assumed into his law, or covenant of grace. For it is the same thing which is denominated the law (of Moses, or of Christ) from the preceptive part, and a covenant from the terms, or sanction, especially the promissory part. Nor is there any part of the law of Moses, which was not a part of the Mosaical covenant. And if the form cease which denominateth, the being and denomination ceaseth, and all the parts, as parts of that which ceaseth. So that if the covenant of works made with the Jews cease, (which Camero calleth a third or middle covenant, and several men do variously denominate, but the Scripture calleth the old or former covenant, or testament, or disposition,) then all the law, as part of that covenant, ceaseth. And that is as much as to say also that it ceaseth as merely Mosaical, or political to the Jews. And then the argument is vain, This or that word was written in the tables of stone; therefore it is of perpetual obligation. For as it was written in stone, it was Mosaical, and is done away; and under the new covenant all that is natural and continued, shall by the Spirit be written upon the heart; whence sin at first did obliterate it.

7. That as the rest of God in the creation is described by a cessation from his work, with a complacency in the goodness of it; but Christ's rest is described more by vital activity and operation, than by cessation from work, even his triumphant resurrection, as the conquest of death, and beginning of a new life: so I think the old sabbath is more described by such corporeal rest, or cessation from work, which was partly ceremonial, or a signifying shadow, and that the word sabbath is never used in Scripture, but for such a day of ceremonial rest (though including holy worship). But that the Lord's day, and its due observation, is more described by spiritual activity and operation, in the spiritual resurrection of the soul, and its new life to God; and that the bodily rest is no longer ceremonial and shadowy, but fitted to the promoting and subserving of the spiritual activity and complacency in God, and holy exercises of the mind, as the body itself is to the service of the soul.

8. That I am not ignorant that many of the English divines long ago expounded Matt. xxiv. 20, of the christian sabbath, and Col. ii. 16, as exclusive of the Jewish weekly sabbath: but so do not most expositors, for which I think they give very good reasons, which I will not stand here to repeat.

9. That I intend not a full and elaborate treatise of the Lord's day, but a brief explication of that method of proof which I conceive most easy and convincing, and fittest for the use of doubting christians; who are many of them lost in doubts in the multitude and obscurity of arguments from the Old Testament: when I think that the speedy and satisfactory despatch of the controversy is best made by a plain proof of the institution of Christ by the Holy Ghost in the apostles; which I thought to have showed in two or three sheets, but that the necessity of producing some evidence of the fact, and answering other men's objections, drew it out to greater length. And my method required me to say more of the practice of antiquity, than some other men's. But again, I must give notice that Dr. T. Young's Dies Dominica is the book which I agree with in the method and middle way of determining this controversy, and which I take to be the strongest written of it. And that I omit most which he hath, as taking mine but as an appendix to his, and desire him that will write against mine, to answer both together, or else I shall suppose his work to be undone.

OBEDIENT PATIENCE:

ITS NATURE IN GENERAL;

AND

ITS EXERCISE IN TWENTY PARTICULAR CASES. WITH HELPS TO OBTAIN AND USE IT; AND TO REPRESS IMPATIENCE.

THE PREFACE.

I HERE offer to others the same which I have prepared for myself, and find necessary for my daily use. All men most savour that which they find most suitable to them. When I was young, and lay under the sad suspicions of my own heart, and the doubts of my sound conversion and justification, I was far more pleased with a sermon that opened the nature of saving grace, and helped me against such doubts, than with a sermon of affliction, and its use; yea, though I began to be afflicted. But now this is the subject of my daily necessary thoughts: man's implacable enmity maketh them somewhat necessary; but God's more immediate corrections on my body, incomparably more. And while every day almost fills my ears with the sad complaints of weak, melancholy, afflicted, impoverished, sick, pained, or otherwise distressed persons, and the weekly newsbooks tell us of foreign wars, persecutions, ruins, implacable contentions, malignant combinations against the church, pursuing conscience and obedience to God with diabolical rage, to drive it out of the world; and of the successes of blood-thirsty men, and deluge of atheism, idolatry, sadduceeism, infidelity, Mahometanism, hypocrisy, sensuality, ambition, worldliness, lying, perjury, malignity, and gross ignorance, which hath even drowned the earth; while there is little but doleful tidings, complaints and fears from kingdoms, churches, cities, families, and God in judgment permitteth mankind to be worse than serpents, toads, or wolves, if not than devils, to one another; and while wit and learning, reverend error and hypocrisy, are every day as hotly at work, as any smith in his flaming forge, to blow the coals of bloody malice; and hating and destroying others, even those whom they pretend to love as themselves, seemeth to multitudes the most honourable and necessary work, and the killing of love, and of souls and bodies, is taken for meritorious of everlasting happiness: I say, while all this is so in the world, and while all flesh must look for pain, sickness, and death, and all men are yet worse to themselves, and greater burdens than all their enemies are, I cannot think a Treatise of Patience needless or unseasonable.

CHAPTER I.

WHAT TRUE PATIENCE IS, AND IS NOT, TOWARDS GOD AND MEN. HOW WE POSSESS OUR SOULS IN PATIENCE. WHAT IMPATIENCE IS WORST. WHEREIN LIETH THE SINFULNESS OF IMPATIENCE TOWARDS GOD.

Sect. I. To what I have said for patience from the sufferings of Christ, in another book for my own use, my condition calleth me to add some more, especially on the consideration of these texts of Scripture: "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered," Heb. v. 8, 9. "In your patience possess ye your souls," Luke xxi. 19; Heb. xii. 1—14; Rom. v. 3, 4; xv. 4, 5. "Ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye may inherit the promise," Heb. x. 36. "Let patience have her perfect work," James i. 3, 4; v. 7—12; 1 Pet. ii. 19—25; iii. 9; Matt. v. 10—12. "Let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well-doing, as to a faithful Creator," 1 Pet. iv. 12—19; Heb. vi. 15.

Sect. 2. What is patience, 1. Towards God. 2. Towards man.

1. Patience considered only physically, as mere suffering, is no virtue or moral good. Devils, and malefactors, and all men must suffer, whether they will or not. 2. Stupidity, or natural dulness, is not patience. 3. Nor to bear the loss of any mercy because we undervalue it, as bad men can easily bear the loss of God's grace, and all the means thereto. 4. Nor is it patience, but selfishness, and want of love, in those that easily bear the loss or sufferings of friends, (yea, and of the church or commonwealth,) so they be but well themselves, because they care not much for any but themselves. 5. Much less is it patience, desperately to despise and dare God's judgments, like men that are mad or drunk, and take it to be valour to defy the gallows. 6. And it is not holy patience when men restrain their passions, only lest they thereby afflict themselves, and not in obedience to God. 7. Nor when it is but the sufficiency of the worldly prosperity which yet is left, which maketh them bear some diminution. He that hath still enough to gratify his flesh, may bear the loss of that which it can spare, yea, though it a little pinch him. 8. Yea, if a man be in greatest want, or pain and misery, and bear it quietly only because he hopeth for deliverance in this world, it is but prudent forbearance of self-afflicting, and not the obedient patience of faith. 9. Yea, a presumptuous, false hope of heaven itself, and of God's approbation of some bad cause for which men suffer, may somewhat alleviate the sufferings of ungodly men. Some poor men, and sick men, think that they shall be saved from sufferings hereafter, merely because they have their sufferings in this life; as if affliction without holiness would serve. And many an erroneous person hath suffered the more easily for ill-doing, by thinking that it was martyrdom for the cause of God. Clement, Ravilliac, Guy Faux, Garnet, and many such murderers, Knipperdolling, and others at Munster, endured much by such presumption.

Sect. 3. But true patience is, when both body and mind, having a natural and due sense of the suffering, we yet restrain inordinate passion, (grief, fear, and anger,) and their ill effects, especially repining thoughts or words of God, and use no sinful means for our deliverance; but still acknowledge the sovereignty, justice, wisdom, and love of God, and obediently do submit our wills to God's, and approve and love his holiness and justice, though we love not suffering itself, and comfortably hope for a happy issue, even amendment and increase of holiness here, and heaven hereafter, where all our sufferings will end in everlasting joy. This is patience.

Sect. 4. Patience towards men is not, 1. To take hurt or wrong for none.

2. Nor to be indifferent towards men's sins, as if they were a small and tolerable evil: nor to let them alone in the way to hell, and make our pretence of patience and quietness, an excuse for unbelief, and unmercifulness to souls; especially when they are public or common sins, which are defended as well as committed by men pretending to learning and piety, endangering the church or land, either by their increase, or by exposing us to the plagues of God. In this case, (though sober wisdom must be used,) it is sinful cruelty to pretend patience, charity, or reverence to men, for the omission of such duty as is needful to reformation and deliverance; yea, to speak easily of heinous sin, as Eli did to his sons, on pretence of gentleness or patience, is but to tempt men to impenitence and damnation.

3. Nor is it patience, but contempt of God, for magistrates, parents, or masters, to forbear necessary justice and correction, towards intolerable sin: or for pastors to forbear necessary reproof or discipline, to the corrupting or endangering of the church.

4. It is not just and moderate passion that is sinful impatience. Fear is necessary for self-preservation: Christ was heard in the thing that he feared. Anger is necessary to show our displaeency at sin and to repel evil: Christ looked with anger on obstinate sinners; and God is said to be angry every day, and his wrath doth kindle the flames of hell. Grief, if moderate, is but the necessary sense of evil, by which we differenee it from good. God made our passions for our good, and the right use of them is our duty.

5. Lawful and necessary defence of our innocency, our reputation, our lives, our liberties, our country, is not sinful impatiency, any more than to defend the reputation, estates, or lives of others, whom we must love but as ourselves. Selfish malefactors, persecutors, destroyers, reproved sinners, are wont to call them impatient, who let them not sin, slander, destroy, and domineer without contradiction; yea, that praise not the plagues of the world and their destroyers. Christ is so accused for his words, of Herod and the Pharisees.

Sect. 5. But true patience towards men hath all these properties. 1. It maketh not suffering, or a wrong, seem greater than indeed it is. Impatience maketh a tolerable pain or injury to seem intolerable: a tooth-ache seems as the breaking of the bones: a man seems undone if he lose but his house, or his land, or friend: a threatening of men is a frightful thing: martyrdom is more feared than hell. To be imprisoned, or robbed, or persecuted, or falsely accused, to be accounted wicked, and guilty, where we are innocent, seem all unsufferable evils to the impatient; which a patient man maketh not half so great a matter of. To be cast down from honour or preferment, yea, to miss of his aspiring hopes, and have another set up before him, is a great and vexatious thing to the ambitious. To have a man's opinion slighted, contradicted, and confuted, his understanding vilified, his worth and parts disgraced, his will opposed, yea, to be but mocked or scorned, seemeth a very troublesome injury to the proud, which patient men would easily endure. Much of the wickedness and vanities in the world, come from men's impatient, over-great sensibility of their cross. The thief ventureth on the gallows and hell, because he cannot bear his wants. The fornicator, drunkard, and all the voluptuous, venture on everlasting misery, because they cannot bear the denying or displeasing of their fleshly appetite and lust. The great tyrants of the earth depopulate countries, raise needless wars, and fill the world with hellish wickedness, blood, and misery, and their consciences with the most heinous guilt, because they cannot bear an equal, or a seeming slight or wrong, or to see other princes greater than they, or to be confined to moderate dominion (though large enough, considering their account to God). Murders are committed by the proud and impatient, because they cannot bear an injury or affront. Yea, sacred church tyrants rack and tear Christ's church, by their needless impositions, and stick not at the cruellest persecutions and ruinings of men better than themselves, because they cannot bear that religion which is not subject to their wills, or to see any teach the flocks in any points against their opinions; or worship God but in their words, or in obedience to their pleasure: much less to have any that differ from them, to be esteemed and preferred before them. As Nebuchadnezzar, by his idol, (Dan. iii.) they cannot endure any that bow not to their idol Will. A fiery furnace seems not too

hot for them; they can better bear the most profane and filthy sinner, who hateth godliness and God, than the wisest and best that will not honour and obey them. The sight of Mordecai depriveth Haman of all the pleasure of his power and wealth.

2. Patience towards men doth not blind and pervert our judgment, to think that things and persons are other than indeed they are, or that the cause is worse or better than it is. It leaveth the judgment impartial, and quiet, and sedate, to right considerations and conclusions. Impatience seldom useth a true balance. To a passionate man or enemy, all that their adversaries say or do, doth seem injurious or bad. A dissenter from the oracle of pride and dominion, seemeth a fool, or knave, or a schismatic, if not unworthy to live as a man, at liberty on the earth. All the undeniable good that appeareth in them goeth but for hypocrisy. Yea, if God say, that disobedience is to him as the sin of witchcraft, and rebellion against him as idolatry, a papal spirit dares plead it for itself, as if it were as bad as witchcraft to obey God before him, and such as he, or as bad as idolatry, not to rebel against God's laws, if such command it. Yea, if all others will not join with him in the false accusation, and defy christian love as much as he; but will speak for the innocent, and gainsay such unjust aggravations; he is not able to endure their charity, but accuseth such as defenders of those, whom his pride and impatience hath feigned to be criminal and intolerable.

3. Patience stops the injuries of men that they go no further than man can reach. If men's scorns and slanders come to our ears, patience stops them from coming to the heart. If men take away our estates, patience hinders them from taking away our peace and comfort. If men lay us in a prison or a dungeon, patience disableth them to keep out our heavenly light and consolation. If men despise us, slight us, cross our opinions or wills, patience doth not suffer this to vex us, or cast us into malicious discontent. But impatience openeth the door of the heart to every cross, or injury, or displeasure: and when men can but touch our outside or accidents, impatience doth more, and wounds the soul. It tormenteth a man at the heart, because another hurts his flesh, or less than that, his goods, or name, or some superfluity, which even the flesh might spare.

4. Patience keepeth men from revenge, and all desires of it: it hath no tendency to do hurt. Yea, it forgiveth injuries, and desireth God (on his just terms) to forgive them. Yea, it is still joined with a true desire of the good of those that do us wrong, and with just and prudent endeavours of their welfare. Malchus's ear is healed by Christ, who prayed for his enemies, as he taught Stephen and all his followers to do. It is true, we cannot forgive the sin, as it is against God, nor the future punishment; but we may pray to God to give men repentance and forgiveness. But impatience is a hurtful and revengeful disposition; it thirsteth after it; it delighteth in it, and rejoiceth to hear of an adversary's sufferings.

5. Patience will keep a man from seeking his own defence and right, not only by unjust means, but by means otherwise lawful, when it is like to do more hurt to others, than good to him; if it be like to hurt the soul of an enemy by hindering his conversion to a christian life, it is not our defended outward estate that will compensate such a hurt and loss. This is the sense of Christ's command, of giving our garment to him that sueth us at law, and of turning the other cheek to him that striketh us, Matt. v. That is, patience must submit to tolerable injuries, rather than by impatience to strive by violence and self-defence, when it will but exasperate another, whose soul is precious, and whom we must love as ourselves; yea, we must not fly to the law or magistrate to defend a right which we can spare, when patience and submission will do more good to him that wrongs us, or to others, than the vindication of our right will do to us or them. But the meaning is not, that intolerable injury may not be opposed, nor the commonwealth have the preservation of the law, and that thieves or murderers be tolerated; nor that all covetous, malicious, oppressing men should be encouraged to injure others, by knowing that they will never seek their right. It is more for order and common good, than for ourselves, that wrongs must be resisted.

Sect. 6. By what hath been said, we may understand what it is in "patience to possess our souls." 1. A man loseth himself or soul, when he lets in the enemy or evil into it, that before was but without the doors. His soul must be garrisoned with patience, against sufferings, which are more grievous at the heart, than in the outward accidents or the skin. The spirit of a man, if sound, will bear his outward infirmities, but a wounded spirit who can bear? Patience in true believers, and waiting hopefully on God, doth keep the garrison of the heart, when the outworks, our estates, our reputation, our friends, our health, are taken from us. For, 1. It keeps the soul against self-afflicting. 2. Against temptations to sin by any unlawful means. 3. Against backsliding by forsaking duty, and not continuing in the use of the appointed means. 4. Against sinful doubts, that God forsaketh us, or intends our hurt. It keeps up the peace and comfort of the afflicted, which is our strength. 5. And by all this it helpeth to secure our salvation. 6. And so far as outward deliverance, or ease, or safety is good for us, it is the likeliest way to have it; "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." Patient enduring and turning the other cheek, doth shame afflicters, and sooner make them forbear us, than impatient violence and self-defence. He that resisteth, stirs up the wrath of his afflicter; when he that blesseth him, and doth him good, and really manifesteth love to him, doth heap coals of fire on his head. He that cannot bear one blow, is like to bear two; and he that cannot bear a lesser abuse, shall bear a greater. "Be patient, brethren, and establish your hearts, the Judge is at the door, and the coming of the Lord draws nigh," James iv. 8, 9.

But this is not a rule for government, nor to whole kingdoms, as if they must forbear a necessary self-defence against destroying enemies; but for private men, whose self-defence would hurt the common good.

Sect. 7. But is all impatience equally sinful? No; here the difference is very great.

1. Impatience towards men is a lesser sin, than against God. Man is a worm, and may do wrong, and deserve anger and accusation; but against God there is no pretence for this.

2. Impatience towards men that deserve anger, and which doth exceed only in degree, is not so bad, as to be angry without just cause. Anger is oft-times a duty, as it is a displeasedness at any evil, and a just repelling of it.

3. Anger which desireth not another's pain, further than just correction is necessary to his or others' good, is not so bad as that which tendeth to hurtfulness and revenge.

4. Anger which is short, (though too much,) and is laid by when it hath done its duty against evil, is not so bad as that which continueth, and is turned

into malice, and cannot forgive. "Let not the sun go down upon thy wrath."

5. Impatience, which breaks forth into sinful words, (as cursing, swearing, railing, &c.) is far worse than that which doth not.

6. Impatience, which is but such necessitated sense or passion, as is the effect of natural bodily infirmity, is no sin at all, farther than sin did bring that infirmity; as some children cannot choose but cry; some women cannot choose but be afraid at sudden frightening occasions. One may make the stoutest man sometimes to start. Sick people, and aged, feeble persons are naturally less patient with matters about them, than strong and healthful men. Some constitutions, especially women, can no more avoid some hurtful fear, grief, trouble of mind and anger, than a man in an ague can forbear to shake: especially melancholy and hysterical persons. And God condemns not persons for being sick or weak, infants or aged. The will hath but a political, and not a despotic, power over many passions, as it hath over the tongue and hand.

7. Impatience which infecteth not the judgment and will, but only consists in troublesome passion, is far less sinful than that which doth. When it blindeth and perverteth a man's judgment, especially in great points, to think ill of godliness or duty, or to accuse God, or distrust his promises, or when it corrupteth the will, and love, and desire, and turneth it from God or any good, this is the damning sort of passion. So that passion of lust and pleasure, in sensual youths, in drunkards, fornicators, gamesters, turneth their hearts to sin from the love of holiness. It becomes deadly wickedness when it captivateth the judgment and the will: and so when it vitiateth a man's conversation, and carrieth him against conscience and reason to iniquity. When hypocrites cannot suffer for righteousness, nor endure contempt and poverty in the world, they will force their judgments to believe that such suffering is not necessary, and that it is lawful to do that which will deliver them, much more if it tend to their wealth, honour, and preferment. When sensual men cannot bear a holy, sober, temperate life, they can make themselves believe that it is unnecessary. This is the damnable sort of impatience.

8. Some excess of impatience in the cause of God, is more excusable than when it is in our own cause. Zeal is a passion, but a great duty. Phinehas seemed to have been irregular in his zeal, but his justice was imputed to him for righteousness, and on it God staid the plague. Had not Jehu's zeal been so much for himself, though it seemed cruel, God would have excused it. Christ scourged the merchants out of the temple, and the disciples remembered, "the zeal of thy house hath eaten me up." God speweth the lukewarm Laodiceans out of his mouth. Indeed it is an aggravation of the sin, to father on God a censorious, persecuting, envious, dividing, hurtful zeal; but when it is but some excess of passion or impatience with sin, and maketh a man but too eager in doing good, and not to hurt or injure any, the fault is small.

9. There is some passion that may be too much, and yet doth but drive a man to God and to his duty. Some excess of fear and sorrow may make a man pray harder, and fly from temptation and from sin the more, and live more watchfully, and value the mercy of God more thankfully; but there is impatience which quite unfitteth men for their duty to God and man. When an impatient, froward heart maketh one unmeet for prayer, or meditation, or any holy and comfortable thought of God, and unable to rule their sinful thoughts, and unfit to converse with their families and relations with any kindness, fruitfulness, or peace, this is a very sinful passion. When an impatient heart doth live in discontent with God's provision and disposal, and falleth melancholy by that discontent, and giveth Satan advantage thereby to delude their imaginations, and hurry them into desperate temptations, and sometimes to go mad, and sometimes to make away themselves, or at least to be unthankful for all God's mercies, this is a very bad impatience.

10. A passion towards men about small matters, which is but a sudden displacency, (as anger at a provoking word or accident, which soon passeth away,) is a small matter if it should be causeless, in comparison of a profane impatience with men's duty. When men cannot bear a plain reproof, nor a searching book or sermon, nor holy discourse, nor a godly life; when they think all too much, or prayer or preaching still too long, and can endure many hours more easily at a play, or in a tavern, or common and vain talk, or worldly business, than one hour in spiritual employment; when they bear more easily with a swearer, a jester, an ignorant, carnal, worldly companion, than with one that seriously discourseth of death and judgment, and the world to come, this is a malignant sort of impatience.

In a word, bad men are incompetent judges of patience and impatience. They take that man for a peevish, impatient person, who is angry with their sin, and giveth them necessary reproof, or is not as cold as Eli to sinful children or servants, or is of a quick and eager temper, or showeth but half that zeal and fervency in holy things, which the nature and weight of the matter doth require: and they will praise that man as a mild and patient person, who is senseless of the greatest things which should affect him, and will quietly let men sin and perish, and suffer them to be as bad as they will, and never speak sharply or disgracefully of their sin, nor cross and contradict them in the most dangerous error, much less correct inferiors for doing evil, but be indifferent in every cause of God, and live like a man asleep, or dead, when sin should be resisted, or duty done.

11. That impatience is worst which sets men upon unlawful means of deliverance: as lying, stealing, defrauding, unlawful ways and trades of getting, pleasing men by sin; yea, miserable witches make compacts with the devil, and some go to real or feigned conjurers to obtain their wills, in their impatience. But that is a less sin which ventureth on no forbidden remedy.

12. That impatience is the worst, which is justified, and not repented of; when men say, as Jonah did, "I do well to be angry;" and that deliberately, when the passion should be over. And that is less, (and more pardonable,) which is confessed and lamented, and which we sincerely pray and watch against, and fain would be delivered from.

Sect. 8. *Quest.* Wherein lieth the sinfulness of impatience towards God, or under his hand, when men are his instruments, or permitted by him to afflict us, or in any other trial which is of God?

If we see not the evil of it, we shall not be diligent to avoid it. Too many take it rather for a suffering than a sin.

Answ. 1. Impatience towards God doth signify answerable unbelief. Did we believe his promises, that "all shall work together for our good," and of all the benefit that we may get by patient suffering, it would do much to pacify the soul. But we are discontented at his usage, because we cannot trust him.

2. Yea, this sort of impatience implieth some de-

gree of atheism or blasphemy; for it implieth some murmuring against God's providence, and that implieth some accusation of God; and all accusation of God implieth an answerable degree of blasphemy, and consequently denieth God to be God. For if he be blameworthy in any thing, he is not absolutely perfect; and if he be not perfect, he is not God.

3. Impatience signifieth strong self-willedness: when self-will is men's idol, it usurpeth God's prerogative; and when it should follow his will by obedient submission, it sets up itself, and must needs be fulfilled, and cannot endure to be crossed; as if we were gods, that must have the disposal of all that shall befall us, and nothing must be otherwise than we would have it. Self-will is the great idol of the world.

4. Impatience signifieth an answerable degree of overloving the flesh and world, which also is a kind of idolatry: were it predominant, it were mortal; "For to be carnally-minded is death, and if any man (so) love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Follow any impatience up to the spring, and you will find that it all cometh from this carnal, worldly, creature love. If we did not overlove our ease, our lives, our reputation, our provision and estates, our children or friends, or any earthly thing, we could patiently bear all our losses of them.

5. Impatience showeth that we are answerably wanting in our esteem of Christ, and grace, and glory, and that we live not as we ought on the hopes of heaven. If we did, God and our Saviour would be enough for us. Our heavenly treasure being safe, would more satisfy us. Great men can bear easily the loss of a penny or a pin: the things of the flesh are less in comparison of Christ and heaven, than a pin is to a lordship. Sense would do less to trouble us, if we lived by faith.

6. Impatience showeth that we are too unthankful to God for all his mercies. A true christian never loseth the tenth part so much as he possesseth. When he loseth health, and wealth, and friends, he loseth not his God or Saviour, nor his right to everlasting life. Yea, when God taketh away one or two of his temporal gifts, he leaveth us more than he taketh away. And what unthankfulness is it to forget all that we have received and possess and hope for, because that something is taken from us! Yea, if God take away our health or wealth at last, should all the years that we unworthily possessed them be unthankfully forgotten?

7. Impatience showeth that we are too much unhumbled for our sins, and too insensible how ill we deserve of God. He that deserveth the gallows and is pardoned, should not be impatient of a short imprisonment, and to pay the jailer's fees. Can we believe that our sins are so many as we customarily confess them, and that we deserve hell-fire, and yet impatiently repine at disgrace or injuries from men, or at the loss of goods, or health, or friends? This betrayeth an unhumbled and unmortified soul, (in such a degree,) how humble soever men's words and confessions are.

8. Impatience showeth that we do not well understand ourselves, or the providence of God. We neither understand well our disease, nor the meaning of our Physician. Did we know what a worldly heart is, or a hard heart, or a heart that hath not by repentance got out the core of sin, and how useful affliction is to heal all these diseases, we should not be impatient of the sharpest cure.

9. Impatience showeth that we have not such a love of holiness as we ought to have: else we should think no afflictions too dear a means to procure the increase of it. When God telleth us that he chasteneth us to make us partakers of holiness, and that it may bring forth the quiet fruit of righteousness; and that it may be good for us that we are afflicted, by reducing us by repentance from our wandering folly, and worldly vanity and deceit. A due esteem of so great a benefit would make us take affliction for a gain. At our true conversion we do in heart, resolution, and vow, sell all for the precious pearl, forsake all for Christ, and grace, and glory. And should we not forsake that which affliction takes from us, for the same use, if we be really of the mind that we profess? A little grace is better than all that is taken from us.

10. Impatience, when it is great and tormenting, is a degree of likeness to hell itself. Hell is a state of sin tormenting the sinner (God justly deserting and afflicting such). Their own wickedness continually teareth and vexeth them, and depriveth them of all sense of God's love and mercy, which might ease them. And what a resemblance of this hath the impatient soul; which continually vexeth itself with its own self-will, and fleshly mind, and worldly desires, which are all unsatisfied, and hath no mortification, obedient submission, faith, or hope, to relieve and ease it, but is night and day a self-tormenter!

Such use to say, We cannot help it: our thoughts and passions are not in our power: we cannot choose but be continually troubled with discontent, and anger, and grief, and fear.

11. *Answ.* This showeth a further evil in your passion, viz. that you are over-brutish, and that reason itself is dethroned, and hath lost its due government of sense and passion; when a man can give you great and undeniable reasons enough, against all your discontents, and yet they are impotent and cannot prevail. God gave you reason to bear rule over passion, and he hath furnished you with arguments which should easily suffice. If your reason be enslaved, and faith turned out of doors, and passion rule, whence came this but by your own wilful sin? You say, You are not able to bear what you complain of. Why, then you shall bear more; God will make you able to bear more, whether you will or not, if you cannot obediently bear his trials.

CHAPTER II.

ARGUMENTS AND HELPS FOR PATIENT AND OBEDIENT SUFFERINGS IN PARTICULAR INSTANCES.

HAVING thus far considered patience and impatience in the general, it will be useful to apply some special remedies to many particular cases. And first, I will name the several cases, which I mean to speak to: and they are,

I. God's afflicting hand upon our flesh, in pains and sickness.

II. The sentence of death.

III. Loss of goods and estate, and suffering poverty and want.

IV. The sickness and death of friends.

V. Unfaithfulness of friends.

VI. Persecution by wicked men and enemies.

VII. Dishonour and loss of reputation, even to scorn.

VIII. The unrighteousness of rulers, and the wrath of powerful men.

IX. The treachery and abuse of servants, and hearers, and other inferiors.

X. Great and strong temptations of Satan, &c.

XI. Trouble of conscience, and doubts of pardon and salvation.

XII. To lose the preaching of the gospel, and other ordinary means of grace.

XIII. When God seemeth to deny our prayers, and not to bless his word and mercies to us.

XIV. When all our duties and lawful endeavours seem frustrated by God.

XV. The great weakness of our faith, hope, love, and other graces.

XVI. The misery of the unconverted world, which lieth in ignorance and wickedness.

XVII. The great weakness, scandals, and divisions of christians: the great and manifold troubles of the church.

XVIII. The triumphs of sin and wickedness.

XIX. Public and national sins, plagues, and miseries, especially by war.

XX. The uncertainty of deliverance here, and the fewness of those that shall be saved at last, and the delay of our salvation. Each of these require some special helps for patience, besides the common helps.

CASE I.

In Pains and Sicknesses of Body: Particular Helps.

Of the first of these I have spoken already in the "Meditations on Christ's Sufferings," and oft elsewhere. I shall now briefly add,

1. Sinful souls! look back upon the folly which was the cause of all thy pains. As Adam and Eve's sin brought sufferings into the world, upon our natures, so my own sin is the cause of my own particular suffering. A sinful pleasing of my appetite with raw apples, pears, and plums, when I was young, did lay the foundation of all my uncurable diseases: and my many offences have since deserved God's chastisements! While conscience so justly accuseth thyself, dare not to mutter discontents and accusations against God. "I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him." My pain is to me as the distress of Joseph's brethren was to them: "We were verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear: therefore is this distress come upon us," Gen. xlii. 21. "What we shall say unto my Lord? What shall we speak, or how shall we clear ourselves? God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants," Gen. xliv. 16. So may I say, How oft hath God checked my vain and wandering imaginations, and carnal thoughts, and I did not sufficiently regard him! and if God find out my sin, and my sin find out me, why should I blame any but myself and sin?

2. I can see the necessity of justice towards others; and why should I not see it towards myself? What is a kingdom without it, but a wilderness of wild beasts, or a land of tories? What is a school without it, but a masterless house of rebellious folly? What is a family without it, but a pernicious equalling good and bad? If God made no laws to rule mankind, he were not their moral governor, but only a cause of physical motion: if he made no laws, then there are no laws in the world but man's; and then there is no sin against God, and law-makers themselves are lawless, and can do nothing for which they need to fear the displeasure of God. But if God have made laws, and will not by execution correct disobedience, his laws are contemptible, and no laws, because no rules of judgment. And should I alone expect to be free from fatherly justice, and that my sin should have no correction and rebukes?

3. It is but the same vile flesh that suffers, which must shortly rot and turn to earth, and if I can submit to that, why should I not submit to present pain?

4. As sin made its entrance by the senses into the soul, God wisely driveth it out the same way, and maketh the same passage the entrance of repentance. It is pleasure that tempteth and destroyeth the sinner. It is smart and sorrow which contradicteth that deceitful pleasure, and powerfully undeceiveth brutish sinners. And when repentance is necessary to pardon and salvation, and if it be not deep, and true, and effectual, it will not serve; why should I be impatient with so suitable a remedy and help, as my bodily pains and weakness are? Had I been in this pain when I was tempted to any youthful folly, how easily should I have resisted the temptations which overcame me!

5. The great benefit that I have found in former afflictions, assureth me that they came from fatherly love; yea, have been so merciful a work of Providence, as I can never be sufficiently thankful for. What have they done but keep me awake, and call me to repentance, and to improve my short and precious time, and to bid me work while it is day? What have they done but keep me from covetousness, pride, and idleness, and tell me where I must place all my hope, and how little the world and all its vanities do signify? And shall I think that the same God, who intended me good by all the rest of the afflictions of my life, doth now intend my hurt at last? Experience condemneth my impatience.

6. As deliverances have eased many a pain already, and turned all into thankfulness to God, so heaven will quickly end the rest, and turn all into greater thanks and joy. And can I be impatient if I firmly believe so good an end of all?

7. What! did Christ suffer for my sin, and shall not I patiently bear a gentle rod?

8. What do the brutes that never sinned, endure by man, and for his sins? They labour, they are beaten, and hurt, and killed for us, and eaten by us. What then do sinners deserve of God?

9. How much sorer punishment in hell hath God forgiven me, through Christ! and how much sorer must the unpardoned endure for ever! And cannot I bear these rebukes for pardoned sin, when they are intended to prevent far worse?

10. How do I forsake all, and how could I suffer martyrdom for Christ, if I cannot bear his own chastisement? Are these sharper than the flames?

11. God hath from my youth been training me up in the school of affliction, and calling on me, and teaching me to prepare for suffering, and am I yet unprepared?

12. Impatience is no remedy, but a great addition to my suffering; both by adding to my sin, and by a foolish vexation of myself. If God afflict my body, shall I therefore foolishly vex my soul?

Lord! all these reasons do convince me of my interest and duty: I am fully satisfied of thy dominion, wisdom, and perfect goodness, and that all that thou doest is well done, and should not be accused. I am fully satisfied, that I ought with an obedient will to accept of this chastisement, and not to murmur against thy hand. But the grace and strength to do this must come all from thee. O strengthen thy servant that he faint not, nor lay by his faith and hope, or sin against thee.

Quest. But is there no means but such reasoning with ourselves to be used, to help us to be obedient in our sicknesses and pains?

Answ. What means but intellectual can be fit to quiet souls? Opiate medicines, that quiet the body, cannot cause the submission of the mind. But, 1.

Preparatorily, it is of great advantage not to use the body too tenderly in our health: pamper it not, and use it not with too great indulgence, as to its appetite, ease, and pleasure. Be as careful of its health as you can, but not of its sensual desires. As they that fondly indulge their children, and let them have what they will in health, cannot rule them in sickness; so it is with our bodies; use them to temperance, and seasonable fasting, and daily labour, and a diet and garb not over-pleasant: as Paul teacheth Timothy, "Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ," 2 Tim. ii. 3. They that live in sensual pleasure, are dead while they live. They that must have sport, and meat, and drink, and ease, because the flesh desireth it, and must take nothing that appetite, or sloth, or fancy is against, do cherish the flesh in such a state of self-pleasing, as will hardly be brought to patient suffering.

2. Read the sufferings of Christ with due consideration.

3. Read oft the histories of the martyrs' sufferings.

4. Go oft to the hospitals, or sick that lie in pain, that you may see what is to be expected.

5. Look on the graves, and bones, and dust, and you will perceive, that it is no wonder if such an end must have a painful way.

6. Get deep repentance for sin, and holy self-displeasure and revenge will make you consent to God's correction.

7. Get but a sense of the danger of prosperity, and bodily delights, and ease, and how many millions are tempted by it into the broad way of damnation, and what those poor souls must suffer for ever, and you will the easier bear your pains; and choose to be Lazarus rather than Dives, and a Job rather than a Nero.

8. But there is no effectual cure till faith and hope have such fast apprehensions of the glory, where all your pains will end, as may teach you to take them but as physic for your everlasting health. Therefore prayer for grace, depending on Christ, obedience to the Spirit, and a fruitful, heavenly life, are the true preparations for patient sufferings.

CASE II.

Under the Sentence of Death, against inordinate Fears.

The next case that requireth obedient patience is, the sentence of death.

Of this I have also spoken so oft, that I shall now use but these short remembrances.

1. He that would not die (when he knoweth that there is no other way to paradise) would have no more than he shall possess on earth: which he may easily know is transitory vanity, mixed with so much vexation more than most of the brutes themselves have, as would make man as unhappy a wight as they, if not much more; and man's nature, which abhorreth death, doth abhor the ending of its being, activity, and delights: and will any man's reason then direct him to choose such an end of all? and to despair of ever having any life, activity, or pleasure after this? Doubtless nothing but hell is more contrary to our interest; and our interest, if known, will be our desire and choice. Who would willingly die as brutes?

2. If it be such brutish unbelief and desperation which maketh death frightful, as if there were no better to be had, reason should make such inquiry and search, whether there be no hopes; and if this be but faithfully done, the light of nature and the gospel will confute such desperation, and give man the joyful prospect of happy immortality. It is the darkness of ignorance, error, and unbelief, that makes us fear that, which should be our joyful hope.

3. But if it be the fear of hell or future punishment that makes us afraid of death, (as, alas, to most there is greater cause than they will believe,) such fears should drive men presently to the remedy. We are not in hell, where there is no hope, but on earth, where mercy is ready to save us, and seeketh to us, and beggeth our acceptance. If you fear death and hell, fly presently to Christ for grace; repent unfeignedly of all the sin which is your danger: give up your souls to be saved by Christ on his own reasonable terms, and then you may boldly and joyfully hope that he will save them. All your fears, if you will truly repent and trust in Christ, may be turned into assurance of salvation, and glad desires to be with him!

4. Did we not all our life-time know that we must die? And should a man therefore live in continual terror? If not, how little doth the case and reason differ at the last, from that which he was all his life in?

5. All that have been born into this world since it was made, have quickly passed out again. Death is as common as birth. And hath God made all mankind to live in continual terror, so much more miserable than the brutes, that know not that they must die? Shall I wish alone to be exempted from the case of all mankind?

6. Yea, all the saints that ever were on earth (save Enoch and Elias) died. All that are in heaven have gone this way before me. Faith can see beyond the gulf or stream, which they are safely wafted over, and see them stand safe and joyful on the shore of glory. And should I not long to be with so desirable company? But of this I have spoken elsewhere.

7. Do we believe in Christ, that he hath done and suffered all that he did, to purchase heaven for us, and his intercession and grace is to bring us to it; and when all is done, would we not come there, and had we rather stay in a sinful, malignant, vexatious earth?

8. Are we in good earnest when we pray, and labour, and suffer for heaven, and make it the end of all our religion and obedience, and make that the business of our lives, and yet would we not go to that which we spend our lives in seeking?

9. If our fears be unreasonable, necessitated by nature, against the convictions of faith, even those fears should make us desire death, as that which faith tells us will end them all, and be our only full deliverance.

10. Is it not unnatural, and contrary to the very interest and tendency of all our faculties, to fear and flee from that which is our felicity and joy? Doth our heavenly state differ from the best on earth, more than a kingdom from a prison; and shall we fear it, as if it were evil, and fly from the only hope and happiness of souls?

Quest. These reasons to godly men are undeniable; but the fears of death will not yield to reason: have you no other way or remedy against it?

Answ. Souls are wrought upon by soul-operations and remedies. But further,

1. When fear cometh from natural averseness to die, and strangeness to the state of separated souls, and to some unrevealed things of the unseen world, it is wisdom to cast those dark and unknown frightful things quite out of our thoughts, and quietly to shut our eyes against them. When I was young, I was wont to go up the Wrekin-Hill with great pleasure (being near my dwelling,) and to look down on the country below me, and see the villages as little

things; but when I was weak with age and sickness, the last time I went up, if I did but cast my eye downwards, my spirits failed, and I was ready to fall down in sudden death. Were I chained fast to the top of a high spire-steeple, I am sure that I could not fall, and yet I am confident that one look down would suddenly kill me. What then should I do? As on the hill I fixed my eyes on the earth at my feet, till I came down; so I would in such a height, either look only upward, or shut my eyes, and take heed of looking down to the earth: so do here. If faith and reason tell you, that death is not to be so feared, and that all your hope and comfort must be beyond it, and that you are safe in God's promise, and in the hand of Christ; but yet the thoughts of a grave, and the separation from the body, and of all that is unknown to us in the next world, is frightful to you; shut your eyes, and think not on those things; wink, and say, they belong not to my thoughts.

But then join the other remedies. 2. Look upwards, and dwell on the delightful thoughts of all that revealed joy and glory, which is ready to receive us, and of the company that is there, that hope and desire may conquer fear.

3. And especially trust Jesus Christ with your departing souls, and trust him quietly and boldly, as to all that he hath revealed, and you know; and as to all that is unrevealed and unknown, he is fully able, wise, and willing. Trust him, for he commandeth it. Trust him, for he never deceived any. He hath saved all departed souls, that ever truly and obediently trusted him. Cast away all distrusting, caring, fearing thoughts, that would take his work out of his hand: against all such even wink, and trust him: it is his part and not yours to know fully what he will do with you, and to receive you into his prepared mansions, and to justify you against the accusations of Satan, and the guilt of pardoned sin; and to bring you into the Jerusalem above, and present you spotless to his Father. Cast therefore all these cares on him, who hath promised to care for you. Commit yourselves to him, and trust him with his own, which he hath wonderfully purchased: suspect not his power, skill, or will: and beg his grace to increase your faith, that you may not fear nor faint, through self-caring and unbelief.

CASE III.

Under Poverty and Want, through Losses, or any other Causes.

Another case that needeth obedient patience is, poverty and want; either through losses, which come by the afflicting providence of God, or by robbery, or by oppression of unjust men, by violence or injurious suits at law, or by the failing of our trade or calling, or by multitudes of children, or by sickness, lameness, and disability to work, or by the unhappiness or misearriages and debts of parents, or by rash suretyship, or any other way.

Poverty hath its temptations, and they may and will be felt, but must not be over-felt. It is some trial to want food and necessary clothing and habitation; it is more to be put to beg it of others, or be beholden to them, especially who give it grudgingly: but yet to a single man these are comparatively small. Hard fare and scant, with patched or ragged garments, may be consistent with health, when fulness causeth mortal diseases to the rich. But it is far harder to bear the wants of an impatient wife, and crying of children; to have many to provide for, and to have nothing for them: and it is yet harder to be in debt, and bear the importunity, frowns, and threatenings of creditors. What should the poor do in this distressed case, and how should it be patiently endured?

I will first premise this counsel, for prevention of such necessity and distress, and then tell you how to bear it patiently.

1. Let not your own sin bring you into poverty, and then if it be by the trying providence of God, without your guilt, it is the more easily borne. Some run themselves into want by idleness, refusing diligent labour in their calling: some come to poverty by base and brutish sensuality, by pampering the flesh in meats and drinks; their appetites must be pleased till necessity displease them: some by covetous gaming losing their own, while they gaped after another's: some by foolish pride, living above their estates, in worldly pomp, in houses, furniture, apparel, and retinue: some by rash bargains, and covetous venturousness: some by rash, imprudent marriage: some by filthy, beastly lusts; and many by unadvised suretyship: wilfulness and guilt are the sting and shame of poverty.

2. If you have little, live accordingly, and suit your diet and garb according to your condition, with a contented mind: nature is content with little; but pride and appetite are hardly satisfied: coarse diet and usage are as sweet and safe to a contented mind, as daily feasting to the voluptuous and rich.

3. If your labour will not get you necessaries for life and health, beg rather than borrow, when you know you are unable and unlike to pay. It is far easier begging before you are in debt than after: two such burdens are heavier than one. Such borrowing, if you conceal your disability to pay, is one of the worst sorts of thievery, and a great addition to your misery.

4. Draw not others by suretyship or partnership, or unfaithful trading, into suffering with you. Be not guilty of the sufferings of others: it is more innocent, and more easy, to suffer alone.

5. Therefore marry not till you have a rational probability that you may maintain a wife and children: the case of absolute necessity to the lustful, is commonly excepted; and so it ought when it is but harder living that a woman is by such a man put upon, and she knowingly consenteth to the suffering; but I know not how any such man's necessity can warrant him to make wife and children miserable, and that by fraud, and without her knowing consent? Nor do I think, that any man can be under such necessity, which may not be cured by lawful means: it is a shame that any should need such a remedy; but I think Christ intimateth a better than such a wrong to others, if no less would serve, Matt. xix. 20; xviii. 9.

II. But what is to be done for obedient patience when poverty (however) is upon us.

Answ. 1. Find out all your sin that caused it, and repent of that, and see that you are much more grieved for that than your poverty: and presently fly to Christ by faith, till your conscience have the peace and comfort of forgiveness.

2. Remember that whatever were the means or second causes, God's will and providence is the overruling cause, and hath chosen this condition for you, whether it be by way of trial, (as to Job and the apostles,) or by way of punishing correction. Therefore consider whose hand you are in, and with whom it is that you have to do; and apply yourselves first and principally to God, for reconciliation, and pardon of the punishment, and for grace to stand in all your trials. Behave yourselves in all your wants, as a child to a father, as if you heard God say, It is I that do it; it is I that corrects thee, or that tries thee, or

that chooses thy diet and medicine according to thy need, and for thy good.

3. Think of all those texts of Scripture, from the mouth of Christ and his apostles, which speak of the temptation and dangerousness of riches, and the difficulty of the salvation of the rich, and how few such are sound christians, or saved; and how commonly they prove worldly, sensual brutes, and enemies, and persecutors of the faithful, Matt. xix. 23, 24; James iv. v.

And then think of all those texts that tell you, that Christ himself was poor, that he might make many rich, and that the apostles were poor, and that Christ tried the rich man, whether he was sound, by bidding him "Sell all, and give to the poor, and follow him," and trieth all his disciples by taking up the cross and forsaking all. He showed what the spirit of christianity is, when he caused all the first believers to sell all, and to live in common: and he blesseth his poor, that are poor in spirit, because that "theirs is the kingdom of heaven," Matt. v.

4. Study well the great advantages of poverty, and the particular danger of riches. The damnation of souls cometh from the love of this world, and fleshly prosperity and pleasures, better than God, and holiness, and heaven. And what stronger temptation to this can there be, than to have all fulness and pleasure, which the flesh desireth? Though it was not for being rich that Dives (Luke xvi.) was damned, nor for being poor that Lazarus was saved; yet it was riches which furnished Dives with that pomp and pleasure, which drew his heart from God and heaven; and poverty kept Lazarus from those temptations. Doth not reason and experience tell you, that it is very much harder for a man to be weaned from the love of this world, and to seek first a better, who liveth in all plenty and delight, than a man that is in continual affliction, and hath nothing in the world to allure him to overlove it? Oh what a help is it to drive us to look homeward for a better habitation, and to save us from the deceitful flatteries of the world, and the lusts of brutish flesh, to be still wearied with one cross or other, and pinched with wants, that even the flesh itself may consent to die, or not be importunate with the soul to serve it any longer. A man in miserable poverty is most unexcusable if his heart be not in heaven.

5. To be over-much troubled at poverty is a sin of dangerous signification. It showeth that you overlove the flesh and the world, and do not sufficiently take God and heavenly felicity for your portion. No man is much troubled for the want of any thing but that which he loveth: and to overlove the world is a sin, which, if it prevail against the greater love of God and glory, it is certainly damning. And he that taketh not God's kingdom and righteousness as better than the world, and seeketh it not first, cannot obtain it. If God and heaven seem not enough for you, unless you be free from bodily want, you trust not God aright.

6. Doth it not properly belong to God, to diet his family, and give to every one what he seeth best? If he had made you worms, or dogs, or serpents, you could find no fault with him. May he not diversify his creatures as he please? Shall every fly and vermin murmur that he is not a man? And may he not as freely diversify the provision of his creatures, as their natures? Must all be masters, and yet none be servants? Must the rich be bound to relieve the poor, and must there be no poor to be relieved? "The poor you have always with you," saith Christ. How shall men be rewarded at last, as they clothed them, fed them, visited them, &c. if there were none that stood in need thereof? Is not God wiser than we, to know what is best for us? and can he not give us all that we desire if he saw it best? And do you think, that he wanteth so much love to his children as to feed and clothe them? Were it for want of love, he would not give them the far greater gifts, even his Son, and Spirit, and life everlasting: if this were the trial of his love, you might say that he most loveth the worst of men, who more abound in riches than the most cruel and persecuting tyrants, the most wicked, sensual, profligate monsters? Were riches any special treasure, God would not give them to such flagitious enemies, and deny them to humble, faithful persons. It is no small sin to murmur at God for maintaining and governing his family according to his wisdom and will, and for not being ruled by the desires of our flesh.

7. Do you not see that riches bring more trouble to them that have them, than poverty doth to contented persons? They that have much, have much to do with it, and many to deal with, many tenants, servants, and others, that will all put them to some degree of trouble: they have more law-suits, losses, crosses, and frustrations than the poor. Their food and rest is not so sweet to them, as to poor labouring men: their bodies are usually fuller of diseases: thieves rob them, when he is fearless that hath nothing which other men desire: he that hath little hath a light burden to carry, and little to care for.

8. And do you think that a man will die ever the more willingly or comfortably for being rich? No; the more they love the world, the more it teareth their hearts to leave it! Oh what a horror it is for a guilty, miserable soul, to be forced to quit for ever all that he flattered his soul in as his felicity, and all that for which he neglected and sold his God and his salvation! No man till it comes can fully conceive the dismal case of a dying worldling.

CASE IV.

Under the Sufferings and Death of Friends. 1. *Of Children.* 2. *Of ungodly Kindred.* 3. *Some dear Friend, who died in Pain or Misery.* 4. *Some Pillars in Church or State.*

Another case which requireth obedient patience is, the sufferings and death of friends, whether near us, as wife, husband, children; or more remote, as those that have been most kind to us, most faithful to God, or most useful to the church.

It is not only lawful, but a duty, to be duly sensible of such a loss: to be void of natural affection, and to bear all men's sufferings too easily, saving their own, is the odious quality of the basely selfish.

And, alas! many good christians are yet with greater reason grieved, for the death of wicked children or relatives, lest they be in helpless misery: and some parents mourn for their dead infants, as doubting of their salvation.

Somewhat should be said against impatience in every one of these several cases.

As to the last.

I. Faithful parents have no just cause to be impatient at the death of infants. For,

1. For my part, I think that God hath promised their salvation: I speak not of the infants of heathens or infidels, or of hypocrites, but of sincere christians, (one at least,) or such pro-parents as take them for their own. I believe that it is not another but the same covenant, which baptism sealeth to the child and parent; and that as true faith is the condition to the adult, so to be the child of a true christian is all the condition to an infant, to be dedicated to God and accepted by him; and I believe that it is the parents' duty to dedicate him, and enter him into covenant

with Christ; and that all that so come to Christ are received by him, and none east out. And that this covenant on God's part pardoneth their original sin, and puts them into an infant right to salvation; and that all such, so dying, are saved by promise. And if any thing hinder actual baptizing, as long as a believer is justly supposed to devote himself and his child to God, as far as in him lieth, it is not the bare want of water, or the outward ceremony, that depriveth such of part in God's covenant.

All this I have elsewhere opened and confirmed. But if this should prove an error, yet all grant that there is more probability of God's special mercy to the children of the faithful, than to others; but I think there is more.

2. And they are taken out of a dangerous and troublesome world. What abundance of sad thoughts must they have undergone, and what abundance of temptations, and what abundance of sufferings of many kinds, if they had lived till old age? Had it been but the fear of dying, to escape it is no contemptible mercy. To be at the harbour so easily and quickly, while others must be tossed many score years on so tempestuous and dangerous a sea, is matter of rejoicing. And though confirmed grace be never lost, such as I, who incline to think that the grace given to the infants of believers as such, is as losable as Adam's, or the angels that fell, was, must with Augustine take it for a mercy, that their possible apostasy is by death prevented. For my own part, when I see how many children of exeellent men prove wicked, and scourges to the church, and what a miserable world it is that we are in, even sunk into darkness, wickedness, and self-destruction, like the suburbs of hell, I have many times rejoiced, but never grieved, that I never had a child. And why then should I mourn if I had one, and God had quickly taken him away?

II. I confess the death of ungodly kindred is a humbling case: to think where they are, as God's word tells us of all the unconverted and unholy, and to think that they are past all help and hope, remediless for ever. But yet we have all this to command our patient submission to God.

1. God, who is absolute Lord of his creatures, is wiser and more merciful than we, and doeth all well, and to his glory. And his will is still fulfilled, which is the end of all. And if we knew what he knoweth, we should rest satisfied in his works, as better than our will and way would have been.

2. When we come to heaven we shall be fully reconciled to all the severest providences of God: for our mind and will shall be conformed to God's.

3. We should rejoice with the blessed, as well as be sorrowful with the miserable. And, oh! what worlds of glorious angels and spirits are there for us to rejoice with, which in proportion should quite overbalance our sorrow for the damned.

4. The destruction of the wicked should call us to think how unspeakably we are beholden to God for ourselves, and so many of our friends, and all the faithful, that he did not forsake us, and cut us off in our impenitent state.

5. What are your kindred, that they should be more lamented than all the rest of the ungodly world? How incongruous had it been for you to cry and mourn inordinately for the death of some one person, when the plague lately took away in the city a hundred thousand! And when the world lieth in heathenism, infidelity, Mahometanism, popery, ignorance, and ungodliness, is it congruous for you to be over-troubled for one, because he is akin to you?

III. But suppose the case be the death of some dear friend of ours. When we think of the great pain in which they died, or of the grave where now they lie corrupting, or of our former familiarity, our present losses, we are apt to over-grieve. But,

1. We always knew that they must die. Do not as many die as are born?

2. We had a long time to prepare each other for our parting, and doth it now come as an unexpected thing? What else did we live together for, but to help each other to prepare for death?

3. Should we not be thankful to God for the use and comfort of them so long?

4. Is it not matter of greater joy, than our loss should cloud, that they have ended all their work and suffering, and have safely escaped all their enemies and dangers, and are past all fears and sorrows, and are everlastingly delivered from all the guilt and power of sin, and have the end of all their faith and patience, their work and hope, and are triumphing with Christ and all the blessed in heavenly endless joy and glory? Do we believe this, and yet do we not rejoice with them, but mourn as those that have no such faith or hope?

5. And as to their late pains, it is none when it is past: I would not now wish myself that I had never felt the pain that is past; much less do they wish it that are with Christ! And yet we are apter to keep imprinted on our minds the groans and dying sorrows of our friends, than all the former comforts of their lives, or all the joy that they have now with Christ, and shall have for ever.

6. Though natural affection be laudable, usually much faultiness showeth itself in our over-much sorrow: 1. It showeth that we prepared not for it as we ought to do. 2. It showeth that we have too great a love still for this world and present life. 3. And that our belief of heaven and the blessedness of the spirits of the just with Christ, is very weak, and too little effectual. 4. And it showeth that we expect a longer life on earth ourselves, than we have just cause to do. If we knew we should die the next day or week, it would be folly to mourn for our parting from a friend that died but the day before. Would we not have their company? And where can we have it but where we are to be ourselves? And are we so sottish as to forget how quickly we must follow them and be gone? If we love their company, we should rejoice that we shall quickly meet them, and live with Christ and them for ever. I have oft thought (and mentioned it) how like it was to this our folly, when I have seen a man fetch his beasts home out of pasture, and when one hath gone through the gate, another hath looked and mourned after him, not knowing that he was presently to follow. Alas! it is want of conversing by faith with the saints above, which maketh us overgrieve for the miss of them here below.

And as to the loathsomeness of the grave and rottenness, it is the fruit of sin, and we always knew that flesh was corruptible. It is made of that which lately stood on our tables, the flesh of sheep, and beasts, and swine, and birds, &c. turned into the flesh of man: and before that, it was grass growing for the food of cattle in the fields. But the soul corrupteth not; and if it change the rags of flesh, for a building in the heavens, why should we repine at this? The soul is the man; and God will change these vile bodies, and make them incorruptible, and spiritual, and immortal, like to the glorious body of Christ, Phil. iii. 19, 20.

IV. But our sorrows seem to be more justifiable, when we mourn for the loss of the pillars or useful servants of the church. Their death is the loss of souls, yea, of many, and a sign of God's displeasure to a land. But as to this also;

1. Magistrates, and ministers, and all, are mortal;

they have their work and time, and then they must go home. They came not to abide on earth, but to do their message and be gone. When they have faithfully finished their course, they must go to their Master's joy, that he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.

2. Thank God for the good he hath done by them, and pray for a succession of more. God will not serve himself here by one generation only: as the same rose or other flowers, which you get this year, will not serve you for the next; nor the same fruit or crop of corn, but every year must bring forth its own fruit; so must it be with serviceable men. Elisha must have his time and part, as Elias had; and a David, Solomon, Hezekiah, or Josiah, live not here always. Every generation must have its proper servants, work, and honour. If some have till evening borne the burden and heat of the day, allow them their rest, and let others work the following day.

3. And God hath the fulness of the Spirit in Christ, to send forth our successors: and he is the Lord of the church, and knoweth what is best, and what the people are fit to receive. Christ lived on earth to no great age, and he tells his apostles, "That it was expedient for them that he go away, that the Comforter might come." God will choose his own servants, and their times, and we must submit to his disposal.

4. Paul was permitted at Rome to dwell two whole years in his own hired house, and receive all that came to him; preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him. But I have been permitted above fifty years to preach the same gospel, though long a law, and bishops, and justices did forbid me (save that for nine or ten years, they confined my vocal preaching to my house). James was cut off near the beginning of his apostleship: Stephen was sooner cut off than he. Some excellent ministers hath God taken away young.

5. Christ is more worthy of their company than we are. Heaven is more worthy of them than earth, than those that hate them and abuse them; "Of whom the world was not worthy," Heb. xi. 28. The world knoweth not the worth of a saint, or how to use him, or what use to make of him.

6. We know not from what approaching evil God in mercy taketh them away. We have lately lamented the death of many excellent persons, magistrates and ministers; but the storms that are now assaulting us, tell us, that it was a seasonable and merciful change to them. Christ saith, "If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I go to the Father," John xiv. 28. They mourn not for their own removal: would you wish them here again from heaven? You do not mourn, that Christ, and Abraham, and David, and the apostles are gone to heaven; nor that Lazarus changed his beggary for Abraham's bosom; nor that the martyrs are gone thither. The ancient churches were wont with thankfulness to recite the names of their departed pastors in their liturgies, and to keep days of thanksgiving (which we call holy-days) in memorial of their martyrs. They may say as Christ, "Weep not for me, but for yourselves and your children;" for those that must endure the storms that are coming upon us, and must be sifted by Satan and his ministers, to try whether their faith and constancy will fail. Christ purchased them for heaven, and he will have them there. It is his will and prayer, "Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may see the glory which thou hast given me," John xvii. 24 (a better sight than we see here, when we are laid among malefactors in gaols, or scorned for preaching). "If our hopes were in this life only, we were of all men most miserable:" and do we love them so little as to wish them with us in so miserable a life? Is vanity and vexation, and the portion of the wicked, better than the Jerusalem above? Our cows, and sheep, and hens, &c. when they have bred up their young ones at great pains and love, must part with them for us to kill and eat, yea, and with their own lives also: and shall we grudge that our friends and we must die to go where God will have us? If God should not take our friends or us, till our wills consented, I doubt we should stay here too long, unless pain constrained us to consent; but God is fittest to choose the time. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of all his saints," Psal. cxvi. "Even the hairs of their head are numbered." It is not then for want of love to them that they are taken away by death. "They rest from their labour and their works follow them." Were we not fools and slow of heart to believe what the gospel saith of blessed souls, we should know that they ought to suffer with Christ, and then to reign with him, as he suffered, and then entered into his glory.

And, as David said of his child, we shall come to them, but they shall not return to us.

CASE V.

Unkindness and Injury of Friends and Relations.

Another case that calls for patience is, the unkindness of friends, and their injurious dealing with us. Husband and wife often prove burdens and continual griefs to one another. Parents and children prove worse than strangers. Those that we have obliged by our benefits are ungrateful, and those untrusty whom we have trusted.

1. It must be so; man will be man, uncertain and untrusty. David and Paul say that all men are liars; that is, such as will deceive those that too much trust them. They are all sinful, ignorant, erroneous, mutable, and selfish: if interest, change, or temptations come, there is no hold of them, if God do not hold them up. Did you not know man till now?

2. It is God's just rebuke for your too much trust in man, and for your erroneous overvaluing man: and it is his merciful remedy to drive you home from man to God. This deceit and failing of your friends is part of the curse pronounced, Jer. xvii. 5, 6, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. For he shall be like the heath in the desert," &c. But "blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters," &c.

3. The failing of man doth but tell us what we are ourselves, even untrusty and mutable as other men. It should help to humble us for the badness of our nature, and drive us to seek to Christ for his confirming grace, and not to trust ourselves too far.

4. And it should call us to examine whether we never wronged and deceived others. Have we not put the best side outward, and seemed better to our friends than we are? Have we not been less helpful, friendly, and comfortable to them, than we promised, or than we should have been, and deceived their expectations? Have we not by our failings or provoking harshness been their grief? Or worse, have we not pleased them in their sin, and been temptations and snares to their souls?

5. Is there any friend that is nearer to you than yourselves? And is there any that hath hurt you

half so much as you have done yourselves? Alas! how little suffer we by friends or foes, in comparison of what we suffer by ourselves!

6. Christ went before us in this kind of suffering, to teach us what to expect from men. Peter denied him with cursing and swearing, and that after warning and contrary protestations; and all his disciples forsook him and fled. And yet he forsook not them, but died for them, and as soon as he was risen, kindly comforteth them, "Go tell my brethren, and tell Peter, (saith he,) I go to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God."

7. Were your friends so much obliged to you, as you were to God and to your Saviour? or did they ever promise and vow more to you, than you did in your baptism to Christ? And have you faithfully performed all your vows, and answered all your obligations? Did you ever oblige any by such benefits as God hath bestowed upon you? No, not by the thousandth thousandth part. And have not you more unthankfully injured God, than ever any friend did injure you? Let this then provoke you to repentance.

If it be an unkind husband or wife; first see that you be innocent, and give no provocation. If you have deceived them by seeming better than you are, or if you be a burden to them, no wonder if they deceive you, and be a burden to you. And next, remember that you had your choice, and that after time of deliberation. If you have by blind love, or passion, or covetousness, or causeless haste, deceived yourselves, repent, and make the best of it for the future that you can. Sin will not be without its sting.

9. If you love God and them, why are you not more grieved that they wrong God, and that they hurt themselves, than that they wrong you and deal unkindly by you. They do a thousandfold more wrong to Christ, and more hurt to their own souls, than they can do to you.

10. I fear most of us too little consider that friends overkind, and so overloved, are oft more dangerous than the unkind, yea, than enemies. To be crossed by them may many ways do us good, but to overlove them, hath more danger and hurt than I will now digress to mention. Corrupted love is the sinfullest and worst affection.

11. And why do you not consider the benefit and comfort which you have had by your friends, as well as the injuries? What if they now deal unkindly by you? Have they not many years been kind and useful to you? And should that be forgotten? And if you compare them, was not the kindness longer and greater than the unkindness? If Job say, "Shall we receive good at the hands of God and not evil," we may much more say so of men.

12. Perhaps God permitteth it, that you may be the less grieved to part with them at death. I have noted it in some of my nearest acquaintance, that have lived in the greatest endearedness, that a little before death some unkindness hath fallen out between them, perhaps else death would have torn their hearts more grievously than that unkindness did. When God would separate Paul and Barnabas for his work, a little dissension became the cause. And when Paul was to be offered up, almost all his old companions forsook him, 2 Tim. iv. 16. Who would have thought that David should ever have dealt so unkindly with Mephibosheth; but his prosperity was less sweet and insnaring by it.

13. It is purposely to keep us from heart idolatry, and drive us to God our surest Friend, that he permitteth friends to fail us. It is not them, but God, that we live upon, and that we must trust to, if we would not be deceived: it is not they, but Christ, that is our treasure. God never dealt unkindly with us: he hath promised that he will never fail us nor forsake us. 2 Tim. iv. 16, when Paul had said, "At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me, (he addeth,) yet the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me," &c. David's lovers and friends stood aloof from him, when God was his hope. "I looked on my right hand and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul. I cried unto thee, O Lord, I said, Thou art my refuge and my portion," &c. Psal. xxxviii. 11, 15; xiv. 4, 5.

14. I confess that the case of a bad or unsuitable and unkind husband or wife, is a very sharp trial. They are near you, even in your bosom, bed, and heart: they are still with you, and a contentious woman is as a continual dropping, saith Solomon. To have a discontented, displeasing, angry, provoking person always with one to the death, is a greater affliction than any that ordinarily cometh from enemies. But yet let such consider, 1. That it is a just chastisement for their sin, and may help to a more deep repentance. 2. As it is a great and constant trial, so it calleth for great and constant patience, and exercise of grace: and what is liker to increase grace, than great and constant exercise? 3. It is a great and constant preservative against the flatteries of this world, or building a palace or fool's paradise on earth; it is a daily voice to such, saying, This is not your rest; look and long for better company and friends. 4. And as near as wife or husband is, God is much nearer to us, even within us; and should make us rejoicingly forget all other joys or sorrows, in comparison of him.

15. The same I say of wicked children: the affliction is grievous; but, 1. It calleth men to examine how they have discharged their duty to them. Have you lovingly, familiarly, and unweariedly instructed them, exhorted and admonished them? Have you not thrust them into company, callings, or places of temptations, for a little worldly wealth, or learning, or reputation? Yea, have you kept them from temptations by prudent watchfulness and convincing dissuasions? Have you taught them as is required, Deut. v. 11? Or have you not slubbered over so great a duty; and looked God should save them merely for being yours? 2. But remember, that all the children of God in glory will be dear and comfortable to you, as if they had been all your own.

CASE VI.

Injuries from Malicious Enemies. 1. *Personal.* 2. *Persecuting.*

Another trial which requireth patience is, injuries from malicious enemies; either personal enemies, or such as hate and persecute us for our duty. As to the former sort, consider,

1. We have the greater reason to be patient, when we consider what poor and worthless worms we are; and that enmity and injury against such low and little creatures is a smaller fault than if it were against nobler or more excellent beings. We make no great matter of beating a horse or dog. Though this must not diminish their repentance, it must diminish our impatience.

2. And we are so bad that we give occasion of hatred and hard thoughts of us to our enemies; and though this justify not their mistakes, who take us to be worse than we are, yet it commandeth us who tempt them to it, the more patiently to bear it. They mistake us mostly by thinking that the same sins that are in us are predominant, and in a greater

measure than they are. They call us erroneous, proud, hypocrites, covetous, unpeaceable, &c. And when we know there is in us some error, some pride, hypocrisy, and the rest, the conscience of this must make us the easier bear with and forgive the false accusers, that charge us with more than we are guilty of.

3. And when we consider we were enemies to God, and have far more wronged him by sin than any can wrong us, and yet he forgiveth us; it must teach us to forgive the wrongs and enmity of others. Yea, God hath made our forgiving others a condition of his full forgiving us; and we cannot pray to him for forgiveness, and consequently not expect it, on any lower terms; yea, we must learn of God to love our enemies, and pray for them, and do them good, and not seek revenge and satisfaction.

4. Which of us hath done no wrong to others? Have we unjustly censured none, nor spoken evil of them, or been angry, or reviled them without just cause? Have we never tempted any to sin, nor encouraged them in it, nor omitted any duty which we owed them? If we have, we may see God's justice permitting injuries against us, as an equal castigation.

5. However, conscience tells us that we have deserved a thousandfold worse from God: and he useth to make the sins of men the instruments of his punishments on earth. God punished David by the permitted sins of Absalom and Shimei (though he caused not the sin). And David the more patiently endured it, as acknowledging the providence of a correcting God.

6. Is it your own fault if all your enemies' wrongs do you not much more good than hurt. God hath told you how so to improve them; and if you do, you may well be patient with that which is your benefit and advantage; yea, and thankful too, which is more than patient. But if you do not so improve them, you have more to be grieved for than your injuries, even your own sin and omission, which loseth so gainful an advantage.

7. If they repent, God will forgive them all their greater wrong against him; (oh what a deal doth he forgive at once to a converted sinner!) and then surely you will easily forgive your mite. But if they repent not, instead of impatience and revenge, pity them, and lament their case; for they will suffer more than you can now desire: would you have them suffer more than hell?

8. Your happiness and all your great concerns are out of the power of all your enemies: it is but matters of little moment that they can touch you in. They cannot take away your God, your Saviour, your Comforter, your glory; no, nor the least of your graces. They cannot deprive you of your knowledge, or of love to God, of faith, or hope, or peace of conscience, or joy in the Holy Ghost. They cannot bring back the guilt of any pardoned sin, nor cast you into hell.

9. And if impatience open the door of your heart, which your enemies could bring no nearer you than your estate, your ears, or your flesh at most, it is not they but yourselves that are your chief tormenter. And will you torment yourselves because another wrongeth you?

10. Do you not observe how sin hath set all the world in a state of enmity to God, and all that is holy, and to the way of their own salvation? And that all the unsanctified world is in a war against God and goodness, under the unknown conduct of the devil? And do you make a great matter then of some petty injury or enmity to you? This is more foolishly selfish, than if you should complain of a soldier for taking a pin off your sleeve, when an army is plundering all the town, and setting all the country on fire, and murdering your neighbours before your face.

So much for patience in case of personal enmity and injury.

II. But if it be in the case of persecution for your duty to God, impatience then is far more culpable. In this case I premise this advice.

1. Search diligently lest some personal crimes of your own be in the cause, as well as your religion. Sometimes the sinful miscarriages of christians doth provoke the adversaries to think the worse of their way of religion for their sakes, and so to persecute them for truth and duty, but provoked to it by former sin. In this case your first duty is to repent of the sin which first provoked them, and openly confess it and lament it: for while you remain impenitent, and hide or justify your gross iniquity, you harden them that afflict you, and you provoke God to let them loose. Especially when you can aggravate all the miscarriages of your persecutors, and cannot bear so much as the naming of your own sin, but take it for enmity or injury to be called to repent.

If it be any sin of ours that hath made us stink in the nostrils of our persecutors, we cannot comfortably suffer or expect deliverance, till we repent.

2. Let us search with the severest suspicion and impartiality, that it be indeed truth and duty, and not error and sin, for which we suffer. I doubt not but men may be persecutors and injurious, who do but afflict men for sin and error, when it is done for such as are but those tolerable infirmities, which all christians in one kind or other are liable to; or when the punishment is greater than the fault deserveth; and when it is done in malice against the piety of the persons, or tendeth to the hinderance of piety, and injury of the church of God. But yet the guilt of his persecutors is no justification of any one that suffereth for his sin or error, nor should abate, but increase his repentance, in that he occasions by his scandal the sin and misery of his persecutors. Peter justly calleth us to make sure, that none of us suffer as evil-doers; much less as impenitent persons that cannot endure to hear of it. I am one that have been first in all the storms that have befallen the ministry these twenty years past (to look no further back;) and yet my conscience commandeth me to say, as I have oft done, that many through mistake, I am persuaded, now suffer as evil-doers for a cause that is not good and justifiable. For the great difference among sufferers, proveth that some must needs be mistaken.

3. If we be sure that our cause is good, let us also make sure that we use it well. A good cause may be abused. Let us see, 1. That we mix no error with it. 2. That we do not manage it partially and uncharitably; that we make not the contrary worse than it is. 3. That we delight not to represent our adversaries more odiously than there is cause. 4. That we deny no just honour or obedience to our governors. 5. That we show not the same spirit of persecution which we exclaim against, by differing from them only in the manner of expression. If they unjustly say, that men are so bad as to be unworthy of christian communion, you agree in unjust condemning others, and only wrong them several ways. 6. Let us see that while we are restrained from some part of our work, we neglect not that which none forbiddeth us. Are we not shamefully guilty in this? None forbiddeth ministers to catechise those that are under sixteen years of age, or to teach them by preaching, or to pray with them, and yet that is commonly neglected. None forbid

us to confer daily with our ignorant or vicious neighbours, to try if we can convert them; nor to win them by kindness, as Christ went to publicans and sinners. None forbid religious people to catechise and teach their families, and read good books to them, and pray with them, and openly sing the praises of God, as Daniel openly prayed in his house, to be examples to ungodly families about them. And yet how much is this neglected! And a dumb and negligent father and master of a family, will condemn himself by speaking against dumb and negligent ministers, and against those that restrain him from some public duties. Some think that if a law were made (which God prevent) against all catechising and teaching men's families, and against praying and singing the praises of God, it would by opposition stir up some to do it better, that now neglect it, so prone are they to that which is forbidden. And since it is come into the heads of some clergymen, to preach openly that it is unlawful to receive dissenters to their communion, and they intend to forbid them, and excommunicate them, that they may be uncapable of public trust, or votes; I hear that some intend to communicate, who before condemned it as unlawful, and sharply censured those that did it.

But when you have made sure, that you suffer not as evil-doers, upon mistake, but for your duty, and for righteousness, consider these following reasons for your patience.

1. If you believe not that any thing is done against you by man, but what falls under the overruling, disposing will and providence of God, you deny his government, and are unfit to do or suffer. Though God caused none of the malice and sin of the murderers of Christ, yet as to the effect of their free, sinful volitions, there was nothing done but what God's counsel fore-determined for the redemption of the world: and if you believe this, dare you impatiently grudge at the providence of God?

2. Though you are innocent towards your persecutors, and you suffer for well-doing, you are not innocent towards God, who may use bad men for just chastisement.

3. It is an unspeakable mercy to have unavoidable, deserved sufferings to be made the sanctified means of your salvation, and to be for ever rewarded for bearing that which else would have been but the foretaste of hell. Sin brought unavoidable pain and death on all mankind. No power, or policy, or price can save you from it. If you deny Christ and sell heaven to save your lives, you shall die for all that; and he that so saveth his life shall lose it, and lose his soul also by such self-saving. "It is appointed to all men once to die, and after that the judgment." A martyr doth but die, and so doth his persecutor; and death to the ungodly is the door of hell. And is it not a marvellous mercy, that suffering but the same death, in faith, and hope, and obedience for Christ, and for your duty, shall procure you a crown of glory? Even as the same outward blessings, which to the wicked are but the fuel of sin and hell, are by believers improved for grace and glory; so is it also with the case of suffering. And what a terror is it to conscience, when the sentence of death shall be passed upon you, to think, Now that life is at an end, which I sold my soul to save! Oh that I had rather chosen to die for my duty, than by my sin: this death would then have been the entrance into heaven, which is now the entrance into misery. This made many dying christians in Cyprian's charge to be hardly comforted, because they had not died martyrs, that death might have been a double gain to them Is it not better have a glorious reward for dying, than die for nothing?

4. It is no small benefit to be called out to the exercise of that, which every one must resolve on, and be prepared for, that will be saved: that we may not be deceived, but know by experience, whether we are sincere or not. Whatever worldly hypocrites think, Christ was in good earnest when he said, "He that forsaketh not all that he hath, even life itself, cannot be my (sincere) disciple," Luke xiv. 26, 30, 33. Holiness here and heaven hereafter, is that which Christ came to proeure for his own, and that which all must choose and trust to as their hope and portion, that will be his. Worldlings never make this choice, but being doubtful of the life to come, prefer the present prosperity of the flesh, and will be religious only in subordination thereto, and hope for heaven (if there be any life to come) but as a reserve and second good, because they cannot keep the world: which they will not lose for the hope of heaven, as long as they can keep it, but will rather venture their souls than bodies. This being the true difference between the faithful and the worldly hypocrite, all that will be saved must be such as would let go life, and all the world, rather than by wilful sin to forfeit their salvation, if they were called to it: though all be not actually put upon the trial, and seeing it is so easy for a prosperous man to profess christianity with a worldly mind, and say that he would rather die than wilfully sin, being in hope that he shall never be put to it; it is a great advantage to our assurance of salvation, to find that we can suffer in a time of trial, and so that our resolution was not false; for so far as any man loveth the world, the love of the Father is not in him. The heat of persecution withereth the corn that groweth on the rocks. They are offended and go sorrowful away, because they cannot make sure both of earth and heaven. And as the faithful have the fullest proof of their sincerity in the greatest sufferings, no wonder if they have the greatest comfort. No reasoning will so fully answer all their fears and doubts, whether they are sincere, and should not forsake Christ in suffering.

5. Believers should much more pity their persecutors than themselves. If a madman in Bedlam should spit in your face, would you have your action against him, or would you be sorry for him? They are preparing fuel for themselves in hell, while they make a purgatory for you on earth. O think who it is that ruleth them, and how he will reward them, and how dear they will pay for this for ever, without conversion; and pray God to have mercy on them in time. If the righteous be scarcely saved, and must suffer before they reign, where shall the ungodly and sinners appear? "It is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you, and to you that are troubled, rest with Christ," 2 Thess. i. 6, 7. Do but believe that dreadful reckoning of their day that is coming, when in vain they will wish the hills to cover them, and shall receive according to their works, and then you will rather weep over their foreseen misery, than make too great a matter of your suffering by them. They know nothing but present things, like beasts; but you forcknow things to come. God beareth with them, because he knoweth that their day is coming.

6. And remember, that if you suffer for Christ and righteousness, the wrong is much more to him than to you: and he will judge them that do but neglect his servants, much more that persecute them, as doing it all against himself: and the cause and

interest being much more his than yours, cast it upon him, and trust him with his own cause. Who is to be trusted if he be not? And when is he to be trusted, if not when we suffer for him? An honest master would bear out his servant who suffereth for obeying him, and will not Christ? Do you think that Christ will be too slow, or deal too gently in his revenge? Sure you would wish no greater punishment to persecutors than he hath threatened. It were better a millstone were hanged about their neck, and they cast into the sea, who offend but his little ones. On whom this stone falls, it will grind him to powder.

7. The promises made to them that patiently suffer for well-doing, are so many and great, I will not recite them, supposing you cannot be ignorant of them. And do you not believe the word of Christ? He hath bound himself to save you harmless, and to be with you in your sufferings, and never to fail you nor forsake you; and to give you for all that you lose for him a hundredfold (in value) in this world, and in the world to come, eternal life. If we trust these promises, undoubtedly our patience and choice will show it. He that is offered a lordship in a foreign land, if he will leave his native land and friends where he liveth in poverty or prison, if he trust the promiser, will leave all and go with him; but if he dare not venture, he doth not trust him.

8. Do you suffer any thing but what Christ foretold you of? Did he not tell you, that you must sit down and count what it will cost you to be a christian, before you undertook it? Did he not tell you, that you shall be hated of the world, because you are not of the world? yea, hated of all (worldly) men for his name's sake? And did you not profess to take him and his salvation on these terms? and to consent to his conditions? If you thought them too hard, you might have refused them. What hypocrites are they that silence Christ's ministers for scrupling to engage them in covenant to Christ at their baptism, by the symbolical, transient image of a cross, as obliging them to be the soldiers of a crucified Christ, and when they have done, abhor all that in christianity which will bring the cross, and will rather venture on hell than bear it! yea, will lay the cross by persecution upon others! It is true, that it was in your infancy that this covenant was made by others for you; but did not you own it at age, when you called yourselves christians? Alas! hypocrisy undoes the visible church: men mean nothing less than what they vow. They think that resolution for suffering, or martyrdom, is proper to some rare, extraordinary saints, and will not believe that none is a true christian nor can be saved without it; that is, without preferring heaven before earth, and the soul before the body. Take any of these worldly hypocrites aside, and seriously ask him, (in France or Flanders,) how dare you persecute the servants of Christ? and they will say, It is not long of us, we cannot help it; the law and magistrates command us: we shall suffer ourselves if we do not obey them. Would you think that these men did stand to their baptism? As if they plainly said, Whatever Christ saith, we will do any thing against him and his servants that man's law bids us, rather than we will suffer ourselves. How far are these men from being ready for martyrdom, yea, or being christians, or the servants of God! If you are christians you have bound yourselves by covenant to take up the cross and follow Christ, though to the death, and to choose rather to suffer than wilfully to sin.

9. And did not you, as christians, list yourselves as soldiers under Christ, against the devil, flesh, and world? And is he a soldier indeed that expecteth no enemies? and that murmureth because he must come in danger, and see any war? Did you not know that there is a war throughout all the world, between Christ and Satan, between the woman's and serpent's seed? and is hurting and killing any wonder in a war? or that he that is born after the flesh should persecute him that is born after the Spirit?

10. What hath a christian to do in this life, but to prepare for a safe and happy death? And if you had done this, you had prepared for persecution and martyrdom itself. If you are ready to die by sickness, why not by fire or sword, by axe or halter, if God will have it so? Do you not know that most sicknesses do by their length put the body to more pain than ordinary martyrdom before they kill them? How easy a death is hanging, in comparison of dying by the stone in the bladder, or by the colic, or many other sicknesses! Yea, the painful death of burning, being soon despatched, is little to these. And sure a fine, or prison, or poverty, is yet less than any of these. O slothful men! unfaithful to yourselves, that have lived so long unprepared for death, when you had nothing else to do in the world. Your flying from suffering by sin, doth show that you have neglected the great work of life, or that that which you lived for is yet undone. You would have been ready to suffer, if you had been ready to die. And doth this seem strange to you, after all your warnings and professions?

11. Have you a due estimate of worldly things? Are you crucified to the world, and it to you, by the cross of Christ? Do you account them as loss and dung for him? Do you use them as if you used them not, and possess them as if you possessed them not? Do you judge of them as death will teach you to do? If you do, sure you will not count that persecution that taketh them from you an unsufferable thing; nor be impatient to be deprived of them.

12. Had you rather be in the case of the prosperous persecutor, or the persecuted believer? If the former, you are no true christians: if the latter, murmur not when you have that which you prefer. Sure a true martyr at the stake, or with Daniel in the lions' den, would be loth to change states with Nebuchadnezzar or Darius.

13. Do you think Christ loved Stephen the first martyr, or James the first martyred apostle, or Peter and Paul that died for the gospel, less than he loved those that overlived them and suffered no such thing? Is not the crown of martyrdom the most glorious? Why are they said to live before the rest a thousand years? Had you not now rather have Stephen's place in heaven, than theirs that suffered nothing for Christ? And if it be best at last, is it not most eligible now?

14. Are you afraid of men? You have a greater than man to fear, and greater hurt than man can do you: "Fear not them that can kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do; but fear him that can destroy soul and body in hell: yea, I say unto you, fear him," Luke xii. 4. Are you afraid of a prison, or death, or fire? Fear more hell-fire and death everlasting. When Bilney burnt his finger in the candle, he remembered that hell-fire was more intolerable.

15. Wherein hath Christ been more an example to you, than in patient and obedient suffering, even unto death, and to the most accursed, shameful death? Do you think that he only suffered to keep us from all suffering? Peter saith, it was to leave us an example; and Paul saith, that we must be conformed to him, and partakers of his sufferings. Why else doth Christ call us to bear the cross? And is it not joyful to see the footsteps of Christ in the way we go, and to know that we follow him?

16. Sure that is not a state of greatest fear and sorrow, in which Christ hath commanded us to rejoice with the greatest joy: but so he hath done in the case of persecution; "Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness' sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven," Matt. v. 10, 12. "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial, but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when his glory shall be revealed, you may be glad also with exceeding joy," 1 Pet. iv. 12, 13. "They took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing that in heaven they had a better and enduring substance," Heb. x. 34. So Heb. xi. throughout.

17. God hath promised you that all your sufferings shall work together for your good, Rom. viii. 28, and taught you how to make them your exceeding gain. Practise this art, and you will be more patient, when you find the benefit and feel that you are more than conquerors. Our victory is by patient suffering. The worst men may conquer our bodies by force, but our souls are unconquered, and we are conquerors of the temptation and real hurt, while we keep obedient patience. When it is said of Job, "In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly;" Satan was conquered, and missed his end, while he seemed to prevail upon his flesh.

By persecution you may learn, 1. What a nature is in lapsed men. 2. That there are devils that keep up a war against Christ. 3. How great their power is in the world, by God's permission, over wicked men. 4. How wonderful a work of God it is, that the godly can live in so much peace and safety as they do, among those that are the very servants of the devil; even as Daniel was kept in the den of lions, because God shut their mouths. 5. How great need there is of sanctifying grace. 6. How great a mercy is our conversion, which cureth such a nature in us. 7. It calleth us to continual christian watchfulness, to beware of men, and especially of their temptations, and to be wise as serpents, and innocent as doves. 8. It driveth us to constant prayer and dependence upon God for help and safety. 9. It teacheth us to keep up faith and hope, as having our eye continually on God, and on the heavenly inheritance, without which we have nothing to support us. 10. And it assureth us that there is a day of judgment, in which Christ will call over again in righteousness all the false judgments and actions of this world. He that maketh all this use of persecution, will have gain enough to plead for patience.

18. To review this last; if you believe in Christ indeed, you do believe that he will come again to judge the world in righteousness, and to set all straight that here was made crooked by the falsehood and malignity of men. And will not the foresight of that resolve you patiently to suffer? Faith may foresee how poor blinded persecutors will then have their eyes opened, and see him with terror, whom they persecuted in his servants, and how he will silence and condemn them, with, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels," Matt. xxv. 41; 2 Thess. i. 6, 10—12; ii. 12. If the forethoughts of that day do not quiet or resolve you, alas! you have greater matter of fear and trouble than persecution, even your own unbelief. Pray more for faith, than for deliverance from men.

19. Consider comparatively what man is, that hurteth you; and what God is, who hath promised to help you and reward you. Man is a worm, blinded and mad by the deceit of Satan. They know not what they are doing against themselves and God, as well as against you: they are all the while going towards the grave, and their souls towards the dreadful bar of God: their bones and dust are no whit terrible. If God will here have mercy on them, he will make them know who it is they persecute, and how hard a work it is barefoot to kick against the pricks, and make them, as Paul, themselves undergo such persecutions for Christ, as they madly used against others; they will say, as Paul, "I was mad against them:" and his case tells you, that if the very captain of the persecutors were but converted, though by a voice and miracle from heaven, the rest, instead of taking it for a conviction, would presently persecute him themselves. But if God let them go on, alas! where will they shortly be? O pray, pray hard for your persecutors, as Christ did, before they are past prayers and hope, in hell. But are these poor worms to be much feared? How oft are we charged not to fear them, Luke xii. 4; Matt. x. 28; John xxiv. 27; Jer. xlvi. 27, 28; Ezek. iii. 8, 9. The fearful (that fear men) are numbered with unbelievers, and are shut out among the dogs, if fear prevail against their faith, Rev. xxii.

And then think what that God is, that hath promised our defence. When Infinite power, wisdom, and love, is set against a few wasps and worms, shall our fear of them be greater than our trust in him? If it were but an angel from heaven that appeared for our defence or encouragement, against a dog that barked at us, it were a shame to us not to trust him. "If God be for us, who shall be against us?" Read Psal. xci.; Rom. viii.; Matt. vi. See Isa. viii. 13, 14; xli. 10, 13, 14.

20. Can any thing do you greater good, that can outwardly befall you, than that which both assureth you of your right to heaven, and puts you presently in possession of it? And this will be the fruit of martyrdom. Oh what a change will that day make! from torment to our Master's joy! from the raging army of the devil, to the heavenly choir of saints and angels! A strong faith would make us long for such a day. As children of God, joint heirs with Christ, if we suffer with him, we shall be glorified with him; and the present sufferings are not worthy to be compared to the glory, Rom. viii. 18. 2 Cor. iv. 16—18, "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, our inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." "Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to him in well-doing, as to a faithful Creator," 1 Pet. iv. 19.

CASE VII.

Oppression and Injustice by Men of wealth and power.

Another case that requireth patience, is oppression by men of wealth and power in the world, and injustice of ungodly governors. Justice is so much due to all mankind, and injustice so odious, that we are ready to take it the more heinously when we cannot have our right. Oppressing landlords raise their rents to such a height, that poor men, with the most tiring care and labour, can hardly live. And some rich men do think that their wills must be poor men's rule, and that they must deny them nothing that they command; as if the poor were slaves, that had no property or benefit of the law. And worst of all when in too many nations on earth, rulers are unjust, and haters of just and upright men, and either break

all bounds of law to ruin them, or else turn the law itself against them; and when they justify the wicked, and condemn the innocent, yea, when piety, and honesty, and conscience, are made the most intolerable crimes, and filthiness and sensuality do pass for works of one that may be trusted; these cases call for extraordinary patience, and it is the more grievous because that magistracy is a special ordinance of God, and the image of his supereminence and governing power shineth in it: and to have Satan get possession of it, and turn it against God himself who made it, and make that the plague and calamity of mankind, which was instituted for order, justice, and defence, and the upholding of goodness, and suppression of sin, this is a most grievous case. The same I say of cruel masters tyrannizing over their servants, and wicked parents oppressing virtue in their children. Here patience is of great necessity.

And, 1. We must here be very careful to distinguish between true power and its abuse, and not to think evil of power itself because it is abused. And this must be the more carefully studied, because here practically to distinguish is exceeding difficult. For the best things when corrupted, are the worst. It is hard to love rain and waters in a deluge, when it drowneth the country, men and beasts. One that had seen the fire of London, or yesterday the burning of Wapping, might be tempted to take fire to be more terrible than amiable. If physicians killed twenty for one they cured, men would grow into a dread or hatred of their profession: and as to rulers, judges, and all sorts of magistrates, the case is the same. They are God's ordinances (in general) and good in themselves, and if well used would be the great blessing of the world; God's ordinary means to protect the innocent, encourage the godly, and bring ungodliness to shame; to keep rich men from oppressing the poor, and the unruly multitude from popular rage against their neighbours or superiors; to keep up equity and justice, and to frustrate treachery, perjury, and fraud; in a word, to be God's ministers or officers for the common good, and to see his laws obeyed by the subjects, being themselves the most zealous in obeying them, and to be a terror to blasphemers, fornicators, murderers, thieves, oppressors, and other evil-doers, and a praise and defence to them that do well.

There are two cases which are no better than ruin to mankind; that is, to have no government, and to have utter tyranny, which designeth the undoing of the subjects, souls and bodies, by forcing them to sin against God to their damnation, (as far as force can do it,) or commonly to die as martyrs, and which is used to subvert the government of God, and to set up wickedness and will, and to destroy the common welfare.

And there are two cases which are such as we must submit to. One is the tolerable injustice and oppression of ungodly rulers, who will kill, and ruin, and persecute some particular innocent men, but yet are for the common peace and welfare, and do more good by their government than hurt by their abuse. These must be patiently endured, so far as the evil cannot lawfully be remedied. The other sort is the defective government of good rulers, who endeavour the common good, and promote piety, and suppress sin, but with such mixture of failings as follow their personal imperfections, and with such blots as David had in the case of Mephibosheth and Uriah, and as Asa had, that oppressed many of the people, and as Constantine had in the case of Crispus and Athanasius, and as Theodosius senior had in the case of the Thessalonians, and as Theodosius junior and Anastasius had in the case of the Eutychians, and as even our King Edward VI. had about the death of the Duke of Somerset, and he about his brother's death. Grotius owneth the old saying, that the names of all good kings may be written *uno annulo*, in one ring: I think that is too hard a censure. But even the best are men: and as a physician's faults, though few, cost the patient dearer than all their neighbours' faults do; so a prince's faults, though he be extraordinary good, may cost a kingdom dearer than the faults of thousands else. Yet these honest princes are so great blessings to the world, and so rare, that it is a happy nation that hath no worse, and must be very thankful for them.

But there is a fifth sort imaginable in Eutopia, and those men of so perfect wisdom and goodness, as that all their government is just. Short of heaven, there is little or no hope of this, unless there be a golden age to come, or such a reign of Christ for a thousand years as some describe, which is but the reign of wisdom, justice, piety, and love. But when God hath some great blessing for a land, he useth to raise up rulers better than the rest of the nations have: and when sin provoketh him, he removeth them quickly from an unworthy land, as he did Josiah, and our King Edward VI. and Jovian in the Roman empire. Yea, sometimes a wicked people and clergy prevail against a godly king, as they did against Ludovicus Pius in France.

2. Because bad rulers are a great national judgment, it calleth a land to search after and repent of national sins; for it is for such that this calamity usually cometh. When Gildas describeth the horrid wickedness of the British kings, he describeth the great wickedness of the clergy and people as the deserving cause. And no wonder, when in the days of Hezekiah and Josiah, though the kings were excellently good, yet the unreformed, obstinate clergy and people so provoked God that he would not spare them, but cast them off into captivity and ruin. But usually God gratifieth their pernicious desires, and giveth them such bad kings as they would have, as he did Saul, Jeroboam, &c. and permits people to please themselves to death.

3. Take heed that selfishness and error cause you not to judge worse of governors than they are, and to take just restraint or punishment, for oppression, and to think all unjust that is displeasing to you. This error is common to the selfish, partial sort of men, that judge men and actions by self-interest.

4. Take heed lest over-much love to your estates or liberties make some injustice and injuries done you, by rich men or rulers, to seem much greater than they are, and it be your vice that rendereth them insufferable.

These things being avoided, bear your oppressions with these considerations.

1. God permitteth it for your sin, or for your trial; therefore be humbled under it as God's hand, and bear it obediently till he deliver you.

2. If wealth and power be so liable to make men oppressors, do not you desire them, but thank God for a safer station, and bear that which keeps you from it.

3. The sin of oppression is a far greater evil than the suffering of the oppressed; therefore rather pity them as miserable, than yourselves.

4. Consider how much more many millions have suffered by oppressions, than ever you did, or are like to do. How many thousands were killed and ruined by Alexander! How many thousands by Julius Cæsar! How many thousands in many Roman civil wars, under Antony, Marius, Scylla, Sejanus, &c.! How many churches corrupted and persecuted by Constantius, Valens, Gensericus, Hun-

nericus, &c.! What a multitude did Justinian murder in Egypt, in blind zeal for Christ! How few ages have escaped the guilt of innocent blood! How many thousands did the pope's cause slay in the Palestine wars, and in the Italian frequent wars, and the rebellions against the emperors Fredericks, Henrys, &c.! How many thousand christians, Albigenses, Waldenses, and Bohemians, did they murder! How many destroyed in Piedmont, Rhetia, and Germany! How many thousands murdered at once in France, and oft besides! What dreadful work hath the inquisition made in Flanders, Holland, Spain, and Italy? What a dreadful case was Ireland in, when two hundred thousand protestants were murdered, and thousands were stripped and utterly undone! Queen Mary's bonfires were sharper than we have yet felt. While Satan in all ages fills the world with wars and blood, a little tolerable oppression by landlords or inferior rulers, should not be over-tenderly and impatiently complained of, by tenants, servants, or any others.

5. Innocency is a sound and healthful state, and can bear much: Peter bids servants be patient when they suffer undeservedly; but it is not thankworthy to be patient when they are beaten for their faults. Peace of conscience maketh all sound within; and then a man may bear the more easily all that befalleth him from without: when he can say, It is not for my sins, he may comfortably commit his cause to God.

6. Whoever oppresseth you, God will never do you wrong, and it is his hands that your great concerns are in: he will use you with merciful justice, yea, and deliver you from all the oppressions of men.

He suffereth men of the world to oppress the just, that they may be driven to him by prayer and faith, and may be saved from damning worldly love, and God may have the glory of their deliverance. How great a part of the Psalms are written upon the occasion of oppression, plots, and cruelties of wicked enemies! and what abundance of promises of deliverance from such, are recorded in the sacred Scriptures!

7. Patience and faith are a thousand times better than money, or liberty, or any thing that oppressors can take from you: do you but take the advantage of oppression to exercise these, and all is turned to your exceeding gain.

8. In this also nothing befalleth you, but what Christ foretold you of, and taught you in what manner to bear. The prosperity, power, and oppression of the wicked had almost stumbled David himself, till he went into the house of God, and understood their end: they are like gallants sporting and feasting in a sumptuous house, which is to be blown up or set on fire before the frolic is well ended, and then who would be found among them? He will think himself happy that can say, I was none of them: yea, in judgment, how fain would they, as Pilate, wash their hands from innocent blood! And even of omissions, much more of oppressions, say, "Lord, when saw we thee hungry, naked, in prison," &c. *Qui patitur vincit.* Christ hath foretold you of all this, and taught you to love your enemies, and bless them that curse you, and pray for them that hate and persecute you, and turn the other cheek to him that striketh you, and go two miles with him that commandeth you to go one, and give him your coat that sueth you for another garment: that is, rather suffer, than seek private revenge; yea, or seek to right yourselves, when it will do more hurt to the souls of others by scandal, or alienation, or exasperation, than it will do good.

Righting oneself against injuries, especially of powerful oppressions, will cost one more than patient putting up all will do. As I went along the street, a tory in Latin reviled me, and struck me on the head with his staff; I took little notice of him, and went on my way, and the hurt was small; I saw another stricken, and he struck again, and it raised a tumult, and he and others were sorely hurt, and went to law after for reparation.

He that cannot bear one blow, must bear many; and he that cannot bear to be oppressed in his estate, perhaps may lose his liberty or life: we live in a world of wicked men; and the wicked will do wickedly: and two rogues by perjury may take away the lives of the most innocent and excellent members of the commonwealth or city! And what conscience do such wretches make of a malicious oath, that use to adorn their sentences with "God damn me," and with direful oaths?

Is not your oppression a reproof for your unthankfulness, that God, by wonderful restraint, hath saved your lives from perjury and oppression so long? Is it not a wonder of providence that perjury hath murdered no more? yea, that till popery made it seem needful to their ends, few in many years did ever suffer by it? Is it not a wonder that the worthiest men, both lay and clergy, are not utterly destroyed, as to liberty and life, when two or three atheists, infidels, papists, exasperated villains, may swear them to the gaol, or the gallows, almost when they will? Yea, when even Walsh, the popish priest, out of Keting, tells you that his Irishmen have in all ages lived in continual war, and murdering one another on the lightest causes; yet if Irish papists will come hither out of their own land, and set up the trade of swearing men to death, I know no remedy but to die in patience. I know some (the most innocent and worthy men that I know) who dare not let strangers speak with them, lest they should swear treason against them. For my own part, before my weakness confined me to my chamber, I long confined myself to my house, and refused to speak with unknown persons, (to my grief forced to reject the presence of foreigners that came in want on begging,) lest they should be men that would swear me to the gallows, if they could but say that once they spake with me, or saw me: and, as the world now goeth, if we escape with our lives by such avoiding human converse with unknown persons, (as we fly from wolves and serpents,) we shall esteem it a very great protection by the providence of the all-ruling God. I doubt not but (while I am sharply accused by some for coming too near the papists and conformists) there are no small number of them, whose faces I never saw, nor ever had any thing to do with, who would confidently swear some capital crime against me, had they but the least advantage of speech or presence, to make it seem but a possible thing, only because I am accounted an adversary to their side and opinion in religion.

And why should all this seem strange or intolerable to us, when Christ doth so often tell us, that rich men are usually the worst, and that he sent out his apostles as lambs among wolves? and when we know how Christ and his apostles were used by the rulers and teachers of the people; yea, and christians after them, in most ages to this day?

9. Consider how great the temptations are, of men that are in power, wealth, and pleasure; and then you will pity them, and pray for them. Who knoweth what you would have done yourselves, if you had their temptations? They have a stronger worldly interest to tempt them against that law of Christ, which calls them another way, than other men have. They have more full and constant pro-

vision for all the desires of the flesh: they are more than any other men assaulted by subtle, designing seducers, who have their worldly ends (on church pretences usually) to attain by their seduction: they are more in danger of the infectious breath of flatterers, and the false accusers of godliness and good men, than any others: they use to be deprived of the common needful benefit to mankind, of faithful and plain-dealing friends and monitors, and truth is usually kept far from them, and out of such a hearing as is needful for conviction. And to live continually under such dangerous temptations, needeth more than man for their preservation, from deceit, and sin, and the ruin of themselves and hurt of others.

10. Our obedience to God were far from a tried praise-worthy degree, if it cost us little or nothing; and doubtless Christ will bear all your charges. Oh what an excellent servant is that, who will cheerfully do all his duty to an unjust and abusive master! What an excellent child is that, who useth all due reverence, obedience, love, and patience, to a froward, harsh, yea, and a malignant father; not disobeying God, nor hazarding his soul by wilful sin, or forsaking godliness, and yet not dishonouring his parents, or disobeying them in any lawful thing! What an excellent wife is that, who constantly and patiently performeth all loving and cheerful duty, to an abusive, furious, drunken, profane, malignant husband! This requireth abundance more grace, than to live in cheerful love and duty to a godly, tender, loving husband. The former sort is called more acceptable to God, and the latter sort of duty is no glory, 1 Pet. ii. 20. To suffer for sin, is indeed a bitter suffering, even for that which is worse than suffering. "It is better, if the will of God be so, that we suffer for well-doing than for evil-doing: for Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust," 1 Pet. iii. 17, 18. "For hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed all to him that judgeth righteously," 1 Pet. ii. 21—23. O follow this excellent example: there lieth more of christianity in learning of Christ to suffer from foolish, wicked men, than most will think of.

"Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye-service as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing God: and whatever ye do, do it heartily as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance," Col. iii. 22. "Not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward," 1 Pet. ii. 18. These are the excellent precepts of Christ.

It is therefore inconsiderately said by many, If I had deserved such usage, I could have borne it. As if suffering without sin, were not a lighter burden than sin and suffering for it. The oppressor hurts himself a hundred times more than he can hurt you, (if you do no worse to yourself than he doth,) as guilt of oppression is a cause to such to weep and howl for the miseries that shall come upon them: their riches are corrupted, and their gold and silver cankered, and the rust of them shall eat their flesh as fire, and they heap up treasure for the last days. The cries of the poor labourers oppressed by them, are entered into the ears of the Lord. "They live in pleasures and wantonness on earth, and nourish their hearts in feasting and fulness, and condemn and kill the just, who resist them not. Be patient therefore, brethren, to the coming of the Lord," James v. God will speedily avenge his elect that cry to him, though now he delay, Luke xviii.

CASE VIII.

Superiors' Sufferings by bad Children, Servants, Tenants, or Subjects.

Another case that needeth patience, is the suffering of superiors by bad children and servants, tenants, tradesmen, and others, whom they must use and trust. Of bad children I have partly spoken before. Natural love maketh this one of the heaviest afflictions in the world. When parents have been at all that suffering, care, labour, and cost, which go to the bringing of children into the world, and bringing them up from the breasts to maturity, and teaching them their duty to God and man, and preparing them to be useful to themselves and others, that after all this they should prove brutish, fleshly sots, that are slaves to their bellies, and wallow in the sink of filthy lust, and savour nothing but pride and fleshly pleasure, and the belief of God's word hath no power to change them, yea, perhaps prove haters of serious holiness, and enemies of good men, and plagues to their country, and fight against the only means of their own and other men's salvation. Oh! what a heart-breaking affliction is this! Yea, when in case of the most ungodly error, or swinish appetite and lust, the counsel, the tears, the prayers of parents cannot move them to any true repentance or reformation. I confess, I that never had a child, am no fit judge of the heaviness of this cross.

I have written my thoughts to such miserable youths, and partly to parents, in a small book, called "Compassionate Counsel to Young Men." I here briefly add,

1. In this sad case, make not light of it, or as ungodly parents do, that are troubled more for their children's wastefulness and want than for their souls. And yet be not over-much cast down: neglect no means (prayer, counsel, company, &c.) which may tend to their recovery, while there is any hope; and especially look back (not with despair, but) with true repentance upon your own sins of youth against God, your parents, and yourselves. And then examine whether you have dealt with christian wisdom and fidelity to have prevented their misery, in their education. Did you with love and diligence labour to make them understand the things of God and their salvation? Did you labour to bring it to their hearts, that they might fear God and his judgments, and know the evil and danger of sin? Did you labour to make religion pleasant to them by showing them the goodness of it, and avoiding harsh, averting ways? Did you watch over their ways, and keep them from a custom of pleasing their appetites over-much? And did you engage them in wise and good company, and use them in religious exercises, and keep them from the infectious company of bad, licentious youths, especially in places of plays and gaming, drinking and idleness, wicked schools or academies, where temptations are too strong for fleshly, unexperienced youth. If you have failed in these duties, and have sent your children among the vicious, sensual, and malignant, whether on pretence of learning, ministry, courtship, breeding, or gainful trades, no wonder if both they and you do suffer by it, and if they be plagues to their country and to you, who have been plagues and treacherous to them, and sent them as into a pest-house, or a stews, and then are grieved for their diseases.

2. Be humbled for the viciousness of your own

natures, which had the root of all these sins, and conveyed them originally to your children.

3. Let it make you the more sensible of the greatness of God's mercy, which hath healed your natures, and pardoned your sin, and saved you from that wilful sottishness and wickedness, which others are given over to, of which you were in danger.

4. The thoughts of the far greater misery of most of the world, who lie in idolatry, infidelity, wickedness, or error, may somewhat drown the sense of a particular affliction: as the common plague in London did overcome the sense of the loss of our own friends; and the common fire overcame the sense of the loss of our houses.

5. Yet while there is life there is hope. God hath ways enough to humble and break the stiffest and the hardest heart: therefore pray for them and warn them to the last.

6. Grace maketh all Christ's members dear to us as well as our own kindred. Christ himself answered, when they mentioned his mother and brethren, that they that heard God's word and kept it, were his mother, sisters, and brethren. And when one said, "Blessed is the womb that bare thee," he said, "Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and do it." Therefore rejoice in the welfare of all the children of God in heaven and on earth, who will be as dear to you as your own children.

7. Submit to God's absolute dominion, who best knoweth what to do with his own, and never did wrong to any, nor can do, and will satisfy all at last of the wisdom and goodness of all his dispensations.

II. Bad servants also are to some an exercise of patience: some will not learn nor be reformed, but hate goodness and live wickedly: some in drunkenness, filthiness, gaming, and play-houses; some deceive and rob their masters; some are eye-servants and slothful, and make no conscience of any fault or neglect which they can but hide, or excuse with lying; some burn their masters' houses, or undo them, or at least much damage them by heedlessness, carelessness, and forgetfulness; and the best oft-times prove very costly by their neglects.

In all these cases, 1. Repent of all your neglects of them. If you have not diligently taught them the principles of religion, which should have made them better; or if you have not seriously endeavoured their true conversion and sanctification, and bringing heavenly things to their hearts, which would have kept out the love of sin; or if you have not taught them a conscionable life, by a careful example of it in yourselves; be humbled, and acknowledge the justness of your correction, and bear it as the fruit of your own sin.

2. Be sure that the sin and misery of your servants be more grievous to you than your own loss and suffering by them. It is but temporal things that you lose.

3. Remember what unprofitable and unfaithful servants you have been to God, and how much more he daily beareth with in us all.

4. Remember that the frailty of man is such, that nothing will be done perfectly which imperfect persons do. The wisest and best are liable to many oversights, forgetfulness, and omissions, and have much which must be borne with.

5. Be the more careful that you fail not in any of the duty which you owe to them or any others: for our own sin hurts us more than others'.

III. What I say of servants, may serve as to the case of bad tenants, who will not pay their rents; and bad tradesmen, that unconscionably borrow and break, and live on other men's estates, and ruin others by their falseness. God will permit man's badness to show itself; and he will have all worldly things appear to be transitory, and unsatisfactory, and accompanied with vexation.

IV. As to the patience necessary in princes and magistrates to bad, provoking subjects, I am not to meddle with it, being discharged by rulers from being a monitor to them.

CASE IX.

False Accusations, Defamations; Duty made odious Crimes; Reputation ruined.

Another case that needeth patience is, false accusation, defamation, and taking away our good name; when innocent men are proclaimed to be guilty of odious crimes, which they detest far more than their accusers do. Yea, when the most conscionable men, that most fear all sin, are defamed by their teachers themselves, as well as by the brutish rabble, to be the worst of men in the land, unfit for human converse, or to be members of any society, and unworthy to live, at least out of gaols. Sin is so much worse than poverty, or any bodily suffering, that the imputation of it unjustly, seemeth a greater trial than to be taken for a beggar, or a leper. But the great trial is, when godly magistrates or ministers of Christ are taken for rogues, traitors, schismatics, unconscionable villains, by which their endeavours for the souls of men are rendered useless: and worst of all, when a malignant generation shall make the generality of men fearing God, and living religiously, to be taken for the most wicked, dangerous hypocrites in the land. By this, young and unexperienced persons, and the ignorant multitude, are brought to a contempt or hatred of serious, practical religion, and made the enemies of their best friends, and of the means of their own salvation.

1. In this sad case, we must not on pretence of patience, and contempt of honour, be insensible of the snares that are laid by Satan to deceive the multitude, and undo souls; nor of the heinous wrong that is done to Christ, and the christian religion and name. Yea, this horrid crime, when it is common, doth so much threaten the destruction of a land, and the removal of the gospel, that it should make us all mourn and earnestly pray, that God would not leave so bad a people, that say, "Depart from us, we would not the knowledge of thy ways." What wonder if Christ give up that land to darkness, and deceit, and Satan, and take away his gospel, when the practice of it is made a common scorn, and taken for an intolerable evil? When God's peculiar people were delivered into captivity, the reason is given, "All the chief of the priests and the people transgressed very much, and the Lord sent his messengers, because he had compassion on his people, and his dwelling-places; but they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, till the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, and there was no remedy," 2 Chron. xxxvi. 14. "I will get me to the great men, and speak to them; for they have known the way of the Lord. But these have altogether broken the yoke, and burst the bonds: therefore a lion shall slay them," &c. Jer. v. 5.

When Christ and his apostles were taken for intolerable, God would tolerate the nation no longer, but gave them up to the cruellest destruction that hath been heard of in the world, and the remnants of them are scattered, cursed people in all countries to this day. When they cried of such as Paul, "Away with such a fellow from the earth, it is not fit that he should live;" God concluded, Away with

such a wicked nation, scatter them as cursed over the earth. They that will themselves escape the destruction in such a land, must mourn and cry for all its abominations, Ezek. ix. 4; and must grieve for the reproach of the solemn assemblies, Zeph. iii. 18. And a Noah, Daniel, or Job in it, may save none but their own souls.

But yet as our reputation is but our own personal interest, whether we are defamed for the common cause of conscience and obedience to God, or whether it be by any private, malicious slander against ourselves, we may bear it patiently.

For, 1. What is our reputation, but the thoughts and words of men concerning us? And how small a matter is this as to ourselves! If they think well of you, you are never the better; and if they think ill of you, you are not the worse. If you be poor, or sick, or pained, will it ease you, or make you rich, for men to think and say that you are well or rich? And if you be rich and well, will it make you poor or sick for men to think or say that you are so? And as the thoughts of men alter not your state, so what is man that his thoughts should be so much regarded by you? Thoughts are such unseen, transitory actings of the mind, that we have much ado to make men believe that there is any law for them, or any great sin in them, or that God himself regardeth them. And when a man is asleep, or thinks of other things, those thoughts are all laid by: and he must quickly die, and lie in darkness; and then what are his thoughts, or what is it to you what that rotten carcass lately thought of you when it lived?

2. The usual cause of impatience under personal disgrace and slander, is pride in ourselves, which is matter of a thousandfold more hurt and grief than the loss of our reputation is. Pride is an overvaluing our reputations or honour with men; a desire to be better thought of than we deserve, as to greatness, wisdom, or goodness; or else an over-great esteem and desire of that reputation, which is indeed our due. Did you not overvalue it, you could easilier spare it, and bear the loss of it. O fear the devilish sin of pride a thousandfold more than any dishonour! A truly humbled soul can easily bear the words and thoughts of men, as to its own interest; for he knoweth his own failings, and liveth not on man.

3. If you will not be hypocrites, let there be some proportion between your confessions to God, and your sense of the accusations and reproaches of men. In prayer you study enlarged confessions, and how much evil do you (truly) say of yourselves. And if another should wrongfully add somewhat more, methinks you might endure it. Is it not an incongruous thing to hear one in prayer an hour together on a day of humiliation accuse himself of the breach of every one of the ten commandments; or for troubled, fearful persons, in all their discourse with ministers or friends, to accuse themselves as utterly graceless, and resist all that can be said to the contrary; and yet for the same persons to be disquieted and impatient, if another accuse them over-much, yea, or less than they accuse themselves? There is some hypocrisy in this.

4. Praise is a more dangerous thing to us than dispraise; and therefore our friends usually hurt us more than our enemies. Flattery is pleasing to nature, and dispraise displeasing; but it is pleasing things only that are overloved, and things overloved that undo the soul. Praise is the usual fuel of pride, and pride the ready way to ruin; but dispraise calleth us to examine and judge ourselves, and is a help to humiliation. And though praise be due to all that is good, and other men owe it to wise and good men; yet the wisest and best are so apt to be tickled and pleased with it, that they seldom escape some degree of proud infection by it.

5. It is God's judgment to which we stand or fall. If he calls us his children, it is a small matter what men call us. If he justifieth us, who is he that shall condemn us? As Paul saith, "It is a small matter to me to be judged of man (or at man's bar, or day); I have one that judgeth me, even the Lord," 1 Cor. iv. 3. Why should he make a great matter what men think or say of him, who believeth that he must live or die for ever, as God shall judge him, and not as men judge him?

6. The thoughts and words of men do not so much as touch our skin. If they be let into our hearts, and made our pain, it is not they, but ourselves that do it.

7. What kind of men be they that slander, reproach, and scorn men for their duty to God or man? Are they not miserable fools, led blindfold towards hell in Satan's chains? And are we not happy and safe in Christ's justification? And will a lord or prince be cast down if a bedlam shall revile him, or because a child of seven years old thinks meanly of him? How easily do learned men bear the contempt of the unlearned, and great men bear the obloquy of beggars? It is not wise or godly men that dishonour you for being wise and godly; but only the ignorant and ungodly that speak against that which they never knew.

8. If it be for your obedience to God, the reproach is more against him than you: it was he, and not you, that made the law which you obey. He that accuseth any one for obeying his father, master, or prince, doth most accuse them that commanded him. If it be a fault and dishonour to mind heaven above earth, and to obey God and his word before man, it is long of God that so commanded us, and not of us. And if they accuse God, be sure he is sufficient to confute them, and to defend himself; he will stop the mouths of all blasphemers, and you may boldly trust him if you suffer for him, and your cause is his. A barking dog may sooner stop the course of the sun, than a blasphemer conquer God.

9. Yea, it is one of the greatest honours in the world to be dishonoured for God. You are deepliest engaged for his cause and he for you: you are principal soldiers in his army; for suffering is the victory of the soldiers of Christ. If God's name, and cause, and interest, and promise cannot put honour on you, nothing can.

10. The reproacher more dishonoureth himself than you. It is a dishonour indeed to be a false accuser, but none to be a patient sufferer.

11. And though we be not guilty of what malicious liars accuse us, we are guilty of many other sins, which God may correct us for by their tongues.

12. Christ went before us in this kind of suffering. "He made himself of no reputation, but endured the cross, despising the shame. He endured the contradiction of sinners against himself," Heb. xii. 2, &c. He that came into the world to destroy the works of the devil, and to save men from sin, was said to be a sinner, and to have a devil, and to do his miracles by the devil's help. They accused him to be a glutton and a wine-bibber, and a sabbath-breaker, and a familiar with publicans and sinners, and a despiser of traditions, and ceremonies, and church government, and a usurper, and a traitor against Cæsar, and a blasphemer against God; and that it might be believed, crucified him as such between malefactors, as worse than Barabbas, a murderer, and fastened his accusation on his cross, and to this day they call him a deceiver. And his apostles were

accordingly accused; Paul was called a pestilent fellow, a mover of sedition, that taught men against Cæsar and the law, and turned the world upside down, not worthy to live upon the earth. The apostles were made a gazing-stock, the scorn of men, the filth and offscouring of all things. And did we not resolve to follow Christ and them, and to bear this cross?

13. But oh what a joyful support to us should it be, to foresee by faith the approaching day, when all this will be set right, and godliness will be a dishonour no more; when Christ will come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that now believe! 2 Thess. i. 10, 11; and when these accusers and slanderers will all be silenced, confuted, and confounded: and sin will be an everlasting shame. Oh what a change will that day make! Then who will have the honour and glory, and who will be cast out as the dung?

Object. But odious lies are divulged, printed, and believed of me, and strangers and posterity will not know but all is true.

Answ. And what if it be so? It toucheth you not now; and neither your body in the grave will feel it, nor your soul in heaven. "Be patient, brethren, to the coming of our Lord," James v. Lies and false history are the devil's way, by which he deceiveth most of the world. It is little thought by the readers how much history is false. Turks and heathens think odiously of christians; and papists of protestants, and by multitudes of lies, cherish hatred and blood-guiltiness in their followers. Pity the liars; alas! it is they that are the sufferers, that by this are hardened in mortal sin. Oh what a blessed day is at hand, when all these slanderers will change their tone, and God will openly justify his servants!

And in the mean time the wicked will believe the father of lies, and we cannot help it. But the faithful honour upright men not the less, but the more, for calumnies which they endure; and had they not been prone to over-honour them, holy-days and relics had not been used as they are.

Let it be your care to give the liars no occasion by your sin; and then mourn for the success of Satan, but joyfully wait for the judgment of God.

CASE X.

Vexatious, strong Temptations of Satan, especially to Melancholy Persons.

Another case that needeth patience is, molesting, strong temptations of Satan, especially to afflicted, sad, discontented, and melancholy persons. As to alluring temptations to sinful love and pleasure, it is abhorrence, and watchfulness, and fear, that are more necessary than patience. But vexing temptations, which would draw men to murmuring, anger, malice, fear, hurtful grief, and such other sins, must be overcome by patience and watchfulness conjunct. But because against this I have written a treatise of "The Cure of Melancholy and over-much Sorrow," and another of "The True Method of Peace of Conscience," I will here only say this little following:

1. God did not think meet to keep innocent Adam and Eve, no nor Christ himself, from being tempted. This life is appointed for trial and conflict, in order to a better. Not to be tempted, were not to be men on earth. There is no crown of glory, but to them that overcome; and no victory where there is no fight or strife. It is not force, but temptations, by which Satan conquereth the world, and which all must conquer that will be saved. Yea, Christ was tempted to the most odious crime, to worship the devil. But to be tempted is no sin of ours: resist and conquer, and it increaseth our acceptance with God, and (which some call our merit) our fitness for the reward. It may be an advantage to our own confirmed, rooted faith and holiness, and contribute to our greater glory in heaven.

2. Satan is a conquered enemy: Christ our Head was tempted that he might overcome him for us. And as he said, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world;" so we may believe and rejoice, that he hath overcome the devil, that we might overcome him. "He was tempted, that he might succour them that are tempted," Heb. ii. 18.

3. All that are in heaven (that had the use of reason) came thither by overcoming of temptations on earth. And would you go a way different from them all?

3. The tempter cannot do what he will, but what God permitteth him, who hath promised to restrain him, that he may not overpower us: "There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it," 1 Cor. x. 13.

6. But alas! we commonly are guilty of giving the tempter his advantage against us. We provoke God by sin to turn him loose upon us, and we give him entertainment by long parleys with him, and by thinking over all that he hath against us, and leaving our imaginations open to his access, and oft also our eyes and ears to feed them. In these cases true repentance is needful to our deliverance from temptations. Yea, and our own mistakes, corruptions, discontents, impatience, and sinful passions are the very strength of the tempter, and he findeth within us the fire which he bloweth up. In this case the cure must be mostly wrought upon ourselves.

7. Strong love and resolution rejoice to conquer strong temptations; as strong men love not to be tied to the work of children and women, but would have such as exerciseth their strength. It is the joy of friendship, to undergo much for a friend: "Love is strong as death; many waters cannot quench it, nor the floods drown it," Cant. viii. 7. If you would give all the substance of your house for love, it would be utterly contemned. Jacob will serve long and patiently for love. And when Satan showeth his malice against Christ and us, strong love would do as Samson and David by the Philistines, go out against them in God's strength, and overcome them. And though we are weak, God's grace is sufficient for us, and his strength is manifested in our weakness.

8. Remember who the tempter is, that you may meet his temptations with hatred and abhorrence. God in mercy put an enmity against devils into our natures, as soon as the devil's enmity had conquered man, that so we might abhor whatever we know to be from them. What if the devil appeared to you in some shape, and persuaded you to despair, or to blaspheme God, or to doubt of the life to come, or to any other sin or mischief? Would it not be a sufficient preservative to know that it is the devil that makes the motion? I do not think that the present forward servants of the devil would obey him as they do, if they saw him to be the tempter. If he brought the cup to the drunkard in a known apparition and shape, sure it would go down with terror, if at all: if he brought a harlot to the whoremonger's bed, it would cool his lust: if he appeared and persuaded the malignant to hate, deride, and persecute men for obeying God, it would sure abate their rage. And why should it not work alike in troubling temptations, when you know they come from him (which the nature and fruit of them may make you know)?

9. Let temptations move you to study their confutation. Know every snare, and the remedy: God hath furnished you in Scripture with armour against all, if you will use it.

10. Long for the blessed day when the tempter and troubler shall be cast out, and never more molest the faithful soul with any motion against God or comfort.

CASE XI.

Settled Doubts of Sincerity and Salvation. Temptations to Despair.

But it is yet a heavier affliction, when a soul is in a settled doubtfulness of its sincerity, justification, and salvation, yea, and strongly persuaded that he hath no grace, nor ever shall have, and hath little hope left of mercy and salvation; and the more he examines and thinks of it, the more he believeth this sad conclusion.

For an ungodly man to know that he is ungodly, is the most hopeful preparation to his recovery, and not to be stifled or made light of; but if it be a sincere person,

1. Before I tell you how far patience is useful in this case, I must tell you that on pretence of patience, the cure must not be neglected, nor contempt or senselessness indulged. Sin is it that bringeth men into this dark, uncomfortable state; and it is present sin in which it doth consist: search therefore what guilt of former sin was the cause, and see that it be truly repented of; and then search how much present sin doth cherish it. Usually there is much ignorance in it of the covenant of grace; and a great defectiveness in our sense of the infinite goodness of God, and of the wonders of his love in Christ, and of the ocean of mercy continued in the work of man's redemption. And there is much unbelief or distrust of God and our Redeemer, and of the promises of grace and salvation; and too little trust to the strengthening and comforting help of the Holy Ghost. And there is too little care to cure men's sinful fears and passions; and sometimes too little care to forbear renewing the wounds of conscience by yielding to temptations, and renewing guilt. And where these are the causes, they must first be resisted, and partly overcome.

2. And while the soul sincerely repenteth and striveth against that sin, (especially distrust of God and Christ,) it must be considered that God giveth not all his grace at once. Infants are not strong: faith, hope, love, and comfort are weak before they are strong, and usually are long in getting strength: and weak faith hath always unbelief joined with it; and every weak grace is clogged and clouded by its contrary sin. And while grace is weak, and sin thus cloudeth it, it cannot be expected that the soul should have certainty of sincerity and salvation, or be free from grief, and fears, and doubting. But patient waiting upon Christ in the use of his appointed means, may in time bring faith and every grace to greater strength, and so the soul to more assurance.

3. A man that hath not attained to a certainty of salvation, may yet have more cause of hope and joy, than of fear and sorrow, upon the mere improbability of his damnation. I have oft instanced thus: It would torment a good christian, if he believed he should ever commit but such sins as David and Peter did (to pass by Solomon); and no christian ordinarily is sure that he shall not commit as great sin: and no wise man that by God's grace is resolved against it, should torment himself with such a fear.

No wife is certain, but she may hate or forsake her husband, or he may hate and murder her; nor any child, but that the father or mother may murder it. And yet it is so unlikely, that it is folly to be sad with such a fear. The old fathers, who thought that no ordinary christian (but a few confirmed ones) can be certain of perseverance or salvation, and those Lutherans and Arminians that are of the same mind, did not yet live in terror for fear of apostasy and damnation, but rejoiced in the comfort of probable hope.

4. If your fears be, whether you are true christians, presently become such, and so end those fears. It may be it is too hard for you to know whether you have been such till now; but you may presently resolve it for the time to come: do but understand the baptismal covenant, and consent to it, and that work is done. Present consent, that is unfeigned, is true christianity. If you can say, that now you are truly willing that Christ with his grace and glory be yours, and you his on his gospel terms, that is, your Priest, Prophet, and King, you are true christians.

Your concluding that the day of grace is past, and God will never give you grace, nor pardon you, while he is daily entreating you to be reconciled to him, and accept his grace, is an abusive suspicion that God is not sincere, and a contradiction to the tenor of his word and instituted ministry. When he bids us go to the highways and hedges, and compel (even the basest) to come in, for a willing soul to suspect that God is unwilling, is abusively to give him the lie; but if you are unwilling yourselves, why complain you? It is an odd sight, to see a beggar in the cold entreated to come to the fire, or a man in the sea entreated to come into the ship, and he will not come, and yet cry and complain that he shall never be taken in; that is, because he will not.

5. It is a great mercy of God that you have hearts so far awakened, as to be troubled with care and fear of your everlasting state, which you see the stupid, dreaming world so little regard. And here are two comfortable evidences appear in most christians in these troubles. First, your fear of punishment hereafter showeth that you have some belief of the word of God, for you believe his threatenings; else why do you fear them? And if you believe that his threatenings are true, it is scarce possible that you should believe that his promises are false; therefore your defect is in the application of these promises to yourself; and to doubt of our own faith or sincerity, is not to doubt of the truth or word of God, and is not damning unbelief (though some mistakingly have written so). Secondly, and you have so much of the applying act, as consisteth in consent and desire. You would fain have Christ, and grace, and glory; and you consent to be his as he consenteth to be yours: else why do your complaints and troubles signify so much? And desire signifieth love and willingness as really as joy doth, though not so pleasingly. So that here is faith, or consent, or willingness, and love to that which you mourn for want of; and those are evidences of grace.

Object. But may not a wicked man be terrified with the fear of damnation?

Answ. Yes, but if this fear were joined with a willingness to be a true christian, and to be justified, sanctified, and ruled by Christ, he should be saved.

Object. But may he not be willing of Christ and holiness, as a means to his salvation, though else he had rather be ungodly and live in sin?

Answ. 1. He cannot truly desire salvation itself, as indeed it is salvation: not to be tormented in hell he may desire; but salvation is to be saved from sin and

separation from God, and to live in perfect holiness, love, and joy in the heavenly society, praising God among the blessed for ever. The heart of the ungodly is against this holy life. 2. And every man hath some end: if this be not the end intended by any man, it must be some sinful pleasure that he must intend or desire. And to make perfect holiness (which mortifieth all such desires and pleasures) to be desired as a means to attain those pleasures, (which it destroyeth,) is a contradiction. So that a wicked man cannot truly desire perfect holiness more than sinful pleasure, neither as his end, nor as the means thereto. Yet I will not deny but that while he hateth it, he may consent that God should make him holy as a *minus malum*, a lesser evil than the pains of hell, which he hateth more. But God hath not promised to give men Christ and holiness, because they hate hell more than it, and desire it not for itself.

Object. I fear that this is my case; for I have a great unwillingness to prayer, meditation, and every holy duty.

Answ. 1. Is your unwillingness to believe and trust God, and love him perfectly, and to live in his thankful, joyful praises, and to love his word, and ways, and servants, and that for ever, greater than your willingness and desire? It is these inward acts that are the holiness of the soul, and to be willing of these, is to be willing to be holy. 2. As to outward exercises, by praying and such like, there may be some such disturbance of the spirits raised by them, through temptations and false thoughts and fears, as put the mind into renewed trouble: and it is that disturbance and trouble in the duty, that many are against, rather than the duty itself. And such may find, that at the same time they would fain have that calmness, confidence, and delight in God, which they would be glad to express by holy prayer. 3. And we must distinguish between a degree of unwillingness or backwardness, which is predominant and effectual, and a degree which doth but strive against holiness, but not overcome. Every christian hath flesh, which lusteth against the Spirit, and would draw back; and therefore hath some degree of backwardness to his duty: but if this did prevail, he would give it over, which he doth not. 4. And yet for a time, in temptation and melancholy, he may be deterred from some outward duty, and give it over, and yet not lose a holy state of soul. Many a true christian is many years affrighted from the Lord's supper: and some such persons in deep melancholy and temptations, have given over outward prayer, and hearing sermons and reading, and yet have not given over a desire of holiness, which is heart prayer, nor a desire to love and obey God's word. Sick men cease outward duty in their beds, when they cease not inward piety.

6. It may be God seeth that you were grown dull and sluggish, and he useth this trouble to awake you to a greater care of your duty and salvation: or he saw you in danger of overloving some worldly vanity, and he useth this to imbitter and divert you, that you may know better what to mind and desire.

7. The effects of a melancholy disease, or of a natural timorousness of the weak and passionate, are much different from rational, well-grounded doubts of sincerity and salvation. A melancholy person can think of nothing with confidence and comfort: there is nothing but trouble, confusion, fears, and despair in his apprehension. He still seems to himself undone and hopeless. A person naturally timorous, cannot choose but fear, if you show him the clearest reasons of assurance. These are like pain in sickness, which faith and reason will not cure; but should help us to strive against and bear. God will not impute our diseased misery to us as our damning sin.

8. It is one thing to have grace, and another thing to know that we have it: many have it, who doubt whether it be sincere. And it is an unspeakable mercy to have it, though you doubt of it. God knoweth his grace in us, and will own it, when we doubt of it or deny it. As long as this foundation of God is sure, that God knoweth who are his, and while we name Christ we depart from iniquity, we are safe, though through fear we are uncomfortable.

9. Though true faith do of its own nature tend to the peace and quietness of the believer, yea, and to fill his soul with joy; yet it doth not always quiet it; but it always consenteth to the baptismal covenant, which maketh us christians, and so far trusteth Christ for pardon, grace, and glory, as to cast our souls and hopes upon him, and to forsake all other trust and hopes rather than to forsake him. As I have oft said, if a prince say to a beggar, Go out of thy own country with me in this ship, and trust me to convey thee to Mexico or China, and I will make thee a lord or prince; if he venture and go with him, though he trembles with fear at every wave or pirate in the voyage, he truly trusteth him, and shall speed accordingly. If a physician say, Trust me and take my medicine, and I will undertake to cure you; if the patient take his medicine, he shall be cured, though he tremble with fear, and doubt of the success: he trusteth him practically, if he cast his hope upon him, though with fear. Though faith and obedience be formally two things, faith, which will cause us to consent, venture, and follow or obey Christ, preferring heaven, whatever we lose by it, is saving faith, whatever doubts, fears, or disquietment remain. If this were better understood, timorous and dark or melancholy christians (who know there is none but Christ to trust to, and therefore resolve to be ruled by him) would not so ordinarily think they have no true faith, because it doth not cast out all their doubts and fears, and quiet and comfort them; which indeed a strong faith would do, which is not hindered by error or diseases.

10. We greatly wrong God and ourselves in contenting ourselves with poor, diminutive thoughts of the essential love and goodness of God. When we think of the sun, (a thousand times bigger than all the earth,) and of all the stars, and the incomprehensible orbs of the heavens, and the unconceivable swiftness of their motions, and the power and extent of their rays of light and emanations, we are overwhelmed with the thoughts of the greatness, power, and wisdom of God; but when we think of his goodness and love, we scarce think much more highly of it than of the goodness and love of a father, a friend, or some excellent man. And should we match his power but with a man's, what madness and ugly blasphemy were it!

Yet I would not have the presumptuous here to mistake, and hence to conclude that a God so good will not condemn the rejecters of his grace, and say, essential, infinite love will make all men as happy as he can. For, 1. Experience assureth us of the contrary; that he maketh great variety of creatures, and permitteth pain and misery in the world. 2. And the execution of justice on the impenitent, wicked subjects, is good, as a means to the right government of free agents. 3. And the infiniteness of God's goodness and love doth not appear in his loving any creature which is finite, but in loving that which is infinite, and that is himself.

But yet we must conceive of his essential attributes as equal in themselves. And if God's goodness and love were conceived of by man, in any proportion

to his greatness and power, we could never so easily suspect his kindness, nor fear that he will damn those who unfeignedly desire to please him; nor should we fly from him as from a hurtful enemy, but long to be nearer him in holy communion, as we desire the company of our wisest, dearest friends; nor should we be so distrustful of him, as if he were no security to us from our dangers; but the name of the Lord would be our strong tower, to which when we fly, we should believe that we are safe, and our trust in God would be the quieting of our tormenting fears and cares.

11. And we have these poor thoughts of the love of God to man, because we do not sufficiently study the miraculous demonstrations of it in our Redeemer: diversions cause us to neglect this study; and perverseness and unbelief do cause us to give it too narrow a room and too slight and short entertainment in our thoughts. Nothing in this world doth better deserve our most diligent and delightful study, than the gospel of Christ, and the wonderful work of divine love in man's redemption and salvation: study this till you firmly believe it, and taste it, and it will be as angels' food, a heavenly feast here sent down to earth, to draw men's hearts to God in heaven. The love of God will turn your very hearts into returning holy love. It was drops of love that Christ sweat in the shape of blood in his agony, and it was a stream of love which flowed from his pierced side, in the shape of blood and water. It is love which the three witnesses on earth, and the three from heaven, attested. God knew how much sin had obscured his love and goodness to man, more than his power and greatness, by making man an unmeet receiver and discerner of it, by reason of guilt, fear, and naughtiness of heart; and therefore how very backward man is to believe and relish God's love. Therefore while Satan more industriously enticeth the soul of man to the idolatry of creature carnal love, than ever he did entice the bodies of men to worship Baal or such like; God hath set up his own image sent down to man from heaven, in opposition to Satan's idols, that sense may have suitable means for the moral conquest of the tempter, and the replenishing of the soul with a truly excellent facilitating love; and in a congress of the love of God and man, in and by him that is God and man, heaven may be here begun, and may have a fuller communion with souls on earth, than it had before Christ's incarnation. Study the gospel aright, as the book of divine love, and it will turn you from many unprofitable studies, and cure sinful, melancholy fears, better than all other medicines in the world. And even those that said with Thomas, "Unless I may see and feel, I will not believe;" or as a holy divine in deep melancholy rashly said to me, If an angel from heaven should tell me that I have free grace, I would not believe him; would repent as both these did: and when by faith you have as it were put your finger into his wounded side, the sense of divine love will make you cry out, "My Lord, and my God."

12. And it greatly hurteth christians, that they are not duly sensible, how much it is Satan's design and work in all his temptations to misrepresent God to man, and hide his love and goodness from us: as he doth it in the wicked by drawing them to fleshly, deluding love, and making them ignorant, unbelieving, or forgetful of the love of God; so he doth much against better men by raising many objections against it, and filling them with false imaginations, and diminutive or suspicious thoughts against God, as if he were far more terrible to us than amiable.

13. And it wrongs some that they misunderstand the office of conscience, as if it always spake as an oracle from God, whereas it is but the act of a dark understanding, which very usually erreth, and misjudgeth of our state; and a mistaking conscience accusing falsely, as graceless, &c. shall no more condemn us at God's bar than a slandering enemy. "I judge not my own self, (saith Paul,) I know nothing by myself, (inconsistent with sincerity,) yet am I not thereby justified: there is one that judgeth me, even the Lord:" that is, it will not really go with me as I judge, but as God judgeth.

14. And alas! when fear beareth down both faith and reason, as to the act, no silencing reason prevaileth with the soul. I prove to them from the gospel this great truth; that Christ damneth none (that hear the gospel) but those that wilfully reject him and refuse his offered grace, out of greater love to something else, and this to the last. I oft convinced dejected christians that this is true, and that this is not their case; they do not continue to refuse Christ and his grace by preferring something else. And yet this quieteth them not, nor receive they the conclusion; for fear, and feeling, and weakness, and melancholy, overpowereth their reason; as bitter physic would not let children believe that it was good for them, and given them in love.

15. Though no pretence of patience must abate our desires after full assurance and perfection, yet while we find by experience that God will have men on earth to differ much from those in heaven, and to have but low and little things in comparison of their joy and glory, it is our great duty to be thankful for our present measure, and to wait in hope for more. He that hath no comfortable apprehension of his condition, can have no thankfulness for it: and we are all obliged to great thankfulness for the least degree of grace and hope: and thankfulness is somewhat more than patience, and therefore doth include it.

The acts of the understanding and of the will go together: and if we had as full an understanding of the heavenly state, as those have that possess it, our wills by answerable love and joy would now enjoy it; and so we should have the peculiar privileges of the glorified here on earth. But this is no more suited to our present state in flesh, than it is to an infant in the womb to know what cities, courts, and churches are, or what trades, and merchandise, and husbandry is, or what books, and arts, and sciences are, or what meat, and drink, and recreation are. We must be content on earth with the measure which God designeth unto earth. We see by constant experience, that he hath precluded the heavenly state from all our senses; he will not let us see what is done above. The first martyr had such a sight by miracle, but we must not expect it. He will not let our departed friends appear to us here to give us notice of what they see. He will not send angels to satisfy our desire of such knowledge; nay, infernal devils shall appear but rarely: the rareness of all these leaveth sadness in doubt whether there be any such thing or not. And Paul's sight of paradise was such as must not be uttered to us.

And full subjective certainty of salvation, which excludeth all doubts and fears, is so high a degree as few in flesh, I think, obtain. Objective certainty every true christian hath; that is, his salvation (if he so die at least) is absolutely certain itself, so that his belief and hope of it shall never deceive him. But to be certainly known to men, that is, with an apprehension which as much excludeth doubts and fears as sight and possession would do, or as the light and the visible objects exclude all doubts whether we behold them, or as we know that two

and two are four, or that every effect hath a cause, and every relate a correlate, and that full contradictions are inconsistent; I think this degree of certainty none have on earth, without some miraculous inspiration or revelation. But we may attain to so firm an apprehension of that truth and blessedness, which is certain in itself, as may make our hope, and joy, and desire far greater than our doubts, and fears, and aversation. And this joyful life of well-grounded hope may be called a certainty or full assurance; though yet it be far short of perfect, and the certainty of beatifical vision and fruition. And alas! it is but very few true christians who attain this quieting, joyful degree.

All this being considered, you see that while we are on earth, we must not look for heaven; nor in the wilderness for the Land of Promise: Joshua and Caleb's encouraging words, and the bunch of grapes, and God's promise and presenee, and his conducting light, provision, and proteetion, must quiet us in our journey: and some few have Moses' Pisgah-sight. Murmuring at wilderness-wants, dangers, and difficulties, was the Israelites' sin and fall. We must not look for the harvest at seed time, nor for more knowledge, and assurance, and joyful apprehensions of heaven, on earth, than is suitable to the state of travellers in flesh: we are yet, alas! too sinful; and sin will breed doubts and fears: we are here very ignorant, and conscious that we are very liable to err; and that every man hath many errors; and therefore we are apt to doubt even of that whieh we see and feel, yea, and to fear where we see convincing evidence of certainty; and we can scarce tell when and how to trust our own understandings: we are in a dark world; and in a dark body, and chained to it in our actings; all our grace and goodness is imperfect; and till every grace be perfeet in us, assurance of salvation will not be perfect; for the perfection of every grace is necessary to it. And is it any wonder that such a wight as man, in flesh, and sin, and under temptations, and in a dark, malignant world, which God hath very much forsaken, should not have the joy of full assurance of invisible glory? The christians of all those ages, who held that none (or only a few rare persons) eould be certain of their salvation, could not have that certainty which they thought none had? Yet they did, and we must, rejoice in hope, and be thankful here for a travelling degree.

CASE XII.

The Loss of Teachers, and suitable Means of Grace and Salvation.

Another great affliction which requireth patience is, the loss of the sound and serious preaching of the gospel, by the death, or banishment, or silencing of our teachers, while our own great wants and weaknesses call for the best assistance. The soul being more precious than the body, the welfare of it is more valuable, and its loss and famine more lamentable: and we see that God ordinarily worketh according to the aptitude of means; and when he taketh away such needful means, it is a sad degree of his own forsaking us, and denying to us further grace. Alas! how bad are we under the best helps, and how dark and doubting under the most clear, convincing teaching, how cold and dull under the most warm and lively ministry! And what shall we then be, if God remove our teachers from us? May we not turn cold, and dull, and worldly, and deceived, under cold, dull, deceiving, worldly pastors? and now grow careless of our own souls, under those that are careless of their own and ours? If in the communion of wise and holy christians, we found it hard to grow in grace, may we not fear deelining when we are separated from such, and dwell as Lot in Sodom, and must converse with worldly or malignant men?

As to the sad case, 1. You may have the greater comfort, because you make not light of the affliction; and may be the more patient believingly, because you are not patient as contemptuous unbelievers. The patience of carnal men under such a loss, is a greater evil than the loss itself; and the patience of faith is a greater good than the helps which you lose. Had you been so blind, and dead, and bad, as to let go the gospel, and be easily quiet and content, as long as you enjoy your honour, wealth, and ease, this had been a far greater misery than a want of teachers; as a mortal sickness which causeth loathing and indigestion, is worse than the hardest fare with appetite and health. Thank God that you are sensible of your loss.

2. If you are true christians you have the law and gospel written upon your hearts, whence none can by violence take it from you. You may lose the provision of your house, and the food on your tables; yea, and cast up that which you have eaten; but if it be digested and turned into your flesh and blood, it is not so easily taken from you. O bless God, that before he took away the means, he did convert you by them, and taught you effectually before he took away your teachers. When the word was digested and turned into knowledge, faith, repentance, desire, obedience, patience, hope, and love, neither men nor devils ean take it from you; your heart, where it is sown and rooted, is not within their reach, unless you will give them the key, and foolishly betray yourselves. When God hath made you his habitation by his Spirit, and Christ dwelleth in your hearts by faith, and the kingdom of God and life eternal is begun within you, the loss of your outward helps will not undo you. I am not imitating them that tell you that all men have sufficient light within them, or that call you to undervalue the word written and preached, on pretence of that sufficiency, as if you need no other notice of God and Christ, but to be told that he is in you. But yet rejoice that God is within you, though all these outward means were gone: that is, that your faith and love have within you such an object to live upon as your Father, Saviour, and Sanctifier, and such an agent as the Spirit to aetuate all. When they silence your teachers, burn your books, shut up your church doors, they cannot shut out the Spirit of Christ, nor deprive you of its life, and light, and love.

3. If men take away the means forementioned, they do not therefore take away all. 1. You have all God's works to view and study: sun and stars, heaven and earth, sea and land, eities and country, fields and meadows, beasts and men, good and bad. And you are taught already by the gospel, to see not only the great Creator in all these, but also the gracious Redeemer, purchasing, upholding, and using all as delivered to him for the good of his elect.

2. You have the daily use of meditation, as on all the works of God, so also on Christ and the gospel which you have learnt; yea, and of the joys of heaven.

3. You have daily and hourly leave to open your ease to God; you have access to him by Christ in prayer, thanksgiving, and joyful praise. If you have but an appetite, you have here a continual feast, which you may enjoy in every place; in your closet, in the fields, in a prison.

4. It is very likely that you may save your Bibles, and other good books, and so have God's word still at hand. It was written in Hebrew and Greek, but

God hath used man to translate and unseal it to you; and you may choose your time, and choose the subject which you would read: and the writings of your teachers are usually more accurate than their speaking; and at a cheap rate you may have choice and excellent helps. And you may read them in your families, to your children and servants, and set up many teachers for one. Undervalue not these remaining helps.

5. And if God continue to you in the public assemblies but sound doctrine and lawful communion, do not say all means are gone. If it be but the reading of the holy Scriptures, and singing psalms, and praying, no worse than is expressed in the liturgy of this nation, it is a mercy not to be despised. It was but a little part of the New Testament which was contained in Peter's speech, which converted three thousand, Acts ii. And but a little part which was in the words of Paul, which the gentiles desired might be again spoken to them the next day. And but a little part which Paul wrote to any one church, when he required them to read it publicly, and to read that to one church which was written to another. Christ's own sermon, Luke iv. and that to his disciples, Matt. v. were but a little of what bare reading now can tell us. Ezra was put to spend much of the day in a pulpit, to read the law, and make them understand the reading: that is, when by their captivity they had lost the language in which the law was written, he was fain to read it in Hebrew, to translate it by word of mouth, and turn the Hebrew into the Chaldean tongue which they understood. This was far less than the bare reading of both Law and Gospel already translated doth for you. The quantity of one or two of our chapters, were received in the days of the apostles with great joy, to the conversion of many souls. And in Queen Mary's days, some poor women would hire a boy secretly in a corner to read to them a little of the English Bible, yea, of the Primer. But the full soul loathes the honeycomb, when to the hungry every bitter thing is sweet.

There are some ignorant christians that think it enough to charge any thing in worship or religion to be unlawful because it is human, the work of man. It is like, these will not be grieved that their teachers are silenced, for they were men. And as men have written some forms of prayer, so they are men that have written the many hundred holy books that are now among us. And preaching and praying are the words and works of men. The singing psalms were turned into metre by men: yea, all your English Bibles were made English by men, and you read and hear no English words but the words of men, though they signify the word of God. The dividing of the Scripture into chapters and verses, is the invention and work of men. And I think they were but men that taught you to speak and read. God worketh by man on man, as sociable, fit instruments: and if you despise all in religion that is the work of man, you will despise the word and work of God, and show that you are less than men.

4. When God taketh teachers from one people (before death) he usually sends them to another; and it proveth oft to the advantage of the church. When the disciples were all driven away from Jerusalem, they went preaching the gospel into all countries about. Persecution drove the apostles all over the world: it sent Paul to Rome, to preach it at the doors of Nero. When he and Barnabas were driven from one city, they carried the gospel to another. Persecution had a great hand in sending the gospel to most nations in the world that had it. Yea, the very banishment of Nestorius, Dioscorus, and such others, as heretics, for some forms of speech, had a great hand in the sending of christianity into Persia, India, and many remote parts of the east, south, and north; and of late to New England, and other plantations in America, it was sent by the prelates and other rulers from this land. A captive maid, it is said, began the conversion of the Iberians; as Frumentius and Edesius did of the Indians (or rather, planted a ministry in Habassia, miscalled India, which before had none but lay christians since the eunuch's days).

And every good christian is of a public spirit, and loveth Christ's greatest interest with the greatest love, and therefore loveth the church and the word better than himself, or his native soil. Why then should we not the more patiently bear the loss of those labourers, whom God sends to do greater work abroad? Is it like that Mr. John Elliot would ever have done half the good in England that he hath done in America? We pray that God's name may be hallowed, and his kingdom come, and his will be done on earth as it is in heaven, and England is a very little part of the earth.

5. We must have our time of rest with Christ, when we have had our time of labour. If God call home his servants to himself, rejoice with them that there rejoice, "and have fought a good fight, and have finished their course, and do receive the crown of righteousness;" grudge them not their rest and happiness. God sent them hither to work, run, and fight, and not to reign or long abide. It may seem hard to us that so holy a man as Stephen should do Christ no longer service in his church; and that James, who hoped to have sat next to Christ in his kingdom on earth, should so quickly be taken from his apostleship; but he had his petition to be near to Christ in a better manner than he desired: and Stephen and he did more in a day by dying, than most others do by living long. The foundation of the church was to be laid in blood; and none is too precious for so great a work, for which Christ's blood was not too precious.

6. Ministers are not idle or useless when they are silenced: they are praying for the church, and they are lights in the houses and company where they come, and Christ disdained not oft to preach to one woman or man; as John iv. ix. &c. And some of them publish God's truth by writing, and that to a far greater extent and number, than ever they could have by voice. The word of God is not bound, when we are bound.

7. Yea, the silence and sufferings of Christ's faithful ministers, do powerfully preach: it maketh men see the evil of that proud, malignant spirit, which hateth such men, and cannot endure them. The vulgar are hardly brought to wisdom by mere words, or to know the difference between good and evil, till by sense and experience they feel and taste the several fruits. The cured blind man (John ix.) could quickly discern that God heareth not sinners, but if any man be a (true) worshipper of God, him he heareth; and that he must needs be of God that could open his eyes; and that therefore those men were not of God that hated and persecuted him that did so much good. The vulgar hate popery far more for Queen Mary's bonfires, and the inquisition, and the French, Bohemian, Polonian, Piedmont, and Irish massacres, than for any doctrinal error in their religion. And when long experience hath assured them that the persecuted ministers preached the true gospel of Jesus Christ with great plainness, seriousness, and love to souls, and that they sought no worldly gain or honour but men's salvation, and that they lived as they preached; and when they see

that it is this very sort of men that papists bend their malice against, and study to extirpate, silence, and destroy; and that godliness and conscience is the intolerable enemy which they would drive out of the land; and that the most wicked, sensual, filthy, debauched, unconscionable malignants, are their agents, and the men that they employ and trust, who will obey them before God, and against him; this loudly tells the people what they are; and by their fruits, wolves, thorns, and thistles are known: they can tell whose servants they are by their works, better than by their livery, clothing, or names. To hinder the gospel and good of souls, and make the godly a hated, scorned, persecuted people, and cause men of no conscience to be better thought of, is the devil's work, yea, his chiefest work in the world. And they are so far his servants that do it, by what names or titles soever they be called. And as human nature hateth cruelty, and christianity hateth ungodliness, malignity, and persecution, so these works do effectually preach to the people, and tell them who are their friends, and who their foes; what to love, and what to hate.

8. God will do his work by others when we are dead and gone. Successive generations must partake of his mercies, and do his service here, and not the same men still continue. And when we grow dull with age and weakness, young men of greater vigour and alacrity shall succeed us.

9. And it hath hitherto been God's way to carry on his work with great changes and variety in the world. As he causeth winter and summer, nights and days, so his church hath had hitherto its turns of prosperity and adversity. And prosperity hath increased the number of christians, and adversity hath tried them, and increased the grace of those that persevere.

10. It is more our diligence and faithful use of means, by which we grow in grace, than by the enjoyment of the best, if we be slothful under it: and sometimes God seeth that fulness breedeth wantonness and loathing, and like foolish children we play with our meat, or quarrel about it; and then it is time to take it away, and let fasting help us to a better appetite. I have known those that when they lived among the ignorant, and could hardly hear a good sermon without going divers miles for it, and hardly borrow a good book, and rarely speak with a serious christian, were so hungry, affectionate, and diligent, that they evidently profited very much; but when they came where they had variety, choice, and fulness of teachers, books, and religious converse, some grew more notional, worldly, and cold; and some self-conceited, proud, and quarrelsome; and some downright heretical or schismatical. And do we need any more to justify the afflicting providence of God in taking away, and silencing ministers, than the sad review of our common miscarriages? Have not pious ministers been disgracefully guilty of overvaluing their own judgments and opinions, and laying life and death on words they understood not, and raising hatred, censures, and contempt against their brethren that differed from them, though wiser and better than themselves? What shameful and doleful work did the Nestorian, and Eutychian, and Monothelite controversies make! The doleful wars about predestination, grace, and free will, which have torn the church, and destroyed love these twelve hundred years; I have fully proved to be shameful and sinful, most about ambiguous words, or unrevealed things, in a book called "Catholic Theology." We have heard with grief what unchristian contentions there have long been beyond sea, among protestants called Lutherans and Calvinists, and how oft the former have persecuted the latter. We have heard of late, how some represent Calvinists, as if they were as bad as heathens; and some in the pulpits say, The religion of the Arminians is the religion of the devil. If none of these speak the words of truth or charity, nor know either what they say, or what manner of spirit they are of; is it not just with God to silence them all? What dreadful work hath the interest and controversies of diocesans, liturgy, and ceremonies here made! And when we cannot bear with one another, it is just with God to bear with none of us. How long have episcopal, presbyterians, independents, and anabaptists been censuring, condemning, and some of them persecuting one another; and been teaching the people to believe that those that they accuse deserve it! And if we thus show that we all deserve it, how can we open our mouths against God's justice if he reject us all?

11. As when God taketh away health, strength, and life from the aged, they must be thankful that they enjoyed them so long, and consider how they used them while they had them; so when he taketh away ministers and public helps, we must be thankful that we had so long peaceable enjoyment of them, and consider whether it be not for our abuse, that we are deprived of them.

12. God is not tied to outward helps, though he tie us to them while we may have them. If he take them from us, he can give us that grace in our secret closets, which we had in the public assemblies; and we may expect his assistance and blessing in any means which he appointeth us to use.

CASE XIII.

When God seemeth not to bless Means to us; Preaching, Praying, &c.

Another great trial of patience is, when praying and preaching seem to us to be all lost, and God denieth his answer and his blessing. When we hear from day to day, and understand and remember little that we hear, and find not that we are any stronger in faith, love, and patience than we were; when we pray daily for more grace, and yet find no more than we had before; and we pray for our country, and our rulers, and teachers, and for many friends, and God seemeth to deny us almost all.

And this is not only grievous in itself, but in the temptations which it occasioneth. 1. Satan hence would tempt us to doubt, whether God regarded man, and man's concerns, as the Scripture tells us that he doth. 2. And he would tempt us to doubt whether the promises of God are to be trusted. 3. And consequently to question all religion, and to give over praying and other means, as if all were vain; or at least to use them heartlessly, with little faith, and hope, and comfort: and how should patience here be exercised, and these temptations overcome?

I. Our first work must be to understand God's instituted means, and the promises of God concerning their success, that we may be neither too high nor too low in our expectations, nor charge God foolishly through our mistake.

What is it that God denieth you? Is it outward things, as health, wealth, deliverance from dangers, the life of your friends, the conversion of your relations, &c.? and why think you that prayer in such cases is in vain?

1. Did you think that it was ever the mind and promise of God, that on pretence of hearing prayer, he should give up to us the government of the world? And that we should never be poor, nor sick, nor die till we are willing? I doubt then few would

ever consent, but live longer than Methuselah in earthly prosperity and pleasure. And must our friends never suffer nor die as long as we will pray against it? Where then would there be room for those that are born (unless God made our friends a burden to us; and would not that be as much against our prayers as their death)? Did you think that God must reverse his first sentence, if you will but pray for it? "Dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return unto the ground," Gen. iii. 17—19. Must there be no thorns or briers, no cold or winter, no night or darkness, if you will but pray that there be none? You will say, it is moderate and reasonable prayers that you make.

But, 2. Who must be judge what requests are reasonable, God, or you? If you must be judge, how can we tell what bounds your desires will have? You will not ask to live in prosperity a thousand years; but when death is coming at a hundred years' end, you would live yet longer, and so on for ever, still longer and longer; and a thousand years would not make you willing, if either faith or affliction do it not.

3. And would you have all others have the same grant, that affliction and death should be kept off if they do but pray for it; and that God should give them what they ask? This would infer a thousand contradictions. A thousand men would ask to be kings of England, where there can be but one. Many would ask for the same lordships, lands, or offices: some of them would take you for enemies, and ask for your death or ruin, and it may be you would ask for theirs. They would have your house, your wife, your trade, and you would have theirs. So many would live long, as that you would want food and room. What a mad wish were this, for all men to have their wills! The world is full of folly and wickedness, and wrath and malice; should all such persons have their wills? What is this conceit but a dream of millions of mischiefs, confusions, and impossibilities? One may see by such desires how the world would be governed, if God gave it up to the will of man. Could there be any unity, where every man would rule, and every man hath an interest cross to others? Can there be any order or goodness, when all men are partly bad, and every bad man would have his will?

But you will say, that it is not bad men, nor bad desires, that you would have God to grant, but only what is just and good. *Answ.* But who shall be judge, what is just and good? If every man must be judge, unjust and wicked prayers must be granted; and the judgment and wishes of many will be against yours. If it be you that must be judge, though it is like that is it that you would have, you cannot for shame sure speak it out. This were for God to resign his place to you, and make you the God and Governor of the world, and only those prayers must be granted which you think just and good. Whence are all the bloody wars in the world, but that one king would have that which another hath, or have his will against another? You may see then that it is worse than madness to desire, that any but God should be the highest disposer of the affairs of men, and determine what shall befall us in this world.

4. And do you think that God is unfit to do it? Doth he want wisdom to know what is best? Doth he want goodness to choose what is best? Or doth he want power to do what is best? Who hath it if God wants it? And how come they to it if not by him? And doth he give more than he hath himself? If he hath any imperfection he is not God.

5. It is most certain that all things are done well by God, and as they should be; and therefore the cause of your dissatisfaction is in yourselves. And indeed in these several evils you may find it. 1. By your sin you provoked God in justice to correct you, and deny your prayers. 2. And by your present badness you make yourselves unfit for that which you desire, that is good. 3. And by your blindness and fleshly mind, you desire that which is not to be desired. 4. And after all this, by your idolatrous, usurping self-will, you are discontented with God for not giving you your desires. These four things contain your case: and is not every one of them a shameful evil?

II. But suppose that it be not outward things, but more grace, and assurance, and comfort, and deliverance from temptation and sin, that you pray against, and God doth not give it you: is not this cause of questioning the success of prayer, or of doubting at least of my own success, and whether my prayers are not all in vain?

Answ. That I may give you full satisfaction, I will tell you, 1. What kind of means prayer is. 2. What prayer it is that is such a means. 3. What may be expected by means of prayer, and what not. 4. I will prove to you that prayer is not in vain, nor God's promises to it broken. 5. I will show you why you should be patient under God's denials.

I. Prayer is not a purchasing means, nor a meriting by giving God any thing which may benefit him; nor doth it work any change on God; but it procureth blessings by the fitting the petitioner to receive them. And that in several respects: 1. Even naturally considered, it is a contradiction for a man to be unwillingly happy, and to attain the happiness which he desireth without so much as asking him that alone can give it. 2. Morally considered, a man is very unfit for and unworthy of the benefit which he thinks not worth his asking; especially if it be the greatest blessing that man is capable of, which he so despiseth. 3. And legally considered, the gift cannot be his, that performeth not the condition imposed by the donor, especially when it is but so reasonable a one, as ask and have.

So that you see though prayer purchase not and change not God, it is a naturally, morally, and economically necessary qualification and condition of our reception, and thus only it hath the nature of a means.

II. There are three sorts of prayer, which are not in vain, and yet much differ as to their success. 1. There is prayer that is not dissembled, but cometh only from natural principles or common grace; such as Ahab's humiliation, and the mariners' prayers in Jonah; and it is like the Ninevites' and Simon Magus's desires to escape punishment. This is not in vain, I cannot say that God is under any promise to grant it, but he oft doth grant it, and pity such as cry to him in their misery. Which it seems was the case described, Psal. lxxviii.; cvii. And whether Manasseh's was any better, I know not.

2. There is the prayer of sincere, weak christians, who are guilty of much weakness of faith, and coldness of desire; these yet through Christ have certain promises of necessary things. 3. There are the fervent and faithful prayers of men of eminent faith and holiness; and these oft prevail for extraordinary blessings, which are not promised to the prayers of every true christian. Elias, and Elisha, and Peter did miracles by prayer. There are devils, and sins, and sufferings, that go not out but by fasting and prayer. The effectual, fervent prayer of an excellent, righteous man, availeth more than ordinary christians. If church history may be credited, such were the prayers of Gregory of Neocæsarea, Martin

of Tours, and some other holy men that prevailed for wonders or miracles with God. All attain not their success.

III. And I will tell you what grant of prayers you may or may not expect from God. 1. The attaining of salvation, or our ultimate end, every true christian doth pray for, and shall obtain. 2. The obtaining of all those means which are of absolute necessity to salvation, every true christian prayeth for, and shall obtain; such as are our part in the merits and intercession of Christ, the pardon of sin as to the damning punishment, the necessary grace of the Spirit, deliverance from the dominion of sin: these we may be sure of.

3. There be some subordinate means so ordinarily needful, though not absolutely necessary, that we must pray for them with great earnestness, and may pray for them with great hope, though not with certainty of obtaining them; such are the use of Bibles, the benefit of a faithful minister, sacraments, christian society, time of preparation for a comfortable death, &c.

4. There are some things which seem better to selfish persons, and to flesh and blood, than indeed they are, and are of very mutable, various use; sometimes they are good for us, and at other times hurtful; to one man they are good, and to another bad: such are outward prosperity, wealth, honour, ease, health, friends, and life. God best knoweth both to whom these things are good, and when, and how far, and how long; and because we know not, we cannot tell when, and how far, and to whom God will give them, when we pray for them; but we must ask in hope, according to our best understanding, and willingly leave all to the wisdom and will of God.

5. There are some things which would be certainly good for us if we had them, which sin maketh us unfit to receive, or, as the Scripture speaketh, "unworthy of," not only in the sense of the law of works, as all are, but even of the law of grace, or God's ordinary gospel dispensation. Such are greater measures of grace, and of victory over sin, assistance in duty, and the enjoyment of the best means, and freedom from some temptations and afflictions. Guilty, culpable christians of the worst sort, that have less faith, and desire, and obedience than better men, cannot expect that in that condition their prayers should prevail as much as better; and that God should not punish them by any correction, or deny them greater grace and glory.

6. A strong christian who hath before lived by faith, in a holy, fruitful life, and overcome the strong temptations of flattering prosperity, and fetched most of his daily comforts from the hopes of heaven, may expect with high probability, though not with absolute certainty, that God should give him in answer to his prayers, an answerable victory over all the temptations of adversity, and deliver him from such sufferings as else would be to his greater hurt than good.

7. Those that God called to propagate the gospel by the attestation and seal of miracles, had answerable faith and grant of their prayers.

IV. By thus much you may see, that while prayer and hope are guided by God's word of precept and promise, they are far from being in vain: and though he give us not all that we desire, he giveth us all that we ought to desire absolutely, and all that we should conditionally desire, if we have the condition.

For, 1. Prayer goeth to him that can easily give us whatever we need, without loss, or cost, or difficulty; to him who is fuller of goodness than the sea of water, or the sun of light. And if the sun be an intellectual, free agent, it should in reason be no hard matter to believe, that it is willing to give us light.

2. We come not to God before he calleth us: he hath commanded us to ask: it is in his own appointed way and means that we wait for mercy.

3. Sincere prayer cometh from God, and therefore is acceptable to him. It is his Spirit that giveth us holy desires, and teacheth us what and how to ask; and causeth us to believe and hope for mercy. And God despiseth not his Spirit's work. If it cause us but to groan out sincere desires, he knoweth the meaning of them.

4. In prayer we retire from ourselves to God. We exercise repentance in humble confession: we acknowledge our insufficiency, emptiness, and unworthiness, and so are the fitter, as beggars, to receive the gifts of his free grace.

5. True prayer disposeth us to the right use of all that God shall give, and that is the way to obtain our desire. Prayer confesseth sin, and implieth that we take heed of sinning for the time to come: it confesseth unworthiness, and therefore implieth a promise to be thankful. It trusteth to God, and seeketh all of him, and therefore implieth our purpose to live to him and please him.

6. We go to God in the name of Christ, and have a Mediator whom he heareth always. We plead his worthiness, and that by his own command.

7. And prayer hath many promises from God, who is faithful, and never brake his promise. "Ask, and ye shall receive."

8. Lastly, though we have not all that we would have, yet experience greatly encourageth us to pray, and tells us that prayer hath prevailed with God.

I know that the devil and unbelief has many dissuading objections.

As, 1. That God is not moved by our words, much less by long prayers.

Answ. But our hearts are moved while just desire is excited and exercised, and thereby made fitter to receive God's gifts. We pull the boat to the shore, and not the shore to the boat, when we lay hold on the shore and pull at it. If this reason were good, all means in the world were vain as well as prayer. If we do good, and obey God, and forsake sin, if it were to perfection, all this maketh no change in God: shall we therefore conclude, that it is vain, and no means of his acceptance and blessing. Your eating, and drinking, and trading, and ploughing, and sowing, and study, and travels, make no change in God: are they therefore all in vain? And will he give you all that you want without them? Changes are made upon the receiver, not on God.

Object. 2. God knoweth what we want without our prayer, and he knoweth our desires.

Answ. What though you know what a beggar wants, or what your child wants; will you think him a fit receiver, who thinks himself too good to ask, or thinks you must give him all without asking? Is it not God himself that hath bid you pray, and are his terms too hard? Have you less need than Christ himself had, who spent whole nights in prayer?

Object. 3. Many live in prosperity that never pray, and many in adversity that pray.

Answ. Dives lived in prosperity, Luke xvi. and so did Herod and Pilate, and so do many Turks and heathens: is christianity therefore in vain? And will you be contented with the portion of such men? Go into the sanctuary and see their end. Are those now in prosperity who are in hell with devils, past help and hope? Prayer is not to make us richer

and greater in the world than other men, but to make us better, and obtain salvation. Do you judge of men by their case in this world or the next? And are those men prosperous, who are the slaves of the flesh, and the world, and the devil? And are they not better, who are secured of the love of God?

V. But I will next tell you, what cause you have of patience, even when God seemeth to deny your prayers.

1. It is an unspeakable mercy, that he will not deny us any thing that is necessary to our salvation. Is that man miserable, and should he murmur, who is a child of God, a member of Christ, and an heir of heaven; and is pardoned, sanctified, and shall be saved? Is there not enough in Christ and heaven to satisfy you?

2. God gave you mercy, yea, invaluable mercy, before you asked it: he gave you your being and reason unasked: he gave the world a Saviour unasked: he gave you christian parents, teachers, and books unasked: and he gave you his first grace unasked, and many a deliverance since; therefore if he deny you what you ask, it is not because he is backward to give.

3. If it be any outward thing that he denieth you, bethink you whether God or you be fitter to dispose of such. Have you more authority and right? He owed you nothing: if he have given you long ago, be thankful for that, though it be past; it was freely given. And who is wiser, and better knoweth how to use you and all men? Is it God or you? Who is better, or unlikelier to choose amiss?

And again, remember how great a sin it is, to grudge at God for his government of the world, and to desire to depose him, and to dispose of any thing ourselves. Is this your subjection and submission to his will? Did not Christ by his example teach you better, when he said, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt?" And "if this cup may not pass from me unless I drink it, thy will be done," Matt. xxvi. 39, 42. Man's duty, holiness, interest, and rest, lieth in bringing over his own will entirely to the will of God, and his sin and misery in resisting it.

4. Either you are sure that what you ask is best for you, or not. If it be wealth or health, you are not sure; more perish by prosperity than by adversity. I before told you that men are condemned for loving somewhat more than God, and holiness, and heaven, and preferring it in their choice. And do you think men are liker to overlove sickness, and poverty, and crosses, more than health, and wealth, and pleasure? And would you have God give you that which is worst for you, only because you pray for it or would have it? You will not do so by your child, no nor by your swine, lest he burst his belly.

But if it be grace, and that which you are sure is best for you, your first duty is to examine whether there be not some great impediment in yourselves, which is the cause of God's denial. Do you go to the root of your old sins in your penitent confession? Do you hide no secret guilt or sin, and deal too gently with it? Do you humble yourself to those that you have wronged by word or deed? Do you make just restitution, so far as you are able, to all that you have defrauded? Do you not dally with temptation, and wilfully renew your guilt? Do you not over-much hanker after worldly prosperity, or some sinful pleasure? Do you not wilfully omit some certain duty to God or man, in your relation or converse, and look after none but yourself, and live unfruitfully to others, your children, servants, and neighbours? If conscience find such guilt as this, presently endeavour faithfully to amend it, and then beg God's further grace, and you shall find him not unwilling to give it you.

But if none of this be the case, but you have the testimony of your consciences, that excepting your unwilling imperfections and infirmities, in simplicity and godly sincerity you have your conversation in the world, and endeavour true obedience to Christ; then you may be sure that God hath denied you no grace essential to christianity, and necessary to salvation.

5. And as to increase of grace and higher measures, remember that even the desire of it is an unspeakable mercy: for the desire of perfection is the mark of sincerity, and so of salvation. Be thankful to God for those desires. But this is the affliction next to be spoken to more distinctly.

CASE XIV.

Weakness of Grace, Knowledge, Faith, Love, Comfor. great Corruptions.

It is one of the greatest burdens to an upright soul, to be kept under spiritual languishing and weakness, and to have but a low degree of grace. When knowledge is so small that it will not free us from daily uncertainties about truth, and duty, and sin; and all that plead for their several opinions perplex us; and Scripture seemeth unintelligible to us, and we do but grope after God as in the dark, and are overwhelmed with strange, unsatisfied thoughts of God, and of Christ, and of the world which we are going to.

When faith is so weak, that we trust Christ for heaven and earth, with fear, and unquietness, and distrust; and can scarce tell whether our faith overcome the world; and our trusting Christ for heaven would make us forsake earth and life, rather than hazard it by wilful sin; when doubts and fears do tell us that we have little faith.

What a calamity is it, when our hopes of heaven do so little rejoice us, that every worldly suffering seems strong enough to quell and quench our joy! Yea, we have more dread than desire, more trouble than joy, when we think of dying, and of the next life!

What a calamity it is, when our love to God, and Christ, and glory, is so small, that we are in fear that we love more this body, and worldly prosperity, and pleasure! When all the thoughts of God's essential goodness, his love and mercy to us and others, and all the wonderful love and mercy of our Redeemer, and all the mercies on earth, and promises of heaven, will scarce warm our hearts with love and thankful joy in God! And yet we can easily love, and overlove, our flesh, our house, our lands, our friends, and fanciful amorousness is a common disease.

What a calamity is it that we have no more government of our thoughts, to keep out covetousness, pride, and lust, and to cast out Satan's abominable temptations.

And that when we know that God trieth us to exercise our patience, we can no better overcome fear, anger, grief, and discontent. Should we be patient under all this want of grace?

Answ. This is to me the greatest burden in this world, and I suppose it is so to all sound christians, as to considerate trouble of mind, though loss of friends or bodily pains may stir up more passion. That which was before said about uncertainty of salvation, must be taken in about this case.

And, 1. Let us make sure of our sincerity, before we talk of imperfections; if we can know that we have the truth of special grace, we may know what

to say to the case of our infirmities. And for that, still remember what I said before about the sincerity of faith. If you have so well thought of this world and the next, and of Christ, that you are soundly resolved to trust Christ for grace and glory, to the forsaking of all that stands against it, you have saving faith and title to salvation. I opened it before to you by two similitudes, of a patient that practically trusteth his physician, and a poor prisoner that practically trusteth one that promiseth him a lordship in a foreign land. Though you venture with fear and trembling, if you will venture all on Christ, and leave all for him so far as he requireth you, it is saving faith. Practically trust him and he will save you.

2. When you are got thus far, remember that as you were born in sin, so you too long lived in it. Sin had a long time to darken your understandings, and harden your hearts, and corrupt your wills, and set you at a greater distance from God: and do you think all this must be undone and cured very easily, and in a moment, or as soon as you desire it? It is an unspeakable mercy that it is so far cured, as that you are translated from death to life, and made new creatures, and the heirs of heaven: and moreover, that Christ hath undertaken the perfect cure in his time and way. Grace somewhat imitateth nature: you were not born as soon as conceived, nor were you at ripe age as soon as born. Your growth and strength came by degrees in time; you had not your learning all at once, but by long study. You get not your riches by trading or labour in a few days: your land brings not fruit to perfection as soon as it is sowed; nor your trees as soon as they are grafted or planted: and must not so great a work as the cure and sanctifying of a soul, be done by such degrees?

3. And consider that you must not be mere patients, but also agents in the increase of your grace and strength. It must be had by exercise; the frequent acts must increase the habits, and God will not do it all without you: he hath appointed you means to use, and will try and exercise your obedience therein. As he giveth not life and strength to those that will not take their food, nor the fruit of the earth without our labour, so neither hath he promised to give more grace, save in the patient use of the means which he hath appointed. Time, means, and diligence are needful.

4. And alas! most christians are too slothful, and use means negligently, and then look that God should give them as much grace, at their mere wish and prayer, as if they were laborious and diligent. And too many do venture on sin, and so keep under grace by graceless living.

5. And some unskilfully use means for one sort of grace when it is another that they most need, and should use the means accordingly. When they should excite and feed their faith, and hope, and holy love, by the consideration of God's truth and goodness, and his love in Christ, and by heavenly doctrine and thoughts endeavour to get a heavenly mind, some study small controversies, and some perplex themselves with scruples about duties and sins of their own making, and some plunge themselves into confounded and bewildering thoughts, and think over again all Satan's temptations; and some only strive to get a more passionate weeping sorrow; and much neglect all serious endeavours for a believing, loving, joyful soul.

6. You must remember that many christians grow in grace and do not know it, but think that they go backward, or have none; because they do not sufficiently observe wherein the nature of sanctification doth prineipally consist: some lay it on passion, and some on memory, and some on the belief of their own sincerity, justification, and salvation, and some on words and free expression, whereas it chiefly consisteth in the estimation of the judgment, the resolution of the will, and the obedience of our lives. If you esteem God's grace and glory better, and sin worse, and the world to be good or bad as it serveth grace or sin, then you grow in understanding. If you are more firmly resolved to place your hopes, and make your choice according to this estimation, and to please God, and secure grace and glory, whatever it cost you, and to avoid wilful sin, which is your danger, and to use the world for holy ends, especially if you love wisdom, and holiness, and justice better, and hate sin more than you did heretofore, then your will doth grow in grace. And if you show this will and choice in more obedience of life, avoiding known sin more, and endeavouring to do good, and devoting yourselves more entirely to God, then you grow in holiness of life. Though your memories grow weaker, and though your holy passions and feelings should grow less, and are less able for long meditation, or to keep an order or steadiness in your thoughts, and though you want words in prayer and discourse, and though fears, and peevish angriness, and troubling thoughts should by weakness or temptation get more advantage of you, yet all this stands with rootedness and growth in grace.

7. Forget not what you were heretofore. Had you not formerly a higher esteem of worldly things, and less fear of sinning, than you have now? Growth in grace may be like the growth of your trees, or corn, or flowers, or the shadow on your dial. You do not see these grow or move; but if you come after a sufficient time, you may see that they are grown. We are bigger at age than in childhood, and yet we never saw ourselves grow: it is by insensible degrees. Strong christians have more knowledge than they had, and a more fixed resolution for God and heaven, and a greater contempt of worldly vanity, and victory over our fleshly desires and wilful sin, though they perceive not how these grow.

8. Be thankful that you desire to be better: those desires (as is aforesaid) prove sincerity, and are the earnests of what you do desire, and are a greater blessing than all the riches of the world: God that gave them you will not see them lost. The grace which we have on earth, is desiring, seeking grace: desires are our best evidence here: "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness;" for they shall be satisfied hereafter. We must know the difference between earth and heaven: it is there that we shall have all that we desire. Here desiring and seeking is our work: perfection is the prize and crown; which is not to be had till we have done our race and warfare. The womb is but the place of preparation for what is to be enjoyed in the open world; and no great matters are there to be expected; we must not look for more on earth than its part.

9. And when all is done, God is a free agent, and giveth his grace in such variety as he pleases, and doth not give to all alike. As he freely diversifieth nature and common gifts, so doth he several degrees of grace. It is an unspeakable mercy to have so much as shall save us from the hell we deserve, and give us right to life eternal; though we yet are faint through weakness, and have not the strength and comfort which we desire.

10. And though we have yet much corruption left uncured, we have helps appointed us to overcome them; and the exercise of grace against all such enemies, is much of its glory, and showeth its amiable worth; as darkness sets out the worth of light, and

sickness of health, and death of life. Diseases occasion the honour of our physician. Where sin hath abounded, grace hath superabounded. The whole need not the physician. We must have daily use for Christ, both to pardon us and to cure us. God could have prevented Adam's fall; but he hath permitted it, and permitteth all the sin in the world, though he cause it not: and he knoweth how to use it to his glory. All souls in heaven were once sinful, saving Christ's: we must daily be washed in his blood. We shall never perform a duty so innocently as to need no Saviour and pardoning grace. Where there is no enemy, there is no war; and where there is no war, there is no victory; and where there is no victory, there is no triumph.

11. And that God who freely pardoned all our reigning sins before conversion, will surely pardon all our mere infirmities, when we renew our faith and our repentance. He that through Christ can forgive such as were enemies, will forgive a son: and being reconciled by Christ's death, we shall be saved by his life.

Not that any of these considerations should reconcile us to sin, or abate our hatred of it; it must be our grief that any thing should cleave to us which is hateful to God, which killed Christ, and which is so contrary to holiness and heaven; but use no such impatience as hindereth the sense of the love of God, or the grace of Christ, or the thankful acknowledgment of his mercy. Fight against sin as well as you can, and serve your Lord as well as you are able: but do not sit down and cry, because sin is too strong for you, and because you can serve God no better: complain to Christ in order to beg his help and grace; but use not complaint instead of endeavour.

Thank God that you are weary of sin, and say with Paul, "O wretched man! who shall deliver me?" so you will but say next, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." And now you are weary and heavy laden, come to Christ for ease and rest. And remember, that (if you were ungodly) you could once have endured sin without weariness. Who heard you then impatiently cry out against it? Yea, you were loth to think of leaving it. And look about you on the multitude of the ungodly, and you shall see how far they are from being impatient with their sin, though it be mortal; when they can scarce be patient towards him that would but save them from it. They grudge at God because he will not give them leave to sin, and not because he doth not cure them. Oh how contrary is the impatience of saints and wicked sinners!

12. While you remember what grace you want, remember also both what you have received, and what is promised you, that thankfulness and hope may keep you from discouragement. You are not cured, but you are alive; and Christ hath promised you a cure. In many things we all offend, James ii. 2. "He that saith he hath no sin, is a liar," 1 John i. 8. Paul tells us that he had not obtained perfection, but he rejoiced that he was pressing towards the mark, Phil. iii. 12, 13. "We may rejoice that our Captain hath overcome the world," John xvi. 33. "And he will shortly bruise Satan under our feet," Rom. xvi. 20; vii. 25. Christ, that cured all bodily diseases on earth, will cure spiritual blindness, lameness, and deadness too, if we have but grace enough to go to him for more.

13. Lastly, the more weary you are of sin and weakness, and the more desirous you are to know God better, and love him more, and praise him with greater chearfulness and joy, the more you should long to be with Christ. Heaven will deliver you from all imperfection; from all darkness, unbelief, and dulness; from all sad, uncomfortable thoughts, and from all both alluring and molesting temptations. Oh that we could believe that more strongly, and then our honest impatience with sin and imperfection would but quicken us to the means of our deliverance, and help our joy in the foresight of that blessed change, which will leave no matter of discontent, and will give us more than we could here desire.

But to those who are-overmuch dejected at their imperfections, and remaining faults, I add these cautions. 1. See that it be not the disgrace, or the outward troublesome fruits of your sin, which grieve you more than the sin itself.

2. Take heed lest, while you complain of your badness, there be no secret pride and hypocrisy, to make you angry with those that think you but as bad as you call yourself. It is an odd kind of contradiction, at once to be impatient because we are so bad, and also impatient with them that take us to be so; and not to endure another to say that of us which we say ourselves.

3. The worse you take yourselves and your sins to be, the more you should esteem and desire a Saviour and his grace to heal you, and rejoice that a full remedy is at hand, and freely offered you; and be the more thankful for that mercy which is given, and which is promised to so unworthy sinners.

4. Show your impatience with sin and wants, by hating sin, and diligent using the means of cure, and not by idle, discouraged, despairing complaints.

5. Remember that our Head is perfect for us: his merits and righteousness are perfect: he is fully perfected in glory: and is it nothing that he is related to us, as our Surety, Saviour, and Head? He hath his glory for our good.

6. Remember that no sin or imperfection shall condemn us, but that which we had rather keep than leave, and love more than hate it: and that all things are tolerable which will end in heaven. We groan, being burdened both with sin and sorrow in the flesh; but we wait for full deliverance from the bondage of our corruption, into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

CASE XV.

When God doth not bless the Labours of our Callings, Ministers, Parents' Endeavours for Children, for near Relations, Tradesmen, Endeavours for the Church.

Another case which greatly needeth patience is, when God doth not bless and prosper our endeavours: when ministers study, and preach, and pray, and yet see but small fruit of their labours; few converted, reformed, or strengthened, but all their labour seemeth lost. When parents take pains with their children, and they remain still obstinate and wicked. When magistrates' endeavours are frustrated by a contentious, rebellious people. When men labour in their lawful callings, and all goeth backward, and God seemeth not to bless their labours. In sickness our physic doth not prosper. When we are falsely accused, our just defence is not believed. When we endeavour the public good, we prosper not. This maketh men fear that God forsaketh them.

These several causes should be severally considered. And the case of unprosperous ministers, I confess, is very bad. When a man from his youth is devoted to that holy work, and by many years' hard study prepared for it, and is drawn to it by a longing desire to do good, and studieth for it all his life, and spends time and strength in constant labour, and after all can see small fruit; this lieth heavy, and tempteth them to doubt whether they were called of God, and whether they are not unfit for the

work, or unfaithful in it. Through God's great mercy it is not my own trial: I know not that ever I laboured any where in vain; but I have lived near far better men, who have lived to above fourscore years of age, and have said, that they know not of two souls converted by them in the parishes where they lived: some speed better upon such as came from other parishes, and some on very few at all. And alas! to see no better fruit of such employment, than barely to have a benefice to live on, and some reverence from the people, or a few good words, is a poor encouragement.

But, 1. The first thing to be done in this sad case, is, to search whether the fault be not in ourselves. Whether we choose such subjects to preach on as are most suitable to the hearers' state, and fittest to convince and win them: whether we study plainness and familiar words, and a close, convincing way of speech: whether by familiar conversation with them we get their love, and also find out their ignorance, error, and sin, their objections and doubts, that we may know what they need; and whether we deal with them privately and personally as well as publicly, for their instruction: whether our lives preach to them as well as our tongues, and show them that we believe what we speak; and whether we do all in the expression of unfeigned love, and do them all the good we can for their bodies, and quarrel not with them for worldly things, but lose our right rather than scandalize them, and harden them against the truth. If any of this be amiss, it must be amended; if not, then consider,

2. That to labour is our part, and to prosper is God's. Paul and Apollos can but plant and water, but it is God that must give the increase. Christ himself both preached and wrought miracles in some places, when yet few believed on him; yea, though the people cried him up, it was no great number that were thoroughly converted by all his preaching and works; that being reserved for the coming down of the Holy Ghost, after his death and resurrection. And in some places few were converted by the apostles. Even among the learned philosophers at Athens, how little was their success!

3. God knoweth his chosen, and all shall come to Christ that the Father hath given him, and none of them shall be lost: and God loveth souls and holiness better than we do: all souls are his; and Christ knoweth the price of them. And we know that all that God doth is good, and we shall see the reason of it at last.

The prophets and apostles had more unthankful requitals, than the mere loss of their labour with the greater part. They were also persecuted, scorned, and killed, by them whose salvation they desired. "Which of the prophets have not your fathers killed and persecuted," saith Christ, Matt. xxiii. See Isa. liii. 1, &c.; John xii. 37, 38; Acts xvii.; xix. 9; xxviii. 24. Yea, to some the word is the savour of death unto death, and Christ is a stone of stumbling, and ministers are the scorn of the world, and the offscouring of all things; and, alas! they must be witnesses against their hearers to their condemnation, and must "shake off the dust of their feet against them."

4. If our success were according to our own desires, it would be beyond what God intendeth for men in the world: we would have every man in the world converted and saved. It is our duty to desire and endeavour it as far as we are able; for it is not God's decrees, but his commands, which are our rule. Luke iv. 25, "Many widows (saith Christ) were in the days of Elisha, but it was not to many that he was sent." We may have comfort in our just desires and endeavours.

5. God will accept and reward us, according to our faithful work, and not according to our success. A bad man may be used to save other men's souls, when his own is lost; "Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength," Isa. xlix. 5. It is spoken both of the prophets and of Christ. It was to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel," that Christ saith he was sent; and he is called a minister of the circumcision. And yet Israel was not gathered, when he would have gathered them as a hen doth her chickens, Matt. xxiii. But they were to be utterly ruined for rejecting him. 2 Cor. ii. 14, 15, "Now thanks be to God, who causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place. For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ in them that are saved, and in them that perish. To the one the savour of death to death, and to the other the savour of life unto life: and who is sufficient for these things?" Faithful labour is never wholly lost.

6. And one soul is so precious, as is worth more than all the labour of our lives. He is a hypocrite himself, and no faithful minister of Christ, that had not rather save one soul, though he live in poverty, than have the richest bishopric, and save none. His money shall perish with him, who loveth money better than the soul of the poorest beggar.

7. There may perhaps be many more souls converted than the preacher ever heareth of. The work hath often obscure beginnings. You know not what workings may be in the secret hearts of sinners: and some are bashful, and some have not opportunity to show themselves. I have visited some aged women before death, who were not noted for any zealous profession of religion, but what they showed in the church assemblies, and I found them of solid understanding and experience; and perceived by their talk that they had been constant in all secret duties, and conscionable in all their course. And when I enquired further, I found that they had husbands that restrained them from the society of godly people, and from all open manifestation of what was in their hearts, save what their church worship and upright living showed. And this is the case of some children and servants, who are under the restraint of bad parents and masters. We must not then conclude, that all the seed is lost, which seemeth buried, and appeareth not to us.

8. It is not lost labour which doth but restrain men from being worse. The suppression of vice, and the keeping up a profession of the truth, is worth all our labour; as also the keeping out heresies and errors; and it is worth our labour to feed Christ's sheep, and help to confirm such as are true christians already, and to increase the grace they have; and to comfort the sad, and resolve the doubting, and edify the body of Christ. Surely, the work which is to be done in guiding and edifying the converted, requireth as great skill at least, as that which is required to the converting of infidels and wicked men; (though the change made on the learners be not so great, in regard of the *terminus a quo*; for the higher includeth the lower;) and more learning is necessary to teach the higher form, than to teach the alphabet. Some are for planting, and some for watering; some went forth to make disciples of the nations, and baptize them, and some were to guide them when baptized, and teach them to observe all Christ's commands.

9. If your study and doctrine edify and save yourselves, it is an unspeakable mercy; you have had the comfort of sweet and holy studies, and the pleasant work of opening and pleading saving truth: and if

all this study and preaching have but prevailed with yourselves, and conquered your own sins, and subdued your souls to the obedience of Christ, how happy are you! Yet all this is not said to make you indifferent as to your success: I further, therefore, advise you, 1. Long for the winning and edifying of souls; for I have observed, that few prosper this way, but those that earnestly desire it.

2. Pray hard for them to God, and see that you neglect not your own duty. Study for eminent abilities; preach plainly, earnestly, reverently; exhort them personally; do them good charitably; hurt none; avoid scandal; live as you teach; shun all unnecessary crossness and singularity; "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace with all true believers;" and patiently leave the issue to God.

3. If you are distasted through prejudice, and have long laboured without any notable success, advise with your brethren whether you should not remove, and another be not fitter for that people, and you for another, and do accordingly.

II. As to the second cause of the frustration of all endeavours for the souls of children and servants, I touched it before. I confess it is a grievous case to bring up children who will be slaves of Satan, plagues to the church, and firebrands in hell; and to speak to them in vain, as blocks or mad-men. But good men have lived comfortably that had bad children: Adam had a Cain, Noah had a Ham, Abraham had an Ishmael, Isaac had an Esau, Jacob's sons greatly sinned; Eli had a Hophni and Phinehas, Samuel's sons forsook their father's way; David had an Amnon and an Absalom, Solomon had a Rehoboam, Hezekiah had a Manasseh, Job justly feared his sons' forgetting God in their fulness, and lost them in it: Christ saith, the son shall be against the father, Matt. xiii. 12.

And if you have but one good child, you owe great thanks to God for that. If a minister must not deny God his thanks, nor himself his comforts, though most of his flock prove obstinate and perish; neither must parents be unthankful or uncomfortable, if most of their children should be obstinate and perish, if God permit it, who hath more interest in them than you have; you must submit, and take comfort in your good desires and faithful duty: but oh see carefully that you neglect not love, and prudent diligence, and good example, and that you keep out of tempting company, and keep under suitable means.

III. And it is as near a trial, when a husband cannot convert a wicked wife, nor a wife a wicked husband, but one must lie in the bosom of a slave of Satan, and an enemy of Christ, and no persuasion will do such good. The nearness maketh the affliction very great, such as few that have not had sad experience of it can know. It is a very hard thing to love such with a true conjugal love, who have no true loveliness of soul, but hate the holy ways of Christ; and it is not easy to keep up innocency, and godliness, and peace, under the constant opposition of one so near.

But yet this must be patiently borne, when it cannot be remedied. For, 1. Usually it is a just correction for a sinful choice, which must be repented of; and it is a mercy that your repentance hath some help.

2. It may be such a constant exercise of your grace, especially patience and prudence, as may render you better and stronger christians, than those that have less exercise by trials.

3. The greatness of the temptations must cause you to double your watchfulness and resolutions against the sins which you will be tempted to, and to perform all the duties of our place. As, 1. See that no pretence of love, or pleasing, or obedience, draw you to imitate a husband or a wife in sin, and to become as bad as they, or to receive any error from them, or grow cold to holy duties. Some women that have papists or other erroneous husbands, cannot tell how to love and please them, without being flattered or drawn into their errors; strong constant trials need strong and constant watch and resolution: for if you be overcome to be as they, it is a thousand times worse than all the grief that you have by them.

2. See that their badness destroy not conjugal affections towards them: those may be loved as husbands or wives, who cannot be loved as sincere christians.

3. See that you exceed mere carnal persons in all the duties of your relations. If your difference and grief do cast you into sourness and unpleasing, discontented conversation, or if you be as peevish and froward as common persons, you will be a scandal to those that you should win, and drive them further from religion and salvation. You must show, if you are wives, more love, and meekness, and patience, and obedience, than carnal persons do, as well as more forwardness in religion. Froward, impatient wives do harden many ill husbands in their sin. It hath much pleased me to hear a husband saying of a good wife, I differ from my wife in religion and church orders; I go to one church, and she to another: I think she is too precise and strict; but I think there is not a better wife, a better mother, and a better mistress in the land. A good christian must be good in all relations.

4. Continue prayers and winning endeavours while there is hope.

5. And let the sense of another's sin and misery provoke you to be thankful to God for his grace, and that he hath not left you to the like.

IV. And as to the next case, (when God blasteth our labours and estates, and prospereth not our callings,) it is a usual trial: some are ruined by deceivers and breaking tradesmen, some by losses at sea, some by suretyship, some by fire, some by false servants, some by prodigal sons, some by soldiers, some by unjust suits at law, some overreached in bargains about land; and divers other ways there are by which the rich have been brought to poverty, (to say nothing of gaming, luxury, and such vice, which belongs not to this present case) and by which lawful means of living want success.

And here, 1. It is your duty to see that there be no guilt of any other unpardoned sin which God punisheth this way. Sometimes an estate is blasted by God, because it was unlawfully got by ancestors: sometimes the owner is guilty of former defrauding others, and hath made no restitution; sometimes God thus punisheth some other secret sin, as fornication, lying, flesh-pleasing, and such like. Search deep, and see that no such guilt be unrepented of, and be as a moth or fire to consume your wealth.

2. Especially search lest your hearts grow secretly into a worldly disposition, and too great hopes of riches and prosperity, and too great a desire after plenty, and too much pleasure in the possession, or the hopes of it: if this be your case, it is God's great mercy to blast all to you, and to break your idol, and to fire you out of the garrison that you trust. They that trust in riches, Christ tells you, are as hardly saved as for a "camel (or cable) to go through the eye of a needle:" and it is men's hope which is called their trust. When you hope for more from riches than they can give, you are said to

trust in them. If ever God save you, he will save you from this worldly mind and love: and sure prosperity is not the likeliest way to that; but rather withering the object of your hopes.

3. However, make this use of your crosses, to be more weaned from the world, and more careful to lay up a treasure in heaven, where fire, rust, or moth corrupts not, and thieves, pirates, or soldiers cannot steal, and then your loss, be it never so great, is made your gain.

4. And let your crosses and frustrations call you to exercise the graces suitable to your condition; to renew repentance, submission to God's will, prayer and dependence for your daily bread, abatement of pride, not disdaining the lowest employment, nor to be beholden to others: and if you can follow Christ and his apostles in a holy poverty, you shall quickly be above contempt and want. And let it make you ply that calling and work which will never disappoint you: believe and hope strongly, pray earnestly, obey diligently, be stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as your labour shall not be in vain, though all your worldly wealth be blasted.

V. The last case is the saddest trial of all, when just endeavours for church and state, for societies and posterity, seem all in vain; when hopes of peace, and piety, and public good have been high raised, and all soon blasted and turned into shame. But of this I must speak anon. I conclude all this case of labour frustrate, and hopes cast down, with this necessary warning; Judge of God's love to you by the great and sure tokens of his love, and not by uncertain, transitory things: if God loved those best that prosper most in honour and wealth, Turks and tyrants, and the most luxurious, wicked men, would have the best proof of his love. If your souls prosper in the increase of faith, and in sweeter or desiring thoughts of heaven, and in delight in God and holiness, and in victory over all your carnal affections and discontents, and in a more willing obedience to all God's laws, and in a word, in a fuller compliance of your wills to the will of God, then you are truly prosperous persons, and have the certain tokens of the love of God; when the prosperity of fools will destroy them, and turn to the increase of their sin, and will but be as fuel to hell-fire, and prepare for endless misery.

CASE XVI.

The common Sin and Misery of the World, and fewness of Wise and Godly Men.

A heavier trial of our faith and patience yet is, the misery of this world by the universal corruption of mankind, the prevalency of most odious wickedness, and paucity of wise and godly men: that at five thousand six hundred and eighty-two years after the creation, most of the earth seemed forsaken of God; five parts of six being heathens, Mahometans, and infidels; and of the sixth part, the far greatest part are papists, and lamentable ignorant Grecks, Armenians, Abassines, Jacobites, Nestorians, &c. And of the protestants, so few that so much as seem to be practisers of the christian faith and hope, but most live in worldliness and sensuality, if not also in enmity to serious piety, and persecution of all that practise what themselves profess.

This is a manifold and grievous trial: 1. To our faith; while Satan taketh advantage by it to make us doubt whether man was made for another life, when his nature seemeth to have no inclination to it, but rather to abhor it: and to doubt how Christ is the Saviour of the world, and died for all, and would have all to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth, when so few of the world shall be saved, and so many kingdoms and ages damned; when we ourselves can scarce bear the pain of the stone or colic patiently, or the miscarriage or misery of a child or friend. And it maketh it the harder to us to perceive the goodness, love, and amiableness of God, who can convert and save the world, and will not.

I have answered all this so fully in a little book called "The Vindication of God's Love," that to avoid repetition, I will say but this little following:

1. We are fully certain of God's perfect goodness, by all his works; it being equal to his greatness; and therefore no argument can be of force against a certain truth: nothing can be true that is inconsistent with so sure and great a truth.

2. God's goodness is infinite in act, in his blessed self-love: no finite creature is an object fit to demonstrate infinite love in perfect act, nor capable of it.

3. It is certain *de facto* that God hath made toads, serpents, dung, and puts sensitive nature in men and brutes to great pains and death; therefore it is certain that all this is consistent with God's perfect goodness.

4. God's love to his creature is his beneficence or complacence. He was no ways bound to make all his creatures equal, nor to give as much to a fly or flea as to a man, nor to a man as to an angel, or to the sun: nor is it meet that he complacentially esteem any creature better than it is.

5. It is no way unmeet that God should make a middle rank of active natures between necessitated brutes and immutable confirmed spirits, even a rank of intellectual free agents to be governed morally by laws, in a life of trial, with a power of self-determining as to their wills, and to leave them to their own determined choice, decreeing accordingly to judge them; yet resolving to secure the salvation of some. If it be not against God's goodness to make brutes that have no intellects nor capacity of glory, it is not contrary to it to make intellectuals merely capable, and leave them to their free wills.

6. While we are thankful for God's mercies to his peculiar people, the church, we must not, as some peevishly and rashly do, deny what he doth for the rest of the world. He useth them not according to the terms of the first law, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt die." "He leaveth not himself without witness while he winketh at their ignorance," Acts xiv; in that he giveth them abundance of temporal mercies, fruitful lands and seasons, health and time, and punisheth them not as they deserve: so that "that which may be known of God is manifest in them, for God hath showed it to them: for the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse, because, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God," Rom. i. 19—21. "Who hath made of one blood all nations of men, to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation, that they should seek the Lord, if haply they may feel after him and find him, though he be not far from every one of us," Acts xvii. 25—27. "And in every nation he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him; for he is no respecter of persons," Acts x. "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." And Noah, that believed the warning of God, "and prepared the ark, being moved by fear, became an heir of the righteousness of

faith," Heb. xi. 6, 7. "God will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well-doing do seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the gentile; but glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the gentile: for there is no respect of persons with God. For as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; (for not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. For when the gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while either accusing or excusing one another); in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men according to my gospel," Rom. ii.

The world is not left in despair as devils, under the sentence of the broken law of innocence, but is under the edition of the law of grace which was made to Adam and Noah, and is used on terms of mercy and forgiveness, or else they should not receive all the mercies as they do: they are all obliged to repent in hope, and to use some means for recovery and salvation: and God under the law proclaimeth himself to be "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin, and that will by no means clear," &c. Exod. xxxiv. 5—7. God would be no otherwise known to any men on earth.

And how far men keep or break this law of grace, their Judge best knoweth: but we know that they shall be judged according to the law that they are under, and the measure of talents delivered to them: to whom much is given, of them much is required. Melchizedec was king of Jerusalem, even of righteousness and peace: and Job and his friends seem to have been great men of several countries: in Nineveh they "believed God, proclaimed a fast, and God saw their works, that they turned from their evil ways, and God repented of the evil," &c. Jonah iii. "From the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, my name shall be (or is) great among the gentiles, and in every place incense shall be (or is) offered to my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be (or is) great among the heathens, saith the Lord of hosts," Mal. i. 11.

John and Christ preached repentance and remission of sin, before they preached that Jesus was the Christ: and the very apostles that dwelt with Christ and followed him, did not believe till after his resurrection, that he must be crucified and die for our sins, and rise again, and ascend and intercede in heaven, &c. They were fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets had spoken, how that Christ ought to suffer such things, and so to enter into his glory, Luke xxiv.

We are too like the Jews, who were so proud of their peculiarity, that they deceitfully took their outward privileges to signify much more for them than they did: as if all the rest of the world had been quite forsaken and had been no people of God, because they had not their covenant of peculiarity; whenas indeed their peculiarity was mostly typical, in that they were a type of the peculiar catholic church under the gospel, and that Christ was to be a Jew according to the flesh; even as their law and the righteousness of it was excellent as typical, and as a schoolmaster to lead us to Christ, though it was called faulty, and was to be done away, that a better covenant might take place. God promised Abraham temporal greatness, viz. that his seed should be as the stars of heaven, and he should have a land that flowed with milk and honey: and all this was made good: but in such good as this, how small was the portion of the Israelites! How small and poor their land and kings, in comparison to the Romans, Turks, Chinese, Indians, &c.! The whole land of the twelve tribes, not so big as England; and they lived most in vexation or captivity by the Philistines or others, till David conquered, and Solomon reigned in peace and luxury; and no longer did David's line reign over any more than two of the twelve tribes, and those ere long went into captivity: so that the glory of the Jews' kingdom was the divinity of their typical law, and that the Messiah, and the original of the gospel church, was to spring from them.

And as to their goodness, all the history and prophets tell us how bad they were; and if the lives of most of their kings be compared with Alexander Severus, M. Aurelius, Antonine Philos. and Anton. Pius, and Trajan, and Titus, &c. there will no great cause appear to think that none but Jews could be saved; the pride of their peculiar covenant set them at a greater distance from all others than their real greatness, wisdom, and goodness.

"What advantage then hath the Jew, and what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way; chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God," Rom. iii. 1, 2. And the christian church hath now the said oracles and the covenant of peculiarity in a more excellent kind than ever the Jews had: but let us not follow them in our pride, lest we follow them in destruction; for if we be worse than others, we shall suffer more than others, as our light was greater. Though we only are the church and the peculiar people, the rest of mankind are part of the kingdom of the Redeemer, who "died, rose, and revived, to this end, that he might be Lord of the dead and the living," Rom. xiv. 9, 10. "For all power is given him in heaven and earth; and he is head over all to the church," Eph. i. 22, 23; Matt. xxviii. 19. And our covenant of peculiarity is no repeal of the old law of grace made to mankind in Adam and Noah by God the Redeemer, who ruleth all upon terms of mercy and grace; and was known accordingly as a merciful, pardoning God, before he was incarnate or known as such: and so is still known, when as incarnate he is not known; and it is past doubt, that as much of his grace and mercy of redemption went before his incarnation, so much of it still extendeth further than the knowledge of his incarnation; as the light of the sun is not utterly gone, when clouds keep it unseen, and before it riseth, and after it is set.

And as to the question, How many among the uncalled world do fear God and work righteousness, and are accepted of him? Who art thou that judgest another's servant? To his own master he stands or falls: only I repeat, that Abraham, the father of the faithful, who "saw Christ's day," thought that there had been "fifty righteous persons in Sodom;" a city so bad, that fire from heaven must consume it. And all history tells us, that in all countries there are pious, virtuous persons, who are hated and derided by the sensual herd, yea, and persecuted in most places.

This much I think needful to be considered, that we wrong not God, and ourselves, and others, by clouding his mercy and goodness, and making difficulties to our faith and love.

7. And again, and again, I repeat, that no man is fit to judge diminutively of God's mercy and love, who knoweth not what he saith (and yet speaketh against a certain truth). But they that say, more are damned than are glorified, know not what they say: for it is visible, that all the earth is to the rest of the world, no bigger than an inch to all England, that I say not, to all Europe: and we see that each region hath inhabitants connatural here below (water, earth, air). And we see that the superior regions are most glorious as well as vast: and I think, that few men of sense do think, that sun, moon, and stars, and all the orbs, are made for no higher use than to shine upon or serve this dirty world of earth: so that again I say, that hell is like the gallows, and earth like the gaol, to a whole kingdom or vast empire: and it is no sign of a bad prince, to have one gallows and one gaol in his dominions.

8. And we must remember that though hell be but one word, it signifieth divers degrees of punishment: and Christ, who best knew, tells us, that they who "knew not their Lord's will, shall be beaten with few stripes:" and even to "Sodom in the day of judgment it shall be easier" than to those that refuse the gospel: and it is an airy, active life of misery that the devils themselves have now.

9. And we see by the pain and death of brutes, that God doth lay such pain and death on them without desert by any sin: and is it any diminution of his goodness to lay more on sinful man? All confess that he might have killed and annihilated us without our sin: he that gave a man life freely for thirty, fifty, sixty years, was not bound to continue it for ever. And he that made toads and snakes might have made us such; and yet it is certain, that most men had rather endure any tolerable degree of pain, than either to be annihilated or made toads or snakes: and we cannot certainly tell how far those pains may be called tolerable, which Christ calleth by the name of "easier and few stripes."

10. It is most certain that when we come to heaven, we shall be fully reconciled to all God's dealings, and rejoice in the glory of his holiness and justice, and see no cause to think diminutively of his goodness and his grace.

11. And in the mean time, let us rejoice that he hath made us vessels of mercy, and that he hath endued so many thousands on earth with his grace, and that the heavenly church is so great and glorious: there will be no want of number there.

12. And as to the temptations hence to unbelief, consider, that the heavenly hopes, and desires, and lives of all the godly, do prove that God intendeth them for heaven; all the work of his sanctifying Spirit is not delusion: and the fear and hope that human nature hath of another life, doth show that we have another to expect: and that the wicked have no such heavenly desire, doth but show, that they are uncapable of heavenly felicity, but not that all others are so too.

CASE XVII.

The sad Distempers and Divisions of Christians, and the hurt they do to the World, and to one another, and the dishonourable state of the Church.

Another exercise of our patience is, the great imperfection, scandals, and divisions of christians, and the hurt they do to one another, and to the world, and the dishonourable broken state that they are in.

It is a dolcful case to think, how narrow, and low, and corrupt a state the church was in for four thousand years before Christ's incarnation: how small it was for the two first centuries: how quickly shameful heresies did corrupt it; how lamentably they multiplied even under persecution: how quickly the advanced, enriched clergy were corrupted; what odious schisms they made in the church; how they grieved the hearts of peaceable princes, who with all their power, were unable to keep even common love and peace among the prelates, and to get them to live but as quietly with each other as the heathen did. What a shame is it to think, how the majority carried it in their most famous councils; and into how many sects the church was broken, and most of them by bishops continued to this day! Greeks, Muscovites, Armenians, Nestorians, Jacobites, Melchites, papists, &c. And that so many hundred years' experience doth not end or heal their rents. To read the doleful divisions and cruelties by the Arians, the bloody feuds about Nestorians, Eutychians, Monothelites, the Tria Capitula, images, excommunications, particular men's striving for pre-eminence; to read how the papacy sprang up, and to read the schisms and lives of the popes, the general council's dismal accusations of some of them, their ignorance, simony, and wickedness. To read of the wars between the pope and emperors, Frederics, Henry IV. and Henry V., Otho, &c.; and how commonly the clergy swore, and unswore, and forswore; sometimes for the pope, and sometimes for the emperor. To read how a council of bishops made it the Henrician heresy to hold that emperors have a power to invest bishops *baculo et annulo*, and that the pope may not excommunicate and depose them; and that they decreed to dig up the carcasses of the dead bishops and burn them as Henrician heretics, who had been for the emperors against the popes: to read of all the horrid cruelties of bishops and clergymen, in inquisitions, the murder of many hundred thousand Waldenses and Albigenses, and the many massacres and burnings for religion since: to see at this day, that the clergy will not by reason or request, be entreated to give one another, or the kingdoms of Europe, any peace. What clamours! what preaching! what writings! what railings! what diabolical slanders and persecutions of one another! To see prisons filled, houses rifled, multitudes of true christians undone and hunted by one another! To see how ignorant the most zealous christians are in many places, and, alas! even the teachers of them; and how contentious and prone to sects and bitter censures, and to justify unjustifiable things, and to make odious one another, and to speak evil of the things they understand not, and to be most confident unto rage, where they are most mistaken! To hear how confidently contrary sides appeal to God, and father all their cause on him! How confidently and religiously they seem to die, who are executed for contrary causes! The pious words e. g. and prayers of those in 1660, on one side, and the pious words and prayers of the Jesuits and other papists lately! To hear some swear others guilty unto death, and the Jesuit appeal to God that it was all false, and renounce all equivocations and absolutions at their death! Yea, to hear lately in this parish at the communion publicly while they received the sacrament on it, one man swear or vow before God those visible actions of another, which that other, there and then, as solemnly vowed to be all false! To read every week's newsbooks, whose studied work is, with the greatest wit, and vehemency, and gross lies, to draw christians to hate and destroy each other; and while they cry up love and peace, for the same men so to fight against it, worse than all their public enemies, so that there appeareth no hope of saving the land; yea, the most upright christians from the lies, rage, and malice of professed christians. So that men seem incarnate devils.

And, alas! the few sincere souls live below the holy joy which their christian faith and hope bespeaketh, in too much fear and grief, or tenderness of the body. How can patience endure to see all this?

The case is doleful; but, 1. Remember that all this doth but tell us what sin is, and what it hath done to mankind, and yet men will hardly believe that it is so bad.

2. All this may help you to believe that there is a hell and devils, that God is not to be accused of it, when sin itself is so much of misery and hell.

3. All this doth most notably set forth the excellency of wisdom, godliness, and justice, when the contraries are so odious. It is not godliness, truth, or justice, but the want of them in whole or part, which is the cause of all this evil. Do but think if all England, or all the world, were but such as those few humble, holy, charitable, peaceable, patient christians, which you and I know! oh what a quiet and blessed land and world would it then be! I know the places where they live in so great holiness, love, and peace, that it is a great delight to live among them. Were all such as some of my beloved friends and daily companions are, and have been, it would be such a resemblance of heaven, as would leave no room for the sad complaint of this objection. And by this we see what an excellent thing true faith and godliness is in itself. And though in the same persons there be the remnants of ignorance, error, and sin, which are a trouble to others and themselves, this is because that grace is yet imperfect, but its excellence appeareth in being contrary to sin, and so far subduing it, and keeping it as fire in the chimney, from doing that mischief which reigning sin doth: and making men so good and useful, notwithstanding their remaining faults.

4. And in a life of trial which prepareth us for the reward, it is no wonder if there be somewhat left for all grace to oppose, and exercise itself against. What war, what victory is there where there is no enemy? and what crown?

5. The church is Christ's hospital, and is it a wonder that all are sore and sick? We are here under his cure: he hath done much already; more than all the world could do, in the work of true regeneration and sanctification: he hath broken the head of the serpent, and the heart of sin: and it is dying daily more and more, and it is not the imperfection that must cause us to undervalue so great a work.

6. Christ knoweth his own grace in all believers, even the weakest, notwithstanding all their faults and follies; and he loveth his own, while he hateth their sin, much more than any man can do: and he pardoneth their remaining infirmities, and loveth their persons, and calleth them his brethren, and so must we. If Christ can pardon sin, and love the uprightness of the imperfect, we must imitate him.

7. As we must live in constant need of our Creator for our daily bread, or life, or preservation, so must we live in daily need of the pardoning and healing grace of our Redeemer: as once creating puts us not into a state of self-sufficiency and independence, so neither doth once redeeming us. And the daily benefit of a Saviour's pardon, and healing grace, is our daily comfort.

8. As I told you before about the imperfection of each one's grace, God will have a difference between earth and heaven, and what we want here, we shall there have in perfection; even greater perfection than we can here believe.

9. The faults of all christians teach us all to think humbly of ourselves, and also not to overvalue imperfect man, nor to trust the best too far; nor to take all for true or good, which they do or teach; but to walk cautelously with all men, and to put our whole trust in God alone.

10. And the worse we all are, the more we discern the freeness of God's love and grace, and the great cause of thankfulness that we have for all our mercies.

11. And when we see that the best on earth are so imperfect, it should help us all to long for heaven; where there is no ignorance or error, no sin, no malice, no proud censoriousness, no divisions, but God is joyfully praised by all, as with one soul, one mind, one love, one mouth.

12. In all ages and countries where the church hath been most degenerate, God hath had many that have maintained their integrity, and have not consented to the corruptions and contentions of the times, nor run into the guilt of the ambitious clergy, or of unruly heretics; and a few such as are his jewels, are worth many of the earthly, drossy world.

13. And what wonder is it if nominal christians that are real hypocrites, and wicked men, be haters and persecutors of the just, and the plagues of the world, and the chiefest instruments of the devil on earth. Certainly the false profession of christianity is so far from making men good, and saving them, that it sublimateth their wickedness, and makes them the worst and most miserable of men.

14. It somewhat tendeth to allay the fears of weak christians who think that their faults are inconsistent with sincerity, when they see that so many of all sorts are so faulty: they see what God's mercy beareth with in all.

15. And it is no real cause of dishonour to charity; for no enemy can find any fault in that. There is no sin against God or man, which Christ hath not forbidden, and is not more against than the most righteous alive is; it is therefore utter impudence, to charge those faults of men on Christ, which he forbiddeth and abhorreth. What would they have him to do more to signify his hatred of sin, than to condemn it, and prepare hell for all that live and die impenitent? and himself to die, rather than it shall go unpunished, even in those that are forgiven? and to do so much as he hath done to destroy it?

16. And if the wicked will perish by the scandal which they take at christians' faults, their impudence maketh their damnation just. It were else easy for them to see a difference between the imperfections of a saint, and the wickedness of a beastly or malignant sinner: and they should rather gather, that if the faults of serious believers are odious, their own reigning sin is much more so; and therefore this should hasten their repentance.

17. And oh how desirable should the common sin, and ignorance, and divisions in this world make Christ's appearing and glorious kingdom to us, when the whole church shall be presented spotless, and beautiful in holiness and love, and Christ will be glorified in his saints, and admired in all believers! The holy city of God, the Jerusalem above, hath nothing but perfect amiableness, concord, love, and joy, where all are, though many, yet but one.

CASE XVIII.

Heavy Judgments on the Land, by Plagues, Poverty, Fire, and Wars.

Another trial of our patience is, public, and common, and heavy chastisements of God, upon whole cities, countries, and kingdoms; especially by plagues, famine, fire, and war. 1. In 1665 how doleful was the case of London! When a hundred thousand died in a short time; when men were cast

by heaps into pits for burial, and when good and bad were swept away, and the living were hard put to it to bury the dead, and husbands and wives, and parents and children, who were burying their friends, expected to be presently dead themselves; and when the houses that were not used to prayer, had praying doors, "God be merciful to us" being written on them to notify their case; and when we were glad to fly into remote and solitary places, and were afraid to meet a man, lest he should infect us.

2. And how doleful was the very next year's case, where the rich and famous city of London was burnt! Oh what a sight were those dreadful, raging, mounting flames! How many thousand houses were consumed in three days, which pride had adorned with costly furniture, and where luxury had wasted the creatures of God! What treasures that had been long in heaping up, were there consumed! To see the streets crowded with men astonished, that looked on all their wealth consumed, and could do nothing to save it from the flames; and others carrying out their goods, and some laying them in vaults for safety, and some in churches, and altogether there consumed! The booksellers hoped that the famous structure and vaults of St. Paul's church might have saved their great treasure of excellent books, which yet did but increase the church's ruin. Yea, the houses of the most just and godly men no more escaped than the rest, even where God was daily called on and worshipped! No, nor the churches, where many holy, excellent men had been famous, fruitful preachers, and where the bodies of thousands of true saints had been buried. About seventy churches burnt down; when it was but about four years before that most or many of their faithful pastors had been cast out and forbidden to preach the gospel; and now those that were set up in their steads are driven out by the flames, as they lately fled away from the plague; and most of them to this day, or very many, lie unbuilt, and God's worship is performed in such poor wooden tabernacles, as before would have been made a scorn. And how many thousand families had no habitation, and were reduced to poverty, and to this day live in the distress which those flames did bring upon them! And since then, how many dreadful fires have consumed many corporations in this land! Near us, how calamitous was that in Southwark! and but a fortnight past, that more dreadful fire at Wapping, where about a thousand houses, that had above three thousand families, were burnt!

3. And though God hath not yet tried us with any common destructive famine, poverty causeth thousands to die of sicknesses taken by want; even by drinking water, and wanting fire and clothes, and eating unwholesome food. And we have oft had notice of the case of Germany, after the wars, about 1627, when they were fain to watch the graves, lest the dead bodies should be digged up and eaten; and of the more miserable case of Rochel, and others likewise.

4. But alas! bloody wars have been more common, and men to men more terrible than mad dogs, or wolves, or tigers. We had sad experience of it in England, Scotland, and Ireland; but other countries have felt much more. They that have not tried it, know not what it is to live under the power of savage soldiers, who domineer over all, and make all slaves to them in their own houses, and keep them under daily fear of death, and take away all they have, and make no more to kill men, than to kill dogs or flies; and if they can but call them enemies, think him the most honourable who killeth most. Oh what dismal sights were our fields, covered with the dead, and garrisons stormed, and all countries filled with men-hunters, who took their neighbours' estates and lives for their lawful prey. Besides that one party of them grew to that inhumanity and blasphemy, as to make scorn of death and hell, and so to defy God, as that to this day the word, "God damn me," continueth with them a word of course. And others that professed piety, fell into pride and presumption, and contentious sects, for which they usually raged and were confident. Is it not hard to think of such things with patience, much more to see and feel much of them?

But God hath not left us without remedy. I. As to plagues. 1. The great numbers that die together, make us think otherwise of it than is meet: it is but death, and all must die. Not one more dieth of the plague, than would ere long if there were no plague; and it is usually a shorter pain than other fevers bring; and the pain is small in comparison of the stone in the bladder, and many other diseases.

2. And the terror of men's danger and dying multitudes usually doth more to awaken men to repentance and serious preparation, than other diseases use to do. Though fear alone make not a sound repentance, fear is a great and necessary preparatory. I have reason to hope, that the great plague in London was a help to the conversion of many hundred souls; not only as it called men to review their lives, and bethink them of their state; but as it made them far more impartial hearers of public preaching and private counsel. There was then in London no scorning at holy seriousness and diligence for salvation, in comparison of what is now. The houses that now roar out drunken songs and scorns at godliness, and revile, threaten, and curse the religious sort, had other language then, when "Lord, have mercy on us" was written on the doors. When the public ministers fled, God stirred up the charity of many silenced ministers, who till then had forborne public preaching, and they ventured among them, and begged money out of the country for the poor; visited them, and preached to them in the deserted pulpits. And the sense of approaching death so awakened both preachers and hearers, that multitudes of young men and others were converted to true repentance.

And this was the chief occasion of the public preaching of the silenced ministers ever since. They had so great experience of God's blessing, and their young converts were so sensible of the benefit, that both preachers and hearers then resolved to hold on as long as they could.

And was not London now a gainer by this plague? Did it not make men better? Compare it and other places then. At Oxford the parliament of lords, bishops, and commons, who fled thither from the plague, even then in the heat of it were making that swearing act, which ruineth and imprisoneth nonconformists that come within five miles of any city, or burgess corporation, and take not their oath and declaration (yea, and some lawyers say, conformists too, that have but once preached in that which they call a conventicle, and take not the oath). But in London there is no such work; they were not then sending the preachers to gaol, or hunting them as rogues or rebels, but gladly hearing them, and begging for their prayers.

II. And as to famine or common poverty, I have spoken of it before. The great distress that the fires and other means have brought on many thousand families, hath but drawn out the charity of others, and exercised the repentance, humility, and mortification of the poor, and so hath prepared both sorts, rich and poor, for a greater reward: it hath done much to try men's charity, and to show the difference

between man and man. I that have had the opportunity to try both sorts, have found by long experience, that whereas malignant, worldly men were wont to say, that these religious persons were but hypocrites; though they read the Scripture and prayed much, they were as covetous and uncharitable as others: it is so much contrary, that they excel others in charity as much as in piety; and I can sooner get ten pounds, or twenty, for the poor, from religious persons, than ten shillings from those that speak against them, that are of greater wealth than they.

III. And though the foresaid flames of London, Southwark, Wapping, Northampton, &c. were great corrections, let us not make them greater than they are. As to the loss of estate by them, it is but what the richest merchant is liable to by piracy or shipwreck, and not so much as death will shortly bring on all, when all the world must be forsaken. 2. And it was a great mercy of God, that men's lives were preserved when their wealth was gone; so that they had time to improve the correction. 3. And a great help it was to men of any sense and consideration, to see the vanity of all worldly wealth and treasure, and to prepare for the time when it must be finally left. And the flames of London and its after-ruins, were a notable fore-signification of the great flames and ruins of the final judgment day; and it loudly called on men to examine what the corporation common sin of England is, which laid so many corporations in ashes; and to repent in time. And we need not make it an aggravation that it was done by malice; for it is easier to our consciences, that it be done by others than ourselves; and it helpeth those men to see the evil of those destructive principles which engage men to do such mischief on pretence of the service of the church. 4. Yea, and it is a presignification of the new heaven and earth, when all things shall be restored, to see such a city so soon rebuilt, in far greater splendour than before.

IV. But cruel wars and soldiers are a more sharp calamity; but yet leave us alleviating considerations, and matter enough to exercise and help our patience. For, 1. It doth lively tell us what man is in his corrupted state, and what sin is, and what we had been if grace had forsaken us.

2. It tells us what our state on earth is, a militant life; and calls us to remember our spiritual enemies and warfare, and to live as armed in constant watchfulness. 3. It helps our faith to believe that there are devils, and a hell, when we see the works and instruments of devils upon earth, and see earth made so like to hell. 4. It teacheth us to set light by earthly treasure, which thieves and plunderers can so quickly take away; and to live in constant preparation for death, when men are so ready to take away our lives. 5. And it tells us how much we are beholden to God for our preservation, and for our peace, that all men be not thus continually as incarnate devils to one another. 6. And it calls us to long for the world of perfect love and peace, where there are no such men, and no such doings. How sweet will everlasting peace and joy be when we come newly out of such a world of savage cruelty! 7. And God often by wars, prepareth people for a better peace than they had before; the sweetness of which doth make the miseries of war forgotten. 8. And usually it is the most wicked men that are cut off by war, while the pious and peaceable look on and escape. Wicked men are mad with sin, and will not give peace to themselves or others: while they run with rage to murder others, they are killed themselves, and "God is known by the judgment which he executeth, while the wicked are snared in the work of their own hands, and dashed in pieces by their own rage; for the wicked are like the raging sea, which casts out dirt. There is no peace to the wicked, saith the Lord," Isa. xlix. And while men "bite and devour one another, they are devoured one of another; and they that lead into captivity, shall be led into captivity; and they that kill with the sword, shall be killed by the sword."

So that it should seem no strange thing to a soldier of Christ, that the world which he is passing through is malignant.

CASE XIX.

The Prosperity and Triumphs of wicked Enemies of the Church.

Another great trial of our patience is, the triumph of the wicked enemies of the church, and that the saints are usually under their feet in sufferings and scorn. I spake before of persecution, and as to the prosperity and triumphs of malignants. David, who was under the like temptation, hath long ago given us considerations sufficient for our patience, Psal. xxxvii.; lxxiii. And the triumph of the wicked is but for a moment, and their motion as the grasshoppers, that fall as they rise. Their victories, and glory, and rage, are like a squib of gunpowder, which makes a noise and is presently extinct: they are moved dust, which the wind of God's displeasure blows into our eyes: they are dying while they are raging, and their own death is at hand and lingereth not, while they are killing others. Go into the sanctuary and see their end, and it may silence all impatience; for see their corpses in rottenness, and their souls in hell, and pity will overcome envy, and their case will appear to you a thousand times sadder than theirs that suffer by them for righteousness' sake. Their contrivances do but plot themselves into misery. All the blood which they shed, must be reckoned for: and precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints, even when they seem deserted. Where now is Alexander, Cæsar, Tamerlane, and such other famous murderers called conquerors? Are they now triumphing? Is it an ease to their tormented souls, or life to their dust, that living fools do magnify their names, and their dear-bought victories and murders? If it be no glory to a serpent, crocodile, or a wolf, or a mad dog, to kill men, no nor to the devil, who is a murderer from the beginning, why should it be a glory to these instruments of the devil? Oh what a dreadful search will it be to Babylon, when in her shall be found the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus, and upon her shall come at once all the righteous blood that hath been shed! The blood of the many hundred thousand Waldenses, Albigenses, Bohemians, &c. did but render the papacy more odious: their inquisition, and Alva's cruelties, lost them the Low Countries. They got nothing in France by the sudden murder of thirty or forty thousand protestants; nor will they get at last by their present cruelties. The two hundred thousand murdered by the Irish, prepared for the murderers' greater ruin, but did not satisfy their desires. Queen Mary's fires did but make popery the more easily and commonly hated and extirpated in the days of her successor. Persecutors are not immortal, but must die as well as others: and they have not always the choice of their successors. And as their names rot with their carcasses, and to pious, sober, and wise posterity no names are more odious, so their designs and works also often perish with them. We have seen in our days and land, the same men that were the terror of the nation in war, laid in a grave and left to the common earth, where no one is afraid of them. And the

same men that were lift up by many victories, thought kings, parliament, ministers, and people must submit to their will, as being in their power, within one or two years were hanged, drawn, and quartered, and their quarters hung up over the gates of the city; their victorious army being dissolved without one drop of bloodshed.

If we saw a drunken man or a mad-man raging in the streets, so that people were afraid to come near him, who would think such a man therefore ever the more happy? or who would desire to be in his case? If we judge of them by that part they are now acting on the stage, under great names and garbs, we shall be deluded as they are. Look on them undressed, and off the stage, see what they are under the pangs of death, or when the soul is dragged away to punishment, and hath left their ghastly faces and carcasses for the grave. See what God saith of them in his word, and believe his prognostic what shall befall them. Is Ahab ever the better for being recorded in Scripture, as an enemy to faithful prophets? Or Cain ever the better for being the first murderer in the world? Or Herod ever the better for being mentioned in the gospel? Or Pilate, for having his name in the creed? Or are the flames ever the easier to Dives, because he once fared sumptuously, and was clothed richly every day, while Lazarus lay at his gate in sores? The time is short; the conqueror and the conquered will be equal in the dust, where they will cease to trouble, and lie in peace; but the persecutor and the persecuted (for righteousness' sake) will be as distantly separated as hell from heaven. The men of this world, who have their portion in this life, are God's sword and rod to correct his children; but as they now glory in their shame, so they shall shortly be ashamed of their glorying, and wish in vain that all their proud oppressions and cruel victories had been not done, or could be undone.

CASE XX.

No Probability in any Visible Means that ever the World should be much better. Twelve General Directions to get and use Patience in every Case.

And it adds much to the trial of our faith and patience, that there is no apparent means of deliverance, nor probability, in the eye of reason, that ever the world should become better, but it groweth worse and worse. Could we see any hope of better days, we might the easier wait in patience. 1. The heathen world is out of our reach: we know not how to send any probable means among them. The Roman Jesuits and friars, who have greater stocks of money, have been encouraged by kings, especially of Portugal, to go among some heathens with their ambassadors, or by their help; and to their due praise be it spoken, in Congo, Japan, China, and some other countries, they took great pains, and did much. But most that they did was quickly undone, partly by the pravity of sensual heathens, and partly by their depravation of the christian doctrine which they should have preached. They consulting with carnal wisdom, durst not tell men long of Christ's crucifixion: and they did but change their heathenish images for Agnus Dei's and pictures of the Virgin Mary, and other trinkets like their own; which was easily received, but made not sound christians, while the people thought that christianity lay in such little things: and two things broke down all their paper building. In Congo they liked the profession of christianity, when it touched not the flesh, and lay but in opinions, names, and relics; but when they were told that they must leave drunkenness, whoredom, and riotous sports, they cast off all, and would go no further. In Japan (and most places) when they perceive that the design is secular, to subject all kingdoms to the pope, the princes abhor them, and cruelly persecuted the new-made christians, till they had utterly extirpated christianity there.

The protestant princes and states are little regardful for the conversion of heathens, but contend about their own dominions, interests, and wills, when they should confederate for the promoting of the gospel of salvation. Save that old Mr. John Elliot and his helpers, have by long, unwearied labour done much intensively, but not much extensively, in New England: and how to carry it farther they know not. Merchants that should contrive to make their factories serviceable hereto, take little care of it, but prosecute the way of their own gain.

The most capable persons were princes by their ambassadors: but who much regards it? Or rather, the neighbour nations of christians, who live near the heathens and Mahometans, and traffic with them. But alas! these are mostly an ignorant sort of christians, unfit to manage so great a work, such as the Armenians, Georgians, Circassians, Mengrelians, Abassines, and most of the Jacobites and Nestorians; or ignorant and vicious also, such as mostly are the Greeks and Muscovites; or contemned by those that master them, such as are the Transilvanians and Hungarians. So that they are a scandal to the Turks and heathens, and bring christianity with them into contempt.

And among christians how small is the number of those that are sincerely godly, and keep sound doctrine, and live accordingly! And there appeareth no probability of reforming them. The great and famous Eastern churches are mostly gone to Mahometanism. And the servitude of the Greeks keeps them in ignorance, and ignorance cherisheth all vice. The Muscovites have neither bishops nor priests that can preach, or desire it, nor emperors that will suffer it, but are ignorant slaves under the name of christians. The Roman party are armed with wealth, learning, policy, and power to keep up the papal claim and corruptions, and keep out that reformation, which would restore christianity to its former purity. The reformed in France are under heavy sufferings, and near extirpation. The Lutherans too bitter enemies to concord, and most Germans too sensual in their lives. The protestant churches seem every where declining, if not hastening to ruin. Some rulers that have professed reformation are serving the papists, with resolved violence to root it out, and bring themselves and subjects under a foreign jurisdiction. And George Herbert's prophecy seemeth to go on, that religion is forsaking Europe, and flying to America. Scultetus in "Curriculo vitæ suæ," tells us that one time all seemed so strongly for reformation in Germany, Bohemia, France, England, &c. that many said the golden age was coming: and in one year all was changed and brought as low as formerly. And if we might judge by probabilities, all of christianity saving a lifeless name, and shell, and ceremonies, is like to be rooted out of the earth. And the devil reigneth as powerfully by wicked rulers, and prelates, and priests, called christians, as by Mahometans. And godliness is as effectually destroyed in such a kingdom as Muscovy, as it is in some infidel lands. And when Christ cometh, will he find faith on the earth?

This case indeed is a great trial of our faith and patience: but let us consider, 1. That this world was never intended to be the place of our felicity or long abode, but only, as is aforesaid, as the womb where we are conceived and formed for a better world; or as the wilderness to the Israelites, where

they were to be tried by difficulties in their way to the land of promise: or as a winter journey through dirty or craggy ways homeward. And what if this womb, this wilderness, these ways never amend? What man is so weak as to be discouraged, because posterity is like to find the ways as foul or rough as he has done? Or because the deserts of Libya, or Arabia, or the dangerous passages over the Alps, will be no better to the next generation than they are to this? It is indeed the desire of every true christian that the world were better; and these desires are not vain; they show the honesty of them that wish it: but God will not do all that he hath made it our duty to desire. We must desire the conversion and salvation of many that never will be converted and saved.

2. God will give us all that we desire, but it is not on earth. If we did still see by faith the greater, perfect, glorious world, which we are near, it would quiet us against all our perplexing doubts and troubles in this world. All is well in heaven, even better than we can desire: there is no ignorance, no infidelity, atheism, Mahometanism; no wars, no sects, no cruelties, no contentions; reformation is there perfect, and the church all holy.

3. In all reason our affections should be but proportioned to their objects. It is our duty to mourn for the miserable world, and the corrupt state of the church on earth; but seeing the heavenly glory incomparably exceedeth the world's misery, our joy should be far greater to think of heaven, than our trouble when we think of earth. Again I say, all the earth is no bigger compared to heaven, than our gaol is compared to all this kingdom, yea, to all the kingdoms on earth; and it is our duty to be sorry, if those in prison do not amend, and that those must die that are condemned. But should we not more rejoice, if it went as well as we could wish it with all the rest of the kingdom, or of the world. Heaven, which is many thousand times bigger than earth, hath nothing but perfect felicity and glory, perfect knowledge, love, and joy.

4. And this earth shall serve to all God's ends. He will gather all his chosen; and he will be glorified in his providence towards the rest. Out of this Bedlam Christ bringeth many to saving wisdom; and out of this gaol God's mercy taketh many sons to glory: he reprieveth all, and pardoneth all that are penitent believers; and traitors and enemies are reconciled to him by Christ, and being justified by faith have peace with God. God placed man in an earthly paradise as the passage to a heavenly; and man's own wilful sin and folly turned his paradise into a prison, and it is now a house of correction, where God joineth instruction, and by the book and rod doth teach his chosen saving wisdom: and as the Israelites in the wilderness had their suitable mercies for their forty years; and as Jeremy led the captive Jews to build, and plant, and marry in Babylon, and pray for its peace, as the place in which their own peace must be had, till seventy years were past, (which is the age of man,) so God here giveth us great mercies suitable to our wilderness and captive state; and when a little is over, we shall have better than we could here believe. And though I would not cherish that sinful desire, which would have that on earth which is proper to heaven, nor have I skill enough in the exposition of hard prophecies to make a particular determination about the thousand years' reign of Christ on earth before the final judgment, yet I may say, that I cannot confute what such learned men as Mr. Mead, Dr. Twisse, and others (after the old fathers) have hereof asserted. And I am certain that Christ teacheth us all to pray that God's name may be hallowed, his kingdom come, and his will be done, on earth as it is in heaven; and that he appointeth us to use no prayer or means in vain. And many are ready to believe the old saying, that as the world was made in six days, and the seventh was made a day of holy rest, and a day with the Lord is as a thousand years; so after six thousand years of sin and sorrow, a thousand years' holy rest shall follow. Of this I am uncertain: but I believe there will be a new heaven and earth, in which will dwell righteousness. We must not look for too great matters in a sinful, cursed earth. We would fain have all the blessedness of heaven, but are loth to die, and therefore would have it here on earth; and the rather because as hearsay without sight doth not give a man a satisfactory conception of any house or place that he would know: so such a sensible conception we would have of heaven. But death is the wages of sin, and die we must; "but the gift of God is eternal life, through him who hath overcome him that hath the power of death, by the fear of which we are kept in bondage." And we may rejoice by an implicit trust to Christ, in the hope of that glory which we can in the flesh have no explicit idea or conception of; where will be no sin, no death, no fear, no imperfection, no unbelief, or censorious distaste at any of God's words or works; but beatifying vision, and fulness of everlasting joy in glory.

And against this and other objections, you must still remember that a suffering condition is not so bad for the church on earth, as unbelief and flesh would make you think. For,

1. A fleshly prosperity is too brutish and short to be true felicity. It is the portion of the wicked, and the occasion of their deceit and ruin; Psal. xvii. 14; Luke xii. 15, 20, 21. And is the church less happy, because it is saved from so dangerous temptations?

2. Forget not the invaluable riches of the church, in its lowest state. Their God, their Christ, their Comforter, the promises, and all suitable providences fitted to their good, are a thousandfold greater riches and honour, than all the kingdoms and power of the ungodly world.

3. The church in its most depressed state, hath impregnable strength and safety; their God is invincible; their Saviour is the rock which the gates of hell shall not prevail against, Matt. xvi. 18.

4. When they are most scorned and contemned, and used as fools and rogues, and as the basest and most odious of mankind; they are the members of Christ, the children of God, and bear his image, and are the charge of angels, and passing to a crown of glory. And what is any dishonour from man, as set against such honours with God and all the blessed? "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God," Matt. v. "The reproach of Christ is greater riches than worldlings' treasure," Heb. xi. 26; Eph. ii. 7; v. 25, 27; i. 22, 23; iii. 10.

5. Remember that the far greatest part of the church, even all since the creation, are in possession of heaven already, and it is but a small remnant as the gleanings, that are here yet behind; Heb. xii. 22, 23, read the description of them there. Christ is not ashamed to call them brethren, Heb. ii. 11; and useth them as such: in his Father's house he hath many mansions for them, John xiv. 1—3. And if you saw all those millions in heaven with Christ, could you for shame grudge that the few behind are passing thither through temptation and tribulation? or that it must be as by swimming, or on broken pieces of the ship, that they must come all safe to land? as Acts xxvii. If all be well in heaven, grudge not at the way: these things are never the worse or more uncertain in themselves, for being unseen.

6. And how great security hath God given the church of all this heavenly glory promised. Can we fear that Christ will be defeated of the great design of man's redemption, and reigning in the new Jerusalem, where he is to be its light instead of the sun? And doth not God love his church much better than we do; and better know how to deal with it, and all the world? Shall we, blind sinners, who do nothing thoroughly well, be afraid lest God will miscarry, or do any thing amiss?

8. The church must have its purgatory on earth; and prosperity filleth it with hypocrites who corrupt it; and adversity must refine from such dross.

9. Partieular christians are better by affliction; and what else is the church but particular christians? God will not leave our temptations to the damning love of the world too strong.

10. The church must be conformed to its Head, who suffered, and then entered into glory.

11. While all individuals are sinful and imperfect, what wonder if all the church do suffer by it?

12. Most graces must shine and increase by exercise; like some jewels that must be rubbed: as fire in a flint, or steel, that must be called into sight by violenee. We are but like common men in appearance, till somewhat more than common work or suffering call us out, and show our difference from hypocrites.

These and many such considerations before intimated, may convince us that the worst state of the church or world, is no just cause of censuring God's providence, nor of discouragement or impatience to any true believer: but still in patience we may possess our souls.

I will draw out this treatise no longer, but to remember all christians, that the common great defect of patience is a great dishonour to our profession of faith and heavenly hope, and leadeth us to that within as the cause, which we should be greatly humbled for; and that it is a disease so painful to ourselves, as should make us loth to cherish or excuse it. A tender state of body is not desirable, whieh can endure no cold or air; no diet but curiously drest; neither winter nor summer, &c. Much worse is a tender, impatient mind, that is hardly pleased by man or God; that is impatient at every loss or cross, at every real or supposed wrong, at every danger; threatening, or ill news; that must be stroked, and rocked, and used as a child. Alas! many people that truly fear God, have so great a want of patience, as that one can hardly live quietly with them; but he must have extraordinary skill, and care, and tenderness, if not flattery, who will not be a trouble to them.

And yet because some causelessly judge these to be worse than they are, I will say again, that passion and the will's defection, are very different sorts of impatience.

I conclude with these few brief directions, for establishing the heart with patience in all trials whatsoever.

I. Understand well the true nature of patienee and impatience, that you mistake not natural temper for either saving grace or damning sin. The passions must be distinguished from the judgment and will. A man of a choleric temper, and aged, sick, or weak persons, may be peevish and impatient with the little provocations which daily befall them, so far as to be angry and trouble themselves and others. Children will cry, and most women are more easily cast into passion than men; they are apt to fear beyond all reason, and to be troubled and troublesome to others with unquiet grief, displeasedness, or anger. This must neither be made light of, as no fault, nor yet made a greater fault than it is. Many men have stronger natures, and free from passion, (and some almost to stupidity,) which joined with grace and a due sense of weighty things, is a great advantage and ornament: but it is found oft in the most graceless, wicked men, who deeeive themselves by it, and think they are better than passionate, honest men. Yea, it usually proveth a great hinderance to their repentance and reformation; no sermon, no reason, no thought of death or eternity, will move and change their senseless hearts.

But the saving grace of patience is prineipally in this, when a man hath so resolvedly given up himself to God by Christ for life eternal, and is so much under divine authority, that he can endure the loss of all, even reputation, estate, friends, liberty, or life, rather than forsake Christ, or hazard his salvation by wilful sin; and therefore also striveth against all sinful passions, and repenteth of that whieh doth surprise him.

And damning impatience is, when a man cannot deliberately bear the loss of corporal prosperity, for the sake of Christ and righteousness, nor hold on in a holy, righteous, sober life; but will rather fall off, and wilfully sin, and venture his soul, than deny his flesh, and be undone in the world: such take godliness for a grievous yoke, or else they would not be impatient to bear it, and they take not God and heaven for their best.

II. Nothing therefore will make one patient in a holy, saving sense, but the well-grounded, resolved choice of God's love in Christ, and the blessedness of another world, as that portion which must make us happy, whatever we lose or suffer on earth. Therefore faith and hope must be above, and fetch from heaven the matter of our constant resolution, or else there can be no true patienee: if we live more on earthly hopes and comforts than heavenly, and more to the flesh than the Spirit, there can be no true patienee, much less durable: for in the world we shall have troubles; and if we have not, yet a content in the love of it is more damnable than trouble.

III. Therefore the true contempt of fleshly prosperity and worldly things, by mortification, is absolutely necessary to patience. While the body and its appetite, ease or life, is over-dear to us, we shall never patiently lose or spare them; and while we love the flesh and world, reputation, wealth, and pleasure too much, we shall be over-much troubled to lose them. Account all loss and dung for Christ, as Paul did, and you will easily bear the loss of it.

IV. Think what you have, as well as what you want; reckon up truly all the riches of grace in Christ; to be a child of God, beloved by him, an heir of heaven, a member of Christ, pardoned, justified, sanctified, under God's true promise of everlasting joy; and compare this with your suffering, and think whether it becomes an heir of heaven to be impatient in the way.

V. Therefore be diligent to make your calling and election sure; neither neglect neeessary obedience, nor cherish causeless doubts, lest you lose that comfort of hope which must make you patient in all trials; else when heaven and God's love should support you under all, you will be still questioning your title to it, and so have nothing to set against all your sufferings and fears. If this anchor of hope be not well-grounded, what shall uphold men in sufferings and death?

VI. Live in the constant belief and apprehension of God's absolute disposal of all the world; and see all things and persons as in his hand, and remember that there is nothing comes to pass without him, and

that he useth even the permitted sins of men to his good and holy ends. Think on no man, or action, or event, as independent upon God; but remember still with whom you have to do, and who it is that overruleth all, and whose rod your enemies and afflictions are: and this will tell you that nothing is done amiss by him, and that nothing shall be finally hurtful to the faithful; and that we must not dare to accuse our Maker: and it will make you say, "It is the Lord, let him do as seemeth him good. The will of the Lord be done."

VII. Here see still the certain end of all: how the sufferings of the faithful will end; and how the power, wealth, prosperity, and triumph of the wicked will end. Go into the sanctuary. Believe what God hath foretold you, and faith may fully satisfy you.

VIII. Keep a due humbling sense of your own and others' sin, and of God's common mercies to you and all men, that you may still perceive how much better God dealeth with you than you deserve. It is no small mercy to be alive, out of hell, and to have the free offers of a Saviour, of pardon and salvation, and to have God entreating you to be reconciled to him, and promise you Christ and life, if you do but willingly accept his gift.

IX. Be acquainted with your chief temptations, both to impatience and to other sins, that you may live in arms and watchful resistance. 1. Renew not your own wounds and sufferings by gross negligence or wilful sin, and yielding to the tempter; for if you put God to use a sharper rod, your patience will have a harder work. And do not by rashness make your own suffering, and run into it (as by rash words, by suretyship, and imprudent actions, many do): you may more confidently look for God's support under the cross which he layeth on you for trial, than that which you make for yourselves; though there also repentance may give us a comfortable remedy. 2. And understand what are your temptations to impatience. Is it crosses, poverty, threatenings of men, a froward companion, a wicked child, or rather a weak and peevish, passionate temper? Whatever it is, get those particular considerations against it, which must be your armour, and live in the daily use of them.

X. Resist the beginnings of unbelieving, troubling thoughts, and roll them not in your mind. Abhor the first degrees of distrusting God, or discontent with his providence, or any secret accusation of his disposals; and turn your thoughts presently to his love, and mercies, and promises, and Christ's abundant grace; pore not upon troubling and discontented things any further than is necessary to avoid the evil; but study the satisfactory promises and terms of further grace and endless glory. Be careful (with distrust and trouble) for nothing, but in all wants and straits go to God and open all to him, and ask him for your daily bread, remembering that he clotheth the lilies of the field, and that a sparrow moveth not without his providence, and that all the hairs of your head are numbered, and that he knoweth what you need, and what is best for you, and that sufficient to the day is the evil thereof. Think what a mercy it is that he commands you to "cast all your care on God, who careth for you;" and whether if the king bid a beggar or prisoner trust him, and cast all his care on him, it would not comfort him.

XI. Forget not all the wonderful deliverances that you and the church of God have had, and how oft his mercies have confuted and reproved your distrust.

XII. Lastly, thoroughly study a crucified Christ, and the reasons and use of the cross, and why he will have us imitate him and follow him in sufferings to glory. And never think God disappointeth you, if he will but bring you safe to heaven. And read oft the sufferings of Christ, and his sermons, Matt. v.; John xii. 14—16; Matt. vi.; Rom. viii.; 1 Pet. iii.; iv.; James iv.; v.; Rev. ii.; iii.; Rom. v. 3, 4; Col. i. 11; Heb. vi. 12; xii. 1, &c.; Rom. xii. 12, &c.; xv. 4, 5; 1 Tim. vi. 11. "For you have need of patience, that after you have done the will of God you may inherit the promise," Heb. x. 36. "Count it all joy when you fall into divers (trying) temptations, knowing that the trying of your faith (which is more precious than gold which perisheth) worketh patience; but let patience have its perfect work." And show that you are patient toward God by your patience toward men. "Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one towards another according to Christ Jesus," Rom. xv. 5. So prayeth your brother and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ,

R. B.

MR. BAXTER'S

DYING THOUGHTS

UPON

PHILIPPIANS i. 23.

WRITTEN FOR HIS OWN USE IN THE LATTER TIMES OF HIS CORPORAL PAINS AND WEAKNESS.

THE PREFACE TO THE READER.

READER,

I HAVE no other use for a preface to this book, but to give you a true excuse for its publication. I wrote it for myself, unresolved whether any one should ever see it; but at last inclined to leave that to the will of my executors, to publish or suppress it when I am dead, as they saw cause. But my person being seized on, and my library and all my goods distrained on by constables, and sold, and I constrained to relinquish my house, (for preaching and being in London,) I knew not what to do with multitudes of manuscripts that had long lain by me; having no house to go to, but a narrow hired lodging with strangers: wherefore I cast away whole volumes, which I could not carry away, both controversies and letters practical, and cases of conscience; but having newly lain divers weeks, night and day, in waking torments, nephritic and colic, after other long pains and languor, I took this book with me in my removal, for my own use in my further sickness. Three weeks after, falling into another extreme fit, and expecting death, where I had no friend with me to commit my papers to, merely lest it should be lost, I thought best to give it to the printer. I think it is so much of the work of all men's lives to prepare to die with safety and comfort, that the same thoughts may be needful for others that are so for me. If any mislike the title, as if it imported that the author is dead, let him know that I die daily, and that which quickly will be, almost is: it is suited to my own use: they that it is unsuitable to, may pass it by. If those men's lives were spent in serious, preparing thoughts of death, who are now studying to destroy each other, and tear in pieces a distressed land, they would prevent much dolorous repentance.

R. B.

THE exercise of three sorts of love, to God, to others, and to myself, afford me a threefold satisfaction, conjunct, to be willing to depart.

I. I am sure my departure will be the fulfilling of that will which is love itself, which I am bound, above all things, to love and please, and which is the beginning, rule, and end of all. Antonine could hence fetch good thoughts of death.

II. The world dieth not with me when I die; nor the church, nor the praise and glory of God, which he will have in and from this world unto the end: and if I love others as myself, their lives and comforts will now be to my thoughts, as if I were to live myself in them. God will be praised and honoured by posterity when I am dead and gone. Were I to be annihilated, this would comfort me now, if I lived and died in perfect love.

III. But a better and glorious world is before me, into which I hope, by death, to be translated, whither all these three sorts of love should wrap up the desires of my ascending soul; even the love of myself, that I may be fully happy; the love of the triumphant church, Christ, angels, and glorified man, and the glory of all the universe, which I shall see; and above all, the love of the most glorious God, infinite life, and light, and love, the ultimate, amiable object of man's love; in whom to be perfectly pleased and delighted, and to whom to be perfectly pleasing for ever, is the chief and ultimate end of me, and of the highest, wisest, and best of creatures. Amen.

THE INTRODUCTION.

I WRITE for myself, and therefore, supposing the sense of the text, shall only observe what is useful to my heart and practice.

It was a happy state into which grace had brought this apostle, who saw so much, not only tolerable, but greatly desirable, both in living and dying. To live, to him, was Christ, that is, Christ's interest, or work. To die would be gain, that is, his own interest and reward. His strait was not whether it would be good to live or good to depart, both were good, but which was more desirable was the doubt.

I. *Quest.* But was there any doubt to be made between Christ's interest and his own? *Answ.* No, if it had been a full and fixed competition; but by Christ, or Christ's interest, he meaneth his work for his church's interest in this world; but he knew that Christ also had an interest in his saints above, and that he could raise up more to serve him here; yet, because he was to judge by what appeared, and he saw a defect of such on earth, this did turn the scales in his choice; and for the work of Christ and his church's good, he more inclined to the delay of his reward, by self-denial; yet knowing that the delay would tend to its increase. It is useful to me here to note,

That, even in this world, short of death, there is some good so much to be regarded, as may justly prevail with believers to prefer it before the present hastening of their reward.

I the rather note this, that no temptation carry me into that extreme, of taking nothing but heaven to be worthy of our minding or regard, and so to cast off the world in a sinful sort, on pretence of mortification, and a heavenly mind, and life.

1. As to the sense, the meaning is not that any thing on earth is better than heaven, or simply, and in itself, to be preferred before it. The end is better than the means as such, and perfection better than imperfection.

2. But the present use of the means may be preferred sometimes before the present possession of the end, and the use of means for a higher end may be preferred before the present possession of a lower end, and every thing hath its season. Planting, and sowing, and building, are not so good as reaping, and fruit-gathering, and dwelling, but in their season they must be first done.

II. *Quest.* But what is there so desirable in this life?

Answ. I. While it continueth, it is the fulfilling of the will of God, who will have us here; and that is best which God willeth.

II. The life to come dependeth upon this, as the life of man in the world upon his generation in the womb; or as the reward upon the work; or the runner's or soldier's prize upon his race or fighting; or as the merchant's gain upon his voyage. Heaven is won or lost on earth. The possession is there, but the preparation is here. Christ will judge all men according to their works on earth. "Well done, good and faithful servant," must go before "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course," goeth before "the crown of righteousness which God, the righteous Judge, will give." All that ever must be done for salvation by us, must here be done. It was on earth that Christ himself wrought the work of our redemption, fulfilled all righteousness, became our ransom, and paid the price of our salvation, and it is here that our part is to be done.

And the bestowing of the reward is God's work, who, we are sure, will never fail. There is no place for the least suspicion or fear of his misdoing, or failing, in any of his undertaken work. But the danger and fear is of our own miscarrying, lest we be not found capable of receiving what God will certainly give to all that are disposed receivers. To distrust God is heinous sin and folly, but to distrust ourselves we have great cause. So that if we will make sure of heaven, it must be by giving all diligence to make firm our title, our calling, and our election, here on earth. If we fear hell, we must fear being prepared for it.

And it is great and difficult work that must be here done. It is here that we must be cured of all damning sin; that we must be regenerate and new born; that we must be pardoned and justified by faith. It is here that we must be united to Christ, made wise to salvation, renewed by his Spirit, and conformed to his likeness. It is here that we must overcome all the temptations of the devil, the world, and the flesh, and perform all the duties towards God and man, that must be rewarded. It is here that Christ must be believed in with the heart to righteousness, and with the mouth confessed to salvation. It is here that we must suffer with him, that we may reign with him, and be faithful to the death, that we may receive the crown of life. Here we must so run that we may obtain.

III. Yea, we have greater work here to do than mere securing our own salvation. We are members of the world and church, and we must labour to do good to many. We are trusted with our Master's talents for his service, in our places to do our best to propagate his truth, and grace, and church; and to bring home souls, and honour his cause, and edify his flock, and further the salvation of as many as we can. All this is to be done on earth, if we will secure the end of all in heaven.

Use 1. It is, then, an error (though it is but few, I think, that are guilty of it) to think that all religion lieth in minding only the life to come, and disregarding all things in this present life; all true christians must seriously mind both the end and the means, or way. If they mind not, believingly, the end, they will never be faithful in the use of means. If they mind not, and use not diligently, the means, they will never obtain the end. None can use earth well that prefer not heaven, and none come to heaven, at age, that are not prepared by well using earth. Heaven must have the deepest esteem, and habituated love, and desire, and joy; but earth must have more of our daily thoughts for present practice. A man that travelleth to the most desirable home, hath a habit of desire to it all the way, but his present business is his travel; and horse, and company, and inns, and ways, and weariness, &c. may take up more of his sensible thoughts, and of his talk, and action, than his home.

Use 2. I have oft marvelled to find David, in the Psalms, and other saints, before Christ's coming, to have expressed so great a sense of the things of this present life, and to have said so little of another. To have made so great a matter of prosperity, dominions

and victories, on one hand, and of enemies, success, and perseeution, on the other. But I consider that it was not for mere personal, carnal interest, but for the church of God, and for his honour, word, and worship. And they knew that if things go well with us on earth, they will be sure to go well in heaven. If the militant church prosper in holiness, there is no doubt but it will triumph in glory. God will be sure to do his part in receiving souls, if they be here prepared for his receipt. And Satan doth much of his damning work by men; if we escape their temptations, we escape much of our danger. If idolaters prospered, Israel was tempted to idolatry. The Greek chureh is almost swallowed up by Turkish prosperity and dominion. Most follow the powerful and prosperous side. And, therefore, for God's cause, and for heavenly, everlasting interest, our own state, but much more the church's, must be greatly regarded here on earth.

Indeed, if earth be desired only for earth, and prosperity loved but for the present welfare of the flesh, it is the certain mark of damning carnality, and an earthly mind. But to desire peace and prosperity, and power to be in the hands of wise and faithful men, for the sake of souls, and the increase of the church, and the honour of God, that his name may be hallowed, his kingdom eome, and his will done on earth as it is in heaven; this is to be the chief of our prayers to God.

Use 3. Be not unthankful, then, O my soul, for the mercies of this present life, for those to thy body, to thy friends, to the land of thy nativity, and especially to the church of God.

1. This body is so nearly united to thee, that it must needs be a great help, or hinderance. Had it been more afflicted, it might have been a discouraging elog; like a tired horse in a journey, or an ill tool to a workman, or an untuned instrument in music. A sick or bad servant in a house is a great trouble, and a bad wife much more; but thy body is nearer thee than either, and will be more of thy concern.

And yet if it had been more strong and healthful, sense and appetite would have been strong, and lust would have been strong, and therefore danger would have been greater, and victory and salvation much more difficult. Even weak senses and temptations have too oft prevailed. How knowest thou, then, what stronger might have done? When I see a thirsty man in a fever or dropsy, and especially when I see strong and healthful youths, bred up in fulness, and among temptations, how mad they are in sin, and how violently they are carried to it, bearing down God's rebukes, and conscience, and parents, and friends, and all regard to their salvation, it tells me how great a mercy I had, even in a body not liable to their case.

And many a bodily deliverance hath been of great use to my soul, renewing my time, and opportunity, and strength, for service, and bringing frequent and fresh reports of the love of God.

If bodily mercies were not of great use to the soul, Christ would not so much have showed his saving love, by healing all manner of diseases, as he did. Nor would God promise us a resurrection of the body, if a congruous body did not further the welfare of the soul.

2. And I am obliged to great thankfulness to God for the mercies of this life which he hath showed to my friends; that which furthers their joy should increase mine. I ought to rejoice with them that rejoice. Nature and grace teach us to be glad when our friends are well, and prosper, though all in order to better things than bodily welfare.

3. And such mercies of this life to the land of our habitation must not be undervalued. The want of them are parts of God's threatened curse; and godliness hath the promise of this life, and of that which is to come, and so is profitable to all things. And when God sends on a land the plagues of famine, pestilence, war, persecution, especially a famine of the word of God, it is a great sin to be insensible of it. If any shall say, While heaven is sure, we have no cause to accuse God, or to cast away comfort, hope, or duty, they say well; but if they say, Because heaven is all, we must make light of all that befalleth us on earth, they say amiss.

Good princes, magistrates, and public-spirited men that promote the safety, peace, and true prosperity of the commonwealth, do thereby very much befriend religion, and men's salvation; and are greatly to be loved and honoured by all. If the civil state, called the eommonwealth, do miscarry, or fall into ruin and calamity, the church will fare the worse for it as the soul doth by the ruins of the body. The Turkish, Muscovite, and such other empires, tell us how the church consumeth, and dwindles away into contempt, or withered ceremony and formality, where tyranny brings slavery, beggary, or long persecution on the subjects. Doubtless, divers passages in the Revelation contain the church's glorifying of God, for their power and prosperity on earth, when emperors became christians: what else can be meant well by Rev. ix. 10, "Hath made us kings and priests to God, and we shall reign on the earth;" but that christians shall be brought from under heathen persecution, and have rule and sacred honour in the world, some of them being princes, some honoured church guides, and all a peculiar, honoured people. And had not Satan found out that cursed way of getting wicked men, that hate true godliness and peace, into the sacred placcs of princes and pastors, to do his work against Christ, as in Christ's name; surely no good christians would have grudged at the power of rulers of state, or church. Sure I am, that many, called fifth-monarchy men, seem to make this their great hope, that rule shall be in the hands of righteous men; and I think, most religious parties would rejoice if those had very great power, whom they take to be the best and trustiest men; which shows that it is not the greatness of power in most princes, or sound bishops, that they dislike, but the badness, real or supposed, of those whose power they mislike: who will blame power to do good?

Sure the three first and great petitions of the Lord's prayer include some temporal welfare of the world and ehurch, without which the spiritual rarely prospereth extensively, (though intensively in a few it may,) since miracles ceased.

4. Be thankful, therefore, for all the church's mercies here on earth; for all the protection of magistracy; the plenty of preachers; the preservation from enemies; the restraint of persecution; the concord of christians; and increase of godliness; which in this land it hath had in our ages; notwithstanding all Satan's malignant rage, and all the bloody wars that have interrupted our tranquillity. How many psalms of joyful thanksgiving be there for Israel's deliverances, and the preservation of Zion, and God's worship in his sanctuary: "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love it." Especially, that the gospel is continued, while so many rage against it, is a mercy not to be made light of.

Use 4. Be specially thankful, O my soul, that God hath made any use of thee, for the service of his church on earth. My God, my soul for this doth magnify thee, and my spirit rejoiceth in the review of thy great, undeserved mercy! Oh! what am I, whom thou tookest up from the dunghill or low ob-

scurity, that I should live, myself, in the constant relish of thy sweet and sacred truth, and with such encouraging success communicate it to others? That I must say, now my public work seems ended, that these forty-three or forty-four years, I have no reason to think that ever I laboured in vain! Oh with what gratitude must I look upon all places where I lived and laboured; but, above all, that place that had my strength. I bless thee for the great numbers gone to heaven, and for the continuance of piety, humility, concord, and peace among them.

And for all that by my writings have received any saving light and grace. O my God, let not my own heart be barren while I labour in thy husbandry, to bring others unto holy fruit. Let me not be a stranger to the life and power of that saving truth which I have done so much to communicate to others. O let not my own words and writings condemn me as void of that divine and heavenly nature and life, which I have said so much for to the world.

Use 5. Stir up, then, O my soul, thy sincere desires, and all thy faculties, to do the remnant of the work of Christ appointed thee on earth, and then joyfully wait for the heavenly perfection in God's own time.

Thou canst truly say, "To live, to me, is Christ." It is his work for which thou livest; thou hast no other business in the world; but thou dost his work with the mixture of many oversights and imperfections, and too much troublest thy thoughts distrustfully about God's part, who never faileth: if thy work be done, be thankful for what is past, and that thou art come so near the port of rest: if God will add any more to thy days, serve him with double alacrity, now thou art so near the end: the prize is almost within sight; time is swift, and short. Thou hast told others that there is no working in the grave, and that it must be now or never. Though the conceit of meriting of commutative justice be no better than madness, dream not that God will save the wicked, no, nor equally reward the slothful and the diligent, because Christ's righteousness was perfect. Paternal justice maketh difference according to that worthiness which is so denominated by the law of grace; and as sin is its own punishment, holiness and obedience is much of its own reward: whatever God appointeth thee to do, see that thou do it sincerely, and with all thy might: if sin dispose men to be angry because it is detected, disgraced, and resisted, if God be pleased, their wrath should be patiently borne, who will shortly be far more angry with themselves. If slander and obloquy survive, so will the better effects on those that are converted; and there is no comparison between these. I shall not be hurt, when I am with Christ, by the calumnies of men on earth; but the saving benefit will, by converted sinners, be enjoyed everlastingly: words and actions are transient things, and, being once past, are nothing; but the effect of them, on an immortal soul, may be endless. All the sermons that I have preached are nothing now; but the grace of God, on sanctified souls, is the beginning of eternal life. It is unspeakable mercy to be sincerely thus employed with success; therefore, I had reason, all this while, to be in Paul's strait, and make no haste in my desires to depart. The crown will come in its due time; and eternity is long enough to enjoy it, how long soever it be delayed: but if I will do that which must obtain it for myself and others, it must be quickly done, before my declining sun be set.

Oh that I had no worse causes of my unwillingness yet to die, than my desire to do the work of life for my own and other men's salvation; and to finish my course with joy, and the ministry committed to me by the Lord.

Use 6. And as it is on earth that I must do good to others, so it must be in a manner suited to their state on earth. Souls are here closely united to bodies, by which they must receive much good or hurt: do good to men's bodies, if thou wouldst do good to their souls; say not, things corporeal are worthles trifles, for which the receivers will be never the better; they are things that nature is easily sensible of; and sense is the passage to the mind and will. Dost not thou find what a help it is to thyself to have, at any time, any ease and alacrity of body? and what a burden and hinderance pains and cares are? Labour, then, to free others from such burdens and temptations, and be not regardless of them. If thou must rejoice with them that rejoice, and mourn with them that mourn, further thy own joy in furthering theirs; and avoid thy own sorrows, in avoiding or curing theirs.

But, alas! what power hath selfishness in most! How easily do we bear our brethren's pains, reproaches, wants, and afflictions, in comparison of our own! how few thoughts, and how little cost or labour, do we use for their supply, in comparison of what we do for ourselves! Nature, indeed, teacheth us to be most sensible of our own case; but grace tells us, that we should not make so great a difference as we do, but should love our neighbours as ourselves.

Use 7. And now, O my soul, consider how mercifully God hath dealt with thee, that thy strait should be between two conditions so desirable. I shall either die speedily, or stay yet longer upon earth; whichever it be, it will be a merciful and comfortable state. That it is desirable to depart and be with Christ, I must not doubt, and shall anon more copiously consider: and if my abode on earth yet longer be so great a mercy as to be put in the balance against my present possession of heaven, surely it must be a state which obligeth me to great thankfulness to God, and comfortable acknowledgment; and surely it is not my pain, or sickness, my sufferings from malicious men, that should make this life on earth unacceptable, while God will continue it. Paul had his prick or thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him, and suffered more from men (though less in his health) than I have done; and yet he gloried in such infirmities, and rejoiced in his tribulations, and was in a strait between living and dying, yea, rather chose to live yet longer.

Alas! it is another kind of strait that most of the world are in: the strait of most is between the desire of life for fleshly interest, and the fear of death, as ending their felicity: the strait of many is, between a tiring world and body, which maketh them weary of living, and the dreadful prospect of future danger, which makes them afraid of dying; if they live, it is in misery; if they must die, they are afraid of greater misery. Which way ever they look, behind or before them, to this world or the next, fear and trouble is their lot; yea, many an upright christian, through the weakness of their trust in God, doth live in this perplexed strait; weary of living, and afraid of dying; between grief and fear, they are pressed continually: but Paul's strait was between two joys; which of them he should desire most: and if that be my case, what should much interrupt my peace or pleasure? If I live, it is for Christ; for his work, and for his church; for preparation; for my own and others' everlasting felicity: and should any suffering, which maketh me not unserviceable, make me impatient with such a work, and such a life? If I die presently, it is my gain; God who appointeth me my work, doth limit my time, and sure his glorious

reward can never be unseasonable, or come too soon, if it be the time that he appointeth. When I first engaged myself to preach the gospel, I reckoned (as probable) but upon one or two years; and God hath continued me yet above forty-four (with such interruptions as others in these times have had); and what reason have I now to be unwilling, either to live or die? God's service hath been so sweet to me, that it hath overcome the trouble of constant pains, or weakness, of the flesh, and all that men have said or done against me.

But the following crown exceeds this pleasure, more than I am here capable to conceive. There is some trouble in all this pleasant work, from which the soul and flesh would rest; and blessed are the dead, that die in the Lord; even so, saith the Spirit; for they rest from their labours, and their works follow them.

But, O my soul, what needest thou be troubled in this kind of strait? It is not left to thee to choose whether or when thou wilt live or die. It is God that will determine it, who is infinitely fitter to choose than thou. Leave, therefore, his own work to himself, and mind that which is thine; whilst thou livest live to Christ; and when thou diest thou shalt die to Christ; even into his blessed hands: so live that thou mayst say, "It is Christ liveth in me, and the life that I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me;" and then, as thou hast lived in the comfort of hope, thou shalt die unto the comfort of vision and fruition. And when thou canst say, "He is the God whose I am, and whom I serve," thou mayst boldly add, and whom I trust, and to whom I commend my departing soul; and I know whom I have trusted.

MR. BAXTER'S DYING THOUGHTS.

PHIL. i. 23.

FOR I AM IN A STRAIT BETWIXT TWO, HAVING A DESIRE TO DEPART, AND TO BE WITH CHRIST; WHICH IS FAR BETTER. (OR, FOR THIS IS MUCH RATHER TO BE PREFERRED, OR BETTER.)

SECT. 1. "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not. And dost thou open thine eyes upon such a one, and bringest me into judgment with thee?" saith Job, chap. xiv. 1—3. As a watch when it is wound up, or as a candle newly lighted, so man, newly conceived or born, beginneth a motion, which incessantly hasteth to its appointed period: and an action, and its time that is past, is nothing; so vain a thing would man be, and so vain his life, were it not for the hopes of a more durable life, which this referreth to; but those hopes, and the means, do not only difference a believer from an infidel, but a man from a beast. When Solomon describeth the difference, in respect to the time and things of this life only, he truly tells us, "that one end here befalling both, doth show that both are here but vanity, but man's vexation is greater than the beasts'." And Paul truly saith of christians, "That if our hope were only in this life, (that is, in the time and things of this life and world,) we were, of all men, most miserable." Though even in this life, as related to a better, and as we are exercised about things of a higher nature than the concerns of temporal life, we are far happier than any worldlings.

Sect. 2. Being to speak to myself, I shall pass by all the rest of the matter of this text, and suppose its due explication, and spread before my soul only the doctrine and uses of these two propositions contained in it. I. That the souls of believers, when departed hence, shall be with Christ. II. That so to be with Christ is far better for them than to be here in the body.

Sect. 3. I. Concerning the first, my thoughts shall keep this order. 1. I shall consider the necessity of believing it. 2. Whether it be best believing it, without consideration of the proofs or difficulties. 3. The certainty of it manifested for the exercise of faith.

Sect. 4. I. Whether the words signify that we shall be in the same place with Christ, (which Grotius groundlessly denieth,) or only in his hand, and care, and love, I will not stay to dispute. Many other texts concurring, do assure us that "we shall be with him where he is," John xii. 26; xvii. 24, &c. At least, "with him," can mean no less than a state of communion, and a participation of felicity. And to believe such a state of happiness for departed souls, is of manifold necessity, or use.

Sect. 5. 1. If this be not soundly believed, a man must live besides, or below, the end of life. He must have a false end, or be uncertain what should be his end.

I know it may be objected, that if I make it my end to please God, by obeying him, and doing all the good I can, and trust him with my soul and future estate, as one that is utterly uncertain what he will do with me, I have an end intended, which will make me godly, charitable, and just, and happy, so far as I am made for happiness; for the pleasing of God is the right end of all.

But, I. Must I desire to please him no better than I do in this imperfect state, in which I have and do so much which is displeasing to him? He that must desire to please him, must desire to please him perfectly; and our desire of our ultimate end must have no bounds, or check. Am I capable of pleasing God no better than by such a sinful life as this?

2. God hath made the desire of our own felicity so necessary to the soul of man, that it cannot be expected that our desire to please him should be separated from this.

3. Therefore, both in respect of God, as the end, and of our felicity, as our second end, we must believe that he is the beatifying rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

For, 1. If we make such an ill description of God, as that he will turn our pleasing him to our loss, or will not turn it to our gain and welfare, or that we know not whether he will do so or not, it will hinder our love, and trust, and joy, in him, by which we must please him, and consequently, hinder the alacrity, and soundness, and constancy of our obedience.

2. And it will much dismiss that self-love which must excite us, and it will take off part of our necessary end. And I think the objectors will confess, that if they have no certainty what God will do with them, they must have some probability and hope before they can be sincerely devoted here to please him.

Sect. 6. And, 1. If a man be but uncertain what he should make the end of his life, or what he should live for, how can he pitch upon an uncertain end? And if he waver so as to have no end, he can use no means; and if end and means be all laid by, the man liveth not as a man, but as a brute: and what a torment must it be to a considering mind to be uncertain what to intend and do in all the tenour and actions of his life? Like a man going out at his door, not knowing whither or what to do, or which way to go: either he will stand still, or move as brutes do, by present sense, or as a windmill, or weathercock, as he is moved.

Sect. 7. 2. But if he pitch upon a wrong end, it may yet be worse than none; for he will but do hurt, or make work for repentance: and all the actions of his life must be formally wrong, how good soever, materially, if the end of them be wrong.

Sect. 8. 2. And if I fetch them not from this end, and believe not in God as a rewarder of his servants, in a better life, what motives shall I have, which, in our present difficulties, will be sufficient to cause me to live a holy, yea, or a truly honest, life? All piety and honesty, indeed, is good, and goodness is desirable for itself: but the goodness of a means is its aptitude for the end; and we have here abundance of impediments, competitors, diversions, and temptations, and difficulties, of many sorts; and all these must be overcome by him that will live in piety or honesty: and our natures, we find, are diseased, and greatly indisposed to unquestionable duties; and will they ever discharge them, and conquer all these difficulties and temptations, if the necessary motive be not believed? Duty to God and man is accidentally hard and costly to the flesh, though amiable in itself. It may cost us our estates, our liberties, our lives. The world is not so happy as commonly to know good men from bad, or to encourage piety and virtue, or to forbear opposing them. And who will let go his present welfare, without some hope of better, as a reward? Men use not to serve God for nought; nor that think it will be their loss to serve him.

Sect. 9. A life of sin will not be avoided upon lower ends and motives: nay, those lower ends, when alone, will be a constant sin themselves. A preferring vanity to glory, the creature to God, and a setting our heart on that which will never make us happy: and when lust and appetite incline men, strongly and constantly, to their several objects, what shall sufficiently restrain them, except the greater and more durable delights or motives fetched from preponderating things? Lust and appetite distinguish not between lawful and unlawful. We may see in the brutish politics of Benedictus Spinosa, in his Tractat. Theolog. Polit. whither the principles of infidelity tend. If sin so overspread the earth, that the whole world is as drowned in wickedness, notwithstanding all the hopes and fears of a life to come, what would it do were there no such hopes and fears?

Sect. 10. 3. And no mercy can be truly known and estimated, not rightly used and improved, by him that seeth not its tendency to the end, and perceiveth not that it leadeth to a better life, and useth it not thereunto. God dealeth more bountifully with us than worldlings understand. He giveth us all the mercies of this life, as helps to an immortal state of glory, and as earnests of it. Sensualists know not what a soul is, nor what soul-mercies are; and, therefore, not what the soul of all bodily mercies are, but take up only with the carcass, shell, or shadow. If the king would give me a lordship, and send me a horse, or coach, to carry me to it, and I should only ride about the fields for my pleasure, and make no other use of it, should I not undervalue and lose the principal benefit of my horse, or coach? No wonder if unbelievers be unthankful, when they know not at all that part of God's mercies which is the life and real excellency of them.

Sect. 11. 4. And, alas! how should I bear with comfort the sufferings of this wretched life, without the hopes of a life with Christ? What should support and comfort me under my bodily languishings and pains, my weary hours, and my daily experience of the vanity and vexation of all things under the sun, had I not a prospect of a comfortable end of all? I that have lived in the midst of great and precious mercies, have all my life had something to do to overcome the temptation of wishing that I had never been born, and had never overcome it but by the belief of a blessed life hereafter. Solomon's sense of vanity and vexation hath long made all the business, and wealth, and honour, and pleasure, of this world, as such, appear such a dream and shadow to me, that were it not for the end, I could not have much differenced men's sleeping and their waking thoughts, nor have much more valued the waking than the sleeping part of life, but should have thought it a kind of happiness to have slept from the birth unto the death. Children cry when they come into the world; and I am often sorry when I am awakened out of a quiet sleep, especially to the business of an unquiet day. We should be strongly tempted, in our considering state, to murmur at our Creator, as dealing much hardlier by us than by the brutes, if we must have had all those cares, and griefs, and fears, by the knowledge of what we want, and the prospect of death, and future evils, which they are exempted from, and had not, withal, had the hopes of a future felicity to support us. Seneca and his stoics had no better argument to silence such murmurers who believed not a better life, than to tell them, that if this life had more evil than good, and they thought God did them wrong, they might remedy themselves by ending it when they would. But that would not cure the repinings of a nature which found itself necessarily weary of the miseries of life, and yet afraid of dying. And it is no great wonder that many thought that pre-existent souls were put into these bodies as a punishment of something done in a former life, while they foresaw not the hoped end of all our fears and sorrows. Oh how contemptible a thing is man! saith the same Seneca, unless he lift up himself above human things. Therefore, saith Solomon, when he had glutted himself with all temporal pleasures, "I hated life, because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous to me; for all is vanity and vexation of spirit," Eccles. ii. 17.

Sect. 12. II. I have often thought whether an implicit belief of a future happiness, without any search into its nature, and thinking of any thing that can

be said against it, or the searching, trying way, be better. On the one side, I have known many godly women that never disputed the matter, but served God, comfortably, to a very old age, (between eighty and one hundred,) to have lived many years in a cheerful readiness and desire of death, and such as few learned, studious men do ever attain to in that degree, who, no doubt, had this as a divine reward of their long and faithful service of God, and trusting in him. On the other side, a studious man can hardly keep off all objections, or secure his mind against the suggestions of difficulties and doubts; and if they come in, they must be answered, seeing we give them half a victory if we cast them off before we can answer them. And a faith that is not upheld by such evidence of truth as reason can discern and justify, is oft joined with much secret doubting, which men dare not open, but do not, therefore, overcome; and its weakness may have a weakening deficiency, as to all the graces and duties which should be strengthened by it. And who knoweth how soon a temptation from Satan, or infidels, or our own dark hearts, may assault us, which will not, without sueh evidence and resolving light, be overcome? And yet many that try, and reason, and dispute most, have not the strongest or most powerful faith.

Sect. 13. And my thoughts of this have had this issue. 1. There is a great difference between that light which showeth us the thing itself, and that artificial skill by which we have right notions, names, definitions, and formed arguments, and answers to objections. This artificial, logical, organical kind of knowledge is good and useful in its kind, if right; like speech itself: but he that hath much of this, may have little of the former; and unlearned persons that have little of this, may have more of the former, and may have those inward perceptions of the verity of the promises and rewards of God, which they cannot bring forth into artificial reasonings to themselves or others; who are taught of God, by the effective sort of teaching which reacheth the heart or will as well as the understanding, and is a giving of what is taught, and a making us such as we are told we must be.[a] And who findeth not need to pray hard for this effective teaching of God, when he hath got all organical knowledge, and words and arguments in themselves most apt, at his fingers' ends, as we say? When I can prove the truth of the word of God, and the life to come, with the most convincing, undeniable reasons, I feel need to cry and pray daily to God, to increase my faith, and to give me that light which may satisfy the soul, and reach the end.

Sect. 14. 2. Yet man, being a rational wight, is not taught by mere instinct and inspiration, and therefore this effective teaching of God doth ordinarily suppose a rational, objective, organical teaching and knowledge. And the foresaid unlearned christians are convinced, by good evidence, that God's word is true, and his rewards are sure, though they have but a confused conception of this evidence, and cannot word it, nor reduce it to fit notions. And to drive these that have fundamental evidence, unseasonably and hastily to dispute their faith, and so to puzzle them by words and artificial objections, is but to hurt them, by setting the artificial, organical, lower part, which is the body of knowledge, against the real light and perception of the thing (which is as the soul); even as carnal men set the creatures against God, that should lead us to God, so do they by logical, artificial knowledge.

Sect. 15. But they that are prepared for such disputes, and furnished with all artificial helps, may make good use of them for defending and clearing up the truth to themselves and others, so be it they use them as a means to the due end, and in a right manner, and set them not up against, or instead of, the real and effective light.

Sect. 16. But the revealed and neeessary part must here be distinguished from the unrevealed and unnecessary. To study till we, as clearly as may be, understand the certainty of a future happiness, and wherein it consisteth, (in the sight of God's glory, and in perfect, holy, mutual love, in union with Christ, and all the blessed,) this is of great use to our holiness and peace. But when we will know more than God would have us, it doth but tend (as gazing on the sun) to make us blind, and to doubt of certainties, because we cannot be resolved of uncertainties. To trouble our heads too much in thinking how souls out of the body do subsist and act, sensitively or not, by organs or without; how far they are one, and how far still individuate, in what place they shall remain, and where is their paradise or heaven; how they shall be again united to the body, whether by their own emission, as the sunbeams touch their objects here, and whether the body shall be restored, as the consumed flesh of restored, sick men, *aliunde*, or only from the old materials. A hundred of these questions are better left to the knowledge of Christ, lest we do but foolishly make snares for ourselves. Had all these been needful to us, they had been revealed. In respect to all such curiosities and needless knowledge, it is a believer's wisdom implicitly to trust his soul to Christ, and to be satisfied that he knoweth what we know not, and to fear that vain, vexatious knowledge, or inquisitiveness into good and evil, which is selfish, and savoureth of a distrust of God, and is that sin, and fruit of sin, which the learned world too little feareth.

Sect. 17. III. That God is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him, and that holy souls shall be in blessedness with Christ, these following evidences, conjoined, do evince, on which my soul doth raise its hopes.

Sect. 18. 1. The soul, which is an immortal spirit, must be immortally in a good or bad condition; but man's soul is an immortal spirit, and the good are not in a bad condition. Its immortality is proved thus: A spiritual, or most pure, invisible substance, naturally endowed with the power, virtue, or faculty of vital action, intellection, and volition, which is not annihilated nor destroyed by separation of parts, nor ceaseth, or loseth, either its power, species, individuation, or action, is an immortal spirit. But such is the soul of man, as shall be manifested by parts.

Sect. 19. I. The soul is a substance, for that which is nothing can dō nothing; but it doth move, understand, and will. No man will deny that this is done by something in us, and by some substance, and that substance is it which we call the soul. It is not nothing, and it is within us.

Sect. 20. As to them that say, it is the temperament of several parts conjunct, I have elsewhere fully confuted them, and proved, 1. That it is some one part that is the agent on the rest, which all they confess that think it to be the material spirits, or fiery part. It is not bones and flesh that understand, but a purer substance, as all acknowledge. 2. What part soever it be, it can do no more than it is able to do; and a conjunction of many parts, of which no one hath the power of vitality, intellection, or volition, formally, or eminently, can never by contemperation do those acts, for there can be no more in the effect than is in the cause, otherwise it were no effect.

The vanity of their objections that tell us, a lute,

[a] This is the true mean between George Kieth the quaker's doctrine of continued inspiration and intuition, and that on the other extreme.

a watch, a book, perform that by co-operation which no one part can do, I have elsewhere manifested. 1. Many strings, indeed, have many motions, and so have many effects on the ear and fantasy, which in us are sound, and harmony: but all is but a percussion of the air by strings, and were not that motion received by a sensitive soul, it would be no music or melody; so that there is nothing done but what each part had power to do. But intellection and volition are not the conjunct motions of all parts of the body, receiving their form in a nobler intellective nature, as the sound of the strings maketh melody in man: if it were so, that receptive nature still would be as excellent as the effect importeth. 2. And the watch, or clock, doth but move according to the action of the spring, or poise; but that it moveth in such an order as becometh to man a sign and measure of time, this is from man who ordereth it to that use. But there is nothing in the motion but what the parts have their power to cause; and that it signifieth the hour of the days to us, is no action, but an object used by a rational soul as it can use the shadow of a tree, or house, that yet doth nothing. 3. And so a book doth nothing at all, but is a mere objective ordination of passive signs, by which man's active intellect can understand what the writer or orderer did intend; so that here is nothing done beyond the power of the agent, nor any thing in the effect which was not in the cause, either formally or eminently. But for a company of atoms, of which no one hath sense or reason, to become sensitive and rational by mere conjunct motion, is an effect beyond the power of the supposed cause.

Sect. 21. But as some think so basely of our noblest acts as to think that contempered agitated atoms can perform them, that have no natural intellective, or sensitive, virtue or power in themselves; so others think so highly of them, as to take them to be the acts only of God, or some universal soul, in the body of man; and so that there is no life, sense, or reason in the world but God himself (or such a universal soul); and so that either every man is God, as to his soul, or that it is the body only that is to be called man, as distinct from God. But this is the self-insnaring and self-perplexing temerity of busy, bold, and arrogant heads, that know not their own capacity and measure. And, on the like reasons, they must at last come, with others, to say, that all passive matter also is God, and that God is the universe, consisting of an active soul and passive body. As if God were no cause, and could make nothing, or nothing with life, or sense, or reason.

Sect. 22. But why depart we from things certain, by such presumptions as these? Is it not certain, that there are baser creatures in the world than men or angels? Is it not certain that one man is not another? Is it not certain that some men are in torment of body and mind? And will it be a comfort to a man in such torment to tell him that he is God, or that he is part of a universal soul? Would not a man on the rack, or in the stone, or other misery, say, Call me by what name you please, that easeth not my pain. If I be a part of God, or a universal soul, I am sure I am a tormented, miserable part. And if you could make me believe that God hath some parts which are not serpents, toads, devils, or wicked or tormented men, you must give me other senses, and perceptive powers, before it will comfort me to hear that I am not such a part. And if God had wicked and tormented parts on earth, why may he not have such, and I be one of them, hereafter? And if I be a holy and happy part of God, or of a universal soul on earth, why may not I hope to be such hereafter?

Sect. 23. We deny not but that God is the continued, first cause of all being whatsoever; and that the branches and fruit depend not, as effects, so much on the causality of the stock and roots, as the creature doth on God; and that it is an impious conceit to think that the world, or any part of it, is a being independent, and separated totally from God, or subsisting without his continued causation. But cannot God cause, as a creator, by making that which is not himself? This yieldeth the self-deceiver no other honour nor happiness but what equally belongeth to a devil, to a fly, or worm, to a dunghill, or to the worst and miserablest man!

Sect. 24. II. As man's soul is a substance, so is it a substance differenced formally from all inferior substances, by an innate (indeed essential) power, virtue, or faculty, of vital action, intellection, and free-will: for we find all these acts performed by it, as motion, light, and heat are by the fire or sun. And if any should think that these actions are like those of a musician, compounded of the agents' (principal and organical several) parts, could he prove it, no more would follow, but that the lower powers (the sensitive, or spirits) are to the higher as a passive organ, receiving its operations; and that the intellectual soul hath the power of causing intellection and volition by its action on the inferior parts, as a man can cause such motions of his lute, as shall be melody (not to it, but) to himself: and consequently, that as music is but a lower operation of man, (whose proper acts of intellection and volition are above it,) so intellection and volition in the body are not the noblest acts of the soul, but it performed them by an eminent power, which can do greater things. And if this could be proved, what would it tend to the unbeliever's ends, or to the disadvantage of our hopes and comforts?

Sect. 25. III. That man's soul, at death, is not annihilated, even the atomists and epicureans will grant, who think that no atom in the universe is annihilated: and we that see, not only the sun and heavens continued, but every grain of matter, and that compounds are changed by dissolution of parts, and rarefaction, or migration, &c. and not by annihilation, have no reason to dream that God will annihilate one soul (though he can do it if he please, yea, and annihilate all the world): it is a thing beyond a rational expectation.

Sect. 26. IV. And a destruction, by the dissolution of the parts of the soul, we need not fear. For, 1. Either an intellectual spirit is divisible and partible, or not; if not, we need not fear it; if it be, either it is a thing that nature tendeth to, or not: but that nature doth not tend to it, is evident. For, 1. There is naturally so strange and strong an inclination to unity, and averseness to separation in all things, that even earth and stones, that have no other (known) natural motion, have yet an aggregative motion in their gravitation: but if you will separate the parts from the rest, it must be by force. And water is yet more averse from partition without force, and more inclined to union than earth, and air than water, and fire than air; so he that will cut a sunbeam into pieces, and make many of one, must be an extraordinary agent. And surely spirits, even intellectual spirits, will be no less averse from partition, and inclined to keep their unity, than fire or a sunbeam is; so that naturally it is not a thing to be feared, that it should fall into pieces.

2. And he that will say, that the God of nature will change, and overcome the nature that he hath made, must give us good proofs of it, or it is not to be feared. And if he should do it as a punishment, we must find such a punishment somewhere threat-

ened, either in his natural or supernatural law, which we do not; and therefore need not fear it.

Sect. 27. 3. But if it were to be feared, that souls were partible, and would be broken into parts, this would be no destruction of them, either as to their substance, powers, form, or action, but only a breaking of one soul into many: for being not compounded of heterogeneal parts, but, as simple elements, of homogeneal only, as every atom of earth is earth, and every drop of water in the sea is water, and every particle of air and fire is air and fire, and have all the properties of earth, water, air, and fire; so would it be with every particle of an intellectual spirit. But who can see cause to dream of such a partition, never threatened by God?

Sect. 28. V. And that souls lose not their formal powers, or virtues, we have great reason to conceive; because they are their natural essence, not as mixed, but simple substances: and though some imagine that the passive elements may, by attenuation or incrassation, be transmuted one into another, yet we see that earth is still earth, and water is water, and air is air; and their conceit hath no proof: and, were it proved, it would but prove that none of these are a first or proper element: but what should an intellectual spirit be changed into? how should it lose its formal power? Not by nature; for its nature hath nothing that tendeth to deterioration, or decay, or self-destruction. The sun doth not decay by its wonderful motion, light, and heat: and why should spirits? Not by God's destroying them, or changing their nature: for, though all things are in constant motion or revolution, he continueth the natures of the simple beings, and showeth us, that he delighteth in a constancy of operations, insomuch that, hence, Aristotle thought the world eternal. And God hath made no law that threateneth to do it as a penalty. Therefore, to dream that intellectual spirits shall be turned into other things, and lose their essential, formal powers, which specify them, is without and against all sober reason. Let them first but prove that the sun loseth motion, light, and heat, and is turned into air, or water, or earth. Such changes are beyond a rational fear.

Sect. 29. VI. But some men dream that souls shall sleep, and cease their acts, though they lose not their powers. But this is more unreasonable than the former. For it must be remembered that it is not a mere obediential, passive power that we speak of; but an active power consisting in as great an inclination to act, as passive natures have to forbear action. So that if such a nature act not, it must be because its natural inclination is hindered by a stronger: and who shall hinder it?

1. God would not continue an active power, force, and inclination in nature, and forcibly hinder the operation of that nature which he himself continueth; unless penally for some special cause; which he never gave us any notice of by any threatening, but the contrary.

2. Objects will not be wanting, for all the world will be still at hand, and God above all. It is, therefore, an unreasonable conceit to think that God will continue an active, vital, intellective, volitive nature, form, power, force, inclination, in a noble substance, which shall use none of these for many hundred or thousand years, and so continue them in vain.

Nay, 3. It is rather to be thought that some action is their constant state, without which the cessation of their very form would be inferred.

Sect. 30. But all that can be said with reason is, that separated souls, and souls hereafter in spiritual bodies, will have actions of another mode, and very different from these that we now perceive in flesh: and be it so. They will yet be, radically, of the same kind, and they will be formally or eminently such as we now call vitality, intellection, and volition; and they will be no lower or less excellent, if not far more; and then what the difference will be, Christ knoweth, whom I trust, and in season I shall know. But to talk of a dead life, and an unactive activity, or a sleeping soul, is fitter for a sleeping than a waking man.

Sect. 31. It is true that diseases or hurts do now hinder the soul's intellectual perceptions in the body, and in infancy and sleep they are imperfect. Which proveth, indeed, that the acts, commonly called intellection and volition, have now something in them also of sensation, and that sensitive operations are diversified by the organs of the several senses. And that bare intellection and volition, without any sensation, is now scarce to be observed in us, though the soul may have such acts intrinsically, and in its profundity. For it is now so united to this body, that it acteth on it as our form; and, indeed, the acts observed by us cannot be denied to be such as are specified, or modified, at least, by the agents, and the recipients, and sub-agents' parts conjunct. But, 1. As the sun would do the same thing *ex parte sui*, if *in vacuo* only it sent forth its beams, though this were no illumination, or calefaction, because there were no recipient to be illuminated and heated by it, and it would lose nothing by the want of objects; so the soul, had it no body to act on, would have its profound immanent acts of self-living, self-perceiving, and self-loving; and all its external acts on other objects, which need not organs of sense for their approximation. And, 2. Its sensitive faculty is itself, or such as it is not separated from, though the particular sorts of sensation may be altered with their uses: and therefore it may still act on or with the sense: and if one way of sensation be hindered, it hath another. 3. And how far this lantern of flesh doth help or hinder its operations, we know not yet, but shall know hereafter. Sondius de Orig. Animæ, (though an heretical writer,) hath said much to prove that the body is a hinderance, and not a help, to the soul's intuition. And if ratiocination be a compound act, yet intuition may be done for ever by the soul alone. 4. But as we are not to judge what powers the soul hath when the acts are hindered, but when they are done; nor what souls were made by God for, by their state in the womb, or infancy, or diseases, but by our ordinary, mature state of life; so we have little reason to think that the same God who made them for life, intellection, and volitions here, will not continue the same powers to the same or as noble uses hereafter, whether with organs or without, as pleaseth him. If in this flesh our spirits were not unactive and useless, we have no reason to think that they will be so hereafter, and that for ever.

Sect. 32. This greatest and hardest of all objections, doth make us confess (with Contarenus, contra Pomponatium de Anim. Immortalit.) that though, by the light of nature, we may know the immortality of souls, (and that they lose not their powers or activity,) yet, without supernatural light, we know not what manner of action they will have in their separated state, or in another world, because here they act according to objective termination, and the receptivity of the sense and fantasy, and *recipitur ad modum recipientis*; and in the womb we perceive not that it acteth intellectually at all.

But we know, that, 1. If even then it differed not in its formal power from the souls of brutes, it would not so much afterward differ in act: and it would never be raised to that which was not virtually in its

nature at the first. 2. And we find that even very little children have quick and strong knowledge of such objects as are brought within their reach; and that their ignorance is not for want of an intellectual power, but for want of objects, or images of things, which time, and use, and conversation among objects, must furnish their fantasies and memories with. And so a soul in the womb, or in an apoplexy, hath not objects of intellection within its reach to act upon; but is as the sun to a room that hath no windows to let in its light. 3. And what if its profound vitality, self-perception, and self-love, be by a kind of sensation and intuition, rather than by discursive reason: I doubt not but some late philosophers make snares to themselves and others, by too much vilifying sense and sensitive souls, as if sense were but some loseable accident of contempered atoms: but sensation (though diversified by organs and uses, and so far mutable) is the act of a noble, spiritual form and virtue. And as Chambre, and some others, make brutes a lower rank of rationals, and man another higher species, as having his nobler reason for higher ends; so for man to be the noblest order (here) of sensitives, and to have an intellect to order and govern sensations, and connex them and improve them, were a noble work, if we had no higher. And if intellection and volition were but a higher species of internal sensation than imagination and the fantasy and memory are, it might yet be a height that should set man specifically above the brutes. And I am daily more and more persuaded, that intellectual souls are essentially sensitive and more, and that their sensation never ceaseth. 4. And still I say, that it is to nature itself a thing unlikely, that the God of nature will long continue a soul that hath formally or naturally an intellective power, in a state in which it shall have no use of it. Let others that will inquire whether it shall have a vehicle or none to act in, and whether aerial, or igneous and ethereal, and whether it be really an intellectual sort of fire, as material as the solar fire, whose (not compounding, but) *inadequate-conceptus objectivi* are, an igneous substance, and formal virtue of life, sense, and intellection, with other such puzzling doubts; it satisfieth me, that God will not continue its noblest powers in vain; and how they shall be exercised, is known to him; and that God's word tells us more than nature. And withal, life, intuition, and love (or volition) are acts so natural to the soul, (as motion, light, and heat, *quoad actum* to fire,) that I cannot conceive how its separation should hinder them, but rather that its incorporation hindereth the two latter, by hiding objects, whatever be said of abstractive knowledge and memory.

Sect. 33. VII. But the greatest difficulty to natural knowledge is, whether souls shall continue their individuation, or rather fall into one common soul, or return so to God that gave them, as to be no more divers (or many) individuals as now; as extinguished candles are united to the illuminated air, or to the sunbeams; but of this I have elsewhere said much for others; and for myself, I find I need but this: 1. That, as I said before, either souls are partible substances or not; if not partible, how are they unible? If many may be made one, by conjunction of substances, then that one may (by God) be made many again by partition. Either all (or many) souls are now but one, (individuate only by matter, as many gulfs in the sea, or many candles lighted by the sun,) or not; if they are not one now in several bodies, what reason have we to think that they will be one hereafter, any more than now? Augustine (de Anim.) was put on the question, 1. Whether souls are one, and not many. And that he utterly denieth. 2. Whether they are many, and not one. And that it seemeth he could not digest. 3. Whether they were at once both one and many. Which he thought would seem to some ridiculous, but he seemeth most to incline to. And as God is the God of nature, so nature (even of the devils themselves) dependeth on him, as I said, more than the leaves or fruit do on the tree; and we are all his offspring, and live, and move, and are in him, Acts xvii. But we are certain for all this, 1. That we are not God. 2. That we are yet many individuals, and not all one soul, or man. If our union should be as near as the leaves and fruit on the same tree, yet those leaves and fruit are numerous, and individual leaves and fruits, though parts of the tree. And were this proved of our present or future state, it would not alter our hopes or fears; for as now, though we all live, move, and be in God, (and, as some dream, are parts of a common soul,) yet it is certain that some are better and happier than others; some wise and good; and some foolish and evil; some in pain and misery; and some at ease, and in pleasure: and (as I said) it is now no ease to the miserable, to be told that, radically, all souls are one; no more will it be hereafter, nor can men reasonably hope for or fear such a union, as shall make their state the same. We see in nature, (as I have elsewhere said,) that if you graft many sorts of scions, (some sweet, some bitter, some crabs,) on the same stock, they will be one tree, and yet have diversity of fruit. If souls be not unible nor partible substances, there is no place for this doubt: if they be, they will be still what they are, notwithstanding any such union with a common soul. As a drop of water in the sea is a separable part, and still itself; and as a crab upon the foresaid stock, or tree. And the good or bad quality ceaseth not by any union with others.

Sure we are, that all creatures are in God, by close dependence, and yet that the good are good, and the bad are bad; and that God is good, and hath no evil; and that when man is tormented, or miserable, God suffereth nothing by it, (as the whole man doth, when but a tooth doth ache,) for he would not hurt himself were he passive. Therefore to dream of any such cessation of our individuation by any union with a creature, as shall make the good less good or happy, or the bad less bad or miserable, is a groundless folly.

Sect. 34. Yet it is very probable, that there will be a nearer union of holy souls with God and Christ, and one another, than we can here conceive of: but this is so far from being to be feared, that it is the highest of our hopes. 1. God himself (though equally every where in his essence) doth operate very variously on his creatures. On the wicked he operateth as the first cause of nature, as the sun shineth on them. On some he operateth by common grace: to some he giveth faith to prepare them for the indwelling of his Spirit. In believers he dwelleth by love, and they in him; and, if we may use such a comparison, as Satan acteth on some only by suggestions, but on others so despotically, as that it is called his possessing them; so God's Spirit worketh on holy souls, so powerfully and constantly, as is called his possessing them. And yet, on the human nature of Christ, the divine nature of the second Person hath such a further, extraordinary operation, as is justly called a personal union; which is not by a more essential presence, (for that is every where,) but by a peculiar operation and relation: and so holy souls, being under a more felicitating operation of God, may well be said to have a nearer union with him than now they have.

Sect. 35. 2. And I observe that (as is aforesaid) all things have naturally a strong inclination to union and communion with their like: every clod and stone inclineth to the earth; water would go to water, air to air, fire to fire; birds and beasts associate with their like; and the noblest natures are most strongly thus inclined; and therefore I have natural reason to think that it will be so with holy souls.

Sect. 36. 3. And I find, that the inordinate contraction of man to himself, and to the interest of this individual person, with the defect of love to all about us, according to every creature's goodness, and especially to God, the infinite good, whom we should love above ourselves, is the very sum of all the pravity of man. And all the injustice and injury to others; and all the neglect of good works in the world; and all our daily terrors, and self distracting, self-tormenting cares, and griefs, and fears, proceed from this inordinate love and adhesion to ourselves: therefore I have reason to think, that in our better state, we shall perfectly love others as ourselves, and the selfish love will turn into a common and a divine love, which must be by our preferring the common and the divine good and interest.

Sect. 37. And I am so sensible of the power and plague of selfishness, and how it now corrupteth, tempteth, and disquieteth me, that when I feel any fears, lest individuation cease, and my soul fall into one common soul, (as the stoics thought all souls did at death,) I find great cause to suspect, that this ariseth from the power of this corrupting selfishness; for reason seeth no cause at all to fear it, were it so.

Sect. 38. 4. For I find also, that the nature of love is to desire as near a union as is possible; and the strongest love doth strongliest desire it. Fervent lovers think they can scarce be too mueh one: and love is our perfection, and therefore so is union.

Sect. 39. 5. And I find, that when christians had the first and full pourings out of the Spirit, they had the ferventest love, and the nearest union, and the least desire of propriety and distance.

Sect. 40. 6. And I find, that Christ's prayer for the felicity of his disciples, is a prayer for their unity, John xvii. 22, 23. And in this he placeth much of their perfection.

Sect. 41. 7. And I find also, that man is of a sociable nature, and that all men find by experience, that conjunction in societies is needful for their safety, strength, and pleasure.

Sect. 42. 8. And I find, that my soul would fain be nearer God, and that darkness and distance is my misery, and near communion is it that would answer all the tendencies of my soul; why, then, should I fear too near a union.

Sect. 43. I think it utterly improbable, that my soul should become more nearly united to any ereature than to God; (though it be of the same kind with other souls, and infinitely below God;) for God is as near me, as I am to myself; I still depend on him, as the effect upon its total, constant cause: and that not as the fruit upon the tree, which borroweth all from the earth, water, air, and fire, which it communicateth to its fruit; but as a creature on its Creator, who hath no being but what it receiveth totally from God, by constant communication. Hence Antonine, Seneca, and the rest of the stoics, thought that all the world was God, or one great animal, consisting of divine spirit and matter, as man of soul and body; sometimes calling the supposed soul of the world, God; and sometimes calling the whole world, God; but still meaning that the universe was but one spirit and body united, and that we are all parts of God, or of the body of God, or accidents, at least.

Sect. 44. And even the popish mystical divines, in their pretensions to the highest perfection, say the same in sense; such as Benedict. Anglus, in his Regula Perfectionis, (approved by many doctors,) who placed much of his supereminent life in our believing verily that there is nothing but God, and living accordingly; maintaining that all creatures are nothing distinct from God, but are to God as the beams are to the sun, and as the heat is to the fire; (which really is itself;) and so teaching us to rest in all things as good, as being nothing but God's essential will, which is himself (resolving even our sins and imperfections accordingly into God, so that they are God's, or none).

Sect. 45. And all these men have as fair a pretence for the conceits of such a union with God now, as for such a union after death: for their reason is, 1. That God being infinite, there can be no more beings than his own; but God and the smallest being distinct, would be more entity than God alone; but infinity can have no addition. 2. Because *ens et bonum convertuntur;* but God only is good.

And if we are, notwithstanding all this, distinct beings from God now, we shall be so then. For we shall not be annihilated, and we shall not be so advanced as to be deified, and of creatures, or distinct beings, turned into a being infinitely above us. If we be not parts of God now, we shall not be so then.

But if they could prove that we are so now, we should quickly prove to them, 1. That then God hath material, divisible parts (as the stoics thought). 2. And that we are no such parts as are not distinct from one another; but some are tormented, and some happy. And, 3. That (as is said) it will be no abatement of the misery of the tormented, nor of the felicity of the blessed, to tell them that they are all parts of God: for, though the manner of our union with him, and dependence on him, be past our comprehension; yet that we are distinct and distant from each other, and have each one a joy or misery of his own, is past all doubt. Therefore, there is no union with God to be feared by holy souls, but the utmost possible to be highliest desired.

Sect. 46. And if our union with God shall not cease our individuation, or resolve us into a principle to be feared, we may say so also of our union with any common soul, or many: if we be unible, we are partible, and so have a distinct, though not a divided substance, which will have its proper accidents. All plants are parts of the earth, really united to it, and radicated in it, and live and are nourished by it; and yet a vine is a vine; and an apple is an apple; and a rose is a rose; and a nettle is a nettle. And few men would be toiled horses, or toads, if it were proved that they are animated by a common soul.

Sect. 47. But God letteth us see, that though the world be one, yet he delighteth in a wonderful diversity, and multiplicity of individuals. How various and numerous are they in the sea, and on the land, and in the air! And are there none in the other world? How come the stars therein to be so numerous, which are of the same element? And though, perhaps, Saturn, or some other planets, or many stars, may send forth their radiant effluvia, or parts, into the same air, which the sunbeams seem totally to fill and illuminate, yet the rays of the sun, and of other stars, are not the same, how near soever in the same air.

Sect. 48. Were there now no more contraction by egoity, or propriety among men, nor mine and thine did signify no more, nor the distance were greater than that of the several drops of water in the sea,

or particles of light in the illuminated air, but I had all my part in such a perfect unity and communion with all others, and knew that all were as happy as I, so that there were no divisions by cross interests or minds, but all were one, certainly it would make my own comforts greater by far than they are now? Are not a hundred candles set together and united, as splendid a flame as if they were all set asunder? So one soul, one love, one joy would be.

Sect. 49. *Object.* But it is only the *fomes* that individuateth lights: as when the same sun, by a burning glass, lighteth a thousand candles, they are individuate only by the matter contracting, being still all united parts of the same sunbeams. And when they are extinct, they are nothing, or all one again.

Answ. They were, before they were extinct, both one and many, none but fools think that extinction annihilateth them, or any part of them; they are after as much substance, and as much solar fire, though diffused, and as much and no more one than before, but not, indeed, many as before, but parts of one. Nature hath made the equal diffused sunbeams to be to the air and surface of the earth as the blood equally moving in the body; and our candles and fires seem to be like the same blood contracted in a bile or inflammation, which indeed is more felt than the equally diffused blood, but it is as the pain of a disease; and so when our fires go out, they are but like a healed, scattered inflammation, and the same substance is more naturally and equally diffused. And if the individuation of souls were only by corporeal matter, and the union thus as great at their departure, it would not diminish, if it did not too much increase, their perfection and felicity; for there would be no diminution of any substance, or power, or activity, or perfection whatsoever.

Sect. 50. And this would confute their fond opinion, who think that separated souls sleep *in nuda potentia*, for want of an organized body to operate in; for no doubt, but if all holy souls were one, this world, either in heaven or earth, hath a common body, enough for such a soul to operate in. Even those stoics that think departed souls are one, do think that that one soul hath a nobler operation than ours, in our narrow bodies, and that when our souls cease animating this body, they have the nobler and sweeter work, in part, of animating the whole world; and those that thought several orbs had their several souls, of which the particular wights participated, said the like of separated souls, as animating the bodies of their globes or orbs. And though all these men trouble their heads with their own vain imaginations, yet this much the nature of the matter tells us, which is considerable, that whereas the utmost fear of the infidel is, that souls departed lose their individuation or activity, and are resolved into one common soul, or continue in a sleepy potentiality, for want of a body to operate in, they do but contradict themselves, seeing it is a notorious truth, 1. That if all holy souls were one, no one would be a loser by the union, but it would be a greater gain than we must hope for; for a part of one is as much and as noble and as active a substance, as if it were a separated person (and annihilation, or loss of specific powers, is not to be rationally feared). 2. And that one soul is now either self-subsisting without a body, or animateth a suitable body (as some ancients thought the angels stars). If that one soul can act without a body, so may ours, whether as parts of it, or not; if that one soul animate a suitable body, ours, were they united parts of it, would have part of that employment; so that hereby they confute themselves.

Sect. 51. *Obj.* But this would equalize the good and bad, or at least those that were good in several degrees; and where then were the reward and punishment?

Answ. It would not equal them at all, any more than distinct personality would do: for, 1. The souls of all holy persons may be so united, as that the souls of the wicked shall have no part in that union. Whether the souls of the wicked shall be united in one sinful, miserable soul, or rather but in one sinful society, or be greatlier separate, disunited, contrary to each other, and militant, as part of their sin and misery, is nothing to this case. 2. Yet natural and moral union must be differenced. God is the root of nature to the worst, and however in one sense it is said that there is nothing in God but God, yet it is true, that in him all live, and move, and have their being; but yet the wicked's in-being in God doth afford them no sanctifying or beatifying communion with him, as experience showeth us in this life; which yet holy souls have, as being made capable recipients of it. As I said, different plants, briers and cedars, the stinking and the sweet, are implanted parts (or accidents) of the same world or earth. 3. And the godly themselves may have as different a share of happiness in one common soul, as they have now of holiness, and so as different rewards (even as roses and rosemary, and other herbs, differ in the same garden, and several fruits in the same orchard, or on the same tree). For if souls are unible, and so partible substances, they have neither more nor less of substance or holiness for their union; and so will each have his proper measure. As a tun of water cast into the sea will there still be the same, and more than a spoonful cast into it.

Sect. 52. *Obj.* But spirits are not as bodies extensive and quantitative, and so not partible or divisible, and therefore your supposition is vain.

Answ. 1. My supposition is but the objectors': for if they confess that spirits are substances, (as cannot with reason be denied; for they that specify their operations by motion only, yet suppose a pure proper substance to be the subject or thing moved,) then when they talk of many souls becoming one, it must be by conjunction and increase of the substance of that one: or when they say, that they were always one, they will confess withal that they now differ in number, as individuate in the body. And who will say, that millions of millions are no more than one of all those millions? Number is a sort of quantity; and all souls in the world are more than Cain's or Abel's only; one feeleth not what another feeleth; one knoweth not what another knoweth. And indeed, though souls have not such corporeal extension as passive, gross, bodily matter hath, yet, as they are more noble, they have a more noble sort or extension, quantity, or degrees, according to which all mankind conceive of all the spiritual substance of the universe; yea, all the angels, or all the souls on earth, as being more, and having more substance, than one man's soul alone. 2. And the fathers, for the most part, especially the Greeks, (yea, and the second council of Nice,) thought that spirits created, had a purer sort of material being, which Tertullian called a body; and doubtless, all created spirits have somewhat of passiveness; for they do *recipere vel pati* from the divine influx; only God is wholly impassive. We are moved when we move, and acted when we act; and it is hard to conceive, that (when matter is commonly called passive) that which is passive should have no sort of matter in a large sense taken; and if it have any parts distinguishable, they are by God divisible. 3. But if the contrary be supposed, that all souls are no more than one, and so

that there is no place for uniting or partition, there is no place then for the objection of all souls becoming one, and of losing individuation, unless they mean by annihilation.

Sect. 53. But that God who (as is said) delighteth both in the union, and yet in the wonderful multiplicity of creatures, and will not make all stars to be only one; though fire have a most uniting or aggregative inclination; hath further given experimental notice that there is individuation in the other world as well as here, even innumerable angels and devils, and not one only: as apparitions, and witches, and many other evidences prove, of which more anon. So that, all things considered, there is no reason to fear that the souls shall lose their individuation or activity, (though they change their manner of action,) any more than their being or formal power: and so it is naturally certain that they are immortal.

Sect. 54. And if holy souls are so far immortal, I need not prove that they will be immortally happy; for their holiness will infer it; and few will ever dream that it shall there go ill with them that are good, and that the most just and holy God will not use those well whom he maketh holy.

Sect. I. II. That holy souls shall be hereafter happy, seemeth to be one of the common notices of nature planted in the consciences of mankind; and it is therefore acknowledged by the generality of the world that freely use their understandings. Most, yea almost all the heathen nations at this day, believe it, besides the Mahometans; and it is the most barbarous cannibals and Brazilians that do not, whose understandings have had the least improvement, and who have rather an inconsiderate nescience of it, than a denying opposition. And though some philosophers denied it, they were a small and contemned party: and though many of the rest were somewhat dubious, it was only a certainty which they professed to want, and not a probability or opinion that it was true; and both the vulgar and the deep-studied men believed it, and those that questioned it were the half-studied philosophers, who, not resting in the natural notice, nor yet reaching full intellectual evidence of it by discourse, had found out matter of difficulty to puzzle them, and came not to that degree of wisdom as would have resolved them.

Sect. 2. And even among apostates from christianity, most, or many, still acknowledge the soul's immortality, and the felicity and reward of holy souls, to be of the common notices, known by nature to mankind. Julian was so much persuaded of it, that, on that account, he exhorteth his priests and subjects to great strictness and holiness of life, and to see that the christians did not exceed them: and, among us, the Lord Herbert, de Veritate, and many others that seem not to believe our supernatural revelations of christianity, do fully acknowledge it; besides, those philosophers who most opposed christianity, as Porphyrius, Maximus Tyrius, and such others.

Sect. 3. And we find that this notice hath so deep a root in nature, that few of those that study and labour themselves into bestiality (or sadducism) are able to excuss the fears of future misery, but conscience overcometh, or troubleth them much at least, when they have done the worst they can against it. And whence should all this be in man and not in beasts, if man had no further reason of hopes and fears than they? Are a few Sadducees wiser by their forced or crude conceits, than all the world that are taught by nature itself.

Sect. I. III. If the God of nature have made it every man's certain duty to make it his chief care and work in this life, to seek for happiness hereafter, then such a happiness there is for them that truly seek it. But the antecedent is certain, as I have elsewhere proved; *ergo*, &c.

Sect. 2. As to the antecedent. The world is made up of three sorts of men, as to the belief of future retribution. 1. Such as take it for a certain truth; such are christians, Mahometans, and most heathens. 2. Such as take it for uncertain, but most probable or likeliest to be true. 3. Such as take it for uncertain, but rather think it untrue. For as none can be certain that it is false, which indeed is true, so I never yet met with one that would say he was certain it was false: so that I need not trouble you with the mention of any other party or opinion; but if any should say so, it is easy to prove that he speaketh falsely of himself.

Sect. 3. And that it is the duty of all these, but especially of the two former sorts, to make it their chief care and work to seek their happiness in the life to come, is easily proved thus: natural reason requireth every man to seek that which is best for himself, with the greatest diligence; but natural reason saith that a probability or possibility of the future everlasting happiness is better and more worthy to be sought, than any thing attainable in this present life (which doth not suppose it); *ergo*, &c.

Sect. 4. The major is past doubt. Good and felicity being necessarily desired by the will of man, that which is best, and known so to be, must be most desired.

And the minor should be as far past doubt to men that use not their sense against their reason. For, 1. In this life there is nothing certain to be continued one hour. 2. It is certain that all will quickly end, and that the longest life is short. 3. It is certain that time and pleasure past are nothing, properly nothing; and so no better to us than if they had never been. 4. And it is certain that, while we possess them, they are poor, unsatisfactory things, the pleasure of the flesh being no sweeter to a man than to a beast, and the trouble that accompanieth it much more. Beasts have not the cares, fears, and sorrows, upon foresight, which man hath. They fear not death upon the foreknowledge of it, nor fear any misery after death, nor are put upon any labour, sufferings, or trials, to obtain a future happiness, or avoid a future misery. All which considered, he speaketh not by reason, who saith this vain, vexatious life is better than the possibility or probability of the everlasting glory.

Sect. 5. Now, as to the consequence, or major, of the first argument, it is evident of itself, from God's perfection, and the nature of his works. God maketh it not man's natural duty to lay out his chief care and labour of all his life, on that which is not, or to seek that which man was never made to attain: for then, 1. All his duty should result from mere deceit and falsehood, and God should govern all the world by a lie, which cannot be his part who wanteth neither power, wisdom, nor love, to rule them by truth and righteousness, and who hath printed his image both on his laws and on his servants; in which laws lying is condemned, and the better any man is, the more he hateth it; and liars are loathed by all mankind. 2. And then the better any man is, and the more he doth his duty, the more deluded, erroneous, and miserable should he be. For he should spend that care and labour of his life upon deceit, for that which he shall never have, and so should lose his time and labour: and he should deny his flesh those temporal pleasures which bad men take, and suffer persecutions and injuries from the wicked, and all for nothing, and on mistake: and the wickeder, or more unbelieving, any man is, the wiser and happier should he be, as being in the

right, when he denieth the life to come, and all duty and labour in seeking it, or in avoiding future punishment; and while he taketh his utmost pleasure here, he hath all that man was made for. But all this is utterly unsuitable to God's perfection, and to his other works: for he maketh nothing in vain, nor can he lie, much less will he make holiness itself, and all that duty and work of life which reason itself obligeth all men to, to be not only vain but hurtful to them. But of this argument I have been elsewhere larger.

Sect. 1. IV. Man differeth so much from brutes in the knowledge of God, and of his future possibilities, that it proveth that he differeth as much in his capacity and certain hopes. 1. As to the anteccdent, man knoweth that there is a God by his works. He knoweth that this God is our absolute Lord, our ruler, and our end. He knoweth that, naturally, we owe him all our love and obedience. He knoweth that good men use not to let their faithfullest servants be losers by their fidelity; nor do they use to set them to labour in vain. He knoweth that man's soul is immortal, or, at least, that it is far more probable that it is so; and therefore that it must accordingly be well or ill for ever, and that this should be most cared for. 2. And why should God give him all this knowledge more than to the brutes, if he were made for no more enjoyment than the brutes, of what he knoweth. Every wise man maketh his work fit for the use that he intendeth it to: and will not God? So that the consequence also is proved from the divine perfection; and if God were not perfect, he were not God. The denial of a God, therefore, is the result of the denial of man's future hopes.

Sect. 2. And, indeed, though it be but an analogical reason that brutes have, those men seem to be in the right who place the difference between man and brutes more in the objects, tendency, and work of our reason, than in our reason itself as such, and so make *animal religiosum* to be more of his description than *animal rationale*. About their own low concerns, a fox, a dog, yea, an ass, and a goose, have such actions as we know not well how to ascribe to any thing below some kind of reasoning, or a perception of the same importance. But they think not of God, and his government, and laws, nor of obeying, trusting, or loving him, nor of the hopes or fears of another life, nor of the joyful prospect of it. These are that work that man was made for, which is the chief difference from the brutes: and shall we unman ourselves?

Sect. 1. V. The justice of God, as governor of the world, inferreth different rewards hereafter, as I have largely elsewhere proved. 1. God is not only a mover of all that moveth, but a moral ruler of man by laws, and judgment, and executions; else there were no proper law of nature, which few are so unnatural as to deny; and man should have no proper duty, but only motion as he is moved. And then, how cometh a government by laws to be set up under God by men? And then there were no sin or fault in any; for if there were no law and duty, but only necessitated motion, all would be moved as the mover pleased, and there could be no sin; and then there would be no moral good, but forced or necessary motion. But all this is most absurd; and experience telleth us that God doth, *de facto*, morally govern the world; and his right is unquestionable.

Sect. 2. And if God were not the ruler of the world, by law and judgment, the world would have no universal laws, for there is no man that is the universal ruler: and then kings and other supreme powers would be utterly lawless and ungoverned, as having none above them to give them laws, and so they would be capable of no sin or fault, and of no punishment; which yet neither their subjects' interest nor their own consciences will grant, or allow them thoroughly to believe.

Sect. 3. And if God be a ruler, he is just; or else he were not perfect, nor so good as he requireth princes and judges on earth to be. An unjust ruler or judge is abominable to all mankind. Righteousness is the great attribute of the universal King.

Sect. 4. But how were he a righteous ruler, 1. If he drew all men to obey him by deceit? 2. If he obliged them to seek and expect a felicity or reward which he will never give them? 3. If he make man's duty his misery? 4. If he require him to labour in vain? 5. If he suffer the wicked to prosecute his servants to the death, and make duty costly, and give no after-recompence? 6. If he let the most wicked on the earth pass unpunished, or to escape as well hereafter as the best, and to live in greater pleasure here? The objections fetched from the intrinsical good of duty I have elsewhere answered.

Sect. 1. VI. But God hath not left us to the light of mere nature, as being too dark for men so blind as we. The gospel revelation is the clear foundation of our faith and hopes. Christ hath brought life and immortality to light. One from heaven that is greater than an angel was sent to tell us what is there, and which is the way to secure our hopes. He hath risen, and conquered death, and entered before us, as our captain and forerunner, into the everlasting habitations. And he hath all power in heaven and earth, and all judgment is committed to him, that he might give eternal life to his elect. He hath frequently and expressly promised it them, that they shall live because he liveth, and shall not perish but have everlasting life.[b] And how fully he hath proved and sealed the truth of his word and office to us, I have so largely opened in my Reasons of the Christian Religion, and Unreasonableness of Infidelity, and in my Life of Faith, &c.; and since, in my Household Catechising, that I will not here repeat it.

Sect. 2. And as all his word is full of promises of our future glory at the resurrection, so we are not without assurance that at death the departing soul doth enter upon a state of joy and blessedness.[c] For,

1. He expressly promised the penitent, crucified thief, "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise," Luke xxiii. 43.

2. He gave us the narrative or parable of the damned sensualist, and of Lazarus, (Luke xvi.) to instruct us, and not to deceive us.

3. He tells the Sadducees that God is not the God of the dead (as his subjects and beneficiaries) but of the living, Matt. xxii. 32.

4. Enoch and Elias were taken up to heaven, and Moses, that died, appeared with Elias on the mount, Matt. xvii.

5. He telleth us, (Luke xii. 4,) that they that kill the body, are not able to kill the soul.[d]

6. And Christ's own soul was commended into his Father's hands, (Luke xxiii. 46,) and was in para-

[b] Matt. xxviii. 18; John v. 22; xvii. 2; xii. 26; iii. 16; Rom. viii. 35—38.

[c] 1 Pet. iv. 6, "They that died to (or in) the flesh according to men, do live in the Spirit according to God."

[d] Indeed if the soul were not immortal, the resurrection were impossible. It might be a new creation of another soul, but not a resurrection of the same, if the same be annihilated. It is certain that the Jews believed the immortality of the soul, in that they believed the resurrection and future life of the same man.

dise, when his body was in the grave, to show us what shall become of ours.

7. And he hath promised, that where he is, there shall his servants be also, John xii. 26. And that the life here begun in us is eternal life; and that he that believeth in him shall not die, but shall live by him, as he liveth by the Father, for he dwelleth in God, and God in him, and in Christ, and Christ in him, John xvii. 3; vi. 54; iii. 16, 36; vi. 47, 50, 56, 57; 1 John iv. 12, 13; Luke xvii. 21; Rom. xiv. 17.

8. And accordingly, Stephen, that saw heaven opened, prayed the Lord Jesus to receive his Spirit, Acts vii. 55, 59.

9. And we are come to mount Sion, &c. to an innumerable company of angels, and to the spirits of the just made perfect, Heb. xii. 22, 23.

10. And Paul here desireth to depart and be with Christ as far better. And to be absent from the body, and be present with the Lord, 2 Cor. v. 8.

11. And the dead that die in the Lord are blessed, from henceforth, that they may rest from their labours, and their works follow them.

12. And if the disobedient spirits be in prison, and the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah suffer the vengeance of eternal fire, (1 Pet. iii. 19; Jude 7,) then the just have eternal life. And if the Jews had not thought the soul immortal, Saul had not desired the witch to call up Samuel to speak with him. The rest I now pass by. We have many great and precious promises on which a departed soul may trust.

13. And (Luke xvi. 9) Christ expressly saith, that when we fail, (that is, must leave this world,) we shall be received into the everlasting habitations.

Sect. I. VII. And it is not nothing to encourage us to hope in him that hath made all these promises, when we find how he heareth prayers in this life, and thereby assureth his servants that he is their true and faithful Saviour. We are apt in our distress to cry loud for mercy and deliverances, and when human help faileth, to promise God, that if he now will save us, we will thankfully acknowledge it his work; and yet when we are delivered, to return not only to security, but to ingratitude, and think that our deliverance came but in the course of common providence, and not indeed as an answer to our prayers. And therefore God in mercy reneweth both our distresses and our deliverances, that what once or twice will not convince us of, many and great deliverances may. This is my own case. Oh, how oft have I cried to him when men and means were nothing, and when no help in second causes did appear, and how oft, and suddenly, and mercifully hath he delivered me! What sudden ease, what removal of long afflictions have I had! such extraordinary changes, and beyond my own and others' expectations, when many plain-hearted, upright christians have, by fasting and prayer, sought God on my behalf, as have over and over convinced me of special providence, and that God is indeed a hearer of prayers. And wonders I have seen done for others also, upon such prayers, more than for myself, yea, and wonders for the church and public societies. Though I and others are too like those Israelites, (Psalm lxxviii.) who cried to God in their troubles, and he oft delivered them out of their distress, but they quickly forgot his mercies, and their convictions, purposes, and promises, when they should have praised the Lord for his goodness, and declared his works with thanksgiving to the sons of men.

And what were all these answers and mercies but the fruits of Christ's power, fidelity, and love, the fulfillings of his promises, and the earnest of the greater blessings of immortality, which the same promises give me title to.

I know that no promise of hearing prayer setteth up our wills in absoluteness, or above God's, as if every will of ours must be fulfilled if we do but put it into a fervent or confident prayer; but if we ask any thing through Christ, according to his will, expressed in his promise, he will hear us. If a sinful love of this present life, or of ease, or wealth, or honour, should cause me to pray to God against death, or against all sickness, want, reproach, or other trials, as if I must live here in prosperity for ever if I ask it, this sinful desire and expectation is not the work of faith, but of presumption. What if God will not abate me my last, or daily pains? What if he will continue my life no longer, whoever pray for it, and how earnestly soever? Shall I therefore forget how oft he hath heard prayers for me? and how wonderfully he hath helped both me and others? My faith hath oft been helped by such experiences, and shall I forget them? or question them without cause at last?

Sect. I. VIII. And it is a subordinate help to my belief of immortality with Christ, to find so much evidence that angels have friendly communion with us here, and therefore we shall have communion with them hereafter. They have charge of us, and pitch their tents about us; they bear us up; they rejoice at our repentance; they are the regardful witnesses of our behaviour; they are ministering spirits for our good; they are our angels beholding the face of our heavenly Father. They will come with Christ in glorious attendance at the great and joyful day, and, as his executioners, they will separate the just from the unjust.[e]

And it is not only the testimony of Scripture by which we know their communion with us, but also some degree of experience. Not only of old did they appear to the faithful as messengers from God, but of late times there have been testimonies of their ministration for us. Of which see Zanchy, de Angelis, and Mr. J. Ambrose, of our communion with angels. Many a mercy doth God give us by their ministry; and they that are now so friendly to us, and suitable to our communion and help, and make up one society with us, do hereby greatly encourage us to hope that we are made for the same region, work, and company with these our blessed, loving friends. They were once in a life of trial, it seems, as we are now, though not on earth, Jude 6; 2 Pet. ii. 4. And they that overcame and are confirmed rejoice in our victory and confirmation. It is not an uninhabited world which is above us, nor such as is beyond our capacity and hope. We are come to an innumerable company of angels, and to the spirits of the perfected just, who together have discreet quantity, or numerical difference, notwithstanding their happy union and communion.

Sect. I. IX. And Satan himself, though unwillingly, hath many ways helped my belief of our immortality and future hopes. 1. I have had many convincing proofs of witches, the contracts they have made with devils, and the power which they have received from them.[f] Besides the volume of Remigius and Bodin, and the Mallei Maleficorum, Danæus, and others, we had many score of them detected, and many executed in one year in Suffolk and Essex,[g] about 1644. And I have at this present a flint-stone, which was one of about 160, which was voided by the urinary passage, by a bewitched child in Evesham,

[e] Psal. xxxiv. 7; xci. 11, 12; Luke xv. 10; 1 Cor. xi. 10; Heb. i. 14; xii. 22; xiii. 2; Matt. xviii. 10; xxv. 31; xiii. 39, 49; Acts v. 19; viii. 26; xii. 7, 23.

[f] Of this see the second edition, by Dr. More, of Mr. Glanvil's book of apparitions called Atheismus Triumphatus.

[g] For the truth of this read Mr. Fairclough's life.

yet living, some of near an ounce weight; which was fully proved, the witch executed, and the child, upon her imprisonment, freed. To pass by many others.

Sect. 2. 2. And I have had convincing testimony of apparitions, besides that famous one, the devil of Mascon, and that in the shape of Lieutenant-colonel Bowen, in Wales, mentioned elsewhere, and besides many[h] testimonies of haunted houses (however many, or most such reports, are but deceits).

Sect. 3. From both these I gather, 1. That there are individual inhabitants of the invisible world, and that spirits have their numerical differences, whatever unity is among them, and therefore we have reason to judge the same of separated souls. 2. That our souls are designed to future happiness or misery, which is implied in the foresaid contracts and endeavours of devils for our ruin. 3. That faith and holiness are the way of life, and unbelief and sin the way to misery, which also is in these implied.

Sect. 4. 3. And I have both read, and partly seen, convincing evidence, that there is such an exercise of diabolical power as we commonly call possession. Whether all or most mad-men are under such a power, as some think, I determine not, but that some are under it is evident. The motions of the body, which I have seen, seem beyond man's natural power. The telling of secrets and things absent, the speaking of languages never learned, the vomiting of nails, glass, hairs, &c. and other such effects, which the most learned, sober, impartial physicians profess to have seen, are credible testimonies.

Sect. 5. 4. And I have felt, and heard, and known from others, of such a sort of temptations, as show themselves to be the acts of malicious spirits, enemies to mankind. The advantages that Satan taketh of a corrupted fancy, which hath once taken in such an image as may be his matter to work upon, is very remarkable. I have known a worthy, learned, pious person, who from his youth to old age, upon such an advantage, hath been so tempted, with pleasure, to torment himself, even his own flesh, as that for many years together, in a partial melancholy, at divers fits he was not able (though conscience also tormented him for it) to forbear. Many, by an immodest look or touch, have given Satan such a power upon their fancies, as no reason, conscience, or resolution could of a long time overcome. Few men, I think, that observe themselves, have not at some time had experience of such inward temptations, as show that the author of them is an invincible enemy. All which tells us, 1. That there are individual spirits. 2. Yea, devils that seek man's misery. 3. And that by the way of sin; and consequently that a future happiness or misery must be expected by us all.

Sect. 1. X. But the great and sure prognostics of our immortal happiness, is from the renewing operations of the Spirit of holiness on the soul. 1. That such a renewing work there is, all true believers in some measure feel. 2. And that it is the earnest of heaven, is proved thus.

Sect. 2. 1. If it be a change of greatest benefit to man. 2. And if heaven be the very sum and end of it. 3. And if it overcome all fleshly, worldly opposition. 4. And can be wrought by none but God. 5. And was before promised by Jesus Christ to all sound believers. 6. And is universally wrought in them all, either only, or eminently above all others. 7. And was promised them as a pledge and earnest of glory; then it can be no less than such a pledge and earnest: but the former are all true, &c.

Sect. 3. 1. That the change is of grand importance unto man, appeareth in that it is the renovation of his mind, and will, and life. It repaireth his depraved faculties, it causeth man to live as man, who is degenerated to a life too like to brutes. By God's permitting many to live in blindness, wickedness, and confusion, and to be tormenters of themselves and one another, by temptations, injuries, wars, and cruelty, we the fullier see what it is that grace doth save men from, and what a difference it maketh in the world. Those that have lived unholy in their youth, do easily find the difference in themselves when they are renewed. But to them that have been piously inclined from their childhood, it is harder to discern the difference, unless they mark the case of others. If man be worth any thing, it is for the use that his faculties were made; and if he be not good for the knowledge, love, and service of his Creator, what is he good for? And certainly the generality of ungodly worldlings are undisposed to all such works as this, till the Spirit of Christ effectually change them. Men are slaves to sin till Christ thus make them free, John viii. 32, 33, 36; Rom. vi. 18; Acts xxvi. 18; Rom. viii. 2. But where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, 2 Cor. iii. 17. If the divine nature and image, and the love of God shed abroad on the heart, be not our excellency, health, and beauty, what is? And that which is born of the flesh is flesh, but that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, John iii. 6. Without Christ and his Spirit, we can do nothing. Our dead notions and reason, when we see the truth, have not power to overcome temptations, nor to raise up man's soul to its original and end, nor to possess us with the love and joyful hopes of future blessedness. It were better for us to have no souls, than that those souls should be void of the Spirit of God.

Sect. 4. 2. And that heaven is the sum and end of all the Spirit's operations, appeareth in all that are truly conscious of them in themselves, and to them and others by all God's precepts, which the Spirit causeth us to obey, and the doctrine which it causeth us to believe, and by the description of all God's graces which he worketh in us. What is our knowledge and faith, but our knowledge and belief of heaven, as consisting in the glory and love of God there manifested, and as purchased by Christ, and given by his covenant? What is our hope but the hope of glory. See Heb. xi. 1, and throughout; 1 Pet. i. 3, 21; Heb. vi. 11, 18, 19; iii. 6; Tit. ii. 13; iii. 7; Col. i. 5, 23, 27. And through the Spirit, we wait for all this hope, Gal. v. 5. What is our love but a desire of communion with the blessed God initially here, and perfectly hereafter? As the sum of Christ's gospel was, "Take up the cross, forsake all here, and follow me, and thou shalt have a reward in heaven," Luke xiv. 26, 33; xviii. 22, 23. And the consolation of his gospel is, "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven," Matt. v. 11, 12. So the same is the sum of his Spirit's operations, for what he teacheth and commandeth that he worketh. For he worketh by that word, and the impress must be like the signet, what arm soever set it on. He sendeth not his Spirit to make men craftier than others for this world, but to make them wiser for salvation, and to make them more heavenly and holy. For the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light. Heavenliness is the Spirit's special work.

Sect. 5. 3. And in working this it conquereth the inward undisposedness and averseness of a fleshly, worldly mind and will, and the customs of a carnal life; and the outward temptations of Satan, and all the allurements of the world. Christ first overcame the world, and teacheth and causeth us to overcome

[h] See what I have said of particular testimonies in my Saints' Rest, and Unreasonableness of Infidelity.

it; even its flatteries and its frowns: our faith is our victory. Whether this victory be easy, and any honour to the Spirit of Christ, let our experience of the wickedness of the ungodly world, and of our own weakness, and of our falls when the Spirit of God forsaketh us, be our informer.

Sect. 6. 4. And that none but God can do this work on the soul of man, both the knowledge of causes and experience prove. The most learned, wise, and holy teachers cannot (as they confess and show); the wisest and most loving parents cannot, and therefore must pray to him that can; the greatest princes cannot; evil angels neither can nor will. What good angels can do on the heart we know not; but we know that they do nothing, but as the obedient ministers of God. And (though we have some power on ourselves, yet) that we ourselves cannot do it; that we cannot quicken, illuminate, or sanctify ourselves, and that we have nothing but what we have received, conscience and experience fully tell us.

Sect. 7. 5. And that Christ promised this Spirit in a special measure to all true believers, that it should be in them his advocate, agent, seal, and mark, is yet visible in the gospel; yea, and in the former prophets, Isa. xliv. 34; Ezek. xxxvi. 26; xxxvii. 14; Joel ii. 28, 29; Ezek. xi. 19; xviii. 31; Eph. i. 13; John iii. 5; iv. 23, 24; vi. 63; vii. 39; John i. 33; xiv. 16, 26; Acts i. 5, 8; John xv. 26; xvi. 7—9, &c. Indeed the Spirit here, and heaven hereafter, are the chief of all the promises of Christ.

Sect. 8. 6. And that this Spirit is given (not to hypocrites that abuse Christ, and do not seriously believe him, nor to mere pretending, nominal christians, but) to all that sincerely believe the gospel, is evident not only to themselves in certainty, (if they are in a condition to know themselves,) but to others in part by the effects: they have other ends, other affections, other lives, than the rest of mankind have; though their heavenly nature and design be the less discerned and honoured in the world, because their chiefest difference is out of the sight of man, in the heart, and in their secret actions, and because their imperfections blemish them, and because the malignant world is by strangeness and enmity an incompetent judge, yet it is discernible to others, that they live upon the hopes of a better life, and their heavenly interest is it that overruleth all the adverse interests of this world, and that in order thereunto they live under the conduct of divine authority, and that God's will is highest and most prevalent with them, and that to obey and please him as far as they know it is the greatest business of their lives, though ignorance and adverse flesh do make their holiness and obedience imperfect. The universal noise and opposition of the world against them, do show that men discern a very great difference, which error, and cross interests, and carnal inclinations, render displeasing to those who find them condemned by their heavenly designs and conversations.

Sect. 9. But whether others discern it, or deny it, or detest it, the true believer is conscious of it in himself: even when he groaneth to be better, to believe, and trust, and love God more, and to have more of the heavenly life and comforts, those very desires signify another appetite and mind, than worldlings have; and even when his frailties and weaknesses make him doubt of his own sincerity, he would not change his Governor, rule, or hopes, for all that the world can offer him. He hath the [i] witness in himself, that there is in believers a sanctifying Spirit, calling up their minds to God and glory, and warring victoriously against the flesh; so that to will is present with them; and they love and delight in a holy conformity to their rule; and it is never so well and pleasant with them, as when they can trust and love God most; and in their worst and weakest condition, they would fain be perfect. This Spirit, and its renewing work, so greatly different from the temper and desires of worldly men, is given by Christ to all sound believers.

Sect. 10. It is true, that some that know not of an incarnate Saviour, have much in them that is very laudable; whether it be real saving holiness, and whether Abraham were erroneous in thinking that even the Sodoms of the world were likely to have had fifty righteous persons in them, I am not now to inquire: but it is sure, 1. That the world had really a Saviour, about four thousand years before Christ's incarnation; even the God of pardoning mercy, who promised and undertook what after was performed, and shall be to the end. 2. And that the Spirit of this Saviour did sanctify God's elect from the beginning; and gave them the same holy and heavenly dispositions (in some degree) before Christ's incarnation, as is given since; yea, it is called "The Spirit of Christ," which was before given, 1 Pet. i. 11. 3. That this Spirit was then given to more than the Jews. 4. That Christ hath put that part of the world that hear not of his incarnation into no worse a condition than he found them in: that as the Jews' covenant of peculiarity was no repeal of the universal law of grace, made by God with fallen mankind, in Adam and Noah; so the covenant of grace of the second edition, made with Christ's peculiar people, is no repeal of the foresaid law in the first edition, to them that hear not of the second. 5. That all that wisdom and goodness, that is in any without the christian church, is the work of the Spirit of the Redeemer; as the light which goeth before sun-rising, and after sun-setting, and in a cloudy day, is of the same sun which others see, even to them that see not the sun itself. 6. That the liker any without the church are to the sanctified believers, the better they are, and the more unlike the worse. So that all these six things being undeniable, it appeareth, that it is the same Spirit of Christ, which now giveth all men what real goodness is any where to be found. But it is notorious that no part of the world is, in heavenliness and virtue, comparable to true and serious christians.

Sect. 11. 7. And let it be added, that Christ,[k] who promised the greatest measures of the Spirit, (which he accordingly hath given,) did expressly promise this, as a means and pledge, first-fruits and earnest, of the heavenly glory: and, therefore, it is a certain proof, that such a glory we shall have. He that can and doth give us a spiritual change or renovation, which in its nature and tendency is heavenly, and sets our hopes and hearts on heaven, and turneth the endeavours of our lives to the seeking of a future blessedness, and told us, before-hand, that he would give us this preparatory grace, as the earnest of that felicity, may well be trusted to perform his word in our actual glorification.

Sect. 12. And now, O weak and fearful soul, why shouldst thou draw back, as if the case were yet left doubtful? Is not thy foundation firm? Is not the way of life, through the valley of death, made safe by him that conquereth death? Art thou not yet delivered from the bondage of thy fears, when the gaoler and executioner, who had the power of death, hath, by Christ, been put out of his power, as to thee? Is not all this evidence true and sure? Hast

[i] 1 John v. 9—11; Gal. v. 17; Rom. vii.; Phil. iii. 7—15.

[k] Eph. i. 14; 2 Cor. i. 22; v. 5; Rom. viii. 23; 2 Tim. ii. 19; Eph. i. 13; iv. 30; 1 John v. 9, 10; Heb. x. 15.

thou not the witness in thyself? Hast thou not found the motions, the effectual operations, the renewing changes, of this Spirit in thee, long ago? And is he not still the agent and witness of Christ, residing and operating in thee? Whence else are thy groanings after God; thy desires to be nearer to his glory, to know him better, to love him more? Whence came all the pleasure thou hast had in his sacred truth, and ways, and service? Who else overcame thy folly, and pride, and vain desires, so far as they are overcome? Who made it thy choice to sit at the feet of Christ, and hear his word, as the better part, and to despise the honours and preferments of the world, and to account them all as dung and dross? Who breathed in thee all those requests that thou hast sent up to God? Overvalue not corrupted nature, it bringeth not forth such fruits as these: if thou doubt of that, remember what thou wast in the hour of temptation, even of poor and weak temptations. And how small a matter hath drawn thee to sin, when God did but leave thee to thyself. Forget not the days of youthful vanity: overlook not the case of the miserable world, even of thy sinful neighbours, who, in the midst of light still live in darkness, and hear not the loudest calls of God: look about on thousands that, in the same land, and under the same teaching, and after the greatest judgments and deliverance, run on to all excess of riot, and, as past feeling, are greedily vicious and unclean. Is it no work of Christ's Spirit that hath made thee to differ? Thou hast nothing to boast of, and much to be humbled for; but thou hast also much to be thankful for. Thy holy desires are, alas! too weak; but they are holy: thy love hath been too cold; but it is holiness, and the most holy God, that thou hast loved. Thy hopes in God have been too low; but it is God thou hast hoped in, and his love and glory that thou hast hoped for. Thy prayers have been too dull and interrupted; but it is holiness and heaven that thou hast most prayed for. Thy labours and endeavours have been too slothful; but it is God, and glory, and the good of mankind, that thou hast laboured for. Though thy motion were too weak and slow, it hath been Godward; and, therefore, it was from God. O bless the Lord, that hath not only given thee a word that beareth the image of God, and is sealed by uncontrolled miracles, to be the matter of thy belief, but hath also fulfilled his promises so oft and notably to thee, in the answer of prayers, and in great and convincing deliverances of thyself and many others; and hath, by wonders, oft assisted thy faith! Bless that God of light and love, who, besides the universal attestation of his word, long ago given to all the church, hath given thee the internal seal, the nearer indwelling attestation, the effects of power, light, and love, imprinted on thy nature, mind, and will, the witness in thyself, that the word of God is not a human dream, or lifeless thing; that by regeneration hath been here preparing thee for the light of glory, as by generation he prepared thee to see this light, and converse with men. And wilt thou yet doubt and fear against all this evidence, experience, and foretaste?

Sect. 13. I think it not needless labour to confirm my soul in the full persuasion of the truth of its own immortal nature, and of a future life of joy or misery to mankind, and of the certain truth of the christian faith: the being of God, and his perfection, hath so great evidence, that I find no great temptation to doubt of it, any more than whether there be an earth, or a sun; and the atheist seemeth to me to be in that no better than mad. The christian verity is known only by supernatural revelation; but by such revelation it is so attested externally to the world, and internally to holy souls, as maketh faith the ruling, victorious, consolatory principle, by which we must live, and not by sight; but the soul's immortality and reward hereafter is of a middle nature, viz. of natural revelation, but incomparably less clear than the being of a God; and therefore, by the addition of evangelical (supernatural) revelation, is made to us much more clear and sure. And I find among the infidels of this age, that most who deny the christian verity, do almost as much deny or question the retribution of a future life. And they that are fully satisfied of this, do find christianity so excellently congruous to it, as greatly facilitateth the work of faith. Therefore, I think, that there is scarce any verity more needful to be thoroughly digested into a full assurance, than this of the soul's immortality, and hope of future happiness.

Sect. 14. And when I consider the great unlikeness of men's hearts and lives to such a belief, as we all profess, I cannot but fear, that not only the ungodly, but most that truly hope for glory, have a far weaker belief (in habit and act) of the soul's immortality, and the truth of the gospel, than they seem to take notice of in themselves. Can I be certain, or fully persuaded, (in habit and act,) of the future rewards and punishments of souls, and that we shall be all shortly judged as we have lived here, and yet not despise all the vanities of this world, and set my heart, with resolution and diligence, to the preparation which must be made by a holy, heavenly, fruitful life, as one whose soul is taken up with the hopes and fears of things of such unspeakable importance. Who could stand dallying, as most men do, at the door of eternity, that did verily believe his immortal soul must be shortly there? Though such a one had no certainty of his own particular title to salvation, the certainty of such a grand concernment (that joy or misery is at hand) would surely awaken him to try, cry, or search; to beg, to strive, to watch, to spare no care, or cost, or labour, to make all sure in a matter of such weight; it could not be but he would do it with speed, and do it with a full resolved soul, and do it with earnest zeal and diligence. What man, that once saw the things which we hear of, even heaven and hell, would not afterwards (at least in deep regard and seriousness) exceed the most resolved believer that you know. One would think, in reason, it should be so thought: I confess a wicked heart is very senseless.

Sect. 15. I do confess, that there is much weakness of the belief of things unseen, where yet there is sincerity; but surely there will be some proportion between our belief and its effects. And where there is little regard, or fear, or hopes, or sorrow, or joy, or resolved diligence, for the world to come, I must think that there is (in act at least) but little belief of it, and that such persons little know themselves, how much they secretly doubt whether it be true. I know that most complain, almost altogether, of the uncertainty of their title to salvation, and little of their uncertainty of a heaven and hell; but were they more certain of this, and truly persuaded of it at the heart, it would do more to bring them to that serious, resolved faithfulness in religion, which would help them more easily to be sure of their sincerity, than long examinations, and many marks talked of, without this, will do.

Sect. 16. And I confess, that the great wisdom of God hath not thought meet, that in the body we should have as clear, and sensible, and lively apprehensions of heaven and hell, as sight would cause. For that would be to have too much of heaven or hell on earth; for the gust would follow the percep-

tion, and so full a sense would be some sort of a possession, which we are not fit for in this world. And, therefore, it must be a darker revelation than sight would be, that it may be a lower perception, lest this world and the next should be confounded; and faith and reason should be put out of office, and not duly tried, exercised, and fitted for reward; but yet faith is faith, and knowledge is knowledge; and he that verily believeth such great, transcendent things, though he see them not, will have some proportionable affections and endeavours.

Sect. 17. I confess also, that man's soul, in flesh, is not fit to bear so deep a sense of heaven and hell as sight would cause; because it here operateth on and with the body, and according to its capacity, which cannot bear so deep a sense without distraction, by screwing up the organs too high, till they break, and so overdoing, would undo all: but yet there is an overruling seriousness, which a certain belief of future things must needs bring the soul to, that truly hath it; and he that is careful and serious for this world, and looketh after a better, but with a slight, unwilling, half-regard, and, in the second place, must give me leave to think, that he believeth but as he liveth, and that his doubting, or unbelief, of the reality of a heaven and hell, is greater than his belief.

Sect. 18. Oh, then, for what should my soul more pray, than for a clearer and stronger faith? I believe, Lord, help my unbelief! I have many a thousand times groaned to thee under the burden of this remnant of darkness and unbelief; I have many a thousand times thought of the evidences of the christian verity, and of the great necessity of a lively, powerful, active faith: I have begged it; I have cried to thee night and day, Lord, increase my faith! I have written and spoken that to others which might be most useful to myself, to raise the apprehensions of faith yet higher, and make them liker those of sense; but yet, yet, Lord, how dark is this world! What a dungeon is this flesh! How little clearer is my sight, and little quicker are my perceptions, of unseen things, than long ago! Am I at the highest that man on earth can reach, and that when I am so dark and low? Is there no growth of these apprehensions more to be expected? Doth the soul cease its increase in vigorous perception, when the body ceaseth its increase, or vigour, of sensation? Must I sit down in so low a measure, while I am drawing nearer to the things believed; and am almost there, where belief must pass into sight and love? Or must I take up with the passive silence and inactivity, which some friars persuade us is nearer to perfection; and, under pretence of annihilation and receptivity, let my sluggish heart alone, and say, that in this neglect I wait for thy operations? O let not a soul, that is driven from this world, and weary of vanity, and can think of little else but immortality, that seeks and cries both night and day for the heavenly light, and fain would have some foretaste of glory, and some more of the first-fruits of the promised joys, let not such a soul either long, or cry, or strive in vain! Punish not my former grieving of thy Spirit, by deserting a soul that ericth for thy grace, so near its great and unconceivable change. Let me not languish in vain desires, at the door of hope; nor pass with doubtful thoughts and fears, from this vale of misery. Which should be the season of triumphant faith, and hope, and joy, if not when I am entering on the world of joy? O thou that hast left us so many consolatory words of promise, that our joy may be full; send, oh! send, the promised Comforter, without whose approaches and heavenly beams, when all is said, and a thousand thoughts and strivings have been assayed, it will still be night and winter with the soul.

Sect. 19. But have I not expected more particular and more sensitive coneeptions of heaven, and the state of blessed souls than I should have done, and remained less satisfied, because I expected such distinct perceptions to my satisfaction, which God doth not ordinarily give to souls in flesh? I fear it hath been too much so; a distrust of God, and a distrustful desire to know much (good and evil) for ourselves, as necessary to our quiet and satisfaction, was that sin which hath decply corrupted man's nature, and is more of our common pravity than is commonly observed; I find that this distrust of God, and my Redeemer, hath had too great a hand in my desires of a distincter and more sensible knowledge. I know that I should implicitly, and absolutely, and quietly, trust my soul into my Redeemer's hands; (of which I must speak more anon;) and it is not only for the body, but also for the soul, that a distrustful care is our great sin and misery. But yet we must desire that our knowledge and belief may be as distinct and particular as God's revelations are; and we can love no further than we know; and the more we know of God and glory, the more we shall love, desire, and trust him. It is a known, and not merely an unknown God and happiness, that the soul doth joyfully desire; and if I may not be ambitious of too sensible and distinct perceptions here, of the things unseen; yet must I desire and beg the most fervent and sensible love to them that I am capable of. I am willing (in part) to take up with that unavoidable ignorance, and that low degree of such knowledge, which God confineth us to in the flesh, so be it he will give me but such consolatory foretastes in love and joy, which such a general, imperfect knowledge may consist with, that my soul may not pass with distrust and terror, but with suitable, triumphant hopes to the everlasting pleasures.

O Father of lights! who givest wisdom to them that ask it of thee, shut not up this sinful soul in darkness! leave me not to grope in unsatisfied doubts, at the door of the celestial light! Or if my knowledge must be general, let it be clear and powerful; and deny me not now the lively exercise of faith, hope, and love, which are the stirrings of the new creature, and the dawnings of the everlasting light, and the earnest of the promised inheritance.

Sect. 20. But we are oft ready to say, with Cicero, when he had been reading such as Plato, that, while the book is in our hands, we seem confident of our immortality, and when we lay it by, our doubts return: so our arguments seem clear and cogent, and yet when we think not of them with the best advantage, we are oft surprised with fear, lest we should be mistaken, and our hopes be vain; and hereupon (and from the common fear of death, that even good men too often manifest) the infidels gather, that we do but force ourselves into such a hope as we desire to be true, against the tendency of man's nature, and that we were not made for a better world.

Sect. 21. But this fallacy ariseth from men's not distinguishing, 1. Sensitive fears from rational uncertainty, or doubts. 2. And the mind that is in the darkness of unbelief, from that which hath the light of faith.

I find in myself too much of fear, when I look into eternity, interrupting and weakening my desires and joy. But I find that it is very much an irrational, sensitive fear, which the darkness of man's mind, the greatness of the change, the dreadful majesty of God, and man's natural averseness to die, do, in some degree, necessitate, even when reason is fully satisfied that such fears are consistent with certain safety.

If I were bound with the strongest chains, or stood on the surest battlements, on the top of a castle or steeple, I could not possibly look down without fear, and such as would go near to overcome me; and yet I should be rationally sure that I am there fast and safe, and cannot fall. So is it with our prospect into the life to come: fear is oft a necessitated passion: when a man is certain of his safe foundation, it will violently rob him of the comfort of that certainty: yea, it is a passion that irrationally doth much to corrupt our reason itself, and would make us doubt because we fear, though we know not why: and a fearful man doth hardly trust his own apprehensions of his safety, but, among other fears, is still ready to fear lest he be deceived; like timorous, melancholy persons about their bodies, who are ready still to think that every little distemper is a mortal symptom, and that worse is still nearer them than they feel, and they hardly believe any words of hope.

Sect. 22. And Satan, knowing the power of these passions, and having easier access to the sensitive than to the intellective faculties, doth labour to get in at this back door, and to frighten poor souls into doubt and unbelief: and in timorous natures he doth it with too great success, as to the consolatory acts of faith. Though yet God's mercy is wonderfully seen in preserving many honest, tender souls from the damning part of unbelief, and, by their fears, preserveth them from being bold with sin: when many bold and impudent sinners turn infidels, or atheists, by forfeiting the helps of grace.

Sect. 23. And, indeed, irrational fears have so much power to raise doubts, that they are seldom separated; insomuch that many scarce know, or observe, the difference between doubts and fears: and many say they not only fear but doubt, when they can scarce tell why, as if it were no intellectual act which they meant, but an irrational passion.

Sect. 24. If, therefore, my soul see undeniable evidence of immortality; and if it be able, by irrefragable argument, to prove the future blessedness expected; and if it be convinced that God's promises are true, and sufficiently sealed and attested by him, to warrant the most confident belief; and if I trust my soul and all my hopes upon this word, and evidences of truth, it is not, then, our averseness to die, nor the sensible fears of a soul that looketh into eternity, that invalidate any of the reasons of my hope, nor prove the unsoundness of my faith.

Sect. 25. But yet these fears do prove its weakness; and were they prevalent against the choice, obedience, resolutions, and endeavours of faith, they would be prevalent against the truth of faith, or prove its nullity; for faith is trust; and trust is a securing, quieting thing. "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" was a just reproof of Christ to his disciples, when sensible dangers raised up their fears. For the established will hath a political or imperfect, though not a despotical and absolute, power over our passions. And therefore our fears do show our unbelief, and stronger faith is the best means of conquering even irrational fears; "Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou so disquieted in me? trust in God," &c. Psal. xlii. is a needful way of chiding a timorous heart.

Sect. 26. And though many say that faith hath not evidence, and think that it is an assent of the mind, merely commanded by the empire of the will, without a knowledge of the verity of the testimony; yet, certainly, the same assent is ordinarily in the Scriptures called, indifferently, knowing and believing: and as a bare command will not cause love, unless we perceive an amiableness in the object, so a bare command of the law, or of the will, cannot alone cause belief, unless we perceive a truth in the testimony believed: for it is a contradiction; or an act without its object. And truth is perceived only so far as it is some way evident: for evidence is nothing but the objective perceptibility of truth; or that which is metaphorically called light. So that we must say that faith hath not sensible evidence of the invisible things believed; but faith is nothing else but the willing perception of the evidence of truth in the word of the assertor, and a trust therein. We have, and must have, evidence that Scripture is God's word, and that his word is true, before, by any command of the word or will, we can believe it.

Sect. 27. I do, therefore, neither despise evidence as unnecessary, nor trust to it alone as the sufficient total cause of my belief: for if God's grace do not open mine eyes, and come down in power upon my will, and insinuate into it a sweet acquaintance with the things unseen, and a taste of their goodness to delight my soul, no reasons will serve to stablish and comfort me, how undeniable soever. Reason is fain first to make use of notions, words, or signs; and to know terms, propositions, and arguments, which are but means to the knowledge of things, is its first employment, and that, alas! which multitudes of learned men do take up with: but it is the illumination of God that must give us an effectual acquaintance with the things spiritual and invisible, which these notions signify, and to which our organical knowledge is but a means.

Sect. 28. To sum up all, that our hopes of heaven have a certain ground appeareth, I. From nature: II. From grace: III. From other works of gracious providence.

I. From the nature of man: 1. Made capable of it. 2. Obliged, even by the law of nature, to seek it before all. 3. Naturally desiring perfection, 1. Habitual; 2. Active; and, 3. Objective.

2. And from the nature of God. 1. As good and communicative. 2. As holy and righteous. 3. As wise; making none of his works in vain.

Sect. 29. II. From grace: 1. Purchasing it. 2. Declaring it by a messenger from heaven, both by word, and by Christ's own (and others') resurrection. 3. Promising it. 4. Sealing that promise by miracles there. 5. And by the work of sanctification, to the end of the world.

Sect. 30. III. By subordinate providence. 1. God's actual governing the world by the hopes and fears of another life. 2. The many helps which he giveth us for a heavenly life, and for attaining it (which are not vain). 3. Specially the ministration of angels, and their love to us, and communion with us. 4. And, by accident, devils themselves convince us: 1. By the nature of their temptations. 2. By apparitions, and haunting houses. 3. By witches. 4. By possessions; which though it be but a Satanical operation on the body, yet is so extraordinary an operation, that it differeth from the more usual; as (if I may so compare them) God's Spirit's operations on the saints, that are called his dwelling in them, or possessing them, are different from his lower operations on others.

Sect. 1. II. Having proved that faith and hope have a certain, future happiness to expect, the text directeth me next to consider why it is described by "being with Christ;" viz. I. What is included in our "being with Christ." II. That we shall be with him. III. Why we shall be with him.

Sect. 2. To be with Christ, includeth, 1. Presence. 2. Union. 3. Communion, or participation of felicity with him.

Sect. 3. 1. *Quest.* Is it Christ's Godhead, or his human soul, or his human body, that we shall be

present with, and united to, or all? *Answ.* It is all, but variously.

Sect. 4. 1. We shall be present with the divine nature of Christ. *Quest.* But are we not always so? And are not all creatures so? *Answ.* Yes, as his essence comprehendeth all place and beings; but not as it is operative, and manifested in and by his glory. Christ directeth our hearts and tongues to pray, "Our Father, which art in heaven:" and yet he knew that all place is in and with God; because it is in heaven that he gloriously operateth and shineth forth to holy souls: even as man's soul is eminently said to be in the head, because it understandeth and reasoneth in the head, and not in the foot, or hand, though it be also there. And as we look a man in the face when we talk to him, so we look up to heaven when we pray to God. God who is, and operateth as, the root of nature, in all the works of creation, (for in him we live, and move, and are,) and by the way of grace in all the gracious, doth operate, and is, by the works and splendour of his glory, eminently in heaven: by which glory, therefore, we must mean some created glory; for his essence hath no inequality.

Sect. 5. 2. We shall be present with the human nature of Christ, both soul and body: but here our present narrow thoughts must not too boldly presume to resolve the difficulties which, to a distinct understanding of this, should be overcome; for we must not here expect any more than a dark and general knowledge of them: as, 1. What is the formal difference between Christ's glorified body, and his flesh on earth. 2. Where Christ's glorified body is, and how far it extendeth. 3. Wherein the soul and the glorified body differ, seeing it is called a spiritual body: these things are beyond our present reach.

Sect. 6. 1. For what conceptions can we have of a spiritual body, save that it is pure, incorruptible, invisible to mortal eyes, and fitted to the most perfect state of the soul? How near the nature of it is to a spirit, (and so to the soul,) and how far they agree, or differ, in substance, extensiveness, divisibility, or activity, little do we know.

Sect. 7. 2. Nor do we know where and how far Christ's body is present by extent. The sun is commonly taken for a body, and its motive, illuminative, and calefactive beams, are, by the most probable philosophy, taken to be a real emanant part of its substance, and so that it is essentially as extensive as those beams; that is, it at once filleth all our air, and toucheth the surface of the earth; and how much further it extendeth we cannot tell. And what difference there is between Christ's glorified body and the sun, in purity, splendour, extent, or excellency of nature, little do poor mortals know: and so of the rest.

Sect. 8. Let no man, therefore, cavil, and say, How can a whole world of glorified bodies be all present with the one body of Christ, when each must possess its proper room? For, as the body of the solar beams, and the extensive air, are so compresent, as that none can discern the difference of the places which they possess, and a world of bodies are present with them both, so may all our bodies be with Christ's body, and that without any real confusion.

Sect. 9. 2. Besides presence with Christ, there will be such a union as we cannot now distinctly know. A political, relative union is past doubt, such as subjects have in one kingdom with their king; but little know we how much more. We see that there is a wonderful corporeal continuity, or contact, among the material works of God; and the more spiritual, pure, and noble, the more inclination each nature hath to union. Every plant on earth hath a union with the whole earth in which it liveth; they are real parts of it. And what natural conjunction our bodies shall have to Christ's, and what influence from it, is past our knowledge. Though his similitudes in John xv. and vi. Eph. v. 1 Cor. xii. seem to extend far, yet being but similitudes, we cannot fully know how far.

Sect. 10. The same, *variatis variandis*, we may say of our union with Christ's human soul. Seeing souls are more inclinable to union than bodies, when we see all vegetables to be united parts of one earth, and yet to have each one its proper individuating form and matter, we cannot, though animals seem to walk more disjunct, imagine that there is no kind of union or conjunction of invisible souls; though they retain their several substances and forms: nor yet that our bodies shall have a nearer union with Christ's body than our souls with his soul. But the nature, manner, and measure of it, we know not.

Sect. 11. Far be it from us to think that Christ's glorified, spiritual body, is such in forms, parts, and dimensions, as his earthly body was. That it hath hands, feet, brains, heart, stomach, liver, intestines, as on earth: or, that it is such a compound of earth, water, and air, as here it was, and of such confined extent: for then, as his disciples and a few Jews only were present with him, and all the world besides were absent, and had none of his company, so it would be in heaven. But it is such as not only Paul, but all true believers in the world, from the creation to the end, shall be with Christ, and see his glory: and though inequality of fitness, or degrees of holiness, will make an inequality of glory, no man can prove an inequality by local distance from Christ; or, if such there be, for it is beyond our reach, yet none in heaven are at such a distance from him as not to enjoy the felicity of his presence.

Sect. 12. Therefore, when we dispute against them that hold transubstantiation, and the ubiquity of Christ's body, we do assuredly conclude that sense is judge, whether there be real bread and wine present, or not; but it is no judge, whether Christ's spiritual body be present or not, no more than whether an angel be present. And we conclude that Christ's body is not infinite, or immense, as is his Godhead; but what are its dimensions, limits, or extent, and where it is absent, far be it from us to determine, when we cannot tell how far the sun extendeth its secondary substance, or emanant beams; nor well what locality is as to Christ's soul, or any spirit, if to a spiritual body.

Sect. 13. Their fear is vain and carnal, who are afraid lest their union with Christ, or one another, will be too near; even lest thereby they lose their individuation, as rivers that fall into the sea, or extinguished candles, whose fire is after but a sunbeam, or part of the common element of fire in the air, or as the vegetative spirits which, in autumn, retire from the leaves into the branches and trunk of the tree. I have proved before, that our individuation, or numerical existence, ceaseth not; and that no union is to be feared, were it never so sure, which destroyeth not the being, or formal powers, or action of the soul; and that it is the great radical disease of selfishness, and want of holy love to God and our Saviour, and one another, which causeth these unreasonable fears, even that selfishness which now maketh men so partially desirous of their own wills and pleasure in comparison of God's, and their own felicity in comparison of others, and which maketh them so easily bear God's injuries, and the sufferings of a thousand others, in comparison of

their own. But he that put a great desire of the body's preservation into the soul, while it is its form, will abate that desire when the time of separation is come, because there is then no use for it till the resurrection; else it would be a torment to the soul.

Sect. 14. 3. And as we shall have union, so also communion, with the divine and human nature of Christ respectively; both as they will be the objects of our soul's most noble and constant acts, and as they will be the fountain or communicative cause of our receptions.

Sect. 15. 1. We find now that our various faculties have various objects, suitable to their natures. The objects of sense are things sensible, and the objects of imagination things imaginable, and the objects of intellection things intelligible, and the objects of the will things amiable. The eye, which is a nobler sense than some others, hath light for its object, which, to other senses, is none: and so of the rest. Therefore we have cause to suppose, that as far as our glorified souls and our spiritual, glorified bodies will differ, so far Christ's glorified soul and body will, respectively, be their several objects; and beholding the glory of both will be part of our glory.

Sect. 16. Yet is it not hence to be gathered, that the separated soul, before the resurrection, shall not have Christ's glorified body for its object; for the objects of the body are also the objects of the soul, or, to speak more properly, the objects of sense are also the objects of intellection and will, though all the objects of the intellect and will are not objects of sense. The separated soul can know Christ's glorified body, though our present bodies cannot see a soul. But how much our spiritual bodies will excel in capacity and activity these passive bodies, that have so much earth and water, we cannot tell.

Sect. 17. And though now our souls are as a candle in a lantern, and must have extrinsic objects admitted by the senses before they can be understood, yet it followeth not that therefore a separated soul cannot know such objects: 1. Because it now knoweth them abstractively, per species, because its act of ratiocination is compound as to the cause (soul and body). But it will then know such things intuitively, as now it can do itself, when the lantern is cast by. 2. And whatever many of late, that have given themselves the title of ingenious, have said to the contrary, we have little reason to think that the sensitive faculty is not an essential, inseparable power of the same soul that is intellectual, and that sensation ceaseth to separated souls, however the modes of it may cease with their several uses and organs. To feel intellectually, or to understand and will feelingly, we have cause to think, will be the action of separated souls: and if so, why may they not have communion with Christ's body and soul, as their objects in their separated state? 3. Besides that, we are uncertain whether the separated soul have no vehicle or body at all. Things unknown to us must not be supposed true or false. Some think that the sensitive soul is material, and, as a body to the intellectual, never separated. I am not of their opinion that make them two substances; but I cannot say I am certain that they err. Some think that the soul is material, of a purer substance than things visible, and that the common notion of its substantiality meaneth nothing else but a pure, (as they call it,) spiritual materiality. Thus thought not only Tertullian, but almost all the old Greek doctors of the church that write of it, and most of the Latin, or very many, as I have elsewhere showed, and as Faustus reciteth them in the treatise answered by Mammertus. Some think that the soul, as vegetative, is an igneous body, such as we call ether, or solar fire, or rather of a higher, purer kind; and that sensation and intellection are those formal faculties which specifically difference it from inferior mere fire, or ether. There were few of the old doctors that thought it not some of these ways material; and, consequently, extensive and divisible *per potentiam divinam*, though not naturally, or of its own inclination, because most strongly inclined to unity: and if any of all these uncertain opinions should prove true, the objections in hand will find no place. To say nothing of their conceit, who say, that as the spirit that retireth from the falling leaves in autumn, continueth to animate the tree, so man's soul may do when departed, with that to which it is united, to animate some more noble, universal body. But as all these are the too bold cogitations of men that had better let unknown things alone, so yet they may be mentioned to refel that more perilous boldness which denieth the soul's action, which is certain, upon, at best, uncertain reasons.

Sect. 18. I may boldly conclude, notwithstanding such objections, that Christ's divine and human nature, soul and body, shall be the felicitating objects of intuition and holy love to the separated soul before the resurrection; and that to be with Christ is to have such communion with him, and not only to be present where he is.

Sect. 19. 2. And the chief part of this communion will be that in which we are receptive; even Christ's communications to the soul. And as the infinite, incomprehensible Deity is the root, or first cause, of all communication, natural, gracious, and glorious, to being, motion, life, rule, reason, holiness, and happiness; and the whole creation is more dependent on God, than the fruit on the tree, or the plants on the earth, or the members on the body; (though yet they are not parts of the Deity, nor deified, because the communication is creative;) so God useth second causes in his communication to inferior natures. And it is more than probable, that the human soul of Christ, primarily, and his body, secondarily, are the chief second cause of influence and communication both of grace and glory, both to man in the body, and to the separated soul. And as the sun is first an efficient, communicative, second cause of seeing to the eye, and then is also the object of our sight, so Christ is to the soul.[1] For as God, so the Lamb is the light and glory of the heavenly Jerusalem, and in his light we shall have light. Though he give up the kingdom to the Father, so far as that God shall be all in all, and his creature be fully restored to his favour, and there shall be need of a healing government no more, for the recovering of lapsed souls to God; yet sure he will not cease to be our Mediator, and to be the church's Head, and to be the conveying cause of everlasting life, and light, and love, to all his members. As now we live because he liveth, even as the branches in the vine, and the Spirit that quickeneth, enlighteneth, and sanctifieth us, is first the Spirit of Christ before it is ours, and is communicated from God, by him, to us; so will it be in the state of glory, for we shall have our union and communion with him perfected, and not destroyed, or diminished. And unless I could be so proud as to think that I am, or shall be, the most excellent of all the creatures of God, and therefore nearest him, and above all others, how could I

[1] This one truth will give great light into the controversies about God's gracious operations on the soul; for when he useth second causes, we see he operateth according to their limited aptitude; and Christ's human nature, and all other second causes, are limited, and operate variously and resistibly, according to the recipient's capacity.

think that I am under the influence of no second cause, but have either grace or glory from God alone?

Sect. 20. So far am I from such arrogancy, as to think that I shall be so near to God, as to be above the need and use of Christ and his communications, as that I dare not say that I shall be above the need and help of other subordinate causes: as I am now lower than angels, and need their help, and as I am under the government of my superiors, and, as a poor weak member, am little worth in comparison of the whole body, the church of Christ, and receive continual help from the whole: so, how far it will be thus in glory, I know not; but that God will still use second causes for our joy, I doubt not, and also that there will not be an equality; and that it will be consistent with God's all-sufficiency to us, and our felicity in him, that we shall for ever have use for one another; and that to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God, and to be in Abraham's bosom, and sit at Christ's right and left hand in his kingdom, and to be ruler over ten cities, and to join with the heavenly host, or choir, in the joyful love and praise of God and of the Lamb, and many such like, are not false nor useless notes and notions of our celestial glory.

Sect. 21. And, certainly, if I be with Christ, I shall be with all that are with Christ; even with all the heavenly society. Though these bodies of gross, passive matter must have so much room, that the earth is little enough for all its inhabitants; and those at the antipodes are almost as strange to us as if they were in another world; and those of another kingdom, another province, or county, and oft another parish, yea, another house, are strangers to us; so narrow is our capacity of communion here: yet we have great cause to think, by many Scripture expressions, that our heavenly union and communion will be nearer, and more extensive; and that all the glorified shall know each other, or, at least, be far less distant, and less strange, than now we are. As I said before, when I see how far the sunbeams do extend, how they penetrate our closest glass, and puzzle them that say all bodies are impenetrable; when I see how little they hinder the placing or presence of other creatures, and how intimately they mix themselves with all, and seem to possess the whole region of the air, when yet the air seemeth itself to fill it, &c.; I dare not think that glorified spirits (no, nor spiritual bodies) will be such strangers to one another, as we are here on earth.

Sect. 22. And I must needs say, that it is a pleasant thought to me, and greatly helpeth my willingness to die, to think that I shall go to all the holy ones, both Christ and angels, and departed, blessed souls. For, 1. God hath convinced me that they are better than I, (each singly,) and therefore more amiable than myself. 2. And that many are better than one, and the whole than a poor, sinful part, and the new Jerusalem is the glory of the creation. 3. God hath given me a love to all his holy ones, as such. 4. And a love to the work of love and praise, which they continually and perfectly perform to God. 5. And a love to the celestial Jerusalem, as it is complete, and to his glory shining in them. 6. And my old acquaintance, with many a holy person gone to Christ, doth make my thoughts of heaven the more familiar to me. Oh, how many of them could I name! 7. And it is no small encouragement to one that is to enter upon an unseen world, to think that he goeth not an untrodden path, nor enters into a solitary or singular state; but followeth all from the creation to this day, that have passed by death to endless life. And is it not an imboldening consideration, to think that I am to go no other way, nor to no other place or state, than all the believers and saints have gone to before me, from the beginning to this time? Of this more anon.

TO DEPART.

Sect. 1. But I must be loosed, or depart, before I can thus be with Christ. And I must here consider, I. From what I must depart. II. And how, or in what manner: and I must not refuse to know the worst.

Sect. 2. I. And, 1. I know that I must depart from this body itself, and the life which consisteth in the animating of it. These eyes must here see no more; this hand must move no more; these feet must walk no more; this tongue must speak no more. As much as I have loved and over-loved this body, I must leave it to the grave. There must it lie and rot in darkness, as a neglected and a loathed thing.

Sect. 3. This is the fruit of sin, and nature would not have it so; I mean the nature of this compound man: but what though it be so? 1. It is but my shell, or tabernacle, and the clothing of my soul, and not itself. 2. It is but an elementary composition dissolved; and earth going to earth, and water to water, and air to air, and fire to fire, into that union which the elementary nature doth incline to.

3. It is but an instrument laid by when all its work is done, and a servant dismissed when his service is at an end. And what should I do with a horse, when I shall need to ride or travel no more, or with a pen, when I must write no more? It is but the laying by the passive receiver of my soul's operations, when the soul hath no more to do upon it; as I cast by my lute, or other instrument, when I have better employment than music to take up my time.

4. Or, at most, it is but as flowers die in the fall, and plants in winter, when the retiring spirits have done their work, and are undisposed to dwell in so cold and unmeet a habitation, as the season maketh their former matter then to be. And its retirement is not its annihilation, but its taking up a fitter place.

5. It is but a separation from a troublesome companion, and putting off a shoe that pinched me. Many a sad and painful hour I have had in this frail and faltering flesh; many a weary night and day: what cares, what fears, what griefs, and what groans, hath this body cost me! Alas! how many hours of my precious time have been spent to maintain it, please it, or repair it! How considerable a part of all my life hath been spent in necessary sleep and rest; and how much in eating, drinking, dressing, physic; and how much in labouring, or using means, to procure these and other necessaries! Many a hundred times I have thought, that it costeth me so dear to live, yea, to live a painful, weary life, that were it not for the work and higher ends of life, I had little reason to be much in love with it, or to be loth to leave it. And had not God put into our nature itself a necessary, unavoidable, sensitive love of the body, and of life, as he puts into the mother, and into every brute, a love of their young ones, how unclean, and impotent, and troublesome soever, for the propagation and continuance of man on earth; had God but left it to mere reason, without this necessary pre-engagement of our natures; it would have been a matter of more doubt and difficulty than it is, whether this life should be loved and desired; and no small number would daily wish that they had never been born: a wish that I have had much ado to forbear, even when I have known that it is sinful, and when the work and pleasure of my life have been such to overcome the evils of it as few have had.

6. Yea, to depart from such a body, is but to be

removed from a very foul, uncleanly, and sordid habitation. I know that the body of man and brutes is the curious, wonderful work of God, and not to be despised, nor injuriously dishonoured, but admired, and well used; but yet it is a wonder to our reason, that so noble a spirit should be so meanly housed; and we may call it "our vile body," as the apostle doth, Phil. iii. 21. It is made up of the airy, watery, and earthly parts of our daily food, subacted and actuated by the fiery part, as the instrument of the soul. The greater part of the same food which, with great cost, and pomp, and pleasure, is first upon our tables, and then in our mouths, to-day, is to-morrow a fœtid, loathsome excrement, and cast out into the draught, that the sight and smell of that annoy us not, which yesterday was the sumptuous fruit of our abundance, and the glory of that which is called great housekeeping, and the pleasure of our eyes and taste. And is not the rest that turneth into blood and flesh, of the same general kind with that which is turned into loathsome filth? The difference is, that it is fitter for the soul by the fiery spirits, yet longer to operate on and keep from corruption; our blood and flesh are as stinking and loathsome a substance as our filthiest excrements, save that they are longer kept from putrefaction. Why then should it more grieve me, that one part of my food, which turned into flesh, should rot and stink in the grave, than that all the rest should daily stink in the draught? Yea, while it is within me, were it not covered from my sight, what a loathsome mass would my intestines appear! If I saw what is in the guts, the mesentery, the ventricles of the brain, what filth, what bilious or mucous matter, and, perhaps, crawling worms, there are in the most proud or comely person, I should think that the cover of a cleaner skin, and the borrowed ornaments of apparel, make no great difference between such a body and a carcass (which may be also covered with an adorned coffin and monument, to deceive such spectators as see but outsides); the change is not so great of corruptible flesh, replete with such fœtid excrements, into corrupted flesh, as some fools imagine.

7. Yet more: to depart from such a body is but to be loosed from the bondage of corruption, and from a clog and prison of the soul. I say not that God put a pre-existent soul into this prison penally, for former faults; I must say no more than I can prove, or than I know; but that body which was an apt servant to innocent man's soul, is become as a prison to him now. What alteration sin made upon the nature of the body, as whether it be more terrene and gross than else it would have been, I have no reason to assert: of earth or dust it was at first, and to dust it is sentenced to return. But no doubt but it hath its part in that dispositive deprivation which is the fruit of sin. We find that the soul, as sensitive, is so imprisoned, or shut up, in flesh, that sometimes it is more than one door that must be opened before the object and the faculty can meet. In the eye, indeed, the soul seemeth to have a window to look out at, and to be almost itself visible to others; and yet there are many interposing tunicles, and a suffusion, or winking, can make the clearest sight to be as useless for the time as if it were none: and if sense be thus shut up from its object, no wonder if reason also be under difficulties from corporeal impediments, and if the soul that is yoked with such a body can go no faster than its heavy pace.

8. Yet further: to depart from such a body, is but to be separated from an accidental enemy, and one of our greatest and most hurtful enemies; though still we say, that it is not by any default in the work of our Creator, but by the effects of sin, that it is such. What could Satan, or any other enemy of our souls, have done against us without our flesh? What is it but the interest of this body, that standeth in competition against the interest of our souls and God? What else do the profane sell their heavenly inheritance for, as Esau his birthright? No man loveth evil as evil, but as some way a real or seeming good; and what good is it but that which seemeth good for the body? What else is the bait of ambition, covetousness, and sensuality, but the interest and pleasure of this flesh? What taketh up the thoughts and care which we should lay out upon things spiritual and heavenly, but this body and its life? What pleasures are they that steal away men's hearts from the heavenly pleasures of faith, hope, and love, but the pleasures of this flesh? This draweth us to sin; this hindereth us from and in our duty. This body hath its interest which must be minded, and its inordinate appetite which must be pleased; or else what murmurings and disquiet must we expect! Were it not for bodily interest, and its temptations, how much more innocently and holily might I live! I should have nothing to care for, but to please God, and to be pleased in him, were it not for the care of this bodily life. What employment should my will and love have, but to delight in God, and love him and his interest, were it not for the love of the body, and its concerns? By this the mind is darkened, and the thoughts diverted; by this our wills are perverted and corrupted, and, by loving things corporeal, contract a strangeness and aversation from things spiritual: by this, heart and time are alienated from God; our guilt is increased, and our heavenly desire and hopes destroyed; life made unholy and uncomfortable, and death made terrible; God and our souls separated, and life eternal set by, and in danger of being utterly lost. I know that it is the sinful soul that is in all this the chief cause and agent; but what is it but bodily interest that is its temptation, bait, and end? What but the body, and its life and pleasure, is the chief, objective, alluring cause of all this sin and misery? And shall I take such a body to be better than heaven, or be loth to be loosed from so troublesome a yoke-fellow, or to be separated from so burdensome and dangerous a companion?

Sect. 3. *Obj.* But I know this habitation, but the next I know not. I have long been acquainted with this body, and this world, but the next I am unacquainted with.

Answ. 1. If you know it, you know all that of it which I have mentioned before; you know it to be a burden and snare; I am sure I know, by long experience, that this flesh hath been a painful lodging to my soul, and this world as a tumultuous ocean, or like the uncertain and stormy region of the air. And well he deserveth bondage, pain, and enmity, who will love them because he is acquainted with them, and is loth to leave them because he hath had them long, and is afraid of being well because he hath been long sick.

2. And do you not know the next and better habitation? Is faith no knowledge? If you believe God's promise, you know that such a state there is; and you know, in general, that it is better than this world; and you know that we shall be in holiness and glorious happiness with Christ: and is this no knowledge? 3. And what we know not, Christ, that prepareth and promiseth it, doth know; and is that nothing to us, if really we trust our souls to him? He that knoweth not more good by heaven than by earth, is yet so earthly and unbelieving, that it is no wonder if he be afraid and unwilling to depart.

Sect. 4. II. In departing from this body and life, I must depart from all its ancient pleasures: I must taste no more sweetness in meat, or drink, or rest, or sport, or any such thing, that now delighteth me; house, and lands, and goods, and wealth, must all be left; and the place where I live must know me no more. All my possessions must be no more to me, nor all that I laboured for, or took delight in, than if they had never been at all.

And what though it must be so? Consider, O my soul! 1. Thy ancient pleasures are all past already; thou losest none of them by death, for they are all lost before, if immortal grace have not, by sanctifying them, made the benefits of them to become immortal. All the sweet draughts, and morsels, and sports, and laughters; all the sweet thoughts of thy worldly possessions, or thy hopes, that ever thou hadst till this present hour, are passed by, dead, and gone already. All that death doth to such as these is, to prevent such, that on earth thou shalt have no more.

2. And is not that the case of every brute, that hath no comfort from the prospect of another life to repair his loss; and yet as our dominion diminisheth their pleasure while they live, by our keeping them under fear and labour, so, at our will, their lives must end. To please a gentleman's appetite for half an hour, or less, birds, beasts, and fishes must lose life itself, and all the pleasure which light might have afforded them for many years; yea, perhaps many of these (birds and fishes at least) must die to become but one feast to a rich man, if not one ordinary meal. And is not their sensual pleasure of the same nature as ours? Meat is as sweet to them, and ease as welcome, and lust as strong (in season); and the pleasure that death depriveth our flesh of, is such as is common to man with brutes: why then should it seem hard to us to lose that in the course of nature, which our wills deprive them of at our pleasure; when, if we are believers, we can say, that we do but exchange these delights of life for the greater delights of a life with Christ, which is a comfort which our fellow-creatures (the brutes) have not?

3. And, indeed, the pleasures of life are usually imbittered with so much pain, that to a great part of the world doth seem to exceed them; the vanity and vexation is so great and grievous as the pleasure seldom countervaileth. It is true, that nature desireth life, even under sufferings that are but tolerable, rather than to die; but that is not so much from the sensible pleasure of life, as from mere natural inclination; which God hath laid so deep, that free-will hath not full power against it. As before I said, that the body of man is such a thing, that could we see through the skin, (as men may look through a glass hive upon the bees,) and see all the parts and motion, the filth and excrements, that are in it, the soul would hardly be willing to actuate, love, and cherish such a mass of unclean matter, and to dwell in such a loathsome place, unless God had necessitated it by nature (deeper than reason or sense) to such a love and such a labour, by the *pondus* or spring of inclination. Even as the cow would not else lick the unclean calf, nor women themselves be at so much labour and trouble with their children, while there is little of them to be pleasing, but uncleanness, and crying, and helpless impatiency, to make them wearisome, had not necessitating inclination done more hereto than any other sense or reason; even so I now say of the pleasure of living, that the sorrows are so much greater to multitudes than the sensible delight, that life would not be so commonly chosen and endured under so much trouble, were not men determined thereto by natural necessitating inclination; (or deterred from death by the fears of misery to the separated soul;) and yet all this kept not some, counted the best and wisest of the heathens, from taking it for the valour and wisdom of a man to make away his life in time of extremity, and from making this the great answer to them that grudge at God for making their lives so miserable, If the misery be greater than the good of life, why dost thou not end it? thou mayst do that when thou wilt.

Our meat and drink is pleasant to the healthful, but it costeth poor men so much toil, and labour, and care, and trouble to procure a poor diet for themselves, and their families, that, I think, could they live without eating and drinking, they would thankfully exchange the pleasure of it all, to be eased of their care and toil in getting it. And when sickness cometh, even the pleasantest food is loathsome.

4. And do we not willingly interrupt and lay by these pleasures every night, when we betake ourselves to sleep? It is possible, indeed, a man may then have pleasant dreams; but I think few go to sleep for the pleasure of dreaming; either no dreams, or vain, or troublesome dreams, are much more common. And to say that rest and ease is my pleasure, is but to say, that my daily labour and cares are so much greater than my waking pleasure, that I am glad to lay by both together. For what is ease but deliverance from weariness and pain? For in deep and dreamless sleep there is little positive sense of the pleasure of rest itself. But, indeed, it is more from nature's necessitated inclination to this self-easing and repairing means, than from the positive pleasure of it, that we desire sleep. And if we can thus be contented every night to die, as it were, to all our waking pleasures, why should we be unwilling to die to them at once?

5. If it be the inordinate pleasures forbidden of God, which you are loth to leave, those must be left before you die, or else it had been better for you never to have been born, yea, every wise and godly man doth cast them off with detestation. You must be against holiness on that account, as well as against death, and, indeed, the same cause which maketh men unwilling to live a holy life, hath a great hand in making them unwilling to die, even because they are loth to leave the pleasure of sin. If the wicked be converted, he must be gluttonous and drunken no more; he must live in pride, vain-glory, worldliness, and sensual pleasures, no more; and therefore he draweth back from a holy life, as if it were from death itself. And so he is the lother to die, because he must have no more of the pleasures of his riches, pomp, and honours, his sports, and lust, and pleased appetite, for ever. But what is this to them that have mortified the flesh, with the affections and lusts thereof?

6. Yea, it is these forbidden pleasures which are the great impediments both of our holiness and our truest pleasures; and one of the reasons why God forbiddeth them, is, because they hinder us from better. And if for our own good we must forsake them when we turn to God, it must be supposed that they should be no reason against our willingness to die, but rather that to be free from the danger of them, we should be the more willing.

7. But the great satisfying answer of this objection is, that death will pass us to far greater pleasures, with which all these are not worthy to be compared. But of this more in due place.

Sect. 5. III. When I die, I must depart, not only from sensual delights, but from the more manly pleasures of my studies, knowledge, and converse with many wise and godly men, and from all my pleasure in reading, hearing, public and private exercises of

religion, &c. I must leave my library, and turn over those pleasant books no more. I must no more come among the living, nor see the faces of my faithful friends, nor be seen of man. Houses, and cities, and fields, and countries, gardens, and walks, will be nothing as to me. I shall no more hear of the affairs of the world of man, or wars, or other news, nor see what becomes of that beloved interest of wisdom, piety, and peace, which I desire may prosper, &c.

Answ. 1. Though these delights are far above those of sensual sinners, yet, alas! how low and little are they! How small is our knowledge in comparison of our ignorance! And how little doth the knowledge of learned doctors differ from the thoughts of a silly child! For from our childhood we take it in by drops; and as trifles are the matter of childish knowledge, so words, and notions, and artificial forms, do make up more of the learning of the world, than is commonly understood; and many such learned men know little more of any great and excellent things themselves, than rustics that are contemned by them for their ignorance. God, and the life to come, are little better known by them, if not much less, than by many of the unlearned. What is it but a child-game, that many logicians, rhetoricians, grammarians, yea, metaphysicians, and other philosophers, in their eagerest studies and disputes, are exercised in? Of how little use is it to know what is contained in many hundred of the volumes that fill our libraries! yea, or to know many of the most glorious speculations in physics, mathematics, &c. which have given some the title of *Virtuosi*, and *Ingeniosi*, in these times, who have little the more wit or virtue to live to God, or overcome temptations from the flesh and world, and to secure their everlasting hopes. What pleasure or quiet doth it give to a dying man to know almost any of their trifles?

2. Yea, it were well if much of our reading and learning did us no harm, nay, more than good. I fear lest books are to some but a more honourable kind of temptation than cards and dice, lest many a precious hour be lost in them, that should be employed on much higher matters, and lest many make such knowledge but an unholy, natural, yea, carnal pleasure, as worldlings do the thoughts of their lands and honours, and lest they be the more dangerous by how much the less suspected. But the best is, it is a pleasure so fenced from the slothful with thorny labour of hard and long studies, that laziness saveth more from it than grace and holy wisdom doth. But, doubtless, fancy and the natural intellect may, with as little sanctity, live in the pleasure of reading, knowing, disputing, and writing, as others spend their time at a game at chess, or other ingenious sport.

For my own part, I know that the knowledge of natural things is valuable, and may be sanctified, much more theological theory, and when it is so, it is of good use; and I have little knowledge which I find not some way useful to my highest ends. And if wishing or money could procure more, I would wish and empty my purse for it; but yet if many score or hundred books which I have read, had been all unread, and I had that time now to lay out upon higher things, I should think myself much richer than now I am. And I must earnestly pray, the Lord forgive me the hours that I have spent in reading things less profitable, for the pleasing of a mind that would fain know all, which I should have spent for the increase of holiness in myself and others! and yet I must thankfully acknowledge to God, that from my youth he taught me to begin with things of greatest weight, and to refer most of my other studies thereto, and to spend my days under the motives of necessity and profit to myself, and those with whom I had to do. And I now think better of the course of Paul, that determined to know nothing but a crucified Christ among the Corinthians, that is, so to converse with them as to use, and glorying as if he knew nothing else; and so of the rest of the apostles and primitive ages. And though I still love and honour the fullest knowledge, (and am not of Dr. Collet's mind, who, as Erasmus saith, most slighted Augustine,) yet I less censure even that Carthage council which forbade the reading of the heathens' books of learning and arts, than formerly I have done. And I would have men savour most that learning in their health, which they will, or should, savour most in sickness, and near to death.

3. And, alas! how dear a vanity is this knowledge! That which is but theoretic and notional, is but a tickling delectation of the fancy or mind, little differing from a pleasant dream. But how many hours, what gazing of the wearied eye, what stretching thoughts of the impatient brain, must it cost us, if we will attain to any excellency? Well saith Solomon, "Much reading is a weariness to the flesh, and he that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow." How many hundred studious days and weeks, and how many hard and tearing thoughts, hath my little, very little knowledge cost me; and how much infirmity and painfulness to my flesh, increase of painful diseases, and loss of bodily ease and health! How much pleasure to myself of other kinds, and how much acceptance with men, have I lost by it, which I might easily have had in a more conversant and plausible way of life! And when all is done, if I reach to know any more than others of my place and order, I must differ so much (usually) from them; and if I manifest not that difference, but keep all that knowledge to myself, I sin against conscience and nature itself. The love of man, and the love of truth, oblige me to be soberly communicative. Were I so indifferent to truth and knowledge, as easily to forbear their propagation, I must also be so indifferent to them, as not to think them worth so dear a price as they have cost me (though they are the free gifts of God.) As nature is universally inclined to the propagation of the kind by generation, so is the intellectual nature to the communication of knowledge, which yet hath its lust and inordinacy in proud, ignorant, hasty teachers and disputers, as the generating faculty hath in fornicators and adulterers.

But if I obey nature and conscience in communicating that knowledge which containeth my difference aforesaid, the dissenters too often take themselves disparaged by it, how peaceably soever I manage it: and as bad men take the piety of the godly to be an accusation of their impiety, so many teachers take themselves to be accused of ignorance, by such as condemn their errors by the light of truth; and if you meddle not with any person, yet take they their opinions to be so much their interest, as that all that is said against them they take as said against themselves. And then, alas! what envyings, what whispering disparagements, and what backbitings, if not malicious slanders and underminings, do we meet with from the carnal clergy! And oh that it were all from them alone! and that among the zealous and suffering party of faithful preachers, there were not much of such iniquity, and that none of them preached Christ in strife and envy! It is sad that error should find so much shelter under the selfishness and pride of pious men, and that the friends of truth should be tempted to reject and

abuse so much of it in their ignorance, as they do: but the matter of fact is too evident to be hid.

But, especially, if we meet with a clergy that are high, and have a great deal of worldly interest at the stake; or, if they be in councils and synods, and have got the major vote; they too easily believe that either their grandeur, reverence, names, or numbers, must give them the reputation of being orthodox, and in the right, and will warrant them to account and defame him as erroneous, heretical, schismatical, singular, factious, or proud, that presumeth to contradict them, and to know more than they. Of which not only the case of Nazianzen, Martyn, Chrysostom, are sad proofs, but also the proceedings of too many general and provincial councils. And so our hard studies and darling truth must make us as owls, or reproached persons, among those reverend brethren, who are ignorant at easier rates, and who find it a far softer kind of life to think and say as the most or best-esteemed do, than to purchase reproach and obloquy so dearly.

And the religious people of the several parts will say as they hear their teachers do, and be the militant followers of their too militant leaders: and it will be their house talk, their shop talk, their street talk, if not their church talk, that such a one is an erroneous, dangerous man, because he is not as ignorant and erroneous as they, especially if they be the followers of a teacher much exasperated by confutation, and engaged in the controversy: and also if it should be suffering confessors that are contradicted, or men most highly esteemed for extraordinary degrees of piety; then, what cruel censures must he expect, who never so tenderly would suppress their errors!

Oh! what sad instances of this are, 1. The case of the confessors in Cyprian's days, who, as many of his epistles show, became the great disturbers of that church. 2. And the Egyptian monks at Alexandria, in the days of Theophilus, who turned anthropomorphites, and raised abominable tumults, with woeful scandal and odious bloodshed. 3. And oh that this age had not yet greater instances to prove the matter than any of these!

And, now, should a man be loth to die, for fear of leaving such troublesome, costly learning and knowledge, as the wisest men can here attain?

4. But the chief answer is yet behind. No knowledge is lost, but perfected, and changed for much nobler, sweeter, greater knowledge. Let men be never so uncertain in particular *de modo*, whether acquired habits of intellect and memory die with us, as being dependent on the body; yet, by what manner soever, that a far clearer knowledge we shall have than is here attainable, is not to be doubted of. And the cessation of our present mode of knowing, is but the cessation of our ignorance and imperfection; as our wakening endeth a dreaming knowledge, and our maturity endeth the trifling knowledge of a child: for so saith the Holy Ghost, 1 Cor. xiii. 8—12, "Love never faileth (and we can love no more than we know): but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail (that is, cease); whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, (notional and abstractive, such as we have now,) it shall vanish away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass *(per species)* darkly, (as men understand a thing by a metaphor, parable, or riddle,) but then face to face;" even creatures intuitively, as in themselves naked and open to our sight. "Now I know in part;" (not *rem sed aliquid rei;* in which sense Sanchez truly saith, *Nihil scitur;*) "but then I shall know even as I am known:" not as God knoweth us; for our knowledge and his must not be so comparatively likened; but as holy spirits know us both now and for ever, we shall both know and be known by immediate intuition.

If a physician be to describe the parts of man, and the latent diseases of his patient, he is fain to search hard, and bestow many thoughts of it, besides his long reading and converse, to make him capable of knowing: and when all is done, he goeth much upon conjectures, and his knowledge is mixed with many uncertainties, yea, and mistakes; but when he openeth the corpse, he seeth all, and his knowledge is more full, more true, and more certain; besides that, it is easily and quickly attained, even by a present look. A countryman knoweth the town, the fields, and rivers, where he dwelleth, yea, and the plants and animals, with ease and certain clearness, when he that must know the same things by the study of geographical writings and tables, must know them but with a general, an unsatisfactory, and oft a much mistaking kind of knowledge. Alas! when our present knowledge hath cost a man the study of forty, or fifty, or sixty years, how lean and poor, how doubtful and unsatisfactory, is it after all! But when God will show us himself, and all things, and when heaven is known as the sun by its own light, this will be the clear, sure, and satisfactory knowledge: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God," Matt. v. "And without holiness none can see him," Heb. xii. 14. This sight will be worthy the name of wisdom, when our present glimpse is but philosophy, a love and desire of wisdom. So far should we be from fearing death, through the fear of losing our knowledge, or any of the means of knowledge, that it should make us rather long for the world of glorious light, that we might get out of this darkness, and know all that with an easy look, to our joy and satisfaction, which here we know with troublesome doubtings, or not at all. Shall we be afraid of darkness in the heavenly light, or of ignorance, when we see the Lord of glory?

Sect. 6. And as for the loss of sermons, books, and other means, surely it is no loss to cease the means when we have attained the end. Cannot we spare our winter clothes, as troublesome, in the heat of summer, and sit by the hot fire without our gloves? Cannot we sit at home without a horse or coach, or set them by at our journey's end? Cannot we lie in bed without boots and spurs? Is it grievous to us to cease our physic when we are well. Even here, he is happier that hath least of the creature, and needeth least, than he that hath much and needeth much; because all creature commodities and helps have also their discommodities and troublesomeness; and the very applying and using so many remedies of our want is tedious of itself: and as God only needeth nothing, but is self-sufficient, and therefore only perfectly and essentially happy, so those are likest God that need least from without, and have the greatest plenitude of internal goodness. What need we to preach, hear, read, pray, to bring us to heaven, when we are there?

Sect. 7. And as for our friends, and our converse with them, as relations, or as wise, religious, and faithful to us, he that believeth not that there are far more, and far better, in heaven, than on earth, doth not believe, as he ought, that there is a heaven. Our friends here are wise, but they are unwise also; they are faithful, but partly unfaithful; they are holy, but also, alas! too sinful; they have the image of God, but blotted and dishonoured by their faults; they do God and his church much service, but they also do too much against him, and too much for

Satan, even when they intend the honour of God; they promote the gospel, but they also hinder it: their weakness, ignorance, error, selfishness, pride, passion, division, contention, scandals, and remissness, do oft so much hurt, that it is hard to discern, whether it be not greater than their good to the church, or to their neighbours. Our friends are our helpers and comforters; but how oft also are they our hinderers, troubles, and grief! But in heaven they are altogether wise, and holy, and faithful, and concordant, and have nothing in them, nor there done by them, but what is amiable to God and man.

And, with our faithful friends, we have here a mixture, partly of useless and burdensome persons, and partly of unfaithful hypocrites, and partly of self-conceited, factious wranglers, and partly of malicious, envious underminers, and partly of implacable enemies; and how many of all these, set together, is there for one worthy, faithful friend! And how great a number is there to trouble you, for one that will indeed comfort you! But in heaven there are none but the wise and holy; no hypocrites, no burdensome neighbours, no treacherous, or oppressing, or persecuting enemies are there. And is not all good and amiable better than a little good, with so troublesome a mixture of noisome evils?

Christ loved his disciples, his kindred, yea, and all mankind, and took pleasure in doing good to all, and so did his apostles; but how poor a requital had he or they from any but from God! Christ's own brethren believed not in him, but wrangled with him, almost like those that said to him on the cross, "If thou be the Son of God, come down, and we will believe." Peter himself was once a Satan to him, (Matt. xvi.) and after, with cursing and swearing, denied him; and all his disciples forsook him, and fled; and what, then, from others could be expected?

No friends have a perfect suitableness to each other; and roughness and inequalities that are nearest us are most troublesome. The wonderful variety and contrariety of apprehensions, interest, educations, temperaments, and occasions, and temptations, &c. are such, that while we are scandalized at the discord and confusions of the world, we must recall ourselves, and admire that all-ruling providence, which keepeth up so much order and concord as there is: we are, indeed, like people in crowded streets, who, going several ways, molest each other with their jostling oppositions; or, like boys at football, striving to overthrow each other for the ball; but it is a wonder of divine power and wisdom, that all the world is not continually in mortal war.

If I do men no harm, yet if I do but cross their wills, it goeth for a provoking injury; and when there are as many wills as persons, who is it that can please them all? Who hath money enough to please all the poor that need it, or the covetous that desire it? Or, who can live with displeased men, and not feel some of the fruits of their displeasure? What day goeth over my head, in which abundance desire not, or expect not, impossibilities from me? And how great is the number of them that expect unrighteous things! By nothing do I displease so many, as by not displeasing God and my conscience; and for nothing am I so deeply accused of sin as for not sinning. And the world will not think well of any thing that crosseth their opinion and carnal interest, be it never so conform to God's commands. I must confess, that while I suffer from all sides, few men have more common and open praises from their persecutors, than I; but while they praise me in general, and for other particulars, they aggravate my nonconformity to their opinions and wills, and take me to be so much the more hurtful to them. The greatest crimes that have been charged on me, have been for the things which I thought to be my greatest duties; and for those parts of my obedience, to my conscience and God, which cost me dearest; and where I pleased my flesh least, I pleased the world least. At how cheap a rate to my flesh could I have got the applause of factious men, if that had been my end and business! Would I have conformed to their wills, and taken a bishopric, and the honours and riches of the world, how good a man had I been called by the diocesan party! And oh, what praise I should have with the papists, could I turn papist! and all the backbitings and bitter censures of the antinomians, anabaptists, and separatists, had been turned into praise, could I have said as they, or not contradicted them; but otherwise there is no escaping their accusations. And is this tumultuous, militant, yea, malignant world, a place that I should be loth to leave?

Alas! our darkness, and weakness, and passions are such, that it is hard for a family, or a few faithful friends, to live so evenly in the exercise of love, as not to have oft unpleasant jars. What, then, is to be expected from strangers, and from enemies? Ten thousand persons will judge of abundance of my words and actions, who never knew the reasons of them. Every one's conceptions are as the report and conveyance of the matter to them is; and while they have a various light, and false report, (and defectiveness will make them false,) what can be expected, but false, injurious censures?

Sect. 8. And though no outward thing on earth is more precious than the holy word, and worship, and ordinances of God, yet even here I see that which pointeth me up higher, and telleth me it is much better to be with Christ. 1. Shall I love the name of heaven better than heaven itself? The holy Scriptures are precious, because I have there the promise of glory; but is not the possession better than the promise? If a light and guide thither through this wilderness be good, surely the end must needs be better. And it hath pleased God, that all things on earth, and therefore, even the sacred Scriptures, should bear the marks of our state of imperfection: imperfect persons were the penmen; and imperfect human language is the conveying, signal, organical part of the matter; and the method and phrase (though true and blameless) are far short of the heavenly perfection. Else so many commentators had not found so hard a task of it to expound innumerable difficulties, and reconcile so many seeming contradictions; nor would infidels find matter of so strong temptation, and so much cavil as they do; nor would Peter have told us of the difficulties of Paul's epistles, and such occasions of men's wresting them to their own destruction. Heaven will not be made, to perfect spirits, the occasion of so many errors, and controversies, and quarrels as the Scriptures are to us imperfect men on earth; yea, heaven is the more desirable, because there I shall better understand the Scriptures, than here I can ever hope to do. All the hard passages, now misunderstood, will be there made plain, and all the seeming contradictions reconciled; and, which is much more, that God, that Christ, that new Jerusalem, that glory, and that felicity of souls, which are now known but darkly and enigmatically in the glass, will then be known intuitively as we see the face itself, whose image only the glass first showed us. To leave my Bible, and go to the God and the heaven that is revealed, will be no otherwise a loss to me, than to lay by my crutches, or spectacles, when I need them not, or to leave his image for the presence of my friend.

2. Much less do I need to fear the loss of all other books, or sermons, or other verbal informations. Much reading hath oft been a weariness to my flesh; and the pleasure of my mind is much abated by the great imperfection of the means. Many books must be partly read, that I may know that they are scarce worth the reading; and many must be read, to enable us to satisfy other men's expectations, and to confute those who abuse the authority of the authors against the truth: and many good books must be read, that have little to add to what we have read in many others before; and many that are blotted with insnaring errors; which, if we detect not, we leave snares for such as see them not; and if we detect them, (never so tenderly, if truly,) we are taken to be injurious to the honour of the learned, godly authors, and proudly to overvalue our own conceits. And so lamentable is the case of all mankind, by the imperfections of human language, that those words which are invented for communication of conceptions, are so little fitted to their use, as rather to occasion misunderstanding and contentions; there being scarce a word that hath not many significations, and that needeth not many more words to bring us to the true notice of the speaker's mind: and when every word is a *signum*, that hath three relations, 1. To the matter spoken of; 2. To the mind of the speaker, as signifying his conceptions of that matter; 3. And to the mind of the hearer, or reader, which is to be informed by it; it is so hard to find and use words that are fitted indeed to all these uses, and to have store of such, and mix no other, that few, if any, in the world were ever so happy as to attain it. 1. And if words be not fitted to the matter or things, they are false as to their first and proper use; and yet the penury of apt words, and the redundancy of others, and the authority of the masters of sciences, imposing arbitrary terms and notions on their disciples, and the custom of the vulgar, who have the empire, as to the sense of words, have all conspired to make words inept, and of very uncertain signification. So that when students have learned words by long and hard studies, they are oft little the nearer the true knowledge of the things; and too oft, by their ineptitude, misled to false conceptions. And so their saying is too often true, that a great book is a great evil, while it containeth so great a number of uncertain words, which become the matter of great contentions.

2. And when the mind of the speaker or writer is no better informed by such notions, but his conceptions of things are some false, some confused and undigested, what wonder if his words do no otherwise express his mind to others, when even men of clearest understanding find it difficult to have words still ready to communicate their conceptions with truth and clearness. To form true sentiments of things into apt, significant words, is a matter of mere art, and requireth an apt teacher, and a serious learner, and long use (and too many take their art of speaking, in prayer, conference, or preaching, to have more in it of wisdom and piety, than it hath; and some too much condemn the unaccustomed that want it).

3. And if we could fit our words well to the matter, and to our minds, (with that double verity,) yet still it is hard to fit them to the reader or hearer; for want of which they are lost as to him; and his information being our end, they are therefore so far lost to us. And that which is spoken most congruously to the matter, is seldom fitted to the capacity of the receiver. And *recipitur ad modum recipientis, et pro captu lectoris*, &c. Some readers or hearers (yea, almost all) are so used to unapt words and notions, obtruded on mankind, by the master of words, that they cannot understand us if we change their terms and offer them fitter, and yet least understand those which they think that they best understand; and all men must have long time to learn the art of words, before they can understand them, as well as before they can readily use them. And the duller any man is, and of less understanding, the more words are necessary to make him understand; and yet his memory is the less capable of retaining many. This is our difficulty, not only in catechising, but in all our writings and teaching: a short catechism, or a short style, the ignorant understand not; and a long one they remember not. And he that will accommodate one judicious reader or hearer, with profound matter, or an accurate style, must incommodate multitudes that are uncapable of it; and, therefore, such must be content with few approvers, and leave the applause of the multitude to the more popular, unless he be one that can seasonably suit himself to both.

A man that resolveth not to be deceived by ambiguous words, and maketh it his first work, in all his readings and disputings, to difference between words, and sense, and things, and strictly to examine each disputed term, till the speaker's meaning be distinctly known, will see the lamentable case of the church, and all mankind, and what shadows of knowledge deceive the world, and in what useless dreams the greatest part of men, yea, of learned men, do spend their days: much of that which some men unweariedly study, and take to be the honour of their understandings and their lives, and much of that which multitudes place their piety and hopes of salvation in, being a mere game at words, and useless notions; and as truly to be called vanity and vexation, as is the rest of the vain show that most men walk in. My sad and bitter thoughts of the heathen, infidel, Mahometan world, and of the common corruptions of rulers and teachers, cities and countries, senates and councils, I will not here open to others, lest they offend; nor cry out as Seneca, *Omnes mali sumus*, or *Stultorum plena sunt omnia*, nor describe the furious spirits of the clergy, and their ignorance, and unrighteous calumnies and schisms, as Gregory Nazianzen and others do, nor voluminously lament the seeming hopeless case of earth, by the boldness, blindness, and fury of men; but make use of such sad considerations, to loosen my love from such a world, and make me willing to be with Christ.

Sect. 9. And if other men's words and writings are blemished with so much imperfection, why should I think that my own are blameless? I must for ever be thankful for the holy instructions and writings of others, notwithstanding human frailty, and contentious men's abuse of words: and so I must be thankful that God hath made any use of my own, for the good of souls, and his church's edification. But with how many allays are such comforts here mixed! We are not the teachers of a well-ruled school, where learners are ranked into several forms, that every one may have the teaching which is agreeable to his capacity; but we must set open the door to all that will crowd in, and publish our writings to all sorts of readers: and there being as various degrees of capacity as there are men and women, and consequently great variety and contrariety of apprehensions, it is easy *ab antecedente* to know what various reception we must expect: we cast out our doctrine almost as a foot-ball is turned out among boys in the street, in some congregations; few understand it, but every one censureth it. Few come as learners, or teachable disciples, but most come to sit as judges on their teacher's words; and yet have not either the skill, or the patience, or the diligence, which is

necessary in a just trial, to a righteous judgment. But as our words agree or disagree with the former conceptions of every hearer, so are they judged to be wise or foolish, sound or unsound, true or false, fit or unfit. Few sermons that I preach, but one extolleth them, and wisheth they were printed, and another accuseth them of some heinous fault: some men are pleased with clearness and accurateness of doctrine; and others account it too high, and say we shoot over the hearers' heads, and like nothing but the fervent application of what they knew before. Most hearers are displeased with that which they most need: if they err, they reproach that doctrine as erroneous that would cure them: if they are guilty of any prevailing distemper and sin, they take that application to be injurious to them, which would convince them, and save them from that guilt. Most are much pleased with plain and zealous reproof of sin; but it must be other men's sins, and not their own. The poor love to hear of the evil of oppression and unmercifulness, of pride, fulness, and idleness, and all the sins of the rich: subjects love to hear of their rulers' faults, and say, Oh this man is no flatterer; he dares tell the greatest of their sins: but if they hear of their own, they take it for an injury. Rulers like a sermon for submission and obedience; but how few love to hear of the evil of injustice and oppression, or pride and sensuality, or to read Luke xvi. or xii. or James v.; to hear of the necessity of holiness, justice, and temperance, and of death, and judgment, and the life to come! Every sectary and dogmatist delighteth to have his own opinion cried up, and his party praised as the chiefest saints: but all that tendeth to the praise of those that he dissenteth from, and accounteth adversaries to the truth, is distasteful to him, as a complying with iniquity, and a strengthening of the enemies of Christ: and all that uncharitableness which he expecteth from us against others, is as much expected by others against him, and such as he.

This day, while I am writing these words, my pockets are full of letters sent me, on one side importunately charging it on me as my duty to conform, (to the oaths, declarations, covenants, and practices, now imposed,) or else to give over preaching (which would please them); and on the other side vehemently censuring me as guilty of grievous sin, for declaring my judgment for so much of conformity as I have done; and charging me by predictions as guilty of the sufferings of all that are otherwise minded, for communicating in the sacrament, and the common prayers of the church; and others in the mid-way, persuading me equally to bear my testimony against unjust separation and persecution, and to endeavour still, if possible, to save a self-destroying people from the tearing fury of these two extremes. And how should I answer these contrary expectations, or escape the censures of such expectants?

And it hath pleased God, who thirty years and more hath tried me by human applause, of late in this city, (where multitudes of persons of contrary minds are, like passengers in crowded streets, still jostling and offending one another,) to exercise me with men's daily backbitings and cavils: and so many have chosen me for the subject of their discourse, that I may say as Paul, 1 Cor. iv. 9, 10, &c. "We are made a spectacle (or theatre) to the world, and to angels, and to men: we are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ," &c. Did I not live out of the noise in retirement, taken up with pain, and expectations of my change, what an annoyance to me would it be to hear religious persons, that have a God, a Christ, a heaven, to talk of, to abuse their time and tongues in so much talking of one so inconsiderable, and that hath so little to do with them, or they with him; while with some overvaluing me, and others still quarrelling, I am the matter of their idle, sinful talk. The persecutors, for divers years after, first silencing, (if not still,) and the separatists for two or three years last past, have been possessed with so strange a jealousy and quarrelsome a disposition against me, that they seem to take it for their interest to promote my defamation, and for much of their work to search what may afford them any matter of accusation in every sermon that I preach, and every book that I write. And though the fury of the persecutors be such as maketh them much uncapable of such converse and sober consideration as is needful to their true information and satisfaction; yet most of the more religious cavillers are satisfied as soon as I have spoken with them, and all endeth in a *putarem* or *non putarem:* for want of accurateness and patience, they judge rashly before they understand, and when they understand, confess their error; and yet many go on and take no warning after many times conviction of their mistake. Even in books that are still before their eyes (as well as in transient words and sermons) they heedlessly leave out, or put in, or alter and misreport plain words, and, with confidence, affirm those things to have been said that never were said, but, perhaps, the contrary. And when all people will judge of the good or evil of our words, as they think we have reason to use them or forbear them, how can we satisfy men that are out of our hearing, and to whom we cannot tell our reasons? Most men are of private, narrow observation, and judge of the good or hurt that our words do by those that they themselves converse with: and when I convince them that my decisions of many questions (which they are offended at) are true, they say, it is an unseasonable and a hurtful truth: and when I have called them to look further abroad in the world, and told them my reasons; they say, Had these been all set down, men would have been satisfied. And on how hard terms do we instruct such persons, whose narrow understandings cannot know obvious reasons of what we say till they are particularly told them! And so to tell men the reasons of all that such can quarrel with, will make every book to swell with commentaries to such a bigness as they can neither buy nor read: and they come not to us to know our reasons; nor have we leisure to open them to every single person: and thus suspicious men, when their understandings want the humbling acquaintance with their ignorance, and their consciences that tenderness which should restrain them from rash judging, go on to accuse such needful truths of which they know not the use and reason. And what man living hath the leisure and opportunity to acquaint all the ignorant persons in city and country with all the reasons of all that he shall say, write, or do? Or who, that writeth not a page instead of a sentence, can so write that every unprepared reader shall understand him? and what hopes hath that tutor or schoolmaster of preserving his reputation, who shall be accounted erroneous, and accused of unsound or injurious doctrine, by every scholar that understandeth not his words, and all the reasons of them?

But God in great mercy to me hath made this my lot, (not causing, but permitting, the sins of the contentious,) that I might before death be better weaned from all below: had my temptations from inordinate applause had no allay, they might have been more dangerously strong. Even yet, while church dividers, on both extremes, do make me the object of their

daily obloquy, the continued respects of the sober and peaceable are so great, as to be a temptation strong enough, to so weak a person, to give a check to my desires to leave the world. It is long since riches and worldly honour appeared to me as they are, as not rendering the world much lovely or desirable. But the love and concord of religious persons hath a more amiable aspect; there is so much holiness in these, that I was loth to eall them vanity and vexation: but yet as flesh and blood would refer them to selfish ends, and any way value them as a carnal interest, I must so call them, and number them with the things that are loss and dung, Phil. iii. 7, 8. Selfishness can serve itself upon things good and holy: and if good men, and good books, and good sermons, would make the world seem overlovely to us, it will be a mercy of God to abate the temptation: and if my soul, looking toward the heavenly Jerusalem, be hindered as Paul was in his journey to Jerusalem, Acts xx. xxi. by the love of ancient friends and hearers, I must say, What mean you to weep and break my heart? I am ready to leave the dearest friends on earth, and life, and all the pleasures of life, for the presence of far better friends with Christ, and the sweeter pleasures of a better life. That little amiableness which is in things below, is in godly men as life in the heart, which dieth last: when that is all gone, when we are dead to the love of the godly themselves, and to learning, books, and mediate ordinances, so far as they serve a selfish interest, and tempt down our hearts from heavenly aspirings, the world is then crucified to us, indeed, and we to it. I rejoice to tread in the footsteps of my Lord, who had some, indeed, weeping about his cross, but was forsaken by all his disciples, while in the hour of temptation they all fled! But my desertion is far less, for it is less that I am fit to bear. If God will justify, who shall condemn? If he be for me, who shall be against me? Oh may I not be put to that dreadful case, to cry out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" And may nothing separate me from his love! And then were I forsaken of the sober and peaceable, as I am, in part, of some quarrelsome dividers, how tolerable a trial would it be! Man is as dust in the balance, that addeth little to it, and signifieth nothing when God is in the other end. But I suspect still that I make too much account of man, when this case hath taken up too much of my observation.

Sect. 10. And of all things, surely a departing soul hath least cause to fear the losing of its notice of the affairs of the world; of peace, or wars, or church, or kingdoms. For, 1. If the sun can send forth its material beams, and operate by motion, light, and heat, at such a distance as this earth, why should I think that blessed spirits are such local, confined, and impotent substances, as not to have notice of the things of earth? Had I but bodily eyes, I could see more from the top of a tower or hill, than any one that is below can do. And shall I know less of earth from heaven than I do now? It is unlike that my capacity will be so little; and if it were, it is unlike that Christ and all the angels will be so strange to me, as to give me no notice of things that so much concern my God and my Redeemer, (to whom I am united,) and the holy society of which I am a part, and myself as a member of Christ and that society! I do not think that the communion of the celestial inhabitants is so narrow and slow, as it is of walking clods of earth, and of souls that are confined to such dark lanterns as this body is. Stars can shine one to another, and we on earth can see them so far off in their heaven. And sure then if they have a seeing faculty each of them can see many of us; even the kingdoms of the world. Spirits are most active, and of powerful and quick communication. They need not send letters or write books to one another, nor lift up a voice to make each other hear; nor is there any unkindness, division, or unsociable selfishness among them, which may cause them to conceal their notices or their joys; but as activity, so unity is greatest where there is most perfection; they will so be many, as yet to be one; and their knowledge will be one knowledge, and their love one love, and their joy one joy. Not by so perfect a unity as in God himself, who is one and but one; but such as is suitable to created imperfection, which participate of the perfection of the Creator, as the effect doth of the virtue of the cause, and therefore hath some participation of his unity. (O foolish soul! if I shall fear this unity with God, Christ, and all the holy spirits, lest I should lose my present separate individuation, when perfection and union are so near akin.) In a word, I have no cause to think that my celestial advancement will be a diminution of any desirable knowledge, even of things on earth; but contrarily, that it will be unconceivably increased.

2. But if indeed I shall know less of things below, it will be because that the knowledge of them is a part of vanity and vexation, which hath no place in heaven. So much knowledge of good and evil in lower matters, as came to us by sin, is unworthy of our fond tenaciousness, and fear of losing it. Surely the sad tidings which we have weekly in our newsbooks, our lamentable notices of heathen and infidel kingdoms; of the overspreading prevalency of barbarousness, idolatry, ignorance, and infidelity; of the rage and success of cruel tyrants; of the bloody wars of proud, unquiet, worldly men; of the misery of the oppressed, desolate countries, the dissipated churches, the persecuted, innocent christians, are no such pleasing things as that we should be afraid to hear of such no more. To know or hear of the poor in famine, the rich in folly, the church distracted, the kingdom discontented, the godly scandalous by the effects of their errors, imperfections, and divisions; the wicked outrageous, and waxing worse; the falseness, or miscarriages, or sufferings of friends, the fury or success of enemies: is this an intelligence which I cannot spare? What is the daily tidings that I hear, but of bloody wars, the undone countries, the persecuted churches, the silenced, banished, or imprisoned preachers; of the best removed in judgment from an unworthy world by death, and worse succeeding in their rooms; of the renewed designs and endeavours of the church's enemies, the implacable rage of the worldly and unquiet clergy, and the new divisions of self-conceited sectaries, and the obloquy and backbitings of each party against the other? How oft hear I the sad tidings of this friend's sickness or death, and that friend's discontent, and of another's fall, and of many, very many's sufferings! My ears are daily filled with the cries of the poor, whom I cannot relieve; with the endless complaints of fearful, melancholy, despairing persons; with the wranglings of the ignorant and proud professors, and contentious divines, who censure most boldly where they are most erroneous or dark; or with the troublesome discontents of those that I converse with: and should I be afraid of the ending of so sad a tragedy, or of awaking out of such an unpleasant dream? Have I not many times thought of the privilege of the deaf, that hear not these troublesome and provoking things; and of the blind, that see not the vanities and temptations of this world. It is one part of the benefit of solitude, or a private life and habitation, to free me from many

of these unpleasing objects; and a great part of the benefit of sleep, that with my clothes I may lay by these troublesome thoughts.

Sect. 11. But other men tell me, the church cannot yet spare you; there is yet this and that necessary work to be done; there is this and that need, &c.

But, 1. Is it we or God that must choose his servants, and cut out their work? Whose work am I doing? Is it my own or his? If his, is it not he that must tell me what, and when, and how long? And will not his will and choice be best? If I believe not this, how do I take him for my God? Doth God or I know better what he hath yet to do? and who is fittest to do it? The church's service and benefits must be measured out by our Master and Benefactor, and not by ourselves.

2. What am I to those more excellent persons whom, in all ages, he hath taken out of the world? And would men's thoughts of the church's needs detain them? The poor heathen, infidel, Mahometan nations have no preachers of the gospel. And if their need prove not that God will send them such, no country's need will prove that God will continue them such. Many more useful servants of Christ have died in their youth: John Janeway preached but one sermon; Joseph Allen (and many other excellent men) died in the midst of his vigorous, successful labours; both of them far more fit for God's work, and likely to win souls, and glorify God, than I am, or ever was, however their greater light was partly kindled from my lesser. Yet did both these, under painful, consuming languishings of the flesh, die as they had long lived, in the lively triumphant praises of their Redeemer, and joyful desires and hopes of glory. And shall I, at seventy-six years of age, after such a life of unspeakable mercies, and almost fifty-three years of comfortable help in the service of my Lord, be now afraid of my reward, and shrink at the sentence of death, and still be desiring to stay here, upon pretence of further service? We know not what is best for the church as God doth; the church and the world are not ours but his; not our desires, but his will must measure out its mercies. We are not so merciful as he is. It is not unmect for us to desire many things which God will not give, nor seeth it meet to grant the particulars of such desires. Nothing ever lay so heavy on my heart, as the sin and misery of mankind, and to think how much of the world lieth in folly and wickedness! And for what can I pray so heartily as for the world's recovery? and it is his will that I should show a holy universal love by praying, "Let thy name be hallowed, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven;" and yet, alas, how unlike is earth to heaven, and what ignorance, sin, confusions, and cruelties here reign and prosper! And unless there be a wonderful change to be expected, even as by a general miracle, how little hope appeareth that ever these prayers should be granted in the things! It maketh us better to desire that others may be better; but God is the free disposer of his own gifts: and it seemeth to be his will, that the permitted ignorance and confusions of this world should help us the more to value and desire that world of light, love, and order, which he calleth us to prefer and hope for.

And if I am any way useful to the world, it is undeserved mercy that hath made me so, for which I must be thankful; but how long I shall be so, is not my business to determine, but my Lord's. My many sweet and beautiful flowers arise and appear in their beauty and sweetness but for one summer's time, and they murmur not that they flourish for so short a space. The beasts, and birds, and fishes, which I feed on, do live till I will have them die: and as God will be served and pleased by wonderful variety at once of animals and vegetables, &c. so will he by many successive generations. If one flower fall or die, it sufficeth that others shall, summer after summer, arise from the same root: and if my pears, apples, plums, &c. fall or serve me when they are ripe, it sufficeth that not they, but others, the next year, shall do the same. God will have other generations to succeed us. Let us thank him that we have had our time: and could we overcome the grand (too little observed) crime of selfishness, and could love others as ourselves, and God as God, above all the world, it would comfort us at death, that others shall survive us, and the world shall continue, and God will be still God, and be glorified in his works; and love will say, I shall live in my successors, and I shall more than live in the life of the world, and yet most of all in the eternal life and glory of God.

And God, who made us not gods, but poor creatures, as it pleased him, doth know best our measures; and he will not try us with too long a life of temptations, lest we should grow too familiar where we should be strangers, and utterly strangers to our home. No wonder if that world was ready for a deluge, by a deluge of sin, in which men lived to six, seven, eight, and nine hundred years of age. Had our great sensualists any hope of so long a life, they would be more like incarnate devils, and there would be no dwelling near them for the holy seed. If angels were among them, they would, like the Sodomites, seek furiously to abuse them.

Nor will God tire us out with too long a life of earthly sufferings. We think short cares, and fears, and sorrows, persecutions, sickness, and crosses to be long, and shall we grudge at the wisdom and love which shorteneth them? Yea, though holy duty itself be excellent and sweet, yet the weakness of the flesh maketh us liable to weariness, and abateth the willingness of the spirit; and our wise and merciful God will not make our warfare, or our race, too long, lest we be wearied and faint, and fall short of the prize. By our weariness, and complaints, and fears, and groans, one would think that we thought this life too long; and yet when we should yield to the call of God, we draw back as if we would have it everlasting.

Sect. 12. Willingly submit, then, O my soul. It is not thou, but this flesh, that must be dissolved; this troublesome, vile, and corruptible flesh. It is but the other half of thy meat and drink, which thy presence kept longer uncorrupted, going after the excremental part. Thou diest not when man (the *compositum*) dieth, by thy departure. And as thou livest not to thyself, thou diest not to thyself; whether I live or die, I am the Lord's: he that set up the candle, knoweth how long he hath use for the light of it. Study thy duty, and work while it is day, and let God choose thy time, and willingly stand to his disposal. The gospel dieth not when I die. The church dieth not. The praises of God die not. The world dieth not, and perhaps it shall grow better, and those prayers shall be answered which seemed lost. Yea, and it may be some of the seed that I have sown, shall spring up to some benefit of the dark, unpeaceable world when I am dead. And is not this much of the end of life? And is not that life good which attaineth its end? If my end was to do good and glorify God, if good be done, and God glorified when I am dead, yea, though I were annihilated, is not my end attained? Feign not thyself to be God, whose interest (that is, the pleasing of

his will) is the end of all things, and whose will is the measure of all created good. Feign not thyself to be all the world: God hath not lost his work; the world is not dissolved when I am dissolved. Oh, how strong and unreasonable a disease is this inordinate *selfishness!* Is not God's will infinitely better than mine, and fitter to be fulfilled? Choose the fulfilling of his will, and thou shalt always have thy choice. If a man be well that can always have his will, let this always be thy will, that God's will may be done, and thou shalt always have it.

Lord, let thy servant depart in peace; even in thy peace, which passeth understanding, and which Christ, the Prince of peace, doth give, and nothing in the world can take away. Oh, give me that peace which beseemeth a soul, which is so near the harbour, even the world of endless peace and love, where perfect union (such as I am capable of) will free me from all the sins and troubles which are caused by the convulsions, divulsions, and confusions of this divided, selfish world. Call home this soul by the encouraging voice of love, that it may joyfully hear, and say, It is my Father's voice. Invite it to thee by the heavenly messenger. Attract it by the tokens and the foretastes of love. The messengers that invited me to the feast of grace, compelled me to come in without constraint; thy effectual call did make me willing. And is not glory better than preparing grace? Shall I not come more willingly to the celestial feast? What was thy grace for, but to make me willing of glory, and the way to it? Why didst thou dart down thy beams of love, but to make me love thee, and to call me up to the everlasting centre? Was not the feast of grace as a sacrament of the feast of glory? Did I not take it in remembrance of my Lord until he come? Did not he that told me, "All things are ready," tell me also that "he is gone to prepare a place for us?" and it is his will that we shall be with him, and see his glory. They that are given him, and drawn to him by the Father on earth, do come to Christ. Give, now, and draw my departing soul to my glorified Head; and, as I have glorified thee on earth, in the measure that thy grace hath prevailed in me, pardon the sins by which I have offended thee, and glorify me in the beholding and participation of the glory of my Redeemer. Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly, with fuller life, and light, and love, into this too dead, and dark, and disaffected soul, that it may come with joyful willingness unto thee.

Sect. 13. Willingly depart, O lingering soul! It is from a Sodom, though in it there be righteous Lots, who yet are not without their woeful blemishes! Hast thou so oft groaned for the general blindness and wickedness of the world, and art thou loth to leave it for a better? How oft wouldst thou have rejoiced to have seen but the dawning of a day of universal peace and reformation? And wouldst thou not see it where it shineth forth in fullest glory? Would a light at midnight have pleased thee so well? Hast thou prayed and laboured for it so hard? And wouldst thou not see the sun? Will the things of heaven please thee no where but on earth, where they come in the least and weakest influences, and are terminated in gross, terrene, obscure, and unkind recipients? Away, away! the vindictive flames are ready to consume this sinful world! Sinners that blindly rage in sin must quickly rage in the effects of sin and of God's justice. The pangs of lust prepared for these pangs! They are treasuring up wrath against this day. Look not, then, behind thee. Away from this unhappy world! Press on unto the mark, Phil. iii. "Looking towards, and hastening to the coming of the day of God," 2 Pet. iii. 10—12.

As this world hath used thee, it would use thee still, and it will use others. If thou hast sped well in it, no thanks to it, but unto God. If thou hast had manifold deliverances, and marvellous preservations, and hast been fed with angels' food, love not this wilderness for it, but God and his angel, which was thy guide, protector, and deliverer.

And hath this troublesome flesh been so comfortable a companion to thee, that thou shouldst be so loth to leave it? Have thy pains, thy weariness, thy languishings, thy labours, thy cares and fears about this body, been pleasing to thee? And art thou loth that they should have an end? Didst thou not find a need of patience to undergo them? and of greater patience than mere nature gave thee? And canst thou hope now for better when nature faileth, and that an aged, consumed, more diseased body, should be a pleasanter habitation to thee than it was heretofore? If from thy youth up it hath been both a tempting and a troublesome thing to thee, surely, though it be less tempting, it will not be less troubling, when it is falling to the dust, and above ground savoureth of the grave! Had things sensible been never so pleasant in thy youth, and hadst thou glutted thyself in health with that sort of delight, in age thou art to say, by nature, "I have no pleasure in them." Doth God in great mercy make pain and feebleness the harbingers of death, and wilt thou not understand their business? Doth he mercifully, beforehand, take away the pleasure of all fleshly things, and worldly vanities, that there may be nothing to relieve a departing soul, (as the shell breaketh when the bird is hatched, and the womb relaxed when the infant must be born,) and yet we shall stay when nothing holdeth us, and still be loth to come away? Wouldst thou dwell with thy beloved body in the grave, where it will rot and stink in loathsome darkness? If not, why should it now, in its painful languor, seem to thee a more pleasant habitation than the glorious presence of thy Lord? In the grave it will be at rest, and not tormented as now it is, nor wish at night, Oh that it were morning! nor say at morning, When will it be night? And is this a dwelling fit for thy delight? Patience in it, while God will so try thee, is thy duty; but is such patience a better and sweeter life than rest and joy?

Sect. 14. But, alas! how deaf is flesh to reason. Faith hath the reason which easily may shame all contrary reasoning, but sense is unreasonable, and especially this inordinate, tenacious love of present life. I have reason enough to be willing to depart, even much more willing than I am. Oh that I could be as willing as I am convinced that I have reason to be! Could I love God as much as I know that I should love him, then I should desire to depart, and to be with Christ, as much as I know that I should desire it. But God, in nature, hath there laid upon me some necessity of aversation, (though the inordinateness came from sin,) else Christ had not so feared and deprecated the cup. Death must be a penalty, even where it is a gain, and therefore it must meet with some unwillingness: because we willingly sinned, we must unwillingly suffer. The gain is not the pain or dissolution in itself, but the happy consequents of it. All the faith and reason in the world will not make death to be no penalty, and therefore will not take away all unwillingness. No man ever yet reasoned or believed himself into a love of pain and death, as such; but seeing that the gain is unspeakably greater than the pain and loss, faith and holy reason may make our willingness to be greater than our unwillingness, and our hope and joy than our fear and sorrow. And it is the deep

and effectual notice of goodness, which is God's way, in nature and grace, to change and draw the will of man. Come then, my soul, and think, believingly, what is best for thee. And wilt thou not love and desire most that which is certainly the best?

To depart and to be with Christ is far better, or rather to be chosen.

Sect. 1. To say and hear that it is far better to be with Christ, is not enough to make us willing. Words and notions are such instruments as God useth to work on souls, but the convineing, satisfying, powerful light, and the inclining love, are other things. The soul now operateth *ut forma hominis*, on and with the corporeal spirits and organs, and it perceiveth now its own perceptions; but it is a stranger to the mode of its future action, when separated from the body, and can have no formal conception of such conceptions as yet it never had. And therefore, its thoughts of its future state must be analogical and general, and partly strange. But general notices, when certain, may be very powerful, and satisfy us in so much as is needful to our consent, and to such a measure of joy as is suitable to this earthly state. And such notices we have from the nature of the soul, with the nature of God, the course of providence, and government of mankind, the internal and external conflicts which we perceive about men's souls, the testimony and promises of the word of God, the testimony of conscience, with the witness of the sanctifying Spirit of Christ, and in it the earnest and the foretaste of glory, and the beginnings of life eternal here; all which I have before considered.

Sect. 2. The Socinians, who would interpret this of the state of resurrection only, against plain evidence, violate the text: seeing Paul expressly speaketh of his gain by death, which will be his abode with Christ, and this upon his departure hence; which (in 2 Cor. v. 7, 8) he calleth, his being absent from the body, and present with the Lord: and Christ, to the penitent thief, calleth his being with him in paradise: and (Luke xvi.) in the parable of the steward, Christ intimateth to us, that wise preparers, when they go hence, are received into the everlasting habitations; as he there further tells us Lazarus was in Abraham's bosom.

Sect. 3. Goodness is *primaria et mensurans, vel secundaria et mensurata:* the first is God's perfect essence and will; the second is either proper and simple good, or analogical. The former is the creature's conformity to the will of God, or its pleasingness to his will: the latter is, 1. The greater, which is the welfare or perfection of the universe. 2. The lesser, which is the perfection of the several parts of the universe; either, 1. In the nobler respect, as they are parts contributing to the perfection of the whole; or, 2. In the lower respect, as they are perfect or happy in themselves; or, 3. In the lowest respect of all, as they are good to their fellow-creatures which are below themselves.

Sect. 4. Accordingly, it is far better to be with Christ, I. Properly and simply, as it is the fulfilling of God's will. II. Analogically, as it tendeth to the perfection of the universe and the church. III. And as it will be our own good or felicity. IV. And as it will be good to our inferior fellow-creatures; though this last be most questionable, and seemeth not included in the meaning of this text. Somewhat of these in order.

Sect. 5. I. It is an odious effect of idolatrous selfishness, to acknowledge no goodness above our own felicity; and, accordingly, to make the goodness of God to be but formally his usefulness, benevolence, and beneficence, to his creatures, which is by making the creature the ultimate end, and God but the means; to make the creature to be God, and deny God, indeed, while we honour his name; as also it is to acknowledge no higher goodness formally in the creature, than in its own felicity as such: as if neither the pleasing of God's will, nor the perfection of the church and world, were better than we are: we are not of ourselves, and therefore we are not chiefly for ourselves; and, therefore, we have a higher good to love.

That is simply best which God willeth. Therefore, to live here is best whilst I do live here; and to depart is best when the time of my departure cometh: that is best which is, for it is the work of God: the world cannot be better at this instant than it is, nor any thing better, which is of God, because it is as he willeth it to be; but when God hath changed them, it will then be best that they are changed. Were there no other good in my departure hence, but this simple good, the fulfilling of God's will, my reason telleth me that I should be fully satisfied in it: but there is also a subordinate sort of good.

Sect. 6. II. For my change will tend to the perfection of the universe; even that material good or perfection, which is its aptitude for the use to which God hath created, and doth preserve it: as all the parts, the modes, the situation, the motions, of a clock, a watch, or other engine, do to the ends of the artificer. Though God hath not told me particularly, why every thing, and mode, and motion is as it is, I know it is all done in perfect wisdom, and suited to its proper use and end. If the hen or bird knoweth how to make her nest, to lay her eggs secretly together, when and how to sit on them till they are hatched, and how to feed them and preserve them, and when to forsake them, as sufficient for themselves without her help, &c.; if the bee knoweth when, and whence, and how to gather her honey and wax, and how to form the repository combs, and how to lay it up, and all the rest of her marvellous economy; shall I think that God doth he knoweth not what, or what is not absolutely the best? Doth he want either skill, or will, or power?

And should the stone grudge to be hewed, the brick to be burnt, the trees to be cut down, and sawed, and framed, the lead and iron to be melted, &c. when it is but to form a useful edifice, and to adapt and compose every part to the perfecting of the whole?

Shall the waters grudge that they must glide away, and the plants that they must die, and half die every winter, and the fruit and flowers that they must fall, or the moon that it must have its changing motions, or the sun that it must rise and set so oft, &c. when all is but the action and order which maketh up that harmony and perfection which was designed by the Creator, and is pleasing to his will?

Sect. 7. III. But lawful self-love is yet further herein gratified: the goodness expressed in the text is that analogical, subordinate good, which is *mihi bonum*, my own felicity, and that which tendeth thereunto: it is most reasonable to love God best, and that next which is likest him, (if known,) and why should it not be the easiest and the sweetest? But experience findeth it so easy to love ourselves, that certainly, if I firmly believe that it is best for me, I shall desire to depart, and to be with Christ. And have I not reason to believe it?

Sect. 8. The reasons of it I will consider in this order: I. The general reason from the efficients and the means. II. The final reasons. III. The constitutive reasons from the state of my intellect,

and its action and fruition there. IV. The constitutive reasons from the state of my will. V. The constitutive reasons from my practice there, leaving out those which the resurrection will give me, because I am speaking but of my present departure unto Christ.

Sect. 9. And, 1. That is best for me, which love itself, my heavenly Father, designeth, and chooseth, for my good. I hope I shall never dare to think, or say, that he is mistaken, or that he wanted skill or love, or that I could have chosen better for myself than he doth, if he had left all to my choice. Many a time the wise and good will of God hath crossed my foolish, rebellious will on earth; and afterward I have still perceived that it was best, usually for myself, but always for a higher good than mine. It is not an enemy, nor a tyrant, that made me, that hath preserved me, and that calls me hence. He hath not used me as an enemy: the more I have tried him, the better I have found him: had I better obeyed his ruling will, how happy had I been! And is not his disposing and rewarding will as good? Man's work is like man, and evil corrupteth it; but God's work is like God, and uncorrupted: if I should not die till my dearest friend would have it, much more till I myself would choose it, (not constrained by misery,) I should rejoice, and think my life were safe! O foolish, sinful soul! if I take it not to be far better to be at God's choice, than at my own, or any man's! and if I had not rather that he choose the time than I!

Be of good cheer, then, O my soul! it is thy Father's voice that calleth thee hence: his voice that called thee into the world, and bid thee live; that called thee out of a state of sin and death, and bid thee live hereafter unto him; that called thee so oft from the grave, and, forgiving thy sins, renewed thy strength, restored thee to the comforts of his house and service; and that so graciously led thee through this howling wilderness, and brought thee almost to the sight of the promised land. And wilt thou not willingly go, when infinite, fatherly love doth call thee? art thou not desirous of his presence? art thou afraid to go to him who is the only cure of thy fears? What was it but this glory to which he did finally elect thee? Where dost thou read that he elected thee to the riches and honours of this world, or to the pleasures of the flesh? But he elected us in Christ to the heavenly inheritance, Eph. i. 3, 4, &c. Indeed, he elected thee also to bear the cross, and to manifold sufferings here: but is it that which thou preferrest before the crown? That was but as a means unto the kingdom, that thou mightest be conformed to Christ, and reign with him when thou hast suffered with him. If God choose thee to blessedness, refuse it not thyself, nor behave thyself like a refuser.

Sect. 10. 2. And surely that state is my best which my Saviour purchased and promised me as best: as he bought me not with silver and gold, so neither to silver and gold: did he live and die to make me rich or advanced in the world? Surely his incarnation, merits, sacrifice, and intercession, had a low design, if that were all! And who hath more of these than they that have least of Christ? But he purchased us to an incorruptible crown; to an inheritance undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us, that are kept, by God's power, through faith unto salvation, 1 Pet. i. And is it heaven that cost so dear a price for me, and is the end of so wonderful a design of grace, and shall I be unwilling now to receive the gift?

Sect. 11. 3. That sure is best for me, for which God's holy Spirit is preparing me; that for which he is given to believers; and that which is the end of all his holy operations on my soul. But it is not to love this world that he is persuading me from day to day; but to come off from such love, and to set my heart on the things above. Is it to love this life and fleshly interest, this vanity and vexation, or rather to love the invisible perfection, that this blessed Spirit hath done so much to work my heart? And would I now undo all, or cross and frustrate all his operations? Hath grace been so long preparing me for glory, and shall I be loth to take possession of it? If I am not willing, I am not yet sufficiently prepared.

Sect. 12. 4. If heaven be not better for me than earth, God's word and ordinances have been all in vain. Surely that is my best which is the gift of the better covenant, and which is secured to me by so many sealed promises, and which I am directed to by so many sacred precepts, doctrines, and examples; and for which I have been called to hear, and read, and meditate, and pray, and watch so long. Was it the interest of the flesh on earth, or a longer life of worldly prosperity, which the gospel covenant secured to me; which the sacraments and Spirit sealed to me; which the Bible was written to direct me to; which ministers preached to me; which my books were written for; which I prayed for; and for which I served God? Or was it not for his grace on earth, and glory in heaven? And is it not better for me to have the end of all these means, than lose them all, and lose my hopes? Why have I used them, if I would not attain their end?

Sect. 13. 5. That is my best state, which all the course of God's fatherly providences tend to: all his sweeter mercies, and all his sharper corrections, are to make me partaker of his holiness, and to lead me to glory in the way that my Saviour and all his saints have gone before me: all things work together for the best to me, by preparing me for that which is best indeed. Both calms and storms are to bring me to this harbour: if I take them but for themselves, and this present life, I mistake them, and understand them not, but unthankfully vilify them, and lose their end, and life, and sweetness: every word and work of God, every day's mercies, and changes, and usages, do look at heaven, and intend eternity. God leadeth me no other way: if I follow him not, I forsake my hope in forsaking him: if I follow him, shall I be unwilling to be at home, and come to the end of all this way?

Sect. 14. 6. Surely that is best for me which God hath required me principally to value, love, and seek, and that as the business of all my life, referring all things else thereto: that this is my duty, I am fully certain, as is proved elsewhere, and before. Is my business in the world only for the things of this world? How vain a creature, then, were man; and how little were the difference between waking and sleeping, life and death! No wonder if he that believeth that there is no life but this to seek or hope for, do live in uncomfortable despair, and only seek to palliate his misery with the brutish pleasures of a wicked life, and if he stick at no villany which his fleshly lusts incline him to; especially tyrants and multitudes who have none but God to fear. It is my certain duty to seek heaven with all the fervour of my soul, and diligence of my life; and is it not best to find it?

Sect. 15. 7. That must needs be best for me, which all other things must be forsaken for: it is folly to forsake the better for the worse: but Scripture, reason, and conscience, tell me, that all this world, when it stands in competition, or opposition, should be forsaken for heaven; yea, for the least hopes of

it: a possible, everlasting glory should be preferred before a certainly perishing vanity. I am sure this life will shortly be nothing to me; and therefore it is next to nothing now. And must I forsake all for my everlasting hopes, and yet be unwilling to pass unto the possession of them.

Sect. 16. 8. That is like to be our best which is our maturest state. Nature carrieth all things towards their perfection: our apples, pears, grapes, and every fruit, are best when they are ripe; and though they then hasten to corruption, that is, through the incapacity of the corporeal materials any longer to retain the vegetative spirit, which is not annihilated at its separation; and being not made for its own felicity, but for man's, its ripeness is the state in which man useth it, before it doth corrupt of itself, that its corruption may be for his nutriment; and the spirits and best matter of his said food doth become his very substance. And doth God cause saints to grow up unto ripeness, only to perish and drop down unto useless rottenness? It is not credible. Though our bodies become but like our filthiest excrements, our souls return to God that gave them: and though he need them not, he useth them in their separated state; and that to such heavenly uses as the heavenly maturity and mellowness hath disposed them to. Seeing, then, love hath ripened me for itself, shall I not willingly drop into its hand?

Sect. 17. 9. That is like to be the best which the wisest and holiest, in all ages of the world, have preferred before all, and have most desired; and which also almost all mankind do acknowledge to be best at last. It is not like that all the best men in the world should be most deceived, and be put upon fruitless labours and sufferings by this deceit, and be undone by their duty; and that God should, by such deceits, rule all (or almost all) mankind: and also that the common notices of human nature, and conscience's last and closest documents, should be all in vain. But it is past all doubt, that no men usually are worse than those that have no belief or hopes of any life but this; and that none are so holy, just, and sober, so charitable to others, and so useful to mankind, as those that firmliest believe and hope for the state of immortality: and shall I fear that state which all that were wise and holy, in all ages, have preferred and desired?

Sect. 18. 10. And it is not unlike that my best state is that which my greatest enemies are most against: and how much Satan doth to keep me and other men from heaven, and how much worldly honour, and pleasure, and wealth he could afford us to accomplish it, I need not here again be copious in reciting, having said so much of it in the "Treatise of Infidelity." And shall I be, towards myself, so much of Satan's mind? He would not have me come to heaven; and shall I also be unwilling? All these things tell me that it is best to be with Christ.

II. *The Final Reasons.*

Sect. 1. II. Is it not far better to dwell with God in glory, than with sinful men, in such a world as this? Though he be every where, his glory, which we must behold to our felicity, and the perfecting operations and communications of his love, are in the glorious world, and not on earth. As the eye is made to see the light, and then to see other things by the light, so is man's mind made to see God, and to love him; and other things, as in, by, and for him. He that is our beginning is our end; and our end is the first motive of all moral action, and for it it is that all means are used: and the end attained is the rest of souls. How oft hath my soul groaned under the sense of distance, and darkness, and estrangedness from God! How oft hath it looked up, and gasped after him, and said, Oh! when shall I be nearer and better acquainted with my God? "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God: my soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?" Psal. xlii. 1. And would I not have my prayers heard, and my desires granted? What else is the sum of lawful prayers, but God himself? If I desire any thing more than God, what sinfulness is in those desires, and how sad is their signification! How oft have I said, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none on earth that I desire besides thee. It is good for me to draw near to God," Psal. lxxiii. 25, 28. Woe to me, if I did dissemble! If not, why should my soul draw back? Is it because that death stands in the way? Do not my fellow-creatures die for my daily food? and is not my passage secured by the love of my Father, and the resurrection and intercession of my Lord? Can I see the light of heavenly glory in this darksome shell and womb of flesh?

Sect. 2. All creatures are more or less excellent and glorious, as God is more or less operative and refulgent in them, and, by that operation, communicateth most of himself unto them. Though he be immense and indivisible, his operations and communications are not equal: and that is said to be nearest to him which hath most of those operations on it; and that without the intervenient causality of any second, created cause; and so all those are in their order near unto him, as they have noblest natures, and fewest intervenient causes. Far am I from presuming to think that I am, or shall be, the best and noblest of God's creatures, and so that I shall be so near him as to be under the influx of no second or created causes, of which more anon. But to be as near as my nature was ordained to approach, is but to attain the end and perfection of my nature.

Sect. 3. And as I must not look to be the nearest to him, as he is the first efficient, no more must I, as he is the first dirigent, or governing cause. As now I am under the government of his officers on earth, I look for ever to be under sub-governors in heaven. My glorified Saviour must be my Lord and Ruler, and who else under him I know not. If angels are not equal in perfection, nor, as is commonly supposed, equal in power, nor with some regimental order among themselves, I must not conclude that no created angel or spirit shall have any government over me; but it will be so pure and divine, as that the blessed effects of God's own government will be sweetly powerful therein. If the law was given by angels, and the angel of God was in the burning bush, and the angel conducted the people through the wilderness, and yet all these things are ascribed to God, much more near and glorious will the divine regiment there be, whoever are the administrators.

Sect. 4. And as I must expect to be under some created, efficient, and dirigent causes there, so must I expect to have some subordinate ends: else there would not be a proportion and harmony in causalities. Whatever nobler creatures are above me, and have their causalities upon me, I must look to be finally for those nobler creatures. When I look up and think what a world of glorious beings are now over me, I dare not presume to think that I shall finally, any more than receptively, be the nearest unto God, and that I am made for none but him. I find here that I am made, and ruled, and sanctified, for the public or common good of many as above my own, of which I am past doubt; and I am sure that I

must be, finally, for my glorified Redeemer; and for what other spiritual beings, or intelligences, that are above me, little do I know: and God hath so ordered all his creatures, as that they are mutually ends and means for and to one another, though not in an equality, nor in the same respects. But whatever nearer ends there will be, I am sure that he who is the first efficient, and dirigent, will be the ultimate, final cause: and I shall be, in this respect, as near him as is due to the rank and order of my nature. I shall be useful to the ends which are answerable to my perfection.

Sect. 5. And if it be the honour of a servant to have an honourable master, and to be appointed to the most honourable work; if it be some honour to a horse above a swine, or a worm, or fly, that he serveth more nearly for the use of man, yea, for a prince; will it not be also my advancement to be ultimately for God, and subordinately for the highest created natures, and this in such services as are suitable to my spiritual and heavenly state?

Sect. 6. For I am far from thinking that I shall be above service, and have none to do, for activity will be my perfection and my rest; and all such activity must be regular in harmony, and order of causes, and for its proper use: and what though I know not how fully what service it is that I must do, I know it will be good and suitable to the blessed state which I shall be in; and it is enough that God and my Redeemer know it; and that I shall know it in due time, when I come to practise it: of which more afterward.

Sect. 7. The inordinate love of this body and present composition, seduceth souls to think that all their use and work is for its maintenance and prosperity, and when the soul hath done that, and is separated from flesh, it hath nothing to do, but must lie idle, or be as nothing, or have no considerable work or pleasure. As if there were nothing in the whole world, but this little fluid mass of matter, for a soul to work upon; as if itself, and all the creatures, and God, were nothing, or no fit objects for a soul; and why not hereafter, as well as now: or, as if that which, in our compounded state, doth operate on and by its organs, had no other way of operation without them; as if the musician lost all his power, or were dead, when his instrument is out of tune, or broken, and could do nothing else but play on that: as if the fiery part of the candle were annihilated, or transmutate, as some philosophers imagine, when the candle goeth out, and were not fire and in action still; or as if that sunbeam which I shut out, or which passeth from our horizon, were annihilated, or did nothing, when it shineth not with us. Had it no other individual to illuminate, or to terminate its beams or action, were it nothing to illuminate the common air? Though I shall not always have a body to operate in and upon, I shall always have God, and a Saviour, and a world of fellow-creatures; and when I shine not in this lantern, and see not by these spectacles, nor imaginarily in a glass, I shall yet see things suitable intuitively, and as face to face. That which is essentially life, as a living principle, will live; and that which is essentially an active, intellective, volitive principle, force, and virtue, will still be such while it is itself, and is not annihilated, or changed into another thing (which is not to be feared); and that which is such can never want an object till all things be annihilated.

Sect. 8. Reason assureth me, that were my will now what it should be, and fully obsequious herein to my understanding, to fulfil God's will would be the fulfilling my own will; for my will should perfectly comply with his, and to please him perfectly would be my perfect pleasure: and it is the unreasonable adhesion to this body, and sinful selfishness, which maketh any one think otherwise now. I am sure that my soul shall live, for it is life itself; and I am sure that I shall live to God, and that I shall fulfil and please his blessed will; and this is, as such, incomparably better than my felicity, as such: and yet so far as I am pleased in so doing, it will be my felicity.

Sect. 9. I begin now to think, that the strange love which the soul hath to this body (so far as it is not inordinate) is put into us of God, partly to signify to us the great love which Christ hath to his mystical, political body, and to every member of it, even the least: he will gather all his elect out of the world, and none that come to him shall be shut out, and none that are given him shall be lost. As his flesh is to them meat indeed, and his blood is to them drink indeed, and he nourisheth them for life eternal: (his Spirit in them, turning the sacrament, the word, and Christ himself, *in esse objectivo*, as believed in, into spirit and life to us, as the soul and our natural spirits turn our food into flesh, and blood, and spirits, which, in a dead body, or any lifeless repository, it would never be:) so as we delight in the ease and prosperity of our body, and each member, and have pleasure in the pleasant food that nourisheth it, and other pleasant objects which accommodate it; Christ also delighteth in the welfare of his church, and of all the faithful, and is pleased when they are fed with good and pleasant food, and when hereby they prosper. Christ loveth the church, not only as a man must love his wife, but as we love our bodies; and no man ever hated his own flesh, Eph. v. 27, &c. And herein I must allow my Saviour the pre-eminence, to outgo me in powerful, faithful love: he will save me better from pain and death, than I can save my body; and will more inseparably hold me to himself. If it please my soul to dwell in such a house of clay, and to operate on so mean a thing as flesh, how greatly will it please my glorified Lord, to dwell with his glorified body, the triumphant church, and to cherish and bless each member of it! It would be a kind of death to Christ to be separated from his body, and to have it die. Whether Augustine, and the rest of the fathers, were in the right or no, who thought, that as our bodies do not only shed their hairs, but, by sicknesses and waste, lose much of their very flesh; so Christ's militant body doth not only lose hypocrites, but also some living, justified members; yet certain it is, that confirmed members, and more certain, that glorified members, shall not be lost: heaven is not a place for Christ or us to suffer such loss in. And will Christ love me better than I love my body? Will he be more loth to lose me than I am to lose a member, or to die? Will he not take incomparably greater pleasure in animating and actuating me for ever, than my soul doth in animating and actuating this body? Oh, then, let me long to be with him! And though I am naturally loth to be absent from the body, let me be by his Spirit more unwilling to be absent from the Lord; and though I would not be unclothed, had not sin made it necessary, let me groan to be clothed upon with my heavenly habitation, and to become the delight of my Redeemer, and to be perfectly loved, by love itself.

Sect. 10. And even this blessed receptivity of my soul, in terminating the love and delight of my glorified Head, must needs be a felicity to me. The insensible creatures are but beautified by the sun's communication of its light and heat; but the sensitives have also the pleasure of it. Shall my soul be senseless? Will it be a clod or stone? Shall

that which is now the form of man, be then more lifeless, senseless, or uncapable, than the form of brutes is now? Doubtless, it will be a living, perceiving, sensible recipient of the felicitating love of God, and my Redeemer; I shall be loved as a living spirit, and not as a dead and senseless thing, that doth not comfortably perceive it.

Sect. 11. And if I must rejoice with my fellow-servants that rejoice, shall I not be glad to think that my blessed Lord will rejoice in me, and in all his glorified ones? Union will make his pleasure to be much mine; and it will be aptly said by him to the faithful soul, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord," Matt. xxv. 21. His own active joy will objectively be ours, as ours will be efficiently his, or from him. Can that be an ill condition to me, in which my Lord will most rejoice? it is best to him, and, therefore, best to me.

Sect. 12. And the heavenly society will joyfully welcome a holy soul. If there be now "joy in heaven among the angels, for one sinner that repenteth," (Luke xv. 10,) who hath yet so little holiness, and so much sin; what joy will there be over a perfected, glorified soul! Surely, if our angels there behold our Father's face, they will be glad, in season, of our company. The angels that carried Lazarus to Abraham's bosom, no doubt rejoiced in their work, and their success. And is the joy of angels, and the heavenly host, as nothing to me? Will not love and union make their joy to be my own; if love here must make all my friends' and neighbours' comforts to become my own? And as their joy, according to their perfection, is greater than any that I am now capable of, so the participation of so great a joy of theirs will be far better than to have my little separated apartment. Surely, that will be my best condition, which angels and blessed spirits will be best pleased in, and I shall rejoice most in that which they most rejoice in.

III. *The constitutive Reasons from the intellective State.*

III. Sect. 1. Though the tempter would persuade men, because of the case of infants in the womb, apoplectics, &c. that the understanding will be but an unactive power, when separated from these corporeal organs, I have seen before sufficient reasons to repel this temptation. I will suppose, that it will not have such a mode of conception, as it hath now by these organs; but, 1. The soul will be still essentially a vital, intellective substance, disposed to act naturally; and that is to those acts which it is formerly inclined to, as fire to illuminate and heat. And as it cannot die, (while it is what it is in essence,) because it is life itself, that is, the vital substance; so it cannot but be intellective, (as to an inclined power,) because it is such essentially; though God can change or annihilate any thing, if he would. 2. And it will be among a world of objects. 3. And it will still have its dependence on the first cause, and receive his continual, actuating influx. 4. And no man can give the least show of true reason, to prove that it shall cease sensation, (whether the sensitive faculties be in the same substance which is intellective, which is most probable, or in one conjunct, as some imagine,) though the species and modes of sensation cease, which are denominated from the various organs.

5. Yea, no man can prove that the departing soul doth not carry with it its igneous spirits, which, in the body, it did immediately actuate: if it were never so certain that those Greek fathers were mistaken, (as well as Hippocrates,) who took the soul itself to be a sublime, intellectual fire.

And as to the objection some hold, that the soul pre-existed before it was in the body; others, and most, that it then received its first being: if the first were true, it would be true that the soul had its intellectual activity before, though the soul itself, incorporate, remember it not, because it operateth but *ut forma hominis* (and its oblivion they take to be part of its penalty); and they that think it a *radius* of the *anima mundi vel systematis*, must think that then it did intellectually animate *hunc mundum, vel mundi partem:* and to do so again, is the worst they can conjecture of it: as the rays of the sun, which heat a burning-glass, and by it set a candle on fire, are the same rays still diffused in the air, and illuminating, heating, and moving it, and terminated on some other body, and not annihilated, or debilitated, when their contracted operation ceaseth by breaking the glass, or putting out the candle; and as the spirit of a tree still animateth the tree, when it retires from the leaves, and lets them fall. But this being an unproved imagination of men's own brains, we have no further use of it, than to confute themselves. But if the soul existed not till its incorporation, what wonder if it operate but *ut forma*, when it is united to the body for that use? What wonder if its initial operations, like a spark of fire in tinder, or the first lighting of a candle, be weak, and scarce by us perceptible? What wonder if it operate but to the uses that the creation did appoint it; and first, as vegetative, fabricate its own body, as the maker's instrument, and then feel, and then understand? And what wonder if it operate no further than objects are admitted? And, therefore, what wonder if, in apoplexies, &c. such operations are intercepted? But the departing soul is, 1. In its maturity. 2. No more united to this body, and so not confined to sense and imagination in its operations, and the admission of its objects. 3. And it is *sub ratione meriti*, and as a governed subject is ordinate to its reward; which it was not capable of receiving in the womb, or in an apoplexy. And as we have the reasons before alleged to hold, 1. That it shall not be annihilated; 2. Nor dissolved; 3. Nor lose its essential faculties or powers; 4. Nor those essential powers be continued useless by the wise and merciful Creator; though, by natural revelation, we know not in what manner they shall act; whether on any other body, and by what conjunction, and how far: so by supernatural revelation we are assured, that there is a reward for the righteous, and that holy souls are still members of Christ, and live because he liveth, and that in the day of their departure they shall be with him in paradise, and being absent from the body, shall be present with the Lord; and that Christ, therefore, died, rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living, that is, of those that, being dead, hence do live with him, and of those that yet live in the body; for he that said, "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living," that is, stands not related to them as his people, as a king to his subjects, is not himself the Lord of the absolute dead, but of the living.

Therefore, (as Contarenus against Pomponatius de Immortal. Anim. saith,) the immortality of the soul is provable by the light of nature, but the manner of its future operation must be known by faith. And blessed be the Father of spirits, and our Redeemer, who hath sent and set up this excellent light, by which we see further than purblind infidels can do!

Sect. 2. But I deny not but even the Scripture itself doth tell us but little of the manner of our intellection when we are out of the body; and it is not improbable that there is more imperfection in this mode of notional, organical, abstractive knowledge

which the soul exerciseth in the body, than most consider of. And that as the eye hath the visive faculty in sleep, and when we wink, and an internal action of the visive spirits, (no doubt,) and yet seeth not any thing without till the eyelids are opened (and was not made to see its own sight); so the soul in the body is as a winking eye to all things that are not, by the sense and imagination, intromitted, or brought within its reach. And whether *sicut non video visum, neque facultatem, neque substantiam videntem, videndo tamen certo percipio me videre*, so it may be said, *Non intelligo immediate ipsam intellectionem, neque facultatem, aut substantiam intelligentem. Intelligendo tamen certo percipio me intelligere, quia actus intellectus in spiritus sensitivos operans sentitur;* or whether we must further say, with Ockam, that *Intellectus tum intuitive tum abstractive se intelligit*, I leave to wiser men to judge; but I am very suspicious that the body is more a lantern to the soul than some will admit; and that this *lusus notionum secundarum*, or abstractive knowledge of things by organical images, names, and notions, is occasioned by the union of the soul with the body *ut formæ*, and is that childish knowledge which the apostle saith shall be done away. And how much of man's fall might consist in such a knowing of good and evil, I cannot tell, or in the overvaluing such a knowledge. And I think that when vain philosophy at Athens had called the thoughts and desires of mankind from great realities to the logical and philological game at words and notions, it was Socrates' wisdom to call them to more concerning studies, and Paul's greater wisdom to warn men to take heed of such vain philosophy, and to labour to know God and Jesus Christ, and the things of the Spirit, and not to overvalue this ludicrous, dreaming, worldly wisdom. And if I have none of this kind of notional, childish knowledge when I am absent from the body, the glass and spectacles may then be spared, when I come to see with open face, or as face to face. Our future knowledge is usually, in Scripture, called seeing. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God," Matt. v. 8. "We shall see face to face," 1 Cor. xiii. 12. "We shall see him as he is," 1 John iii. 2. "Father, I will that those which thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me," &c. John xvii. 24. An intuitive knowledge of all things, as in themselves immediately, is a more excellent sort of knowledge than this, by similitudes, names, and notions, which our learning now consisteth in, and is but an art acquired by many acts and use.

Sect. 3. If the sun were, as the heathens thought it, an intellective animal, and its emitted rays were vitally visive, and when one of those rays were received by prepared seminal matter (as in insects) it became the soul of an inferior animal, in this case, the said ray would operate in that insect, or animal, but according to the capacity of the recipient matter; whereas the sun itself, by all its emitted rays, would see all things intellectually, and with delight, and when that insect were dead, that ray would be what it was, an intellective, intuitive emanation. And though the soul in flesh do not know itself how it shall be united to Christ, and to all other holy souls, and to God himself, nor how near, or just of what sort, that union will be, yet united it will be, and therefore will participate accordingly of the universal light or understanding to which it is united. The soul now, as it is, or operateth, in the foot or hand, doth not understand, but only as it is, and operateth, in the head. And yet the same soul which is in the hand, understandeth in the head, and the soul operateth not so selfishly or dividedly in the hand as to repine there because it understandeth not there; but it is quiet in that it understandeth in the head, and performeth its due operation in the hand. But this diversity of operations seemeth to be from the organs, and body's use, or need, but souls dismissed from the body seem to be as all eye, or intuitive light. Therefore, though it might content us to say that our Head seeth all things, and we are united to him, yet we may say further, that we ourselves shall see God, and all things that are meet for us to see.

Sect. 4. And seeing it is most certain that the superior glorious regions are full of blessed spirits, who do see God and one another, having much more perfect operations than we have, (whose effects we mortals find here below,) why should I, that find an intellective nature in myself, make any doubt of my more perfect operations when I am dismissed hence, being satisfied that a soul will not lose its simple essence? Either those superior spirits have ethereal bodies to act in (or are such themselves) or not. If they are, or have such, why should I doubt of the like, and think that my substance or vehicle will not be according to the region of my abode? If not, why should I think that my departed soul may not know or see without an igneous or ethereal body or vehicle, as well as all those worlds of spirits? And the certainty of apparitions, possessions, and witches, do tell us, not only that there are such inhabitants of other regions, ordinarily invisible to us, but also that we are in the way to that happiness or misery which is in our invisible state.

Sect. 5. These things reviewed, (being partly mentioned before,) assuring me that I shall have actual intellection in my separated state, the region, with the objects, but, above all, the holy Scriptures, will tell me as much as it is meet that I should here know, what it is that I shall intuitively understand. The apostle, 1 Cor. xiii. 10—12, doth distinguish our knowing in part and knowing perfectly, knowing as a child and as a man, knowing darkly and enigmatically as in a glass, and knowing face to face as we are known. The great question is, when this time of perfection is? whether he mean at death, or at the resurrection? If Dr. Hammond's observation hold, that[m] *ἀνάστασις* in Scripture, when the flesh or body is not joined with it, signifies that life which the soul doth enter upon immediately after our death, and so that the soul hath that (after living) which is signified by the very word which we translate *resurrection*, then it will lead men to think that there is less difference between man's state at his first departure, and at his last resurrection, than most think, even than Calvin himself thought. But the difference between our first and last state of after-life or resurrection cannot be now distinctly known. What difference there is now between Enoch, Elias, and those who rose at Christ's resurrection, and the rest of the saints, even the spirits of the perfected just, and whether the first have as much greater glory than the rest, as it is conceived that we shall have at the resurrection above that which immediately followeth death, what mortal man can tell? I am past doubt that flesh and blood (formally so called, and not only *ab accidente*, as sinful) shall not inherit the kingdom of God, (vid. Hammond in loc.) but that our natural bodies shall be made spiritual bodies: and how a spiritual body differeth from a spirit or soul, I pretend not well to understand, but must stay till God, by experience, or fuller light, inform me. But surely the difference is not like to be so great, as

[m] And Mr. Beverly in his Great Soul of Man.

that a soul in flesh shall know in part, and a soul in a spiritual body shall know perfectly, and a soul between both shall not know at all. If it be perfection which we shall have in our spiritual body, it is like that we are nearer to that perfection, in knowledge and felicity, while we are between both, than when we are in the flesh.

Sect. 6. And sure a soul that (even Solomon saith) goeth upward, and to God that gave it, is liker to know God than that which is terminated in flesh, and operateth *ut forma*, according to its capacity and state; and a soul that is with Christ, is liker to know Christ, and the Father in him, than that which is present with the body, and absent from the Lord. What less can the promise of being with him signify?

Sect. 7. And, I. As to the kind of knowledge, how excellent and more satisfactory a way will that of intuition, or intellective sense, be, than is our present way of abstraction, similitudes, and signs. What abundance of time, thoughts, and labour, doth it cost us now to learn our grammar, our rhetoric, and our logic; our *artes loquendi, dicendi, et disserendi;* to learn our wordy rules and axioms, in metaphysics, physics, &c. And when we have learned them all, (if all can be learned,) how little the nearer are many to the knowing of the signified realties. We oft get but a set of words to play with, to take up our time, and divert us from the matter; even as carnal men use the creatures which signify God, and are made to lead them up to him, to entangle them, and be the greatest and most pernicious diversion of their souls from God; so do too many learned men do by their organical, signal knowledge. They use it as men do cards, and romances, and plays, to delight their fancies, but they know less of the things that are worth their knowing, than many unlearned persons do, as I said before. Had not much of the Athenian learning been then a mere game, for men to play away their precious time at, and to grow proud of, while they were ignorant of saving realities, Christ and his apostles had not so much neglected it as they did, nor Paul so much warned men to take heed of being deceived by that vain kind of philosophy, in which he seemeth to me to have greater respect to the universally esteemed Athenian arts, than, as Dr. Hammond thought, to the mere gnostic pretensions.

This poor, dreaming, signal, artificial knowledge is, 1. Costly. 2. Uncertain. 3. Contentious. 4. Unsatisfactory, in comparison of intuitive knowledge.

1. It is costly, as to the hard labour and precious time which must be laid out for it, as aforesaid. We grow old in getting us horses, and boots, and spurs, for our journey, and it is well if we begin it at the last; like a man that would study the new-found planets, and the shape of Saturn's and Jupiter's satellites, and the *Viam Lacteam*, &c.; and he spends his whole life in getting him the best tubes: or telescopes, and never useth them to his ends; or like one that, instead of learning to write, doth spend his life in getting the best ink, paper, and pens; or rather like one that learneth to write and print exactly, and not to understand what any of his words do signify. Men take their spectacles instead of eyes.

2. And when this learning is got, how uncertain are we whether the words have no ambiguity; whether they give us the true notice of the speaker's mind, and of the matter spoken of! As I said before, what penury, and yet redundancy, of words have we; of how various and uncertain signification; changed by custom, or arbitrary design; sometimes by the vulgar use, and sometimes by learned men that, being conscious of the defectiveness of the speaking art, are still tampering, and attempting to amend it. And some men speak obscurely on purpose, to raise in their readers a conceit of their subtle and sublime conceptions. And he that understandeth things most clearly, and speaketh them most plainly, (which are the parts of true learning,) shall have much ado to get the matter out of dark and bewildering uncertainties, and to make others understand both it and him.

3. And hence come the greatest part of the contentions of the world, which are hottest among men that most pretend to wordy knowledge: as in traffic and converse, the more men and business we have to do with, usually the more quarrels and differences we have; so the more of this wordy learning, instead of realities, men pretend to, the more disputes and controversies they make; and the instruments of knowledge prove the instruments of error and contention. And, alas! how many applauded volumes are the snares and troublers of the world! and how great a part of our libraries are vain janglings, and strife of words, and traps for the more ingenuous sort, that will not be taken with cards and dice; robbing us of our time, destroying our love, depressing our minds, that should ascend to God, and diverting them from the great and holy things which should be the matter of our thoughts and joys; and filling the church with sects and strife, while every one striveth for the pre-eminence of his wit and notions, and few strive for holy love, and unity, and good works.

4. And all this while, alas! too many learned men do but lick the outside of the glass, and leave the wine within untasted. To know God, and Christ, and heaven, and holiness, do give the soul a nourishing and strengthening kind of pleasure, like that of the appetite in its food; but this game at words is but a knowing of images, signs, and shadows, and so is but an image and shadow of true knowledge. It is not that grace which Austin's definition saith, *Nemo male utitur;* but it is that which the sanctified use well, and the unsanctified are puffed up by, and use to the opposition of truth, the ostentation of a foolish wit, and the deceit of their own souls. And if it be sanctified knowledge, it is but mediate, in order to our knowledge of things thus signified; and it is the real good which contenteth and beatifieth, though the notions may be a subordinate recreation; and intuition feasteth on these realities.

Sect. 9. II. And as to the objects of this intuition, their excellency will be the excellency of our knowledge. I. I shall know God better. II. I shall know the universe better. III. I shall know Christ better. IV. I shall know the church, his body, better, with the holy angels. V. I shall better know the methods and perfection of the Scripture, and all God's dirigent word and will. VI. I shall know the methods and sense of disposing providence better. VII. I shall know the divine benefits, which are the fruits of love, better. VIII. I shall know myself better. IX. I shall better know every fellow-creature, which I am concerned to know. X. And I shall better know all that evil, sin, Satan, and misery, from which I am delivered.

Sect. 10. I. Aquinas, and many others, took it for the chief, natural proof of the soul's immortality, that man, by nature, desireth not only to know effects, and second causes, but to rise up to the knowledge of the first cause; and, therefore, was made for such knowledge in the state of his perfection: but grace hath much more of this desire than nature. Not that we must not be content to be without a great deal of knowledge, which would be unmeet for us, useless, troublesome, or dangerous to us; nor must we aspire to that which is above our capacity, and to

know the unsearchable things of God; but not to know God, is to know nothing, and to have an understanding worse than none. I presume not to pry into the secrets of the Almighty, nor to pretend to know more of God than, indeed, I do; but, oh that I might know more of his glorious perfections, of his will, and love, and ways, with that knowledge which is eternal life! Blessed be that love that sent the Son of God from heaven, to reveal him to us in the gospel, as he hath done; but all that hear the same words, and believe them, have not the same degree of light or faith. If an angel from heaven came down on earth to tell us all of God that we would know, and might lawfully desire and ask him, who would not turn his back on libraries, and universities, and learned men, to go and discourse with such a messenger? What travel should I think too far, what cost too great, for one hour's talk with such a messenger? But we must have here but such intimations as will exercise faith, and excite desire, and try us under the temptations of the world and flesh. The glorious light is the reward of the victory obtained by the conduct of the light of grace. God, in great mercy, even here beginneth the reward. They that are true to the initial light, and faithfully follow on to know the Lord, do find usually such increase of light (not of vain notions, but of quickening and comforting knowledge of God) as greatly encourageth them, and draweth them still on to seek for more. It is very pleasant here to increase in holy knowledge, though it usually bring an increase of malignant opposition, and so of sorrows to the flesh. The pleasure that the mind hath in common knowledge, brings men through a great deal of labour to attain it. How many years' travel over land and sea do some men take, to see and know more of this lower world; though it is little that they bring home, but more acquaintance with sin, and vanity, and vexation. How many more years do thousands spend in the reading multitudes of tedious volumes, that they may know what others knew before them. Printers and booksellers live by our desire of knowledge. What soul, then, on earth can possibly conceive how great a pleasure it will be for a glorified soul to see the Lord? Though I cannot now conceive what that intuition of God himself will be, and whether it will not be a glorious kind of concluding or abstractive knowledge; whether the glory which we shall see be only a created appearance of God, or be his very essence; it satisfieth me that it will be as perfect a knowledge as is fit for me to desire; and I shall then desire no more than is fit: and what it is I shall then know by itself, for it is not otherwise to be clearly known. And all the pleasure that I shall have in heaven, in knowing any of the works of God, will be in my beholding God himself, his being, his vital power and action, his wisdom, and his love and goodness, in those works; for he is the life and glory of them all. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

II. And, doubtless, it will be no small part of my delight to see and know God's perfect works, I mean the universe itself. I cannot say that I shall have so large a capacity as to comprehend all the world, or know it perfectly, and with an adequate knowledge; but I shall know it in such perfection as is suitable to my capacity. It is exceeding pleasant to know the least particles of the works of God. With what diligence and delight have men endeavoured to anatomize a body, yea, a small part of a carcass, and to know and describe poor worms and insects, plants and minerals; and no man ever yet perfectly knew the least of them all. No herbalist or physician ever yet knew the nature and uses of any one herb with an adequate knowledge. With what delight and diligence are physical searches carried on in the world, though still we are all but groping in the dark, and ignorant of many things for one that we know, and, therefore, know no one perfectly, because we are ignorant of the rest. But if, indeed, we were above our dreaming, erroneous hypotheses, and saw the nature of every creature, even in sea and land, (this little spot of God's creation,) and the compages of all, oh, what a delightful spectacle would it be! How much more to see the whole creation, yea, or one vortex or system of the globes, and to know their union and communion, and to behold their beauteous symmetry, and hear them in concord and melodious harmony praising the glory of their great, wise, amiable Creator! This were a delectable sight indeed. I shall have as much of this as I shall be capable of; and the wonders and glories of the works of God shall wrap up my soul in admiring, joyful praise for ever: and though here it be but little of God's works that we know, I have great reason to think that it will be far otherwise there. 1. Because the state of perfection must far excel our dark and infant state of imperfection. We have now desires after such a knowledge. His works are great, sought out of them that have pleasure therein: and these desires, being of God, shall not be frustrate. 2. Because there will be a proportionableness of the parts of our perfection; and therefore, as our love to God and his works will be there perfected, so will be our knowledge. 3. Because we shall know God himself as much as we are capable, and therefore we shall know his works in him, or by a subordinate knowledge, the less being in the greater. 4. Because God hath made his works to be known to his glory: but it is little that is here known of them by mortals; therefore they are known by them in heaven, who are fitted to improve that knowledge to his praise.

If Christ, who is the wisdom of God, will teach me the true philosophy, how to love God, and live here in all well-pleasing unto him, I shall quickly, in heaven, be a perfect philosopher; and experience will tell me that the surest way to be truly learned, and know the wonderful works of God, was to know, love, and serve the great Creator; and in him we shall have all, and without him we know nothing, and have nothing at all.

Satan tempted Christ, by showing him the "kingdoms and glory of the world," and promising them all to him if he would have worshipped him: but God will show me more than Satan could show, and give me more of that which is best, than Satan could give.

III. And that in heaven I shall better know Jesus Christ, and all the mystery of our redemption by him, will not be the least of my felicity; for in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom: and to know the mystery of his eternal Godhead, in the second Person, and his created nature, and the union of these, and to see God's wonderful design and work of grace in him laid open to our clearest view, oh what beatifying knowledge would this be! All dark texts concerning his person, his office, and his works, will then be expounded and fully understood. All those strange and difficult things which were the great exercise and honour of faith, will then be plain. Difficulties will no more be Satan's advantage to tempt us to unbelief, or doubting. The sight of the glory of my Lord will be my glory, John xvii. 24. If Paul had not then attained to perfection in the knowledge of Christ, and the power of his resurrection, but was pressing forward to reach that crown

in the life to come, which he calleth "the resurrection of the dead," (Phil. iii. 9—12,) such as I must not expect here to attain it; but when that which is perfect is come, this imperfect knowledge of faith will be done away, as childish knowledge is in manly: and the glass and riddle shall be laid aside, when we "shall see face to face, and shall know as we are known," (1 Cor. xiii. 10—12,) as to our sight and knowledge of Christ and his triumphant body; for I dare not apply that phrase to the sight and knowledge of the divine essence, nor yet deny it.

If now, though we see not Christ, yet, believing, we love him, and rejoice in him with unspeakable, glorying joy; what love and joy will the everlasting sight of our blessed Head excite there in the souls of all the glorified!

IV. I shall better, oh! much better, know the heavenly Jerusalem, the triumphant church, the blessed angels, and glorified saints; and as my love to them, so my knowledge of them, will not be the least part of my heavenly delight. As strangely as I now look upward to that world, because I cannot see it with these eyes, it shall be my well-known everlasting habitation. Oh! what a sight, what a joyful sight, will death show me by drawing aside the veil; or rather the Lord of life, by turning death to my advantage! When I am there at home, I shall no more think with confusion, fear, or doubting, of that blessed place or state. My fears, which now come from the smallness of my faith, will end when faith is turned into vision. As I know the several rooms in my house, and houses in the street, and streets in the city, so shall I then know the many mansions which Christ hath said are in his Father's house. Words now give me so poor, imperfect a conception of the world and things which I never saw, as that sometimes I can scarcely tell whether the joy of my faith, or the trouble of my dark apprehensions, be the greater. But when I shall see the place and persons, the glory which I heard of, that will be the delightful satisfying and possessing kind of knowledge. If Nehemiah, and the godly Jews, made so great a matter of seeing the walls of Jerusalem repaired; and others, of the imperfect re-edifying of the temple; oh what a joyful sight to me will the heavenly Jerusalem then be! The most glorious sight will be at the great marriage-day of the Lamb, when Christ shall come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that now believe; but the next to that will be the day of my particular deliverance, when I shall come to Christ, and see the saints admiring him in glory.

If I were of the opinion of those Greek fathers, who thought that stars were angels, or had intellectual souls, (matters unknown to us,) I should love them as my guardians, and take it to be yet more of my concernment to be advanced to the fuller knowledge of them. But seeing I know that angels love us, and by office do attend and keep us, and rejoice at our good, and at our repentance, and, which is far more, are more holy and excellent creatures than we are, it is, therefore, my comfort to think that I shall better know them, and live in near and perpetual acquaintance and communion with them, a more sensible and sweet communion than we can have with them here. Devils are aërial, and near to this dark and sinful world, and oftener appear to men than angels. But the angels affect not such descending appearances, till love and obedience to their Lord make it pleasing to them: and therefore we have but little knowledge, even of those that know, and love, and keep us. But when we come home to their nearest society and converse, to know them will be sweet and joyful knowledge: for they are more excellent creatures than the most glorious that are below the intellective nature. They are full of light, and full of love to God and man. Had God bid me pray to them, I would not have refused it, but taken it for my honour; but seeing he hath not, I will do that which he hath bid me, even love them, and rejoice in my relation to the innumerable company of them, in the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, (Heb. xii. 22,) and long to know and love them more; expecting, ere long, to bear my part in the praises of God and of the Lamb, in the same choir where they are the precentors.

And that I shall know the spirits of the perfected just, and be of their communion, will be no small addition to my joy. How sweet hath one wise and holy, though weak and blemished, companion been to me here on earth! And how lovely have God's graces in such, though sullied, appeared to me! Oh! then, what a sight will it be when we shall see the millions of souls that shine in perfect wisdom and holiness with Christ! To see a garden that hath some beautiful flowers in it, is something; but if you saw whole fields and countries shining with them, it would be a glory, though fading, to the earth. A well-built city is a pleasanter sight than a single house, and a navy than a ship, and an army than one man. And if this poor low world did all consist of wise, and just, and holy persons, Oh what an orderly, lovely world would it be! If one kingdom consisted (prince, magistrates, pastors, and people) all of such, what a blessed kingdom would that be! The plague of wicked men's deceits, and falsehoods, oppressions, and iniquities, may help to make us sensible of this. It would be a great temptation to us to be loth to die, and leave such a country, were it not that the more the beauty of goodness appeareth, the more the state of perfection is desired. It is pleasant to me to pray in hope, as Christ hath commanded me, that earth may be made liker unto heaven, which now is become so like to hell. But when I shall see the society perfected in number, in holiness, in glory, in heavenly employment, the joyful praises of Jehovah, the glory of God and the Lamb shining on them, and God rejoicing over them as his delight, and myself partaking of the same, that will be the truly blessed day. And why doth my soul, imprisoned in flesh, no more desire it?

V. I shall better understand all the word of God, the matter, and the method of it: though I shall not have that use for it as I have now in this life of faith, yet I shall see more of God's wisdom and his goodness, his love, mercy, and justice, appearing in it, than ever man on earth could do! As the creatures, so the Scriptures, are perfectly known only by perfect spirits. I shall then know how to solve all doubts, and reconcile all seeming contradictions, and to expound the hardest prophecies: that light will show me the admirable methods of those sacred words, where dark minds now suspect confusion! How evident and clear then will every thing appear to me! Like a small print when the light comes in, which I could not read in the glimmering twilight. How easily shall I then confute the cavils of all our present unbelievers! and how joyfully shall I praise that God and Saviour that gave his church so clear a light to guide them through this darksome world, and so sure a promise to support them till they came to life eternal! How joyfully shall I bless him that by that immortal seed did regenerate me to the hopes of glory, and that ruled me by so holy and just a law!

VI. In that world of light I shall better understand God's present and past works of providence, by which he ordereth the matters of this world: the

wisdom and goodness of them is little understood in little parcels; it is the union and harmony of all the parts which showeth the beauty of them, when the single parcels seem deformed, or are not understood. And no one can see the whole together but God, and they that see it in the light of his celestial glory: it is a prospect of that end, by which we have here any true understanding of such parcels as we see. Then I shall know clearly why, or to what use, God prospered the wicked, and tried the righteous by so many afflictions: I shall know why he set up the ungodly, and put the humble under their feet; why he permitted so much ignorance, ungodliness, pride, lust, oppression, persecution, falsehood, deceit, and other sins in the world: I shall know why the faithful are so few; and why so many kingdoms of the world are left in heathenism, Mahometanism, and infidelity. The strange permissions which now so puzzle me, and are the matter of my astonishment, shall all be then as clear as day: I shall know why God disposed of me as he did through all my life; and why I suffered what I did; and how many great deliverances I had, which I understood not here, and how they were accomplished. All our misinterpretations of God's works and permissions will be then rectified: and all our controversies about them, which Satan hath made so great advantage of, (by a pretended zeal for some truths of God,) will then be reconciled, and at an end: and all the works of Divine Providence, from the beginning of the world, will then appear a most delectable, beauteous frame.

VII. And among all these works, I shall specially know more the nature and excellency of God's mercies and gifts of love, which here we too unthankfully undervalued and made light of. The special works of love should be the matter of our most constant, sweet, and serious thoughts, and the fuel of our constant love and gratitude: the lively sense of love and mercy maketh lively christians, abounding in love to God, and mercy to others: but the enemy of God and man most laboureth to obscure, diminish, and disgrace God's love and mercies to us, or to make us disrelish them, that they may be unfruitful, as to their excellent ends and uses. Little do most christians know how much they wrong God and themselves, and how much they lose by the diminutive, poor thoughts which they have of God's mercies: ingratitude is a grievous misery to the sinner, as gratitude is a very pleasant work. Many a thousand mercies we now receive, which we greatly undervalue. But when I come to the state and work of perfect gratitude, I shall have a more perfect knowledge of all the mercies which ever I received in my life, and which my neighbours, and friends, and God's church, and the world, did ever receive: for though the thing be past, the use of it is not past. Mercies remembered must be the matter of our everlasting thanks; and we cannot be perfectly thankful for them, without a perfect knowledge of them: the worth of a Christ, and all his grace, the worth of the gospel, the worth of our church privileges, and all God's ordinances, the worth of our books and friends, and helps of our life and health, and all conveniences, will be better understood in heaven than the most holy and thankful christian here understandeth them.

VIII. And it will be some addition to my future happiness, that I shall then be much better acquainted with myself; both with my nature, and with my sin and grace. I shall then better know the nature of a soul, and its formal faculties (three in one): I shall know the nature and way of its operations, and how far its acts are simple, or compound, or organical. I shall know how far memory, fancy, and sense, internal and external, belong to the rational soul, and whether the sensitive and rational are two or one; and what senses will perish, and what not. I shall know how the soul doth act upon itself, and what acts it hath that are not felt in sleep, in apoplexies, and in the womb. I shall know whether the vegetative nature be any thing else than fire; and whether it be of the same essence with the soul (sensitive or rational); and whether fire *eminenter* be a common fundamental substance of all spirits, diversely specified by the forms, (mental, sensitive, and vegetative,) or whether it be as a body or vehicle to spirits, or rather a nature made for the copulation of spirits and bodies, and the operation of the former on the latter, as between both: and whether fire (and of what sort) be the active *forma telluris*, and of other globes: I shall know how far souls are one, and yet many, and how they are individuate; and whether their *quantitas discreta*, in being numerically many, do prove that they have any *quantitatem continuam*, and whether they are a purer sort of bodies, as the Greek fathers, Tertullian, and others, thought, and what immateriality signifieth; and what substantiality of spirits; and how *substantia* and *materia* differ; and how far they are penetrable and indivisible; and whether a soul be properly *pars*; and whether individual souls are parts of any common soul; and how far the individuation doth continue; and whether, separated from the body, they operate in and by any other vehicle, or without, and how; and whether they take with them any of the fiery nature, as a vehicle, or as a constitutive part. I shall know how God produceth souls; and how his production by emanation or creation does consist with generation; and how forms are multiplied; and what causality the parent's soul hath to the production of the child's; whether by communication of substance, or only by disposing the recipient matter. I shall know whether all souls came from Adam's own substantiality; and whether there be more substance in all than in that one; and whether one substance cause more by generation; or whether it be so as to the souls of brutes; or whether any *anima communis* inform many organical bodies of the brutes, as the sun lighteth many candles which are individuate by matter to which (as parts of one) they variously are contracted, and on which they operate; and whether they were individuate in pre-existence, or shall be individuate after separation. I shall know how far the semen in generation is animated; and how the animated *semina* of two make one; and if animated, what becomes of the *anima seminis perditi*, and of an abortive; and whether the body be animated as vegetative or sensitive before the entrance of the rational soul; or rather the same soul which in its faculty is rational, being one with the sensitive and vegetative, be the constitutive form of the first animated body, and the fabricator of its own *domicilium*. I shall know how far the soul is receptive, and what the *causa finalis* doth to it; and what each object is to the constitution or production of the act; yea, and what an act is, and what a habit; and how a soul, acting or habited, differeth from itself not acting or habited; and how its acts are many, and yet but one; or its faculties at least. Many other such difficulties will all be solved, which now philosophers contend about in the dark, and pass but under doubtful conjectures; or, at least, are known to very few.

And I shall know how God's Spirit operateth on souls; and how it is sent from Christ's human nature to work on man; and whether grace be properly, or only metaphorically, called a nature (a new nature, a divine nature) in us. I shall know what

free-will is, and how man's will can be the first determiner of any act of its own in *specie morali*, (good or evil,) without being such a *causa prima*, as none but God can be; and so how far free acts are necessitated or not. I shall know what power the intellect hath on the will, and the will on the intellect; and what power the sense and fancy hath on either; and what any *intellectus agens* doth; whether it be to our intellection as the sun is to our sight. I shall know what is meant by the degrees of acts and habits in the soul; and whether there be divers degrees of substantiality, or of the *virtus vel facultas formalis* of several souls. I shall know better the difference of habits called acquired and infused; and what common grace is, and what it doth; and what nature can do of itself, or by common grace, without that which is proper to the justified; and how far any degrees of grace are lost.

I shall know what measure of grace I had myself; and how far I was mistaken in myself; and what acts were sincere; and how much that was not sound was mixed; and what was of myself and sin.

I shall know much more of my sins than here I ever knew, the number and the greatness of them; that so I may know, with greatest thankfulness and love, how much I am beholden to pardoning and healing grace.

Yea, I shall know more of my body, as it was the habitation of my soul, or the organical matter on which unitedly it worked. I shall know how far it helped or hindered me; and what were all those obscure diseases that puzzled all the physicians, and myself; and how marvellously God sustained, preserved, and oft delivered me; and what of my actions was to be imputed to the body, and what of them to the soul.

IX. And every fellow-creature, which I am concerned to know, I shall know far better than now I do, both things and persons: the good and bad, the sincere and the hypocrites, will be there discerned: and many an action that here went for honourable, covered or coloured with wit or worldly advantages, or false pretences, will then be found to be odious and unjust: and wickedness will be flattered or extenuated no more: and many a good and holy work which false men, through wickedness and worldly interest, reproached as some odious crime, will there be justified, honoured, and rewarded. All sciences are there perfect, without our ambiguous terms, or imperfect axioms, and rules of art.

X. And, lastly, I shall better know from what enemies, what sins, what dangers, I was here delivered; what contrivances and malicious endeavours of Satan and his instruments God defeated; how many snares I escaped: and I shall better know how great my deliverance is by Christ from the wrath to come. Though we shall not know hell by painful sense, we shall know it so far as is necessary to fill us with gratitude to our Redeemer: yea, we shall know much of it far better than the damned spirits that feel it. For we shall know, by sweet and full fruition, what the joy and blessedness is which they have lost; when they have no such kind of knowledge of it.

All this knowledge will be thus advanced to my glorified soul beyond what I can here conceive in flesh: and is it not then far better to be with Christ?

IV. *The constitutive Reasons from the state of my Will.*

Sect. 1. But it is the will that is to the soul what the heart is to the body: as it is the prime seat of morality, so is it the chief seat of felicity. My greatest evil is there; and my greatest subjective good will be there. Satan did most against it, and God will do most for it. And will it not be better to be with Christ than here?

1. It will not there be tied to a body of cross interests and inclinations, which is now the greatest snare and enemy to my soul; which is still drawing my love, and care, and fears, and sorrows, to and for itself, and turning them from my highest interest. How great a deliverance will it be to be freed from the temptations, and the inordinate love, and cares, and fears for this corruptible flesh!

2. My will shall not there be tempted by a world of inferior good, which is the bait and provision for the flesh, where meat, and sleep, and possessions, house, lands, and friends, are all become my snares and danger. God's mercies will not be made there the tempter's instruments. I shall not there have the flatteries or frowns, promises or threatenings, of the tyrants of the world, to tempt me: bad company will not infect me, nor divert me: the errors of good men will not seduce me; nor reputation or reverence of the wise, learned, or religious, draw me to imitate them in any sin.

3. I shall there have none of Satan's solicitations, to pervert my will: he will not have that advantage by my sense and fancy, nor that access unto me, as now he hath. But of this I spake before.

Sect. 2. My will shall there be better than here: I. Negatively, because, 1. There will be nothing in it that is displeasing to God: no sinful inclination, habit, or act: nothing to strive against God's Spirit; nor grudge at any word or work of God: no principles of enmity or rebellion left. 2. There will be nothing that is against the good of others: no inclinations to injury, or any thing that is against my neighbour's or the common good. 3. There will be nothing in it that is cross to itself; no more war or striving in me; not a law in my mind, and a law in my members, that are contrary to each other: no crossness between sense and reason, nor between the sensitive appetite and the rational: all will be at unity and peace within.

Sect. 3. II. Positively, Christ will have finished his cure on my will. The work of sanctification will be perfect, and, I. My will shall there, by union and communion, be made conformable to the will of Christ, and so unto the Father's will. This must needs be meant (whatever more) in the prayer of Christ, where he prayeth, "That they may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they may be one in us; that they may be one, even as we are one," John xvii. 21, 22. The will of Christ, and of the Father, will be my will, that is, I shall love and will (dispositively and actually) the same that God loveth and willeth (in the measure of a creature, infinitely below him). And if so, 1. How can the will of man have greater honour, than to be the same with the will of God? Assimilation to a king, among us poor mortals, goeth for honour; assimilation to angels is much more. That we shall be like, or equal to, angels, is a high part of the blessed's praise; but how much more is it, to be thus far like to God. Indeed, God's image, and the divine in us here, can be no less than this similitude to God's will in the degree that we have it. But, alas! that degree is so very low, as that we can hardly tell whether our similitude or our dissimilitude be the more; I mean, whether our wills are for more that God willeth, or against more. Oh, how many thousand wishes and desires have we had, which are against the will of God! But there we shall have the full impression of God's will upon our wills, as face answereth face in a glass, or as the wax answereth the seal: as the finger on the outside answereth to the motion of the clock within, so, in

all things which belong to our duty and perfection, we shall answer the will of God. As the echo answereth the voice, defectively, but truly, without contradiction or discord, so will our wills be as the echo of God's will.

2. And then I am sure that there will be nothing in my will but good; for God willeth no evil.

3. And this will be virtually all obedience; for all sin is voluntary, and all moral good is primarily in the will.

4. And then there can be no matter of disquiet in me, but all will be in perfect peace; for all that is like God will be pleasing, both to God and me; no troubling crossness will remain.

5. And how easy and sweet then will all my obedience be, when I shall perfectly will it, without any reluctancy or averseness! All will be my very pleasure that I do.

Sect. 4. II. And seeing my will shall be the same with the will of God, it followeth that it shall never be frustrate, but I shall have all whatsoever I would have, and shall be and do whatsoever I would be and do. For I shall desire nothing but what God willeth, and God's will shall certainly be done. I shall have as much love and joy as I would have; I shall be as happy as I would be; I shall desire nothing for others but it shall be done. Indeed, if God's will were there unknown to me, I might ignorantly go against it, as I do here; but there, before I will or desire any thing, I shall know whether it be God's will or not, so that I shall never wish any thing which shall not be accomplished. And as it is God's perfection to have his will always done, (though all his laws be not obeyed,) so my perfection shall consist in this likeness unto God, that my will shall be still fulfilled. And then Christ's promises will be perfectly performed, "Whatsoever ye ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Ye shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you," John xv. 16; xvi. 23; xiv. 13, 14; xv. 7; while their will was the same with the will of Christ: but he saith not that it shall all be given us here. We ask for perfection, and we shall have it, but not here.

Sect. 5. III. Yea, my will itself shall be my fruition; for it shall not be the will of one in need, a desire of what I want, for I shall want nothing; therefore it is said, that we shall thirst no more: but it will be a complacency in what I do possess, and in this also my perfection will be the image of God's perfection: not but that all creatures still receive from God, and in that sense may be said to need, in that they have nothing of themselves, but all by gift and communication from him; but being still and full possessors, they cannot properly be said to want. Complacency in that which we possess is love and pleasure in one act; and, indeed, pleasure and love are the same thing. To love any thing, is to have that thing to be pleasing to my mind. Even when it is wanted, it is thought on as a pleasing thing, and therefore desired, so that the desiring act of the will is but a second act occasioned by want, and following the first act, which is complacency, or simple love. I desire it because I love it. Rightly, therefore, is the will itself called love, for in the first act, love, will, and rational appetite, are all words of the same signification. My will, therefore, must needs be perpetually full of perfect joy, when enjoying love and pleasure will be my will itself. Thus shall I have in me the spring of living waters, and the Comforter will then perfectly do his work, when my constant will itself shall be comfort. Well, therefore, is glory said to be the perfection of sanctifying grace, when this grace is the beginning of that love and joy which glory is the perfection of; and perfection is the Spirit's work.

Sect. 6. IV. And it will be much of my felicity that my will shall be confirmed and fixed in this conformity to the will of God, and holy love will be its nature. Now both understanding and will are so lamentably mutable, that further than God promiseth to uphold us, we know not one day what we shall think, judge, or will the next. But when love is as a fixed nature in us, we shall be still the same, adhering to amiable goodness, without intermission or cessation. It will be as easy to us (and more) to love God and holiness, as it is to the hungry and thirsty to love meat and drink, or to the proud to love praise or domination, yea, or to any man to love his life. And we shall be no more weary of loving, than the sun is of shining, or than the hungry is of feasting, or a friend of friendly love and converse. Nay, the comparison is quite too low, for all creatures here have a fading vanity which wearieth the satiated or failing appetite, but there is no such thing in heaven.

Sect. 7. II. And as from the nature of that act, so much more from the nature of the object, my love will appear to be my happiness. The objects (which are as the matter of the act) will be these:—

1. God himself will be the full and everlasting object of my love. And he that could but understand as well as those in heaven do, what this word signifieth, to love God, and be beloved of him, would say, that there needs no other description of perfect happiness: perfect, joyful complacency in God is the heaven which I desire and hope for. This is my felicity, and much more. As I am the agent of love to God, and the object of God's love to me, it is my felicity. As God is the ultimate object of my love, and the agent of his love to me, (that is, of the effects of it,) so it is unspeakably more high and excellent than to be my felicity. Love is the closure of the wills of God and man, and as it is God's part or interest, (efficiently or objectively,) it is infinitely more excellent than as it is my part and interest.

Sect. 8. In God there is all that love can desire for its full, everlasting feast. 1. He is infinitely good in himself, that is, most amiable; and the nature of man's will is to love good as good. Could we love God with a love that is adequate to the object, we should be God ourselves, which is impossible: none but God can adequately know God or love him. In God's love to himself, both the act and object are infinite, and, indeed, are both one, there being not that formally which we know by the name of act and object; but act and object are our analogical, inadequate conceptions of that act of God which is his essence. But in our love to God the act is finite, and infinitely below the object; yea, the object, which in reality is itself infinite, yet proximately as the *esse cognitum* is the object of our love, is finite there. It is the conception or idea of God in the intellect, which is the proper and nearest object of the will, and this is as a face in a glass, a shadow, even the finite little shadow of an infinite Being. The same infinite good is a felicity to divers persons in divers degrees, according as they diversely love him, and are receptive of his love.

Sect. 9. 2. God, who is infinitely good in himself, will be that most suitable good to me, and meetest for the dearest embracements of my will. For, I He hath all in himself that I need or can desire. There is no room, nothing above him, or beyond him, or without him, for love to cleave to; though below him the creature, though not being without him, is loved without him, by the deception of the mind.

Sect. 10. 2. He is willing to be loved by me. He disdaineth not my love. He might have refused to be embraced by such affections as have so oft and sinfully polluted themselves by embracing vanity and filth: as persons of state, and stately cleanliness, will not be touched by filthy hands, much less let dogs or dirty swine leap on them which come from wallowing in the mire. God might have driven me away from the happiness of loving him, and have denied me the leave for so high a work; but he commandeth my love, and maketh it my greatest duty. He inviteth and entreateth me, as if he were a gainer by my happiness. He seeketh to me to seek to him, and as he is the first, so is he the most earnest suitor. He is far readier to receive my love than I am to give it him. All the compassionate invitations which I have had from him here, by his word and mercies, assure me that he will there receive me readily; he that so valued my poor, cold, imperfect love to him on earth, will not reject my perfect love in heaven; he that made it the great work of his Spirit to effect it, will not refuse it when it is made perfect by himself.

Sect. 11. 3. And he is near to me, and not a distant God out of my reach, and so unsuitable to my love. Blind unbelievers may dream that he is far off, but he is as near us, even now, as we are to ourselves. He is not far from any of us, for in him we live, and move, and have our being. The light of the sun is not so near my eyes, as God will be for ever to my mind. When he would sanctify us to love him, he bringeth us nigh to him in Christ. As we love ourselves easily as being, as they say, the nearest to ourselves, so we shall as easily love God as ourselves, when we see that he is as near us as we are to ourselves, as well as that he is infinitely more amiable in himself.

Sect. 12. 4. And because of the imparity of the creature and the Creator, he hath provided such means to demonstrate to us his nearness, as are necessary to the exercise of our love. We shall see his glory, and taste his love, in our glorified Mediator, and in the glory of the church and world. God will condescend to show himself to us according to our capacities of beholding him. Here we see him in his works and word, and there we shall see him in the glory of all his perfect works. But this leadeth me to the second object of my love.

Sect. 13. II. Under God, as I shall see, so I shall delightfully love, the glorious perfection of the universe, even the image of God in all the world; as my love will be my delight, so I shall love best that which is best, and most delight in it: and the whole is better than any part; and there is a peculiar beauty and excellency in the whole world, as perfect, compaginate, harmonious, which is not to be found in any part, no, not in Christ himself, as man, nor in his church.

The marvellous inclination that all things have to union, even the inanimates, might persuade me, if I felt it not certainly in myself, that it is most credible that man also shall have the like inclination, and such as is agreeable to the nature of his faculties; and therefore our love and delight in all things is that uniting inclination in man.

Sect. 14. III. And I shall have a special love to the holy society, the triumphant, universal church, consisting of Christ, angels, and saints, as they are specially amiable in the image and glory of God. God himself loveth them more than his inferior works; that is, his essence, which is love, and hath no degrees or change, doth send forth fuller streams of good upon them, or maketh them better and happier than the rest. And my love will imitate the love of God, in my capacity. And if societies on earth, more holy and wise than others, though imperfectly, are very amiable, what then will the heavenly society be? Of this I spake before (of knowing them).

Sect. 15. 1. Think here, O my soul, how sweet a state unto thee it will be to love the Lord Jesus, thy glorified Head, with perfect love! When the glory of God, which shineth in him, will feast thy love with full and everlasting pleasure, the highest created perfection of power, wisdom, and goodness, refulgent in him, will not give leave to thy love to cease, or intermit, or abate its fervour. When thou shalt see in the glorified church the precious fruits of Christ's redemption, grace, and love, this also will feed thy love to him, from whom this heavenly glory cometh. And when thou shalt feel thyself possessed of perfect happiness, by his love to thee, will not this also do its part? Yea, the remembrance of all his former love, what he did for thee, and what he did in thee here on earth, how he called thee with a holy calling; how he washed thee in his blood from all thy sins; how he kindled in thee those desires which tended to that perfect glory; how he renewed thy nature; how he instructed, and guided, and preserved thee from thy childhood; and how many and how great sins, enemies, dangers, and sufferings, he saved thee from; all this will constrain thee everlastingly to love him. Thus, (though he give the kingdom to the Father, as ceasing his mediatory, healing, saving work of acquisition,) he will be to thee the Mediator of fruition. God in him will be accessible, and condescend to a suitable communion with us, John xvii. 24. And as Christ is thy life, radically and efficiently, as he is the giver of grace and Spirit of love, so he will be objectively thy life as he is lovely, and it will be formally thy life to love him, and God in him, for ever.

Sect. 16. 2. Think, also, O my soul, how delectable it will be to love (as well as to know) those angels that most fervently love the Lord! They will be lovely to thee as they have loved thee, and more as they have been lovers and benefactors to the church and to mankind; but far more as they are so many refulgent stars, which continually move and shine, and burn in purest love to their Creator. O blessed difference between that amiable society of holy spirits, and this dark, mad, distracted, wicked world! Here devils tempt me within, and devils incarnate persecute me without. Blaspheming of God, reviling godliness, deriding the sacred Scriptures and sacred exercises, malignant slandering of the servants of God, hating, persecuting, silencing, and saying all manner of evil falsely of them, for their righteousness' sake, while such crimes are pretended, as they once falsely charged on Christ himself. This is the conversation of those that I have long dwelt with in this world: atheism, infidelity, papal church tyranny, bloody wars, destroying the righteous, oppressing the poor, adultery and fornication, stigmatizing perjury, ambition, violence, covetousness, deceit, sottish ignorance, wilfulness in sin, hatred of reproof, revengeful malice; these, and such like, are the fruits of the soil where I have long sojourned (though, through the grace of Christ, among the faithful, there have been better fruits). And is not the company of holy angels better than this? with whom God is all; who are even made up of shining wisdom, and holy love, and beneficent activity; who are the blessed choir that melodiously sing forth the high praises of their Maker; among whom God dwelleth as in his presence-chamber, or his temple, and in whom he taketh his great delight? With these I shall see or hear no evil. No mixture of

fools or wicked ones do pollute or trouble their society. There will be no false doctrine, no evil example, no favouring wickedness, no accusing goodness, no hurtful violence; but holy, powerful, operative love, will be all, and do all, as their very nature, life, and work. And is it not better to be a doorkeeper there, than to dwell in the palaces of wickedness? And is not a day with them better than a thousand here?

Sect. 17. 3. And with the holy angels I shall love holy souls that are made like unto them, and joined with them in the same society; and it is likely with them judge, that is, rule the world. All their infirmities are there put off with the flesh; they also are spirits made up of holy life, and light, and love. There is none of their former ignorance, error, imprudence, selfishness, contentiousness, impatience, or any other troubling, hurtful thing. When I think with what fervent love to God, to Jesus Christ, and to one another, they will be perfectly united there, alas, how sad and how shameful is it, that they should here be prone to disaffections and divisions, and hardly agree to call each other the servants of God, or to worship God in the same assemblies; but the remnants of dividing principles, viz. pride, error, and uncharitableness, will be all left behind. Society with imperfect saints is sweet; the imperfect image of God upon them is amiable; but their frailties here are so vexatious, that it is hard to live with some of them in peace. But perfect love will make them one; and oh, how delightful will that communion of saints be! I can never forget how sweet God hath made the course of my pilgrimage, by the fragrancy and usefulness of his servants' graces; how sweet have my bosom friends been, though mutable! How sweet have the neighbourhood of the godly been! How sweet have the holy assemblies been; and how many hours of comfort have I there had! How profitable have their writings, their conference, and their prayers been! What then will it be, to live in the union of perfect love with perfect saints in heaven for ever, and with them concordantly to love the God of love?

Sect. 18. III. And as the act and the object of love will constitute my felicity, so will my reception from the love of God and his creatures, be sweeter to me than my own activity can be; for it is mutual love that makes it up. I shall not be the fountain of my own delights; nor can I act till I am acted, nor offer any thing to God, but what I have first received from him. And receive I shall abundantly and continually, and from thence shall overflow to God, and receiving and returning are now, and will be, the circular, endless motion, and our true perpetual life and happiness.

Sect. 19. I. All my receivings shall be from God. His love is not a mere immanent will, nor a wish which toucheth not the object; but it is what heat is, in, or from, the sun or fire; it is an efflux of goodness; it is the most powerful, sweet, communicating principle, or work. All love is communicative; but none in comparison of God's; as there is none primitively and simply good but God. How much doth love in the affairs of men! All that is pleasant in the world is it, or its effects. Were it not for sensual love, there would be no generation of man or brutes; God hath made it a generating principle. Hatred causeth not congress, but fighting with, or flying from, one another. Were it not for natural love, mothers would never endure the pain, and trouble, and care, which is necessary to human birth and education; were it not for love, parents would never labour all their lives to leave their children well instructed, and well provided for, when they are gone. My food would not please me did I not love it, and I should neglect it to the neglect of my life. Did I not love my books, and learning itself, I should never have bestowed so much of seventy years in poring on them, and searching for knowledge, as I have done; did I not love my house, my conveniences and necessaries, I should neglect them, and they would be to me of small use; did I not love my friends, I should be less profitable to them, and they to me; did I not love my life, I should neglect it, and never have endured the labour and cost about it as I have done. If a man love not his country, posterity, and the common good, he will be as a burdensome drone in the hive, or as pernicious vermin. What is done in the world that is good, but by love?

And if created love be so necessary, so active, so communicative, how much more will the infinite love of the Creator be! His love is now the life of the world; his love is the life of nature in the living, the life of holiness in saints, and the life of glory in the blessed. In this infinite love it is that I, and all the saints, shall dwell for evermore. And if I dwell in love, and love in me, surely I shall have its sweet and plenteous communication, and shall ever drink of the rivers of pleasure. It is pleasant to nature to be beloved of others, especially of the great, and wise, and good; much more to have all the communications of love, in converse and gifts, in plenty and continuance, which may be still expressing it to our greatest benefit! Had I a friend now that did for me but the hundredth part of what God doth, how dearly should I love him! Think, then, think believingly, seriously, constantly, O my soul, what a life thou shalt live for ever in the presence, the face, the bosom of infinite, eternal love. He now shineth on me by the sun, and on my soul by the Son of righteousness; but it is as through a lantern, or the crevices of my darksome habitation; but then he will shine on me, and in me, openly, and with the fullest streams and beams of love.

Sect. 20. God is the same God in heaven and earth, but I shall not be the same man. Here I receive comparatively little, but live in darkness, doubtful and frequent sorrows, because my receptivity is less; the windows of my soul are not open to his light; sin hath raised clouds, and consequently storms, against my comforts; the entrances to my soul by the straits of flesh and sense are narrow; and they are made narrower by sin than they were by nature. Alas, how often would love have spoken comfortably to me, and I was not at home to be spoken with, but was abroad among a world of vanities, or was not at leisure, or was asleep, and not willing to be awaked! How oft would love have come in and dwelt with me, and I have unkindly shut my doors against him! how oft would he have been with me in secret, where he freely would embrace me, but I had some pleasing company or business which I was loth to leave! how oft would he have feasted me, and had made all ready, but I was taken up and could not come! Nay, when his table hath been spread before me, Christ, grace, and glory have been offered to me, my appetite hath been gone, or dull, and all hath been almost neglected by me, and hath scarce seemed pleasant enough to be accepted, or to call off my mind from luscious poison. How oft would he have shined upon me, and I have shut my windows or mine eyes! He was jealous indeed, and liked not a partner; he would have been all to me, if I would have been all for him; but I divided my heart, my thoughts, my love, my desires, and my kindnesses; and, alas, how much did go besides him, yea against him, to his enemies, even when I knew that all was lost, and worse than lost, which was not his! What

wonder then, if so foolish and unkind a sinner had little pleasure in his love; and if so great ingratitude and neglect of sovereign goodness were punished with such strangeness, and fears, and faintings, as I have long with groans lamented. *Recipitur ad modum recipientis.*

But in heaven I shall have none of these obstructions; all old unkindness and ingratitude will be forgiven; the great Reconciler in whom I am beloved will then have perfected his work; I shall then be wholly separated from the vanity which here deceived me; my open soul will be prepared to receive the heavenly influx; with open face I shall behold the open face of glorifying love; I shall joyfully attend his voice, and delightfully relish the celestial provisions. No disease will corrupt my appetite; no sluggishness will make me guilty again of my old neglects; the love of the Father, by the grace of the Son, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, will have got the victory over all my deadness, folly, and disaffection, and my God-displeasing and self-undoing averseness and enmity will be gone for ever. The perfect love, which God doth first effect in me, will be my everlasting receptivity of the fullest love of God. Benevolent love will make me good; that is, a holy lover of God; and then pleased love will make me his delight, and benevolence will still maintain me in my capacity.

Study this heavenly work of love, O my soul: these are not dead or barren studies, these are not sad, unpleasant studies; it is only love that can relish love and understand it; the will here hath its gust, so like to an understanding, as make some philosophers say, that *voluntas percipit* is a proper phrase. What can poor, carnal worldlings know of glorious love, who study it without love? What sounding brass and tinkling cymbals, a lifeless voice, are they that preach of God, and Christ, and heavenly glory, without love! but gazing upon the face of love in Christ, and tasting of its gifts, and looking up to its glorious reign, is the way to kindle the sacred fire in thee. Look upwards, if thou wouldst see the light that must lead thee upwards. It is not for nothing that Christ hath taught us to begin our prayers with, "Our Father, which art in heaven;" it is fatherly love that must win our hearts, and that must comfort them; and it is in heaven where this is gloriously manifested. As I said before, as the soul is in all the body, but yet understandeth not in the hand as it doth in the head, and rejoiceth not in the foot as it doth in the heart; so God, that is every where, doth not every where glorify his love as he doth it in heaven. Thither, therefore, the mind and eye are even by nature taught to look up as to God, as we look a man in the face when we speak to him, rather than to his feet, though his soul be also there.

My sinful heart hath needed sorrow. My careless, rash, presumptuous soul hath needed fears; and I have had some part of these. Mercy saw it good for me, as necessary to prevent my dangerous deceits and lapses: and oh that in the hour of sensual temptations I had feared more, and departed from evil. But it is holy love that must be my life; or else I am dead notwithstanding fear.

O come, then, and study the life of love. It is more of a holy nature than of art; but yet study must do much to prepare thee to receive it. This is the great use of a heavenly conversation. It is the contemplation, belief, and hope of the glorious state of love hereafter, that must make us like it, and kindle it in us here. The burning-glass must be turned directly to the sun, if you will have it set any thing on fire. There is a carnal or common love to God, which is kindled in men by carnal pleasures; but a holy love, like that in heaven, must be studiously fetched from heaven, and kindled by the foresight of what is there, and what we shall be there for ever. Faith must ascend, and look within the veil. Thou must not live as a stranger to thy home, to thy God, and Saviour, and thy hopes. The fire that must warm thee is in heaven, and thou must come near it, or open thyself to its influence, if thou wilt feel its powerful efficacy. It is night and winter with carnal minds, when it is day and summer with those that set their faces heavenward.

Sect. 21. II. But though all my receivings will be from God, they will not be from him alone. We must live in perfect union also with one another, and with all the heavenly society; and therefore as we must love them all, so shall we be beloved by them all: and this will be a subordinate part of our blessedness. God there will make use of second causes, even in communicating his love and glory.

Sect. 22. 1. The Lord Jesus Christ will not only be the object of our delightful love, but will also love us with an effectual, operative love for ever. His love will be as the vital heat and motion of the heart to all the members, the root of our life and joy. The love of our Redeemer will flow out into us all as the vital spirits, and his face of glory will be the sun of the heavenly Jerusalem, and will shine upon us, and show us God; and in his light we shall have light. Did his tears for a dead Lazarus make men say, Behold, how he loved him! Oh, then, what will the reviving beams of heavenly life make us say of that love which filleth us with the pleasures of his presence, and turneth our souls into joy itself! He comforteth us now by the teaching of his word; but, surely, the fruition of salvation will be more gladdening than the tidings of it. When he that told us of glory, in his gospel, shall give it us, we shall not only believe, but feel that he loveth us.

Sect. 23. Believe, O my soul, thy Saviour's love, that thou mayst foretaste it, and be fit to feel it. We were uncapable, in sinful flesh, of seeing him otherwise than as clothed with flesh, and his consolations were administered by a word of promise suitable to his appearance; but when he withdrew his bodily presence, the Comforter was sent with a fuller consolation. But all that was but the earnest, and the first-fruits, of what he will be to us for ever. Be not seldom, nor unbelieving, nor slight, in the thoughts of thy Saviour's love, for it is he that is the way to the infinite love. Let thy believing be so much of thy daily work, that thou mayst say that he "dwelleth in thy heart by faith," Eph. iii. 17; and that while thou livest here it is Christ that liveth in thee; and that thy life in the flesh is not a fleshly life, but by the faith of the Son of God that hath loved thee, and given himself for thee, Gal. ii. 20. And that though thou see him not, yet, believing, thou lovest him also with unspeakable joy, as believing the unspeakable perfect joy which his love will communicate to thee for ever.

Look upon the sun, and think thus for thyself: how wonderful is the emanation of this sun; its motion, light, and heat, communicated to so many millions of creatures all over the earth, and in the seas! What, if all these beams of light and heat were proportionable beams of perfect knowledge, love, and joy; and that all creatures that are under the sun had, from its influx, as much wisdom, love, and joy, as they have light, heat, and motion? Would not then this earth be a world of angels, and a heaven? Oh what a blessed world would it be; and what a benefactor would the sun be to the world! Why, even such will Jesus Christ be to the celestial

world. He is the Sun of glory. His influence will send forth life, and light, and joyful love upon all the blessed, from the face of God, as the sun sends forth from God its motion, light, and heat, upon this world. Now, therefore, begin, and live upon him: live upon the influence of his grace, his teaching, love-kindling, and quickening grace, that thou mayst have his name and mark, and he may find in thee something of himself, or of his own, when thou comest to his righteous trial. His grace is not in my power, nor at my command. It is not meet it should be so; but he hath not bid me seek and beg in vain. If he had never told me that he will give it me, it is equal to a promise if he do but bid me seek and ask. But I have more. He teacheth me to pray: he maketh my prayers: he writeth me out a prayer-book on my heart: he giveth me desires, and he loveth to be importuned by them: his Spirit is first a Spirit of supplication, and after of consolation, and in both a Spirit of adoption. So far is he from being loth to be troubled with my importunity, that he seeketh to me to seek his grace, and is displeased with me that I will ask and have no more.

All this is true: but how then cometh my soul to be yet so low, so dark, so fond of this wretched flesh and world, and so backward to go home, and dwell with Christ? Alas! a taste of heaven on earth is a mercy too precious to be cast away upon such as have long grieved and quenched the Spirit, and are not, by diligent and patient seeking, prepared to receive it. He that proclaimeth a general peace, will give peace only to the sons of peace. If, after such unkind neglects, such wilful sins as I have been guilty of, I should expect to be suddenly in my Saviour's arms, and to be feasted presently with the first-fruits of heaven, I should look that the Most Holy should too little manifest his hatred of my sin. My conscience remembereth the follies of my youth, and many a later odious sin; and telleth me that if heaven were quite hid from my sight, and I should never have a glimpse of the face of glorious, eternal love, it were but just. I look upward from day to day; I groan to see his pleased face, and better to know my God and my home. I cry to him daily, My God, this little is better than all the pleasures of sin. My hopes are better than all the possessions of this world. Thy gracious looks have oft revived me, and thy mercies have been unmeasurable to my soul and body. But, oh, how far short am I of what, even fifty years ago, I hoped sooner to have attained! Where is the peace that passeth understanding, that should keep my heart and mind in Christ? Oh! where is the seeing, the longing, the rejoicing, and triumphing faith? Where is that pleasant familiarity above, that should make a thought of Christ and heaven to be sweeter to me than the thoughts of friends, or health, or all the prosperity and pleasure of this world? Do those that dwell in God, and God in them, and have their hearts and conversations in heaven, attain to no more clear and satisfying perceptions of that blessed state than I have yet attained? Is there no more acquaintance above to be here expected; no livelier sense of future joys, nor sweeter foretaste; no fuller silencing of doubts and fears? I am not so loth to go to a friend, nor to the bed where I oft spend the night in restless pains and rolling, as I have too often been to come to thee. Alas! how many of thy servants are less afraid to go to a prison than to their God, and had rather be banished to a land of strangers than sent to heaven. Lord, must I, that am called thy child, and an heir of heaven, and a co-heir with Christ, have no more acquaintance with my glorified Lord, and no more love to thee that art my portion, before I go hence, and come before thee? Shall I have no more of the heavenly life, and light, and love? Alas! I have scarce enough in my meditations to denominate them truly heavenly meditations. I have scarce enough in a prayer to make it indeed a heavenly prayer, or in a sermon to make it a heavenly sermon: and shall I have no more when I come to die? Must I go hence so like a stranger to my home? Wilt thou take strangers into heaven, and know them as thine that do not better know thee here? O my God, vouchsafe a sinner yet more of his Spirit that came down on earth to call up earthly minds to God, and to open heaven to all believers! O what do I beg for so frequently, so earnestly, for the sake of my Redeemer, as the Spirit of life and consolation, which may show me the pleased face of God, and unite all my affections to my glorified Head, and draw up this dark and drowsy soul to love and long to be with thee?

But, alas! though these are my daily groans, how little yet do I ascend. I dare not blame the God of love; he is full and willing. I dare not blame my blessed Saviour; he hath showed that he is not backward to do good. I dare not accuse the Holy Spirit; it is his work to sanctify and comfort souls. If I knew no reason of this, my low and dark estate, I must needs conclude that it is somewhat in myself. But, alas! my conscience wants not matter to satisfy me of the cause. Sinful resistance of the Spirit, and unthankful neglects of grace and glory, are undoubtedly the cause. But are they not a cause that mercy can forgive, that grace can overcome? And may I not yet hope for such a victory before I die?

Lord, I will lie at thy doors and groan: I will pour out my moans before thee. I will beg, and whatever thou wilt, do thou with me. Thou describest the kindness of the dogs to a Lazarus that lay at a rich man's door in sores: thou commendest the neighbourly pity of a Samaritan, that took care of a wounded man: thou condemnest those that wilt not show mercy to the poor and needy: thou biddest us to be merciful as our heavenly Father is merciful. If we see our brother have need, and shut up the bowels of our compassion from him, it is because thy love dwelleth not in us: and shall I wait, then, at thy doors in vain, and go empty away from such a God; when I beg but for that which thou hast commanded me to ask, and without which I cannot serve thee, or come to thee, live or die in a habit beseeming a member of Christ, a child of God, and an heir of heaven? O give me the wedding garment, without which I shall but dishonour thy bounteous feast. Let me wear a livery which becometh thy family, even a child of God. How oft hast thou commanded me to rejoice; yea, to rejoice with exceeding and unspeakable joy; and how fain would I in this obey thee! Oh that I had more faithfully obeyed thee in other preparatory duties, in ruling my senses, my fancy, my tongue, and in diligent using all thy talents! Then I might more easily have obeyed thee in this. Thou knowest, Lord, that love and joy are duties that must have more than a command. O bid me do them with an effecting word. How can I rejoice in death and darkness? When the Bridegroom is absent I must fast and mourn. While I look towards heaven but through the crevices of this dungeon flesh, my love and joy will be but answerable to my light. How long is it since I hoped that I had been translated from the kingdom of darkness, and delivered from the power of the prince of darkness, and brought into that light which is the entrance of the inheritance of saints. And yet, alas! darkness, darkness is still my misery. There is light round

about me, in thy word and works, but darkness is within me; and if my eye be dark, the sun will be no sun to me. Alas! my Lord, it is not all the learning in the world; no, not of theology, that consisteth in the knowledge of words and methods, which I can take for the satisfactory, heavenly light. To know what thou hast written in the sacred book, is not enough to make me know my glorified Saviour, my Father, and my home. It must be a light from heaven that must show me heaven, and a light accompanied with vital heat that must turn to love and joy within me. O let me not have only dreaming knowledge of words and signs, but quickening light, to show the things which these words do signify, to my mind and heart. Surely, the faith by which we must live, must be a living faith, and must reach further than to words, how true soever. Can faith live in the dark? What is it but an effect of thine illumination? What is my unbelief but the darkness of my soul? Lord Jesus, scatter all these mists! Make thy way, O thou Sun of righteousness, into this benighted mind! O send thine Advocate to silence every temptation that is against thy truth and thee; and thine Agent to prosecute thy cause against thine enemies and mine, and to be the resident witness of thy verity, and my sonship and salvation. Hearing of thee is not satisfactory to me: it must be the presence and operation of thy light and love, shed abroad by thy Spirit on my heart, that must quiet and content my soul. I confess, with shame, that I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am unworthy to have any glimpse or taste of heaven; but so did many that are now entertained and feasted by thy love in glory.

My Lord, I know that heaven is not far from me: it is not, I believe, one day's or hour's journey to a separated soul. How quick is the communion of my eyes with the sun, that seems far off, and couldst thou not show it me in a moment? Is not faith a seeing grace? It can see the invisible God, the unseen world, the new Jerusalem, the innumerable angels, and the spirits of the perfected just, if it be animated by thine influx; without which it can do nothing, and is nothing. Thou that oft healedst the blind here in the flesh, didst tell us that it is much more thy work to illuminate souls. It is but forgiving all my sins, and removing this film that sin hath gathered, and my illuminated soul will see thy glory. I know that the veil of flesh must be also rent before I shall see thee with open face, and know my fellow-citizens above as I am known. It is not heaven on earth that I am begging for, but that I may see it from mount Nebo, and have the bunch of grapes, the pledge and the first-fruits; that faith and hope which may kindle love and desire, and make me run my race in patience, and live and die in the joy which beseemeth an heir of heaven.

But if my part on earth must be no greater than yet it is, let it make me the wearier of this dungeon, and groan more fervently to be with thee, and long for the day when all my longing shall be satisfied, and my soul be filled with thy light and love.

Sect. 24. And, doubtless, as I shall love the angels and saints in heaven, so I shall some way, in subordination to Christ, be a receiver from them. Our love will be mutual; and which way soever I owe duty, I shall expect some answerable return of benefit. The sun shineth upon the stars, as well as on the earth, and the stars on one another. If angels are greatly useful to me here, it is like they will be much more there, where I shall be a more capable receiver. It will be no diminution to Christ's honour, that he there maketh use of my fellow-creatures to my joy, no more than it is here. The whole creation will be still one compaginated frame; and the heavenly society will for ever retain their relation to each other, and their aptitude and disposition to the duties and benefits of those relations. And as we shall be far fitter for them than here we are, so shall we have far more comfort in them. How gloriously will God shine in the glory of the blessed! How delightful will it be to see their perfection, in wisdom, holiness, love, and concord! What voices they use, or what communication, instead of voices, we shall shortly know; but surely there is a blessed harmony of minds, and wills, and practice. All are not equal; but all accord to love and praise their glorious God, and readily to obey him, and perfectly to love each other. There is no jarring or discordant spirit that is out of tune; no separation or opposition to each other. As God's love in Christ is our full and final happiness, so nature, which hath made us sociable, teacheth us to deire to be loved of each other, but especially by wise and worthy persons. Saints and angels in heaven will love incomparably better than our dearest friends on earth can do, and better than they did themselves when we were on earth; for they will love that best which is best, and where there is most of God appearing; else it were not intellectual love. And therefore they will love us as much better when we come to heaven, as we shall be better. If we go from loving friends on earth, we shall go to them that love us far more. The love of these here doth but pity us in our pains, and go weeping with our carcasses to the grave; but the love of those above will joyfully convoy, or welcome, our souls to their triumphant society. All the holy friends that we thought we had lost, that went before us, we shall find rejoicing there with Christ.

And oh, what a glorious state will be that common uniting and united love! If two or three candles joined together make a greater flame and light, what would ten thousand stars united do? When all the love of angels and saints in full perfection shall be so united, as to make one love, to God that is one, and to one another, who are there all one in Christ; oh what a glorious love will that be! That love and joy will be the same thing; and that one universal love will be one universal joy.

Little know we how great a mercy it is to be here commanded to love our neighbours as ourselves; and much more, to be effectually taught of God so to love one another. And did we all here live in such unfeigned love, we should be like to heaven, as bearing the image of the God of love; but, alas! our societies here are small; our goodness, which is our amiableness, woefully imperfect and mixed with loathsome sin and discord; but there, a whole heaven full of blessed spirits will flame for ever, in perfect love to God, to Christ, and one another.

Go then, go willingly, O my soul! Love joineth with light, to draw up thy desires! Nature inclineth all things unto union: even the lifeless elements have an aggregative motion, by which the parts, when violently separated, do hastily return to their natural adhesion. Art thou a lover of wisdom, and wouldst thou not be united to the wise? Art thou a lover of holiness, and of love itself, and wouldst thou not be united to the holy, who are made of love? Art thou a hater of enmity, discord, and divisions, and a lover of unity here on earth, and wouldst thou not be where all the just are one? It is not an unnatural union to thy loss; nothing shall be taken from thee by it: thou shalt receive by it more than thou canst contribute; it shall not be forced against thy will; it is but a union of minds and wills; a perfect union of loves.

Let not natural or sinful selfishness cause thee to think suspiciously or hardly of it, for it is thy happiness and end. What got the angels that fell to selfishness, from unity? and what got Adam, that followed them herein? The further any man goeth from unity, by selfishness, the deeper he falleth into sin and misery from God. And what doth grace but call us back from sin and selfishness, to God's unity again? Dote not, then, on this dark, divided world. Is not thy body, while the parts by a uniting soul are kept together, and make one, in a better state, than when it is crumbled into lifeless dust? And doth not death creep on thee by a gradual dissolution? Away, then, from this sandy, incoherent state: the further from the centre, the further from unity. A unity indeed there is of all things; but it is one heavenly life and light and love, which is the true felicitating union.

We dispute here whether the aggregative motion of separated parts, (as in *descensu gravium,*) be from a motive principle in the part, or by the attraction of the whole, or by any external impulse. It is like that there is somewhat of all these; but sure the greatest cause is like to do most to the effect. The body of the earth hath more power to attract a clod, or stone, than the intrinsic principle to move it downwards; but intrinsic gravity is also necessary. The superior attractive love and loveliness must do more to draw up this mind to God, than my intrinsic holiness to move it upward; but without this holiness, the soul would not be capable of feeling that attractive influx. Every grace cometh from God, to fit and lead up my soul to God. Faith, therefore, believeth the heavenly state, and love doth, with some delight, desire it, and hope gapeth after it, that I may at last attain it.

They that have pleaded against propriety, and would have all things common in this world, have forgotten that there is a propriety in our present egoity, and natural constitution, which rendereth some accidental propriety necessary to us. Every man hath his own bodily parts, and inherent accidents; and every man must have his own food, his own place, clothing, and acquisitions; his own children, and, therefore, his own wife, &c. But that the greatest perfection is most for community, as far as nature is capable of it, God would show us, in making the first receivers of the extraordinary pourings-out of his Spirit, to sell all, and voluntarily make all common, none saying, This or that is my own; which was not done by any constraining law, but by the law or power of uniting love; they were first all as of one heart and soul, Acts iv. 32.

Take not, then, thy inordinate desire of propriety for thy health, but for thy sickness; cherish it not, and be not afraid to lose it, and measure not the heavenly felicity by it: spirits are penetrable; they claim not so much as a propriety of place, as bodies do. It is thy weakness and state of imperfection now which maketh it so desirable to thee that thy house should be thine, and no one's but thine; thy land be thine, and no one's but thine; thy clothes, thy books, yea, thy knowledge and grace, be thine, and no one's but thine. How much more excellent a state were it, (if we were here capable of it,) if we could say, that all these are as the common light of the sun, which is mine, and every one's as well as mine! Why are we so desirous to speak all languages, but that we might understand all men, and be understood of all, and so might make our sentiments as common as is possible? Whence is it that men are so addicted to talkativeness, but that nature would make all our thoughts and passions as common as it can? And why else are learned men so desirous to propagate their learning, and godly men so desirous to make all others wise and godly? It seemeth one of the greatest calamities of this life, that when a man hath, with the longest and hardest study, attained to much knowledge, he cannot bequeath it, or any part of it, to his heir or any person when he dieth, but every man must acquire it for himself; and when God hath sanctified the parents, they cannot communicate their holiness to their children (though God promise to bless them on their account). Much less can any man make his grace or knowledge common: nature and grace incline us to desire it; but we cannot do it. For this end we talk, and preach, and write; for this end we study to be as plain, and convincing, and moving as we can, that we may make our knowledge and affections as common to our hearers and readers as we can. And oh, what a blessed work should we take preaching and writing for, if we could make them all know but what we know, and love what we are persuading them to love! There would then be no need of schools and universities: a few hours would do more than they do in an age. But, alas! how rare is it for a father of excellent learning and piety, to have one son like himself, after all his industry!

Is not the heavenly communion, then, desirable, where every man shall have his own, and yet his own be common to all others? My knowledge shall be my own, and other men's as well as mine; my goodness shall be my own and theirs; my glory and felicity shall be mine and theirs; and theirs also shall be mine as well as theirs. The knowledge, the goodness, the glory, of all the heavenly society, shall be mine, according to my capacity; grace is the seed of such a state, which maketh us all one in Christ, (neither barbarian nor Scythian, circumcision nor uncircumcision, bond nor free,) by giving us to love our neighbours as ourselves, and to love both our neighbours and ourselves for Christ, and Christ in all: well might Paul say, All things are yours. But it is here but as in the seed; the perfect union and communion is hereafter. Earth and heaven must be distinguished; we must not extend our hopes or pretensions here beyond the capacity of our natures. As perfect holiness and knowledge, so perfect unity and concord, is proper to heaven, and is not here to be expected. The papal pretensions of an impossible union in one governor of all the earth, is the means to hinder that union which is possible. But the state of perfection is the state of perfect union and communion. Hasten then upwards, O my soul, with the ferventest desires, and breathe after that state with the strongest hopes; where thou shalt not be rich, and see thy neighbours poor about thee, nor be poor while they are rich; nor be well while they are sick, or sick while they are well; but their riches, their health, their joy, will be all thine, and thine will be all theirs, as the common light; and none will have the less for the participation of the rest; yea, communion will be part of every one's felicity; it constituteth the very being of the city of God. This celestial communion of saints in one holy church, above what is here to be attained, is now an article of our belief; but believing will soon end in seeing and enjoying.

V. *The constitutive Reasons from the heavenly Life or Practice.*

Sect. I. Seeing and loving will be the heavenly life; but yet it seemeth that, besides these, there will be executive powers, and, therefore, some answerable practice. There are good works in heaven, and far more and better than on earth. For, 1. There will be more vital activity, and, therefore, more exercise

for it; for the power is for action. 2. There will be more love to God and one another; and love is active. 3. There will be more likeness to God and our Redeemer, who is communicative, and doth good, as he is good. 4. Our union with Christ, who will be everlastingly beneficent, as well as benevolent, will make us in our places also beneficent. 5. Our communion in the city of God will prove that we shall all bear our part, as the members of the body, in contributing to the welfare of the whole, and in the common returns to God.

Sect. 2. But what are the heavenly works we must perfectly know when we come thither? In general we know, 1. That they will be the works of love to God and to his creatures; that is, such as love inclineth us to exercise. 2. And they will be works of obedience to God; that is, such as we shall do to please his will, and because he willeth them to be our duty. 3. They will be useful works to others. 4. They will be pleasant to ourselves, and part of our felicity. 5. And they will carry all to God, our end.

Sect. 3. And somewhat of them is particularly described in the holy Scriptures; as, 1. We shall in concord with the whole society, or choir, give thanks and praise to God and our Redeemer, Rev. xix. 5; 1 Pet. iv. 11; Rev. vii. 4; iv. 7, 11; v. 13; vii. 12; xix. 1; Phil. iv. 20. Whether there be any voice, or only such spiritual activity and exultation as to man, in flesh, is not to be clearly understood, is not fit for us here to presume to determine: it will be somewhat more high and excellent than our vocal praise and singing is; and of which this beareth some analogical resemblance or signification. As all passions earnestly desire vent and exercise, so specially do our holy affections of love, joy, and admiration of God Almighty. And there is in us a desire of communion with many in such affections and expressions: methinks when we are singing or speaking God's praise in the great assemblies, with joyful and fervent souls, I have the liveliest foretastes of heaven on earth; and I could almost wish that our voices were loud enough to reach through all the world, and unto heaven itself: nor could I ever be offended (as many are) at the organs, and other convenient music, soberly and seasonably used, which excite and help to tune my soul in so holy a work, in which no true assistance is to be despised. No work more comforteth me in my greatest sufferings, none seemeth more congruous and pleasant to me while I wait for death, than psalms, and words of praise to God; nor is there any exercise in which I had rather end my life: and should I not then willingly go to the heavenly choir, where God is praised with perfect love, and joy, and harmony? Had I more of a praising frame of soul, it would make me long more for that life of praise. For I never find myself more willing to be there than when I most joyfully speak or sing God's praise. Though the dead praise not God in the grave, and dust doth not give him thanks; yet living souls in heaven do it joyfully, while their fleshly clothing turns to dust.

Lord, tune my soul to thy praises now, that sweet experience may make me long to be where I shall do it better! I see where any excellent music is, nature maketh men flock to it; and they that are but hearers, yet join by a concurrent fancy and delight: surely, if I had once heard the heavenly choir, I should echo to their holy songs, though I could not imitate them; and I should think it the truest blessedness to be there, and bear my part. My God, the voice of thy comforting Spirit, speaking thy love effectually to my soul, would make such holy music in me, that would incline me to the celestial concert; and without it all these thoughts and words will be in vain. It is the inward melody of thy Spirit and my conscience, that must tune me to desire the heavenly melody. O speak thy love first to my heart, and then I shall joyfully speak it to my brethren, and shall ambitiously seek that communion of them that praise thee better than sinful, groaning mortals can: and though my sins here make a loathed jar and discord in my songs, I hope my groans for those sins, and their effects, will make no discord: sighs and tears have had the honour to be accepted by thee, who despisest not a contrite soul: but if thy Spirit will sing and speak within me, and help me against the discordant murmurs of my unbelieving heart, and pained flesh, I shall offer thee that which is more suitable to thy love and grace. I confess, Lord, that daily tears and sighs are not unsuitable to the eyes and voice of so great a sinner, who is under thy correcting rod! What better could I expect when I grieved thy Spirit, than that it should prove my grief? Yea, this is far better than the genuine effects of sin. But this is not it that is meetest to be offered to the God of love: he that offereth praise doth glorify thee: and is not this the spiritual sacrifice acceptable through Christ, for which we were made priests to God, 1 Pet. ii. 5. I refuse not, Lord, to lie in tears and groans when thou requirest it; and do not thou refuse those tears and groans; but oh give me better, that I may have better of thine own to offer thee; and by this prepare me for the far better, which I shall find with Christ: and that which is best to us thy creatures will be accepted as best by thee, who art glorified and pleased in the perfection of thy works.

Sect. 4. II. It is, at least, very probable that God maketh glorified spirits his agents and ministers of much of his beneficence to the creatures that are below them. For, 1. We see that where he endueth any creature with the noblest endowments, he maketh most use of that creature to the benefit of others: we shall in heaven be most furnished to do good; and that furniture will not be unused. 2. And Christ tells us that we shall be like, or equal to, the angels; which though it mean not simply and in all things, yet it meaneth more than to be above carnal generation; for it speaketh of a similitude of nature and state as the reason of the other. And that the angels are God's ministers for the good of his chosen in this world, and administrators of much of the affairs on earth, is past all doubt. 3. The apostle telleth us that the saints shall judge the world and angels; and judging in Scripture is oft put for ruling. It is therefore probable, at least, that the devils, and the damned, shall be put under the saints, and that, with the angels, they shall be employed in some ministerial oversight of the inhabitants and affairs of the promised new earth. 4. And when even the more noble superior bodies, even the stars, are of so great use and influx to inferior bodies, it is like that accordingly superior spirits will be of use to the inhabitants of the world below them.

Sect. 5. But I think it not meet to venture here upon uncertain conjectures beyond the revelation of God's word, and therefore shall add no more, but conclude that God knoweth what use to make of us hereafter as well as here, and that if there were no more for us to do in heaven, but with perfect knowledge, love, and joy, to hold communion with God and all the heavenly society, it were enough to attract a sensible and considerate soul to fervent desires to be at home with God.

Sect. 6. And here I must not overpass my rejection of the injurious opinion of too many philosophers

and divines, who exclude all sense and affection from heaven, and acknowledge nothing there but intellect and will: and this is because they find sense and affection in the brutes; and they think that the souls of brutes are but some quality, or perishing temperament, of matter; and, therefore, that sense and affection is in us no better.

Sect. 7. But, 1. What felicity can we conceive of without any affection of delight or joy: certainly bare volition now without these doth seem to be no felicity to us; nor knowledge neither, if there were no delight in knowing.

Sect. 8. 2. Yea, I leave it to men's experience to judge, whether there be now any such thing in us as proper willing, which is not also some internal sense of, and affection to, the good which we will: if it be complacency or the pleasedness of the will, this signifies some pleasure; and love, in the first act, is nothing else but such an appetite: if it be desire, it hath in it a pleasedness in the thing desired, as in *esse cognito*, as it is thought on by us; and what is love without all sense and affection?

Sect. 9. 3. Why doth the Scripture ascribe love and joy to God and angels if there were not some reason for it? Doubtless there is great difference between the heavenly love and joy, and ours here in the body: and so there is also between their knowledge and ours, and their will and ours: but it is not that theirs is less or lower than ours, but somewhat more excellent, which ours giveth us some analogical, or imperfect, formal notion of.

Sect. 10. 4. And what though brutes have sense and affection? doth it therefore follow that we have none now, or that we shall have none hereafter? Brutes have life; and must we therefore have no life hereafter, because it is a thing that is common to brutes? Rather, as now we have all that the brutes have, and more, so shall we then have life, and sense, and affection of a nobler sort than brutes, and more. Is not God the living God? Shall we say that he liveth not because brutes live? or rather, that they live a sensitive life, and man a sensitive and intelleetual, because God is essential, transcendent, infinite life, that makes them live.

Sect. 11. 5. But if they say that there is no sensation or affection but by bodily organs, I answered before to that: the body feeleth nothing at all, but the soul in the body: the soul uniteth itself most nearly to the igneous aerial parts, called the spirits; and in them it feeleth, seeth, tasteth, smelleth, &c. And that soul that feeleth and seeth, doth also inwardly love, desire, and rejoice: and that soul which doth this in the body, hath the same power and faculty out of the body: and if they judge by the cessation of sensation, when the organs are undisposed, or dead, so they might as well conclude against our future intellection and will, whose operation in an apoplexy we no more perceive than that of sense. But I have before showed that the soul will not want exercise for its essential faculties, for want of objects, or bodily organs; and that men conclude basely of the souls of brutes, as if they were not an enduring substance, without any proof or probability: and tell us idle dreams, that they are but vanishing temperaments, &c. which are founded on another dream, that fire (or the motive, illuminative, calefactive cause) is no substance neither: and so our unnatural somatists know none of the most excellent substances, which actuate all the rest, but only the more base and gross, which are actuated by them; and they think they have well acquitted themselves, by telling us of subtle, active matter and motion, without understanding what any living, active, motive faculty or virtue is. And because no man knoweth what God doth with the souls of brutes, (whether they are only one common sensitive soul of a more common body, or whether individuate still, and transmigrant from body to body, or what else,) therefore they make ignorance a plea for error, and feign them to be no substances, or to be annihilated.

Sect. 12. I doubt not but sensation (as is aforesaid) is an excellent operation of the essential faculties of real substances, called spirits; and that the highest and noblest creatures have it in the highest excellency: and though God, that fitteth every thing to its use, hath given, e. g. a dog more perfect sense of smelling than a man, yet man's internal sense is far more excellent than the brutes, and thereby is an advantage to our intellection, volition, and joy here in the flesh: and that in heaven we shall have not less, but more, even more excellent sense and affections of love and joy, as well as more excellent intellection and volition; but such as we cannot now clearly conceive of.

Sect. 13. Therefore there is great reason for all those analogical collections which I have mentioned in my book called "The Saints' Rest," from the present operations and pleasures of the soul in flesh, to help our conceptions of its future pleasures: and though we cannot conclude that they will not unconceivably differ in their manner from what we now feel, I doubt not but feel and rejoice we shall, as certainly as live, and that the soul is essential life, and that our life, and feeling, and joy, will be unconceivably better.

The concluding Application.

Sect. 1. I am convinced that it is far better to depart and be with Christ, than to be here: but there is much more than such conviction necessary to bring up my soul to such desires. Still there resisteth, I. The natural averseness to death, which God hath put into every animal, and which is become inordinate and too strong by sin. II. The remnants of unbelief, taking advantage of our darkness here in the flesh, and our too much familiarity with this visible world. III. The want of more lively foretastes in a heavenly mind and love, through weakness of grace, and the fear of guilt. These stand up against all that is said; and words will not overcome them. What then must be done? Is there no remedy?

Sect. 2. There is a special sort of the teaching of God, by which we must learn "so to number our days as to apply our hearts to wisdom;" without which we shall never, effectually, practically, and savingly, learn either this or any the most common, obvious, and easy lesson. When we have read, and heard, and spoken, and written, the soundest truth and certainest arguments, we know yet as if we knew not, and believe as if we believed not, with a slight and dreaming kind of apprehension, till God, by a special illumination, bring the same things clearly to our minds, and awaken the soul by a special suscitation, to feel what we know, and suit the soul to the truth revealed by an influx of his love, which giveth us a pleasing sense of the amiableness and congruity of the things proposed. Since we separated ourselves from God, there is a hedge of separation between our senses and our understandings, and between our understandings and our wills and affections, so that the communion between them is violated, and we are divided in ourselves by this schism in our faculties. All men still see the demonstrations of divine perfections in the world, and every part thereof; and yet how little is God known! All men may easily know that there is a God, who is almighty, omniscient, goodness itself, eternal, omnipresent, the Maker, Preserver, and Governor of

all, who should have our whole trust, and love, and obedience; and yet how little of this knowledge is to be perceived in men's hearts to themselves, or in their lives to others. All men know that the world is vanity, that men must die, that riches then profit not, that time is precious, and that we have only this little time to prepare for that which we must receive hereafter; and yet how little do men seem to know, indeed, of all such things as no man doubts of. And when God doth come in with his powerful awakening light and love, then all these things have another appearance of affecting reality than they had before; as if but now we began to know them; words, doctrines, persons, things, do seem as newly known to us.

All my best reasons for our immortality and future life are but as the new-formed body of Adam, before God breathed into him the breath of life. It is he that must make them living reasons. To the Father of lights, therefore, I must still look up, and for his light and love I must still wait, as for his blessing on the food which I have eaten, which must concoct it into my living substance. Arguments will be but undigested food, till God's effectual influx do digest them. I must learn both as a student and a beggar; when I have thought, and thought a thousand times, I must beg thy blessing, Lord, upon my thoughts, or they will all be but dulness, or self-distraction. If there be no motion, light, and life here, without the influx of the sun, what can souls do, or receive, or feel, without thy influx. This world will be to us, without thy grace, as a grave or dungeon, where we shall lie in death and darkness. The eye of my understanding, and all its thoughts, will be useless or vexatious to me, without thine illuminating beams. O shine the soul of thy servant into a clearer knowledge of thyself and kingdom, and love him into more divine and heavenly love, and then he will willingly come to thee.

Sect. 3. I. And why should I strive, by the fears of death, against the common course of nature, and against my only hopes of happiness? Is it not appointed for all men once to die? Would I have God to alter this determinate course, and make sinful man immortal upon earth? When we are sinless, we shall be immortal. The love of life was given to teach me to preserve it carefully, and use it well, and not to torment me with the continual, troubling foresight of death. Shall I make myself more miserable than the vegetatives and brutes? Neither they nor I do grieve that my flowers must fade and die, and that my sweet and pleasant fruits must fall, and the trees be unclothed of their beauteous leaves, until the spring. Birds, and beasts, and fishes, and worms, have all a self-preserving fear of death, which urgeth them to fly from danger; but few, if any of them, have a tormenting fear, arising from the forethoughts that they must die. To the body, death is less troublesome than sleep; for in sleep I may have disquieting pains or dreams; and yet I fear not going to my bed. But of this before.

If it be the misery after death that is feared, oh! what have I now to do, but to receive the free, reconciling grace that is offered me from heaven, to save me from such misery, and to devote myself totally to him who hath promised that those that come to him he will in nowise cast out.

Sect. 4. But this cometh by my selfishness. Had I studied my duty, and then remembered that I am not mine own, and that it is God's part, and not mine, to determine of the duration of my life, I had been quiet from these fruitless fears. But when I fell to myself, from God, I am fallen to care for myself, as if it were my work to measure out my days; and now I trust not God as I should do with his own. And had my resignation and devotedness to him been more absolute, my trust in him would have been more easy. But, Lord, thou knowest that I would fain be thine, and wholly thine; and it is to thee that I desire to live; therefore let me quietly die to thee, and wholly trust thee with my soul.

Sect. 5. II. And why should my want of formal conceptions of the future state of separated souls, and my strangeness to the manner of their subsistence and operations, induce me to doubt of those generals, which are evident, and beyond all rational doubting? That souls are substances and not annihilated, and essentially the same, when they forsake the body, as before, I doubt not. Otherwise neither the christian's resurrection, nor the Pythagorean's transmigration, were a possible thing. For if the soul cease to be, it cannot pass into another body, nor can it re-enter into this. If God raise this body, then it must be by another soul. For the same soul to be annihilated, and yet to begin again to be, is a contradiction; for the second beginning would be by creation, which maketh a new soul, and not the same that was before. It is the invisible things that are excellent, active, operative, and permanent. The visible (excepting light, which maketh all things else visible) are of themselves but lifeless dross. It is the unseen part of plants and flowers which causeth all their growth and beauty, their fruit and sweetness. Passive matter is but moved up and down by the invisible active powers, as chess-men are moved from place to place by the gamester's hands. What a loathsome corpse were the world, without the invisible spirits and natures that animate, actuate, or move it! To doubt of the being or continuation of the most excellent, spiritual parts of the creation, when we live in a world that is actuated by them, and where every thing demonstrates them, as their effects, is more foolish than to doubt of the being of these gross materials which we see.

Sect. 6. How oft have I been convinced that there are good spirits with whom our souls have as certain communion, though not so sensible, as our life hath with the sun, and as we have with one another. And that there are evil and envious spirits that fight against our holiness and peace, as certain narratives of apparitions and witches, and too sad experience of temptations, do evince. And the marvellous diversity of creatures on earth, for kind and number; yea, the diversity of stars in heaven, as well as the diversities of angels and devils, do partly tell me, that though all be of one, and through one, and to one, yet absolute unity is the divine prerogative, and we must not presume to expect such perfection as to lose our specific or numerical diversity, by any union which shall befall our souls. Nor can I reasonably doubt that so noble and active a nature as souls dwelling above in the lucid regions, in communion with their like, and with their betters, shall be without the activity, the pleasure, and felicity, which is suitable to their nature, their region, and their company. And my Saviour hath entered into the holiest, and hath assured me that there are many mansions in his Father's house; and that when we are absent from the body, we shall be present with the Lord.

Sect. 7. Organical sight is given me for my use here in the body; and a serpent, or hawk, hath as much or more of this than I have. Mental knowledge reacheth further than sight, and is the act of a nobler faculty, and for a higher use. Though it be the soul itself embodied in the igneous spirits that seeth, yet it is by a higher and more useful faculty that it understandeth: and faith is not an understanding act; it knoweth things unseen, because

they are revealed. Who can think that all believing, holy souls, that have passed hence from the beginning of the world, have been deceived in their faith and hope? and that all the wicked, worldly infidels, whose hope was only in this life, have been the wisest men, and have been in the right? If virtue and piety are faults or follies, and brutish sensuality be best, then why are not laws made to command sensuality, and forbid piety and virtue? To say this, is to deny humanity, and the wisdom of our Creator, and to feign the world to be governed by a lie, and to take the perfection of our nature for its disease, and our greatest disease for our perfection. But if piety and virtue be better than impiety and vice, the principles and necessary motives of them are certainly true, and the exercise of them is not in vain. What abominable folly and wickedness were it to say that the wicked only attain their ends, and that they all lose their labour, and live and die in miserable deceit, who seek to please God in hope of a better life to come, believing that God is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him. Would not this justify the foolish Manichees, that thought a bad God made this world; yea, and would infer that he not only made us for a mischief, but ruleth us to our deceit and hurt, and giveth us both natural and supernatural laws, in ill-will to us, to mislead us to our misery, and to fill our lives with needless troubles. Shall I not abhor every suggestion that containeth such inhuman absurdities as these? Wonderful, that Satan can keep up so much unbelief in the world, while he must make men such fools, that he may make them unbelievers and ungodly.

Sect. 8. III. That my soul is no more heavenly, and my foretaste of future blessedness is so small, is partly the fruit of those many wilful sins by which I have quenched the Spirit that should be my comforter: and it is partly from our common state of darkness and strangeness, while the soul is in flesh, and operateth as the body's form, according to its interest and capacity. Affections are more easily stirred up to things seen, than to things that are both unseen, and known only very defectively, by general, and not by clear, distinct apprehensions. And yet this, oh this, is the misery and burden of my soul! Though I can say that I love God's truth and graces, his work, and his servants, and whatever of God I see in the world, and that this is a love of God in his creatures, word, and works; yet that I have no more desiring and delightful love of heaven, where his loveliness will be more fully opened to my soul, and that the thoughts of my speedy appearing there are no more joyful to me than they are, is my sin, and my calamity, and my shame. And if I did not see that it is so with other of the servants of Christ, as well as with me, I should doubt whether affections, so unproportionable to my profession, did not signify unsoundness in my belief. It is strange and shameful, that one that expecteth quickly to see the glorious world, and to enter the holy, celestial society, should be no more joyfully affected with these hopes, and that I should make any great matter of the pain, and languishing, and perishing of the flesh, when it is the common way to such an end. O hateful sin! that hath so darkened and corrupted souls as to estrange and indispose them to the only state of their hoped happiness. Alas! what did man, when he forsook the love and obedience of his God? How just it is, that this flesh and world should become our prison, which we would make our home, and would not use as our Lord appointed us, as our servant and way to our better state. Though our way must not be our home, our Father would not have been so strange to us in the way, if we had not unthankfully turned away from his grace and love.

Sect. 9. It is to us that know not the mysteries of infinite wisdom, the saddest thought that ever doth possess our minds, to consider that there is no more grace and holiness, knowledge of God, and communion with him in this world. That so few are saints, and those few so lamentably defective and imperfect. That when the sun shineth on all the earth, the Sun of righteousness shineth on so small a part of it, and so few live in the love of God, and the joyful hopes of future blessedness; and those few have so low a measure of it, and are corrupted and troubled with so many contrary affections. Infinite goodness is not undisposed to do good. He that made us capable of holy and heavenly affections, gave us not that capacity in vain; and yet, alas! how little of God and glory taketh up the hearts of men!

But man hath no cause to grudge at God. The devils, before their fall, were not made indefectible; divine wisdom is delighted in the diversity of his works, and maketh them not all of equal excellency. Free-will was to act its part: hell is not to be as good as heaven; and sin hath made earth to be next to hell; so much sin, so much hell. What is sin but a wilful forsaking of God? And can we forsake him, and yet love him, and enjoy his love? God's kingdom is not to be judged of by his gaol or gibbets. We wilfully forsook the light, and made the world a dungeon to ourselves. And, when recovering light doth shine unto us, how unthankfully do we usually entertain it? We cannot have the conduct and comfort of it while we shut our eyes, and turn away. And what though God give not all men an overcoming measure, nor to the best so much as they desire: the earth is but a spot, or print, of God's creation; not so much as an ant hillock to a kingdom, or, perhaps, to all the earth. And who is scandalized because the world hath a heap of ants in it, yea, or a nest of snakes, that are not men? The vast, unmeasurable worlds of light which are above us, are possessed by inhabitants suitable to their glory. A casement, or crevice of light, or a candle, in this darksome world, is an unspeakable mercy; yea, that we may but hear of a better world, and may seek it in hope. We must not grudge that in our prison we have not that presence of our King, and pleasures of the kingdom, as innocent and free subjects have: hope of pardon, and a speedy deliverance, are great mercies to malefactors.

Sect. 10. And if my want of the knowledge and love of God, and joyful communion with the heavenly society, be my prison, and as the suburbs of hell, should it not make me long for the day of my redemption, and the glorious liberty of the sons of God? My true desires of deliverance, and of holiness and perfection, are my evidences that I shall obtain them. As the will is the sinner, so it is the obstinate continuance of a will to sin, which is the bondage, and the cause of continued sin: and a continued hell is continued sin, as to the first part at least. Therefore, they that continue in hell, do continue in a sinning will, and so continue in a love and willingness of so much of hell. So far as God maketh us willing to be delivered from sin, so far we are delivered; and our initial, imperfect deliverance is the way to more. If pains, then, make me groan for ease, and sickness make me wish for health, why should not my remnants of ignorance, unbelief, and strangeness to God, occasion me to long for the day of my salvation? This is the greatest of all my troubles; and should it not, then, be the greatest wearying burden from which I should earnestly desire to be eased? As grace never doth hurt ef-

ficiently, and yet may be ill used, and do hurt objectively, (as to them that are proud of it,) so sin never doth good efficiently, and of itself, and yet objectively may do good; for sin may be the object of grace, and so to use it is not sin. My unbelief, and darkness, and disaffection, and inordinate love of this life, do, of themselves, most hinder my desires of deliverance, and of a better life; but, objectively, what more fit to make me weary of such a grievous state? Were my unbelief and earthly mind predominant, they would chain my affections to this world; or if I were constrainedly weary of a miserable life, I should have no comfortable hopes of a better. But as it is the nature of my sin to draw down my heart from God and glory, it is the nature of my faith, and hope, and love, to carry it upward, and to desire the heavenly perfection; not to love death, but to love that which is beyond it. And have I been so many years in the school of Christ, learning both how to live and die, begging and studying for this grace, and exercising it against this sinful flesh; and shall I now, after all, find flesh more powerful to draw me downward, than faith, hope, and love, to carry my desires up to God?

Sect. 11. O God, forbid! O thou that freely gavest me thy grace, maintain it to the last against its enemies, and make it finally victorious! It came from thee; it hath been preserved by thee; it is on thy side, and wholly for thee. O let it not now fail, and be conquered by blind and base carnality, or by the temptations of a hellish, conquered enemy: without it I had lived as a beast, and without it I should die more miserably than a beast. It is thine image, which thou lovest; it is a divine nature, and heavenly beam. What will a soul be without it, but a dungeon of darkness, a devil for malignity, and dead to holiness and heaven? Without it, who shall plead thy cause against the devil, world, and flesh? Without thy glory, earth is but earth: without thy natural efficacy, it would be nothing: without thy wise and potent ordination, it would be but a chaos: and without thy grace, it would be a hell. O rather deny me the light of the sun, than the light of thy countenance! Less miserable had I been without life or being, than without thy grace. Without thee, and my Saviour's help, I can do nothing; I did not live without thee; I could not pray or learn without thee; I never could conquer a temptation without thee; and can I die, or be prepared to die, without thee? Alas! I shall but say as Philip of Christ, "I know not whither my soul is going, and how then shall I know the way?" My Lord having loved his own in the world, did love them to the end. Thou lovest fidelity and perseverance in thy servants; even those that in his sufferings forsook him and fled, yet are commended and rewarded by Christ, for continuing with him in his temptations, Luke xxii. 28. And wilt thou forsake a sinner in his extremity, who consenteth to thy covenant, and would not forsake thee? My God, I have often sinned against thee, but yet thou knowest I would fain be thine: I have not served thee with the resolution, fidelity, and delight, as such a Master should have been served, but yet I would not forsake thy service, nor change my Master, or my work. I can say, with thy servant Paul, that thou art the God whose I am, and whom I serve: and oh that I could serve thee better! For to serve thee is but to receive thy grace, and to use it for my own and others' good, and so to glorify thee, and please thy will, which, being love itself, is best pleased when we receive and do most good, Acts xxvii. 23. I have not loved thee as infinite goodness, and love itself, and fatherly bounty, should have been loved; but yet I would not forsake thy family. And nothing in this world is more my grief, than that I love thee no more. Forsake not, then, a sinner that would not forsake thee, that looketh every hour towards thee, that feeleth it as a piece of hell to be so dark and strange unto thee, that gropeth, and groaneth, and gaspeth after thee; feeling, to his greatest sorrow, (though thou art every where,) that while he is present in the body, he is absent from the Lord. My Lord, I have nothing to do in this world, but to seek and serve thee. I have nothing to do with a heart and its affections, but to breathe after thee: I have nothing to do with my tongue and pen, but to speak to thee, and for thee, and to publish thy glory, and thy will. What have I to do with all my reputation, and interest in my friends, but to increase thy church, and propagate thy holy truth and service? What have I to do with my remaining time, even these last and languishing hours, but to look up unto thee, and wait for thy grace, and thy salvation? O pardon all my carnal thoughts, and all my unthankful neglects of thy precious grace and love, and all my wilful sin against thy truth and thee; and let the fuller communications of thy forfeited grace now tell me by experience that thou dost forgive me! Even under the terrible law thou didst tell man thy very nature, by proclaiming thy name, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin," Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. And is not the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ revealed in the gospel for our more abundant faith and consolation? My God, I know as I cannot love thee according to thy loveliness, so I cannot trust thee according to thy faithfulness: I can never be sufficiently confident of thy all-sufficient power, thy wisdom, and thy goodness. When I have said, as Psalm lxxvii. 7, "Will the Lord cast off for ever? And will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? Doth his promise fail to generations? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?". Conscience hath replied, that this is my infirmity; I never wanted comfort because thou wantedst mercy, but because I wanted faith and fitness to receive it and perceive it. But hast thou not mercy also to give me, even that fitness, and that faith? My God, all is of thee, and through thee, and all is to thee; and when I have the felicity, the glory of all for ever will be thine. None that trusteth in thee (according to thy nature and promise) shall be ashamed. If I can live and die in trusting in thee, surely I shall not be confounded.

Sect. 12. Why, then, should it seem a difficult question, how I may, willingly, leave this world, and my soul depart to Christ in peace? The same grace which regenerated me, must bring me to my desired end, as the same principle of vegetation which causeth the end, must bring the fruit to sweet maturity. I. Believe and trust thy Father, thy Saviour, and thy Comforter. II. And hope for the joyful entertainments of his love, and for the blessed state which he hath promised. III. And long, by love, for nearer union and communion with him: and thus, O my soul, thou mayst depart in peace.

I. How sure is the promise of God! How suitable to his love, and to the nature of our souls, and to the operations of every grace? It is initially performed here, whilst our desires are turned towards him, and the heavenly seed and spark is here ingenerated in a soul that was dead and dark, and disaffected. Is it any strange thing for fire to ascend? yea, or the fiery principle of vegetation in a tree, to carry up the earthy matter to a great height? Is it

strange that rivers should hasten to the sea? Whither should spirits go, but to the region or world of spirits? And whither should Christ's members and holy spirits go, but to himself, and the heavenly society? And is not that a more holy and glorious place and state than this below? Earth is between heaven and hell; a place of gross and passive matter, where spirits may, indeed, operate upon that which needeth them, and where they may be detained awhile in such operation, or as incorporated forms, if not incarcerated delinquents; but it is not their centre, end, or home. Even sight and reason might persuade me, that all the noble, invisible powers, that operate on this lower world, do principally belong unto a higher; and what can earth add to their essence, dignity, or perfection?

Sect. 13. But why, O my soul, art thou so vainly solicitous to have formal, clear, distinct conceptions of the celestial world, and the individuation and operations of separated souls, any more than of the angels? While thou art the formal principle of an animated body, thy conceptions must be suitable to their present state and use. When thou art possessed of a better state, thou shalt know it as a possessor ought to do; for such a knowledge as thou lookest after, is part of the possession; and to long to know and love, in clearness and perfection, is to long to possess. It is thy Saviour, and his glorified ones, that are comprehensors and possessors; and it is his knowledge which must now be most of thy satisfaction. To seek his prerogative to thyself, is vain, usurping arrogance. Wouldst thou be a God and Saviour to thyself? O, consider how much of the fall is in this selfish care and desire to be as God, in knowing that of good and evil which belongeth not to thee, but to God, to know. Thou knowest, past doubt, that there is a God of infinite perfection, who is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him. Labour more to know thy duty to this God, and absolutely trust him, as to the particularities of thy felicity and reward. Thou didst trust thy parents to provide thee food and raiment, when thou didst but dutifully obey them; though they could have forsaken thee or killed thee every hour, thou didst never fear it. Thou hast trusted physicians to give thee even ungrateful medicines, without inquiring after every ingredient, or fearing lest they should wilfully give thee poison. I trust a barber with my throat; I trust a boatman or shipmaster with my life; yea, my horse, that might cast me; because I have no reason to distrust them, saving their insufficiency and uncertainty, as creatures. If a pilot undertake to bring thee to the Indies, thou canst trust his conduct, though thou know thyself neither the ship nor how to govern it; neither the way nor the place to which thou art conveyed. And must not thy God and Saviour be trusted to bring thee safe to heaven, unless he will satisfy all thy inquiries of the individuation and operation of spirits? Leave unsearchable and useless questions to him that can easily resolve them, and to those to whom the knowledge of them doth belong. Thou dost but entangle thyself in sin and self-vexation, while thou wouldst take God's work upon thee, and wouldst know that for thyself, which he must know for thee. Thy knowledge and care for it did not precede, nor prepare for, thy generation, nor for the motion of one pulse or breath, or for the concoction of one bit of all thy food, or the continuance of thy life one hour; supposing but thy care to use the means which God appointed thee, and to avoid things hurtful, and to beg his blessing. The command of being careful for nothing, and casting all thy care on God, who careth for us, obligeth us in all things that are God's part; and for our souls as well as for our bodies: yea, to trust him with the greatest of our concerns is our greatest duty; supposing we be careful about our own part, viz. to use the means, and obey his precepts. To dispose of a departing soul is God's part, and not ours: oh! how much evil is in this distrustful, self-providing care! If I did but know what I would know about my soul and myself; and if I might but choose what condition it should be in, and be the final disposer of it myself, oh what satisfaction and joy would it afford me! And is not this to be partly a God to myself? Is he not fitter to know, and choose, and dispose of me, than I am? I could trust myself easily, even my wit and will, in such a choice, if I had but power; and cannot I trust God and my Redeemer, without all this care, and fear, and trouble, and all these particular inquiries? If you are convoying your child in a boat, or coach, by water, or by land, and he at every turn be crying out, O father, whither do we go? or, what shall I do? or, I shall be drowned, or fall. Is it not rather his trust in you, than the particular satisfaction of his ignorant doubts, that must quiet and silence him? Be not, then, foolishly distrustful and inquisitive. Make not thyself thy own disquieter or tormenter, by an inordinate care of thy own security. Be not cast down, O departing soul, nor, by unbelief, disquieted within me. Trust in God, for thou shalt quickly, by experience, be taught to give him thanks and praise, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.

Sect. 14. Oh, what clear reason, what great experience, do command me to trust him, absolutely and implicitly to trust him, and to distrust myself!

1. He is essential, infinite perfection, power, wisdom, and love. There is in him all that should invite and encourage rational trust, and nothing that should discourage it.

2. There is nothing in any creature to be trusted, but God in that creature, or God working in and by it. Distrust him, and there is nothing to be trusted. Not the earth to bear me, nor the air to breathe in, much less any mutable friend.

3. I am altogether his own, his own by right, and his own by devotion and consent. And shall I not trust him with his own.

4. He is the great Benefactor of all the world, that giveth all good to every creature, not by constraint, nor by commutation, but as freely as the sun giveth forth its light. And shall we not trust the sun to shine?

5. He is my Father and special Benefactor, and hath taken me into his family as his child. And shall I not trust my heavenly Father?

6. He hath given me his Son as the great pledge of his love, and what, then, will he think too dear for me? Will he not with him give me all things? Rom. viii. 32.

7. His Son came purposely to reveal the Father's unspeakable love, and purposely to save us. And shall I not trust him that hath proclaimed his love and reconciliation by such a messenger from heaven?

8. He hath given me the Spirit of his Son, even the Spirit of adoption, which is the surest character of his child, the witness, pledge, and earnest of heaven, the name and mark of God upon me, holiness to the Lord. And yet shall I not believe his love, and trust him?

9. He hath made me a member of his Son, and so far already united me to him. And will he not take care of the members of his Son? Will he lose those that are given him? Is not Christ to be trusted with his members?

10. I am his interest, and the interest of his Son;

freely beloved; dearly bought! for whom so much is suffered and done, that he is pleased to call us his peculiar treasure. And may I not trust him with his dear-bought treasure?

11. He hath stated me in a relation to angels, who rejoiced at my repentance, and to the heavenly society, which shall not miss the smallest part. Angels shall not lose their joy, nor ministration.

12. He is in covenant with me; even the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. He hath given me many great and precious promises, and shall I fear lest he will break his word or covenant?

13. My Saviour is the forerunner, entered into the holiest, and there appearing and interceding for me. And this after he had conquered death, and risen again to assure me of a future life, and ascended into heaven, to show us whither we must ascend; and that after these comfortable words, "Say to my brethren, I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God," John xx. 17. And shall I not follow him through death, and trust such a Guide and Captain of my salvation?

14. He is there to prepare a place for me, and will take me to himself. And may I not confidently expect it?

15. He told a malefactor on the cross, that he should be that day with him in paradise, to tell believing sinners what they may expect.

16. The church, by the article of his descent into hell, hath signified their common belief that his separated soul had its subsistence and operation, and did not sleep or perish, to tell us the immortality of separated souls.

17. His apostles, and other servants, have on earth served him with all these expectations.

18. The spirits of the perfected just are now in possession of what I hope for. And I am a follower of them who, by faith and patience, have attained the promised felicity. And may I not trust him to save me, who hath already saved millions in this way, when I could trust a ferryman to pass me over a river, that had safely passed over thousands before me? or I could trust a physician who cureth all that he undertaketh of the same disease.

19. I must be at his disposal whether I will or not. I shall live while he will, and die when he will, and go whither he will. I may sin, and vex my soul with fears, and cares, and sorrows, but I shall never prevail against his will.

20. Therefore, there is no rest for souls but in the will of God. That will created us, and that will did govern us, and that will shall be fulfilled on us. It was our efficient and our regent cause, and it shall be our end. Where else is it that we should rest? in the will of men, or angels, or in our own wills? All creatures are but creatures, and our own wills have undone us; they have misgoverned us, and they are our greatest enemies; our disease, our prison, and our death, till they are brought over to the will of God. Till then they are like a foot out of joint; like a child or subject in rebellion. There is no rectitude or health, no order, no peace or true felicity, but in the conformity of our wills to the will of God. And shall I die in distrustful striving against his will, and desiring to keep up my own before it?

21. What abundant experience have I had of God's fidelity and love! And after all this shall I not trust him? His undeserved mercy gave me being; it chose my parents; it gave them a tender love to me, and desire of my good; it taught them to instruct me early in his word, and to educate me in his fear; it chose me suitable company and habitation; it gave me betimes a teachable ingeny; it chose my schoolmasters; it brought to my hands many excellent and suitable books; it gave me some profitable, public teachers; it placed me in the best of lands on earth, and I think in the best of ages which that land had seen; it did early destroy all great expectations and desires of the world, teaching me to bear the yoke from my youth, and causing me rather to groan under my infirmities, than to fight with strong and potent lusts; it chastened me betimes, but did not destroy me. Great mercy hath trained me up all my days, since I was nineteen years of age, in the school of affliction, to keep my sluggish soul awake in the constant expectations of my change, and to kill my pride and overvaluing of this world, and to lead all my studies to the most necessary things, and as a spur to excite my soul to seriousness, and especially to save me from the supine neglect and loss of time. Oh! what unspeakable mercy hath a life of constant but gentle chastisement proved to me! It urged me, against all dull delays, to make my calling and election sure, and to make ready my accounts, as one that must quickly give them up to God. The face of death, and nearness of eternity, did much convince me what books to read, what studies to prefer and prosecute, what company and conversation to choose. It drove me early into the vineyard of the Lord, and taught me to preach as a dying man to dying men. It was divine love and mercy which made sacred truth so pleasant to me, that my life hath been (under all my infirmities) almost a constant recreation and delight, in its discoveries, contemplation, and practical use. How happy a teacher have I had! What excellent help, and sweet illumination! How far beyond my expectation hath divine mercy encouraged me in his sacred work! How congruously did he choose every place of my ministration and habitation to this day, without my own forecast or seeking! When, and where, since he first sent me forth, did I labour in vain? How many are gone to heaven, and how many are in the way, to whom he hath blessed the word, which, in weakness I did, by his grace and providence, deliver! Many good christians are glad of now and then an hour's time to meditate on God's word, and recreate themselves in his holy worship; but God hath allowed and called me to make it the constant business of my life. My library hath afforded me both profitable and pleasant company and help, at all times, whenever I would use them. I have dwelt among the shining lights, which the learned, wise, and holy men of all ages have set up, and left to illuminate the world. How many comfortable hours have I had in the society of living saints, and in the love of faithful friends! How many joyful days have I had in the solemn assemblies, where God hath been worshipped in seriousness and alacrity, by concordant (though imperfect) saints! where the Spirit of Christ hath manifested his presence, by helping myself and my brethren in speaking, and the people in ready, delightful hearing, and all of us in loving and gladly receiving his doctrine, covenant, and laws! How unworthy was such a sinful worm as I, (who never had any academical helps, nor much from the mouth of any teacher,) that books should become so great a blessing to me; and that, quite beyond my own intentions, God should induce or constrain me to provide any such like helps for others! How unworthy was I to be kept from the multiplied snares of sects and errors which reigned in this age, and to be used as a means for other men's preservation and reduction; and to be kept in a love of unity and peace! How unworthy was I that God should make known to me so much of his reconciling truth, while extremes did round about prevail, and were commended to the churches

by the advantages of piety on one side, and of worldly prosperity and power on the other: and that God should use me above forty years in so comfortable a work as to plead and write for love, peace, and concord, and to vouchsafe me so much success therein as he hath done, notwithstanding the general prevalency of the contentious military tribe. Mercy I have had in peace, and liberty in times of violence; and mercy I have had in wars, living two years in safety in the city of defence, in the very midst of the land, (Coventry,) and seeing no enemy while the kingdom was in wars and flames; and only hearing of the common calamities round about: and when I went abroad and saw the effects of human folly and fury, and of God's displeasure, he mercifully kept me from hurting any one, and being hurt by any. How many a time hath he preserved me by day and night in difficulties and dangers, from the malice of Satan, and from the wrath of man, and from accidents which threatened sudden death! while I beheld the ruins of towns and countries, and the fields covered with the carcasses of the slain, I was preserved, and returned home in peace. And oh, how great was the mercy which he showed me, in a teachable, tractable, peaceable, humble, unanimous people! so many in number, and so exemplary in quality; who to this day keep their integrity and concord, when violence hath separated me from them above thirty years: yea, the like mercy of acceptance and success beyond my expectation, he hath showed me every where: I have had opportunity of free ministration; even where there were many adversaries I have had an open door; in the midst of human wrath and rage he hath preserved my liberty beyond expectation, and continued my acceptance and success. When I might not speak by voice to any single congregation, he enabled me to speak by writing to many; and for the success of my plainest and popular writings, which cost me least, I can never be sufficiently thankful; some of which he sent to preach abroad, in other languages, in foreign lands. When my mouth, with eighteen hundred or two thousand more, had been many years stopped, he hath since opened them in some degree; and the sufferings intended us by men, have been partly put by, and partly much alleviated, by his providence; and the hardness of our terms hath not so much hindered the success of faithful labours as we feared, and as others hoped it would have done. I have had the comfort of seeing some peace and concord, and prosperity of truth and piety, kept up, under the utmost opposition of diabolical and human power, policy, and wrath: when I have been sent to the common jail for my service and obedience to him, he hath there kept me in peace, and soon delivered me. He hath made the mouths of my greatest enemies, who have studied my defamation and my ruin, to become my witnesses and compurgators, and to cross their own designs. How wonderful is it that I should so long dwell in so much peace, in the midst of those that seemed to want neither power nor skill, and much less will, to tread me down into contempt and misery! And, oh! how many a danger, fear, and pain hath he delivered this frail and languishing body from! How oft hath he succoured me, when flesh, and heart, and art have failed! He hath cured my consuming coughs, and many a time stayed my flowing blood: he hath eased my pained limbs, and supported a weary, macerated skeleton: he hath fetched me up from the jaws of death, and reversed the sentence which men have passed on me. How many thousand weary days have been sweetened with his pleasant work; and how many thousand painful, weary nights have had a comfortable morning! How many thousand strong and healthful persons have been taken away by death, whilst I have been upheld under all this weakness! Many a time have I cried to the Lord in my trouble, and he hath delivered me out of my distress. I have had fifty years added to my days since I would have been full glad of Hezekiah's promise of fifteen. Since the day that I first preached his gospel, I expected not, of long time, to live above a year; and I have lived since then fifty years. When my own prayers were cold and unbelieving, how many hundreds have prayed for me! And what strange deliverances, encouraging fasting and prayer, have I oft had, upon their importunate requests! My friends have been faithful, and the few that proved unfaithful have profitably taught me to place no confidence in man, and not to be inordinately affected to any thing on earth; for I was forsaken by none of them, but those few that I excessively valued and overloved. My relations have been comfortable to me, contrary to my deserts, and much beyond my expectations. My servants have been faithful: my neighbours have been kind: my enemies have been impotent, harmless, or profitable: my superiors have honoured me by their respectful words; and while they have afflicted me, as supposing me a *remora* to their designs, they have not destroyed but protected me. To my inferiors, God hath made me, in my low capacity, somewhat helpful. I have been protected in ordinary health and safety, when the raging pestilence came near my habitation, and consumed a hundred thousand citizens: my dwelling hath been safe when I have seen the glory of the land in flames, and after beheld the dismal ruins. When violence separated me from my too much beloved library, and drove me into a poor and smoky house, I never had more help of God, nor did more difficult work than there. What pleasant retirements and quietness in the country have been the fruits of persecuting wrath! And I must not forget, when I had more public liberty, how he saved me and all my hearers, even by a wonder, from being buried in the ruins of the fabric where we were; and others, from the calamities, scandal, and lamentations, which would else have followed: and it is not a mercy to be extenuated, that when the tongues and pens of all sects among us, and of proud self-exalters, and of some worthy, pious, differing brethren, have been long and vehemently bent against me, when my infamy hath been endeavoured, by abundance of volumes, by the backbiting of angry dividers of all sorts, and by the calumniating accusations of some that were too high to be gainsaid, and would not endure me to answer them, and vindicate my innocency; yet, all these together were never able to fasten their accusations, and procure any common belief, nor to bring me under the designed contempt, much less to break my comforts, encouragements, or labours.

These, all these, and very many more than these, are my experiences of that wondrous mercy which hath measured my pilgrimage, and filled up my days. Never did God break his promise with me; never did he fail me, nor forsake me. Had I not provoked him by rash and wilful sinning, how little interruption of my peace and comforts had I ever been likely to have had! And shall I now distrust him at the last? Shall I not trust, and quietly trust that infinite wisdom, love, and power, whom I have so long trusted and found so good?

Nature teacheth man to love best those animals that are tame and tractable, that trust us and love us, that will come to our hands, and love our company, that will be familiar with us, and follow us,

be it horse or dog, beasts or birds: but those that are wild and live in woods, and fly from the face of man, are taken to be the game and prey of any one that can catch and kill them. And shall my foolish soul thus wildly fly from the face of God? Shall his children be like the fearful hare, or like a guilty Cain, or like an unbelieving Sadducee, that either believeth not, or hopeth not for, the forgiveness of sin, and the life everlasting? Doth not the Spirit of adoption incline us to love our Father's presence, and to be loth to be long from home? To distrust all creatures, even thyself, is not unreasonable; but to distrust God hath no just excuse. Fly from sin, from Satan, from temptations, from the world, from sinful flesh, and idol self; but fly not from him that is goodness, love, and joy itself. Fear thine enemy, but trust thy Father. If thy heart be reconciled to him and his service, by the Spirit, he is certainly reconciled to thee through Christ: and if he be for thee, and justify and love thee, who shall be against thee, or condemn thee, or separate thee from his love? If thy unreconciled will do make thee doubt of his reconciliation, it is time to abhor and lay by thy enmity. Consent, and be sure that he consenteth. Be willing to be his, and in holiness to serve him, and to be united in joyful glory to him; and then be sure that he is willing to accept thee, and receive thee to that glory. O dark and sinful soul! how little dost thou know thy friend, thyself, or God, if thou canst more easily and quietly trust thy life, thy soul, and hopes to the will of thy friend, or of thyself, if thou hadst power, than to the will of God. Every dog would be at home, and with his master; much more every ingenuous child with his father: and though enemies distrust us, wife and children will not do so, while they believe us just. And hath God ever showed himself either unfaithful or unmerciful to me?

To thee, O Lord, as to a faithful Creator, I commit my soul, 1 Pet. iv. 19. I know that thou art the faithful God, who keepest covenant and mercy with them that love thee and keep thy commandments, Deut. vii. 9. Thou art faithful who hast called me to the communion of thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord, 1 Cor. i. 9. Thy faithfulness hath saved me in and from temptation, 1 Cor. x. 13; it hath stablished me, and kept me from prevailing evil, 2 Thess. iii. 3; and it will keep my spirit, soul, and body to the coming of Christ, 1 Thess. v. 23, 24. It is in faithfulness that thou hast afflicted me, Psal. cxix. 75; and shall not I trust thee, then, to save me? It is thy faithful word, that all thine elect shall obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory; and if we be dead with him, shall live with him, and if we suffer, we shall also reign with him, 2 Tim. ii. 11, 12.

To thee, O my Saviour, I commit my soul: it is thine own by redemption; it is thine own by covenant; it is marked and sealed by thy Spirit as thine own, and thou hast promised not to lose it, John vi. 39. Thou wast made like us thy brethren, that thou mightest be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for our sins. By thy blood we have boldness to enter into the holiest, even by the new and living consecrated way. Cause me to draw near with a sincere heart, in full assurance of faith, by thee that art the High Priest over the house of God, for he is faithful that hath promised life through thee, Heb. xix. 20—23. Thy name is faithful and true, Rev. xix. 11; and faithful and true are all thy promises, Rev. xxii. 6; xxi. 5. Thou hast promised rest to weary souls that come to thee, Matt. xi. 28; 2 Thess. i. 7. I am weary of suffering, and weary of sin; weary of my flesh, and weary of my darkness, and dulness, and distance, and of this wicked, blind, unrighteous, and confounded world: and whither should I look for rest but home to my heavenly Father and to thee? I am but a bruised reed, but thou wilt not break me; I am but a smoking flax, but thou wilt not quench what thy grace hath kindled; but thou, in whose name the nations trust, wilt bring forth judgment unto victory, Matt. xii. 20, 21. The Lord redeemeth the souls of his servants, and none of them that trust in thee shall be desolate, Psal. xxxiv. 22. Therefore will I wait on thy name, for it is good, and will trust in the mercy of God for ever, Psal. lii. 8, 9. The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble, and he knoweth them that trust in him, Nahum i. 7. Sinful fear is a snare; but he that putteth his trust in the Lord shall be set on high, Prov. xxix. 25. Blessed is the man that maketh the Lord his trust, and respecteth not the proud, and such as turn aside to lies, Psal. xl. 4. Thou art my hope, O Lord God, thou art my trust from my youth. By thee have I been holden up from the womb, and my praise shall be continually of thee. Cast me not off now in the time of age. Forsake me not when my strength faileth; O God, thou hast taught me from my youth, and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works. Now, also, when I am old and grey, O God, forsake me not, Psal. xvii. 5, 6, 9, 17, 18. Leave not my soul destitute; for mine eyes are toward thee, and my trust is in thee, Psal. xiv. 8. I had fainted unless I had believed, to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living; even where they that live shall die no more. The sun may cease to shine on man, and the earth to bear us; but God will never cease to be love, nor to be faithful in his promises. Blessed be the Lord, who hath commanded me so safe and quieting a duty as to trust him, and cast all my cares on him, as on one that hath promised to care for me!

II. And blessed be God, who hath made it my duty to hope for his salvation. Hope is the ease, yea, the life of our hearts, that else would break, yea, die within us: despair is no small part of hell: God cherisheth hope as he is the lover of souls. Satan, our enemy, cherisheth despair, when his way of blind presumption faileth. As fear is a foretaste of evil, before it is felt; so hope doth anticipate, and foretaste salvation, before it is possessed. It is then worldly hypocrites' hope that perisheth, for all that hope for true or durable happiness on earth, in the pleasures of this perishing flesh, must needs be deceived. But happy is he who hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God, which made heaven and earth, which keepeth truth for ever, Psal. cxlvi. 5, 6. Woe to me, were my hope only in the time and matters of this fleshly life! 1 Cor. xv. 19; but the righteous hath hope in his death, Prov. xiv. 32; and hope maketh not ashamed, Rom. v. 5. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, whose hope the Lord is, Jer. xvii. 7. Lay hold then, O my soul, upon the hope which is set before thee, Heb. vi. 18; it is thy firm and stedfast anchor, (ver. 19,) without it thou wilt be as a shipwrecked vessel. Thy foundation is sure; it is God himself; our faith and hope are both in God, 1 Pet. i. 21. It is Jesus our Lord who is risen from the dead, and reigneth in glory, Lord of all, 1 Tim. i. 1. Yea, it is the Christ, who by faith doth dwell within us, who is our hope of glory, Eph. iii. 17; Col. i. 27. In this hope, which is better than the law that Moses gave, it is that we draw nigh to God, Heb. vii. 19; it is the Holy Ghost that is both our evidence, and the efficient of our hope, Gal. v. 5; Rom. viii. 16, 23. By him we hope for that which we see

not, and therefore wait in patience for it, ver. 24, 25; by hope we are saved. It is an encouraging grace which will make us stir, whenas despair doth kill endeavours: it cureth sloth, and makes us diligent and constant to the end, and by this doth help us to full assurance, Heb. vi. 11, 12. It is a desiring grace, and would fain obtain the glory hoped for. It is a quieting and comforting grace, Rom. xv. 4. The God of hope doth fill us with joy and peace in believing, that we may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost, ver. 13. Shake off despondency, O my soul, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God, Rom. v. 2. Believe in hope, though dying flesh would tell thee that it is against hope, Rom. iv. 18. God, that cannot lie, hath confirmed his covenant by his immutable oath, that we might have strong consolation who are fled for refuge to the hope which is set before us, Heb. vi. 18. What blessed preparations are made for our hope! and shall we now let the tempter shake it, or discourage it? The abundant mercy of God the Father hath begotten us again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Christ, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us, 1 Pet. i. 3. Grace teacheth us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this world, as looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour, Tit. ii. 12, 13. We are renewed by the Holy Ghost, and justified by grace, that we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life, Tit. iii. 6, 7. We are illuminated, that we may know the hope of Christ's calling, and what is the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, Eph. i. 18, 19. The hope that is laid up for us in heaven, is the chief doctrine of the gospel, which bringeth life and immortality into clearer light, Col. i. 5; 2 Tim. i. 10. It is for this hope that we keep a conscience void of offence, and that God is served in the world, Acts xxiv. 15, 16; xxvi. 7: wherefore gird up the loins of thy mind; put on this helmet, the hope of salvation, 1 Thess. v. 8; and let not death seem to thee as it doth to them that have no hope, 1 Thess. iv. 13. The love of our Father, and our Saviour, have given us everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace, to comfort our hearts, and stablish them in every good word and work, 2 Thess. ii. 16, 17. Keep, therefore, the rejoicing of hope, firm to the end, Heb. iii. 6. Continue grounded and settled in the faith, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, Col. i. 23; 1 Pet. i. 13. And now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee, Psal. xxxix. 7. Uphold me according to thy word, that I may live; and let me not be ashamed of my hope, Psal. cxix. 116. Though mine iniquities testify against me, yet, O thou that art the hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in the time of trouble, be not as a stranger to my soul, Jer. xiv. 7, 8. Thy name is called upon by me, O, forsake me not! ver. 9. Why have our eyes beheld thy wonders, and why have we had thy covenant, and thy mercies, but that we might set our hope in God, Psal. lxxviii. 5, 7. Remember the word to thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope, Psal. cxix. 49. If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquity, O Lord, who should stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared. I wait for the Lord; my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope: I will hope in the Lord, for with him there is mercy and plenteous redemption, Psal. cxxx. 3—5, 7. For he taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy, Psal. cxlvii. 11. Though flesh and heart fail, the Lord is the rock of my heart; he is my portion, saith my soul, therefore will I hope in him. The Lord is good to them that wait for him; to the soul that seeketh him. It is good that I should both hope, and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord. It is good for me that I have borne the yoke in my youth, and that I keep silence, and put my mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope, Psal. lxxiii. 26; Lam. iii. 24—27, 29.

God need not flatter such worms as we, nor promise us that which he never meaneth to perform. He hath laid the rudiments of our hope, in a nature capable of desiring, seeking, and thinking of another life: he hath called me by grace, to actual desires and endeavours; and some foretaste he hath vouchsafed. I look for no heaven, but the perfection of divine life, light, and love, in endless glory with Christ and his holy ones. And this he hath begun in me already; and shall I not boldly hope when I have the capacity, the promise, and the earnest and foretaste? Is it not God himself that hath caused me to hope? Was not nature, promise, and grace from him? And can a soul miscarry, and be deceived, that departeth hence in a hope of God's own causing, and encouraging? Lord, I have lived in hope, I have prayed in hope, I have laboured, suffered, and waited in hope; and, by thy grace, I will die in hope. And is not this according to thy word and will? And wilt thou cast away a soul that hopeth in thee, by thine own command and operation? Had wealth and honour, or continuance on earth, or the favour of man, been my reward and hope, my hope and I had died together. Were this our best, how vain were man! But the Lord liveth, and my Redeemer is glorified, and intercedeth for me; and the same Spirit is in heaven, who is in my heart, (as the same sun is in the firmament which is in my house,) and the promise is sure to all Christ's seed. And millions are now in heaven, that once did live and die in hope; they were sinners once, as now I am; they had no other Saviour, no other Sanctifier, no other promise, than I now have; confessing that they were strangers here, they looked for a better country, and for a city that had foundations, even a heavenly, where now they are: and shall I not follow them in hope that have sped so well? Hope then, O my soul, unto the end, 1 Pet. i. 13. From henceforth, and for ever, hope in the Lord, Psal. cxxxi. 13. I will hope continually, and will yet praise thee more and more; my mouth shall show forth thy righteousness and salvation, Psal. lxxi. 14, 15. The Lord is at my right hand; I shall not be moved. My heart, therefore, is glad, and my glory rejoiceth; my flesh also shall dwell confidently, and rest in hope: for God hath showed me the path of life: in his presence is fulness of joy, and at his right hand are pleasures for evermore, Psal. xvi. 8—11.

III. What then remaineth, O my soul, but that, in trust and hope, thou love thy God, thy Saviour, thy Comforter, the glorious society, thy own perfection in glorious, endless, heavenly life, and light, and love, and the joyful praises of Jehovah, better than this burden of painful and corruptible flesh, and this howling wilderness, the habitation of serpents and untamed brutes, where unbelief and murmuring, lust and folly, injustice and uncharitableness, tyranny and divisions, pride and contention, have long provoked God, and wearied thee; where the vintage and harvest is thorns and thistles, sin and sorrows, cares and crosses, manured by manifold temptations? How odious is that darkness and unbelief, that unholiness and disaffection, that deadness and stupidity, which maketh such a work as this, so reasonable, necessary, and pleasant a work, to seem unsuitable or hard! Is it unsuitable or hard to the eye, to see the sun and

light; or by it to see the beautified world? or for a man to love his life or health, his father, or his friend? What should be easier to a nature that hath rational love, than to love him that is essential love itself. He that loveth all, and giveth to all the loving faculty, should be loved by all; and he that hath specially loved me, should be specially loved by me.

Love is the perfection of all thy preparations. It desireth to please God, and therefore to be in the most pleasing state, and freed from all that is displeasing to him, which is not to be hoped for on earth. It desireth all suitable nearness, acquaintance, union, and communion. It is weary of distance, estrangedness, and alien society and affairs. It taketh advantage of every notice, intimation, or mention of God, to renew and exercise these desires. Every message and mercy from him is fuel for love, and, while we are short of perfection, stir up our desires after more. When love tasteth of the grapes, it would have the vine. When it tasteth of the fruits, it would dwell where they grow, and possess the land. Its thoughts of proximity and fruition are sweet; no other person or thing can satisfy it. The soul is where it loveth. If our friend dwell in our hearts by love, and if fleshly pleasure, riches, and honour, do dwell in the heart of the voluptuous, the covetous, and the proud, surely God and our Redeemer, the heavenly society, holiness, and glory, do dwell in the heart which loveth them with a fervent love. And if heaven dwell in my heart, shall I not desire to dwell in heaven? Light and light, fire and fire, are not more inclined to union than love and love, gracious love and glorious love. Would divine, original, universal love communicate and pour out itself more plentifully upon my heart, how easy would it be to leave this flesh and world, and to hear the sentence of my departure to my God! Death and the grave would be but a triumph for victorious love. It would be easier to die in peace and joy, than to rest at night, or to come home from my travel to my beloved friends, or to go, when I am hungry, to a feast. A little love hath made me study willingly, and preach willingly, and write willingly, yea, and suffer somewhat willingly; and would not more make me go more willingly to God? Shall the imagination of house, gardens, walks, libraries, prospects, meadows, orchards, hills, and rivers, allure the desires of deceived minds? And shall not the thoughts of the heavenly mansions, society, and delights, much more allure and draw up my desires? The reading of a known fiction of a *Civitas Solis*, an *Utopia*, an *Atalantis*, &c. hath pleased many: but if I did believingly hear of such a country in the world, where men did never die, nor were sick, or weak, or sad; where the prince was perfectly just and pious, wise and peaceable, devoted to God and the public good; and the teachers were all wise, judicious men, of universal certain knowledge, perfectly acquainted with the matter and method of natural and theological truths, and all their duty, and all of one mind, and of one heart, and tongue, and practice, loving each other, and the people as themselves, and leading the flocks heavenward, through all temptations, with triumphant hopes and joy; where all the people perfectly obeyed God, their commanders, and their teachers, and lived in perfect love, unity, and peace, and were daily employed in the joyful praises of God, and hopes of glory, and in doing all possible good to one another, contending with none through ignorance, uncharitableness, or pride, nor ever reproaching, injuring, or hurting one another, &c.; I say, if I knew or heard of such a country, should I not love it before I ever see it, and earnestly desire to be there? Nay, do I not overlove this distracted world, where tyranny sheddeth streams of blood, and layeth desolate cities and countries, and exposeth the miserable inhabitants to lamentable distress and famine; where the same tyranny sets up the wicked, reproacheth and oppresseth the just and innocent, keepeth out the gospel, and keepeth up idolatry, infidelity, and wickedness, in the far greatest part of all the earth; where Satan chooseth pastors too often for the churches of Christ, even such as by ignorance, pride, sensuality, worldliness, and malignity, become thorns and thistles, yea, devouring wolves, to those whom they should feed and comfort; where no two persons are in all things of a mind; where evil is commended, and truth and goodness accused and oppressed, because men's minds are unacquainted with them, or unsuitable to them; and those that are the greatest pretenders to truth do most eagerly contend against it, and oppose it; and almost all the world are scolding or scuffling in the dark; and where there appeareth but little hopes of a remedy: I say, can I love such a world as this? and shall I not think more delightfully of the inheritance of the saints in light, and the uniting love and joyful praises of the church triumphant, and the heavenly choir?

Should I not love a lovely and a loving world much better than a world where there is, comparatively, so little loveliness or love? All that is of God is good and lovely, but it is not here that his glory shineth in felicitating splendour. I am taught to look upward when I pray, and to say, "Our Father, which art in heaven." God's works are amiable, even in hell; and yet, though I would know them, I would not be there. And, alas! how much of the works of man are mixed here with the works of God! Here is God's wisdom manifest; but here is man's obstinate folly. Here is God's government; but here is man's tyranny and unruliness. Here is God's love and mercies; but here are men's malice, wrath, and cruelty; by which they are worse to one another than wolves or tigers, depopulating countries, and filling the world with bloodshed, famine, misery, and lamentations, proud tyrants being worse than raging plagues; which made David choose the pestilence before his enemies' pursuit. Here is much of God's beauteous order and harmony; but here is also much of man's madness, deformity, and confusion. Here is much historical truth, and some civil and ecclesiastic justice; but, alas! with how much odious falsehood and injustice is it mixed! Here is much precious theological verity; but how dark is much of it to such blind, and negligent, and corrupted minds, as every where abound! Here are wise, judicious teachers and companions to be found; but, alas! how few, in comparison of the most; and how hardly known by those that need them! Here are sound and orthodox ministers of Christ; but how few that most need them know which are they, and how to value them or use them! And how many thousands of seduced or sensual sinners are made believe that they are but deceivers, or, as they called Paul, pestilent fellows, and movers of sedition among the people! And in how many parts of the world are they as the prophets that Obadiah hid in caves, or as Micaiah, or Elias among the lying prophets, or the Baalites; though such as of whom the world is not worthy! And is that world, then, more worthy of our love than heaven? There are worthy and religious families which honour God, and are honoured by him; but, alas! how few! and usually by the temptations of wealth, and worldly interest, how full even of the sins of Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness, if not also unmercifulness to the poor! And how are they tempt-

ed to plead for their sins and snares, and account it rustic ignorance which contradicteth them! And how few pious families are there of the greater sort, that do not quickly degenerate; and posterity, by false religion, error, or sensuality, grow most contrary to the minds of their pious progenitors! There are many that educate their children wisely in the fear of God, and have, accordingly, comfort in them; but how many are there, that having devoted them in baptism to God, do train them up in the service of the flesh, the world, and the devil, which they renounced; and never understood, or at least intended, for themselves or children, what they did profess. How many parents think, that when they offer their children to God in baptism, without a sober and due consideration of the nature and meaning of that great covenant with God, that God must accept, and certainly regenerate and save them! Yea, too many religious parents forget that they themselves are sponsors in that covenant, and undertake to use the means, on their part, to make their children fit for the grace of the Son, and the communion of the Spirit, as they grow up; and think that God should absolutely sanctify, keep, and save them at age, because they are theirs, and were baptized, though they keep them not from great and unneeessary temptations, nor teach them plainly and seriously the meaning of the covenant which was made for them with God, as to the nature, benefits, or conditions of it. How many send them to others to be taught in grammar, logic, philosophy, or arts, yea, and divinity, before their own parents ever taught them what they did with God in baptism, what they received, and what they promised and vowed to do! They send them to trades, or secular callings, or to travel in foreign lands, among a multitude of snares, among tempting company, and tempting baits, before ever at home they were instructed, armed, and settled against those temptations which they must needs encounter, and which, if they overcome them, they are undone. How ordinarily, when they have first neglected this great duty of their own for their fortification, do they plead a necessity of thrusting them out on these temptations, though utterly unarmed, from some punctilio of honour or conformity to the world, to avoid the contempt of worldly men, or to adorn their (yet naked) souls with some of the plumes or painted trifles, ceremonies, or compliments, which will never serve instead of heavenly wisdom, mortification, and the love of God and man. As if they were like to learn that fear of God in a crowd of diverting and tempting company, baits, and business, which they never learned under the teaching, nurture, and daily oversight, of their religious parents, in a safer station: or as if, for some little reason, they might send them as to sea without pilot or anchor, and think that God must save them from the waves: or as if it were better to enter them into Satan's school, or army, and venture them upon the notorious danger of damnation, than to miss of preferment and wealth, or of the fashions and favour of the times: and then when they hear that they have forsaken God and true religion, and given up themselves to lust and sensuality, and, perhaps, as enemies to God and good men, destroy what their parents laboured to build up, these parents wonder at God's judgments, and with broken hearts lament their infelicity, when it were better to lament their own misdoing, and it had been best of all to have lamented it.

Thus families, churches, and kingdoms, run on to blindness, ungodliness, and confusion: self-undoing, and serving the malice of Satan, for fleshly lust, is the too common employment of mankind. All is wise, and good, and sweet, which is prescribed us by God, in true nature, or supernatural revelation; but folly, sin, and misery, mistaking themselves to be wit, and honesty, and prosperity, and raging against that which nominally they pretend to and profess, are the ordinary case and course of the most of men: and when we would plead them out of their deceit and misery, it is well if we are not tempted to imitate them, or be not partly infected with their disease, or at least reproached and oppressed as their enemies: such a Bedlam is most of the world become, where madness goeth for the only wisdom, and he is the bravest man that can sin and be damned with reputation and renown, and successfully drive or draw the greatest number with him unto hell; to which the world hath no small likeness, forsaking God, and being very much forsaken by him.

This is the world which standeth in competition for my love, with the spiritual, blessed world. Much of God's mercies and comforts I have here had; but their sweetness was their taste of divine love, and their tendency to heavenly perfection. What was the end and use of all the good that ever I saw, or that ever God did for my soul or body, but to teach me to love him, and long for more? How many weaning experiences, how many thousand bitter or contemning thoughts have I had of all the glory and pleasures of this world! How many thousand love-tokens from God have called me to believe and taste his goodness! Wherever I go, and which way soever I look, I see vanity and vexation written upon all things in this world, so far as they stand in competition with God, and would be the end and portion of a fleshly mind; and I see holiness to the Lord written upon every thing, so far as it declareth God, and leadeth me to him, as my ultimate end. God hath not for nothing engaged me in a war against this world, and commanded me to take and use it as mine enemy: the emptiness, dangerousness, and bitterness of the world, and the all-sufficiency, trustiness, and goodness of God, have been the sum of all the experiences of my life! And shall a worldly, backward heart overcome the teachings of nature, Scripture, the Spirit of grace, and all experience? Far be it from me!

But, O my God! love is thy great and special gift: all good is from thee; but love is the godlike nature, life, and image: it is given us from the love of the Father, the grace of the Son, and the quickening, illuminating, and sanctifying operation of the Holy Spirit: what can the earth return unto the sun, but its own reflected beams,—if those? As how far soever man is a medium in generation, nature, and that appetite which is the moving *pondus* in the child, is thy work; so, whatever is man's part in the mediate work of believing and repenting, (which yet is not done without thy Spirit and grace,) certainly it is the blessed Regenerator which must make us new creatures, by giving us this divine nature, holy love, which is the holy appetite and *pondus* of the soul. Come down, Lord, into this heart, for it cannot come up to thee. Can the plants for life, or the eye for light, go up unto the sun? Dwell in me by the Spirit of love, and I shall dwell by love in thee. Reason is weak, and thoughts are various, and man will be a slippery, uncertain wight, if love be not his fixing principle, and do not incline his soul to thee: surely through thy grace I easily feel that I love thy word, I love thy image, I love thy work, and, oh, how heartily do I love to love thee, and long to know and love thee more! And if all things be of thee, and through thee, and to thee, surely this love to the beams of thy glory here on earth is eminently so! It is thee, Lord, that it meaneth: to thee it look-

eth: it is thee it serveth: for thee it mourns, and seeks, and groans: in thee it trusts: and the hope, and peace, and comfort which support me, are in thee. When I was a returning prodigal in rags, thou sawest me afar off, and mettest me with thy embracing, feasting love: and shall I doubt whether he that hath better clothed me, and dwelt within me, will entertain me with a feast of greater love in the heavenly mansions, the world of love?

The suitableness of things below to my fleshly nature, hath detained my affections too much on earth: and shall not the suitableness of things above to my spiritual nature much more draw up my love to heaven? There is the God whom I have sought and served: he is also here; but veiled, and but little known: but there he shineth to heavenly spirits in heavenly glory. There is the Saviour in whom I have believed: he hath also dwelt in flesh on earth; but clothed in such meanness, and humbled to such a life and death, as was to the Jews a stumblingblock, and to the gentiles matter of reproach: but he shineth and reigneth now in glory, above the malice and contempt of sinners. And I shall there live because he liveth; and in his light I shall have light. He loved me here with a redeeming, regenerating, and preserving love: but there he will love me with a perfecting, glorifying, joyful love. I had here some rays of heavenly light; but interpositions caused eclipses and nights, yea, some long and winter nights: but there I shall dwell in the city of the sun, the city of God, the heavenly Jerusalem, where there is no night, eclipse, or darkness: there are the heavenly hosts, whose holy love, and joyful praises, I would fain be a partaker of. I have here had some of their loving assistance, but to me unseen, being above our fleshly way of converse; but there I shall be with them, of the like nature, in the same orb, and of the same triumphant church and choir! There are perfected souls gathered home to Christ: not, as here, striving, like Esau and Jacob in the womb; nor yet as John when he leaped in the womb, because of his mother's joy; nor as wrangling children, that are hardly kept in the same house in peace: not like the servants of Abraham and Lot, like Paul and Barnabas, like Epiphanius and Chrysostom, like Luther and Carolostadius, like Ridley and Hooper, or the many striving parties now among us; nor like the disciples striving who should be the greatest: not like Noah's family in a wicked world, or Lot in a wicked city, or Abraham in an idolatrous land; nor like Elijah left alone; nor like those that wandered in sheep-skins and goat-skins, destitute, afflicted, and tormented, hid in dens and caves of the earth: not like Job on the dunghill; nor like Lazarus at the rich man's door: not like the African bishops, whose tongues were cut out; nor like the preachers silenced by popish imposers; (in Germany by the interim, or elsewhere;) nor like such as Tzegedine, Pencer, and many other worthy men, whose maturest age was spent in prisons: not as we poor bewildered sinners, feeling evil, and fearing more, confounded in folly and mad contention, some hating the only way of peace, and others groping for it in the dark, wandering and lost in the clearest light, where the illuminated can but pity the blind, but cannot make them willing to be delivered. What is heaven to me, but God? God, who is life, and light, and love, communicating himself to blessed spirits, perfecting them in the reception, possession, and exercise of life, and light, and love, for ever. These are not the accidents, but the essence of that God who is heaven and all to me. Should I fear that death which passeth me to infinite, essential life? Should I fear a darksome passage into a world of perfect light? Should I fear to go to love itself? Think, O my soul, what the sun's quickening light and heat is to this lower, corporeal world; much more is God, even infinite life, and light, and love, to the blessed world above. Doth it not draw out thy desires to think of going into a world of love? when love will be our region, our company, our life; more to us than the air is for our breath, than the light is for our sight, than our food is for our life, than our friends are for our solace; and more to us than we are to ourselves, and we more for it, as our ultmate end, than for ourselves. O excellent grace of faith which doth foresee, and blessed word of faith that doth foreshow, this world of love! Shall I fear to enter where there is no wrath, no fear, no strangeness, nor suspicion, nor selfish separation, but love will make every holy spirit as dear and lovely to me as myself, and me to them as lovely as themselves, and God to us all more amiable than ourselves and all: where love will have no defects or distances, no damps or discouragements, no discontinuance or mixed disaffection; but as life will be without death, and light without darkness, (a perfect, everlasting day of glory,) so will love be without any hatred, unkindness, or allay. As many coals make one fire, and many candles conjoined make one light, so will many living spirits make one life, and many illuminated, glorious spirits, one light and glory, and many spirits, innaturalized into love, will make one perfect love of God, and be loved as one by God for ever: for all the body of Christ is one; even here it is one in initial union of the Spirit, and relation to one God, and Head, and Life, (1 Cor. xii. throughout, Eph. iv. 1—17,) and shall be presented as beloved and spotless to God, when the great marriage day of the Lamb shall come, Eph. v. 24, 25, &c.; Rev. xxi. and xxii.

Hadst thou not given me, O Lord, the life of nature, I should have had no conceptions of a glorious, everlasting life; but if thou give me not the life of grace, I shall have no sufficient delightful inclination and desire after it. Hadst thou not given me sight and reason, the light of nature, I should not have thought how desirable it is to live in the glorious light and vision; but if thou give me not the spiritual illumination of a seeing faith, I shall not yet long for the glorious light, and beatifical vision. Hadst thou not given me a will and love, which is part of my very nature itself, I could not have tasted how desirable it is to live in a world of universal, perfect, endless love: but unless thou also shed abroad thy love upon my heart, by the Spirit of Jesus, the great medium of love, and turn my very nature or inclination into divine and holy love, I shall not long for the world of love. Appetite followeth nature: oh! give me not only the image and the art of godliness, the approaches towards it, nor only some forced or unconstant acts; but give me the divine nature, which is holy love, and then my soul will hasten towards thee, and cry, How long, O Lord, how long? O come, come quickly, make no delay. Surely the fear of dying intimateth some contrary love that inclineth the soul another way; and some shameful unbelief, and great unapprehensiveness of the attractive glory of the world of love: otherwise no frozen person so longeth for the fire, none in a dungeon so desireth light, as we should long for the heavenly light and love.

God's infinite, essential self-love, in which he is eternally delighted in himself, is the most amiable object, and heaven itself to saints and angels; and next to that his love to all his works, to the world, and to the church in heaven, speaketh much more of his loveliness than his love to me. But yet due

self-love in me, is his work, and part of his natural image; and when this by sin is grown up to excess, (through the withdrawing of a contracted, narrow soul, from the union and due love to my fellow-creatures, and to God,) I must also, I cannot but, inquire after God's love to me: and by this my desires must be moved; for I am not so capable of ascending above self-interest, and self-love, as in the state of glorious union I shall be. I am glad to perceive that others do love God; and I love those most that I find most love him: but it is not other men's love to God that will be accepted by him instead of mine; nor is it God's love to others (which yet rejoiceth me) that will satisfy me, without his love to me. But when all these are still before me, God's essential self-love and delight, his love to his creatures, especially the glorified, and his love to me also, even to me, a vile, unworthy sinner; what then should stay my ascending love, or discourage my desires to be with God?

And dost thou doubt, canst thou doubt, O my soul, whether thou art going to a God that loveth thee? If the Jews discerned the great love of Christ to Lazarus by his tears, canst thou not discern his love to thee in his blood? It is never the less, but the more, obliging and amiable that it was not shed for thee alone, but for many. May I not say as Paul, (Gal. ii. 20,) "I live by the faith of the Son of God, that hath loved me, and given himself for me." Yea, it is not so much I that live, as Christ liveth in me: and will he forsake the habitation which his love hath chosen; and which he hath so dearly bought? Oh, read often that triumphing chapter Rom. viii. and conclude, "What shall separate us from the love of God?" If life have not done it, death shall not do it. If leaning on his breast at meat was a token of Christ's special love to John, is not his dwelling in me by my faith, and his living in me by his Spirit, a sure token of his love to me: and if a dark saying, "If he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" raised a report that the beloved disciple should not die, why should not plain promises assure me that I shall live with him that loveth me for ever? Be not so unthankful, O my soul, as to question, doubtingly, whether thy heavenly Father, and thy Lord, doth love thee? Canst thou forget the sealed testimonies of it? Did I not even now repeat so many as should shame my doubts? A multitude of thy friends have loved thee so entirely, that thou canst not doubt of it: and did any of them signify their love with the convincing evidence that God hath done? Have they done for thee what he hath done? Are they love itself? Is their love so full, so firm, and so unchangeable, as his? My thoughts of heaven are the sweeter, because abundance of my ancient, lovely, and loving holy friends are there; and I am the willinger by death to follow them. And should I not think of it more pleasedly because my God and Father, my Saviour, and my Comforter, is there? And not alone, but with all the society of love. Was not Lazarus in the bosom of God himself? Yet it is said that he was in Abraham's bosom; as the promise runs, that we shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God. And what maketh the society of the saints so sweet as holy love? It is comfortable to read, that "To love the Lord our God with all our heart, and soul, and might," is the first and great commandment; and the second is like to it, "to love our neighbours as ourselves." For God's commands proceed from that will which is his nature, or essence, and they tend to the same as their objective end. Therefore, he that hath made love the great command, doth tell us that love is the great conception of his own essence, the spring of that command; and that this commanded, imperfect love doth tend to perfect, heavenly love, even to our communion with essential, infinite love. It were strange, that the love and goodness which is equal to the power that made the world, and the wisdom that ordereth it, should be scant and backward to do good, and to be suspected more than the love of friends! The remembrance of the holiness, humility, love, and faithfulness of my dearest friends of every rank, with whom I have conversed on earth, in every place where I have lived, is so sweet to me, that I am oft ready to recreate myself with the naming of such as are now with Christ. But in heaven they will love me better than they did on earth; and my love to them will be more pleasant. But all these sparks are little to the sun.

Every place that I have lived in was a place of divine love, which there set up its obliging monuments. Every year and hour of my life hath been a time of love; every friend, and every neighbour, yea, every enemy, have been the messengers and instruments of love; every state and change of my life, notwithstanding my sin, hath opened to me treasures and mysteries of love. And after such a life of love, shall I doubt whether the same God do love me? Is he the God of the mountains, and not of the valleys? Did he love me in my youth and health, and doth he not love me in my age, and pain, and sickness? Did he love all the faithful better in their life than at their death? If our hope be not chiefly in this life, neither is our state of love, which is principally the heavenly, endless grace. My groans grieve my friends, but abate not their love. Did he love me for my strength, my weakness might be my fear; as they that love for beauty loathe them that are deformed, and they that love for riches despise the poor. But God loved me when I was his enemy, to make me a friend, and when I was bad, to make me better. Whatever he taketh pleasure in is his own gift. Who made me to differ? And what have I that I have not received? And God will finish the work, the building, the warfare, that is his own. Oh, the multitude of mercies to my soul and body, in peace and war, in youth and age, to myself and friends, the many great and gracious deliverances which have testified to me the love of God! Have I lived in the experience of it, and shall I die in the doubts of it? Had it been love only to my body, it would have died with me, and not have accompanied my departing soul. I am not much in doubt of the truth of my love to him; though I have not seen him save as in a glass, as in a glass seen I love him. I love my brethren whom I have seen, and those most that are most in love with him. I love his word, and works, and ways, and fain I would be nearer to him, and love him more; and I loathe myself for loving him no better. And shall Peter say more confidently, "Thou knowest that I love thee," than, "I know that thou lovest me?" Yes, he may; because, though God's love is greater and stedfaster than ours, yet our knowledge of his great love is less than his knowledge of our little love; and as we are defective in our own love, so are we in our certainty of its sincerity. And without the knowledge of our love to God, we can never be sure of his special love to us. But yet I am not utterly a stranger to myself; I know for what I have lived and laboured in the world, and who it is that I have desired to please. The God whose I am, and whom I serve, hath loved me in my youth, and he will love me in my aged weakness. My flesh and my heart fail; my pains seem grievous to the flesh; but it is love that chooseth them, that useth them for my

good, that moderateth them, and will shortly end them. Why then should I doubt of my Father's love? Shall pain or dying make me doubt? Did God love none from the beginning of the world, but Enoch and Elias? And what am I better than my forefathers? What is in me that I should expect exemption from the common lot of mankind? Is not a competent time of great mercy on earth, in order to the unseen felicity, all that the best of men can hope for? Oh for a clearer, stronger faith, to show me the world that more excelleth this, than this excelleth the womb where I was conceived! Then should I not fear my third birth-day, what pangs soever go before it; nor be unwilling of my change. The grave, indeed, is a bed that nature doth abhor, yet there the weary be at rest. But souls new born have a double nature that is immortal, and go to the place that is agreeable to their nature, even to the region of spirits, and the region of holy love. Even passive matter, that hath no other natural motion, hath a natural inclination to uniting, aggregative motion. And God maketh all natures suitable to their proper ends and use. How can it be that a spirit should not incline to be with spirits? and souls, that have the divine nature in holy love, desire to be with the God of love? Arts, and sciences, and tongues, become not a nature to us; else they would not cease at death. But holy love is our new nature, and therefore ceaseth not with this bodily life. And shall accidental love make me desire the company of a frail and mutable friend? and shall not this ingrafted, inseparable love, make me long to be with Christ? Though the love of God to all his creatures will not prove that they are all immortal, nor oblige them to expect another life, that never had capacity or faculties to expect it, yet his love to such as in nature and grace are made capable of it, doth warrant and oblige them to believe and hope for the full perfection of the work of love. Some comfort themselves in the love of St. Peter, as having the keys of heaven. And how many could I name that are now with Christ, who loved me so faithfully on earth, that were I sure they had the keys and power of heaven, and were not changed in their love, I could put my departing soul into their hands, and die with joy. And is it not better in the hand of my Redeemer, and the God of love, and Father of spirits? Is any love comparable to his; or any friend so boldly to be trusted? I should take it for ungrateful unkindness in my friend to doubt of my love and trustiness, if I had given him all that he hath, and maintained him constantly by my kindness; but oh, how odious a thing is sin! which, by destroying our love to God, doth make us unmeet to believe and sweetly perceive his love; and by making us doubt of the love of God, and lose the pleasant relish of it, doth more increase our difficulty of loving him. The title that the angel gave to Daniel, "A man greatly beloved of God," methinks, should be enough to make one joyfully love and trust God, both in life and death. Will Almighty love ever hurt me or forsake me? And have not all saints that title in their degrees? What else signifieth their mark and name, Holiness to the Lord? What is it but our separation to God, as his peculiar, beloved people? And how are they separated but by mutual love, and our forsaking all that alienateth, or is contrary? Let scorners deride us as self-flatterers, that believe they are God's darlings; and woe to the hypocrites that believe it on their false presumption! Without such belief or grounded hopes I see not how any man can die in true peace. He that is no otherwise beloved than hypocrites and unbelievers, must have his portion with them. And he that is no otherwise beloved than as the ungodly, unholy, and unregenerate, shall not stand in judgment, nor see God, nor enter into his kingdom. Most upright souls are to blame for groundless doubting of God's love; but not for acknowledging it, rejoicing in it, and, in their doubts, being most solicitous to make it sure. Love brought me into the world, and furnished me with a thousand mercies. Love hath provided for me, delivered me, and preserved me, till now; and will it not entertain my separated soul? Is God like false or insufficient friends, that forsake us in adversity?

I confess that I have wronged love by sin; by many and great unexcusable sins. But all, save Christ himself, were sinners, whose love did purify, and receive to glory. God, who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace we are saved,) and hath raised us up together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, Eph. ii. 4—6. Oh that I could love much that have so much forgiven! The glorified praise him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and made us kings and priests to God, Rev. i. 5, 6. Our Father that hath loved us, giveth us consolation and good hope, through grace, 2 Thess. ii. 16. I know no sin which I repent not of with self-loathing; and I earnestly beg and labour that none of my sins may be to me unknown. I dare not justify even what is in any way uncertain; though I dare not call all that my sin which siding men, of different judgments, on each side, passionately call so; while both sides do it on contrary accounts, and not to go contrary ways is a crime. Oh that God would bless my accusations to my illumination, that I may not be unknown to myself! Though some think me much better than I am, and others much worse, it most concerneth me to know the truth myself; flattery would be more dangerous to me than false accusations; I may safelier be ignorant of other men's sins than of my own. Who can understand his errors? Cleanse me, Lord, from secret sins, and let not ignorance or error keep me in impenitence; and keep thou me back from presumptuous sins, Psalm xix. 12, 13. I have an Advocate with the Father, and thy promise, that he that confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall have mercy. Those are, by some men, taken for my greatest sins, which my most serious thoughts did judge to be the greatest of my outward duties, and which I performed through the greatest difficulties, and which cost me dearest to the flesh, and the greatest self-denial and patience in my reluctant mind. Wherever I have erred, Lord, make it known to me, that my confession may prevent the sin of others; and where I have not erred, confirm and accept me in the right.

And seeing an unworthy worm hath had so many testimonies of thy tender love, let me not be like to them, that when thou saidst, I have loved you, unthankfully asked, Wherein hast thou loved us? Mal. i. 2. Heaven is not more spangled with stars, than thy word and works with the refulgent signatures of love. Thy well-beloved Son, the Son of thy love, undertaking the office, message, and work of the greatest love, was full of that Spirit which is love, which he sheds abroad in the hearts of thine elect, that the love of the Father, the grace of the Son, and the communion of the Spirit, may be their hope and life. His works, his sufferings, his gifts, as well as his comfortable word, did say to his disciples, "As the Father loved me, so have I loved you; continue ye in my love," John xv. 9. And how, Lord, shall we continue in it, but by the thankful belief of thy love and loveliness, desiring still to love

thee more, and in all things to know and please thy will; which thou knowest is my soul's desire.

Behold then, O my soul, with what love the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit have loved thee, that thou shouldst be made and called a son of God, redeemed, regenerate, adopted into that covenant state of grace in which thou standest. Rejoice, therefore, in hope of the glory of God, being justified by faith, having peace with God, and access by faith and hope that maketh not ashamed; that being reconciled, when an enemy, by the death of Christ, I shall be saved by his life, Rom. v. 1, 2. Having loved his own, to the end he loveth them, and without end. His gifts and calling are without repentance. When Satan, and thy flesh, would hide God's love, look to Christ, and read the golden words of love in the sacred gospel; and peruse thy many recorded experiences, and remember the convictions which secret and open mercies have many a time afforded thee. But especially draw nearer to the Lord of love, and be not seldom and slight in thy contemplations of his love and loveliness; dwell in the sunshine, and thou wilt know that it is light, and warm, and comfortable. Distance and strangeness cherish thy doubts; acquaint thyself with him, and be at peace.

Yet look up, and oft and earnestly look up, after thy ascended, glorified Head, who said, "Tell my brethren, I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." Think where and what he is, and what he is now doing for all his own; and how humbled, abased, suffering love is now triumphant, regnant, glorified love; and therefore no less than in all its tender expressions upon earth. As love is no where perfectly believed but in heaven, so I can no where so fully discern it, as by looking up by faith to my Father and Saviour, which is in heaven, and conversing more believingly with the heavenly society. Had I done this more and better, and as I have persuaded others to do it, I had lived in more convincing delights of God's love, which would have turned the fears of death into more joyful hopes, and more earnest desires to be with Christ, in the arms, in the world, in the life of love, as far better than to be here, in a dark, a doubting, fearing world.

But, O my Father, infinite love! though my arguments be many and strong, my heart is bad, and my strength is weakness, and I am insufficient to plead the cause of thy love and loveliness to myself or others. Oh, plead thy own cause, and what heart can resist? Let it not be my word only, but thine, that thou lovest me, even me, a sinner; speak it as Christ said to Lazarus, "Arise." If not, as thou tellest me that the sun is warm, yet as thou hast told me that my parents and my dearest friends did love me, and much more powerfully than so; tell it me, as thou tellest me that thou hast given me life, by the eonsciousness and works of life: that while I can say, "Thou that knowest all things, knowest that I love thee;" it may include, Therefore I know that I am beloved of thee; and therefore come to thee in the confidence of thy love, and long to be nearer in the elearer sight, the fuller sense, and joyfuller exercise of love for ever. Father, into thy hand I commend my spirit. Lord Jesus, receive my spirit! Amen.

AN APPENDIX.

A BREVIATE OF THE HELPS OF FAITH, HOPE, AND LOVE. A BREVIATE OF THE PROOF OF SUPERNATURAL REVELATION, AND THE TRUTH OF CHRISTIANITY.

1 TIMOTHY III. 16.

WITHOUT CONTROVERSY GREAT IS THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS: GOD WAS MANIFEST IN THE FLESH, JUSTIFIED IN THE SPIRIT, SEEN OF ANGELS, PREACHED UNTO THE GENTILES, BELIEVED ON IN THE WORLD, RECEIVED UP INTO GLORY.

THESE are the creed, or six articles of the gospel which the apostles preached.

Sect. 1. God manifested in the flesh of Jesus, is the first and great article. Believe this, and believe all. No wonder that believing that Jesus Christ is the Son of God is so often made, in Scripture, the description of saving faith, the title to baptism, and pardon, and salvation, the evidence of the Spirit, &c. He that truly and practically believeth that God came in flesh to man, and that Christ is the Father's messenger from heaven, must needs believe that God hath a great value for the souls of men, and for his church, that he despiseth not even our flesh; that his word is true, and fully to be trusted; that he, who so wonderfully came to man, will certainly take up man to him. Who can doubt of the immortality of souls, or that Christ will receive the departing souls of the faithful to himself, who believeth that he took man's nature, and hath glorified it now in heaven, in union with the divine? Who can ever have low thoughts of God's love and mercy who believeth this? and who can prostitute his soul and flesh to wickedness, who firmly believeth that he took the soul and flesh of man to sanctify and glorify it?

Sect. 2. II. The Holy Spirit is the justification of the truth of Jesus Christ. He is Christ's advocate and witness to the world. He proveth the gospel by these five ways of evidence: 1. By all the prophecies, types, and pormises of Christ in the Old Testament, before Christ's coming. 2. By the inherent impress of God's image on the person and doctrine of Christ; which, *propria luce*, showeth itself to be divine. 3. By the concomitant miracles of Christ: read the history of the gospel for this use, and observe each history. 4. By the subsequent gift of the Spirit to the apostles and other christians, by languages, wonders, and multitudes of miracles, to

convince the world. 5. By the undeniable and excellent work of sanctification on all true believers through all the world, in all generations to this day. These five are the Spirit's witness, which fully testifieth the certain truth, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

Sect. 3. *Quest.* But how are we sure, who, ourselves, never saw the person, miracles, resurrection, ascension of Christ, that the history of them is true?

Answ. 1. We may be sure that the spectators were not deceived. 2. And that they did not deceive them to whom they reported it. 3. And that we are not deceived by any miscarriage in the historical tradition to us.

Sect. 4. I. It was not possible that men that were not mad, that had eyes and ears, could, for three years and a half, believe that they saw the lame, the blind, the deaf, and all diseases healed, the dead raised, thousands miraculously fed, &c. and this among crowds of people that still followed Christ, if the things had not been true. One man's senses may be deceived at some one instance, by some deceitful accident; but that the eyes and ears of multitudes should be so oft deceived, many years, in the open light, is as much as to say, no man knoweth any thing that he seeth and heareth.

Sect. 5. II. That the disciples who received the apostles' and evangelists' report of Christ, were not deceived by the reporters, is most evident.

For, 1. They received it not by hearsay, at the second hand, but from the eye and ear witnesses themselves, who must needs know what they said.

2. They heard this report from men of the same time, and age, and country, where it was easy to examine the case, and confute it, had it been false.

3. The apostles appealed to crowds and thousands of witnesses, as to many of Christ's miracles, who would have made it odious, had it not been true.

4. They sharply reproved the rulers for persecuting Christ, which would provoke them to do their best to confute the apostles for their own justification.

5. Christ chose men of no great human learning and subtlety, but common, plain, unlearned men, that it might not be thought a deceit of art.

6. Yea, he did not make much more known to them before his death, than the bare matters of fact which they daily saw, and that he was the Christ, and moral doctrine; his death, resurrection, ascension, and kingdom of heaven, they knew little of before; but experience, and the sudden coming down of the Spirit, suddenly taught them all the rest.

7. They taught not one another, but were every one personally taught of God.

8. And yet they all agreed in the same doctrine when they were dispersed over the world, and never differed in any one article of faith.

9. They were men that had no worldly interest, wealth, or dominion, to seek.

10. Yea, they renounced and denied all worldly interest, and sealed their testimony by their sufferings and blood; and all in hope of a heavenly reward, which they knew that lying was no means to obtain.

11. Had they plotted to cheat the world for nothing, the sin is so heinous that some one of them would have repented and confessed it, at least, at death; which none of them did, but died joyfully, as for the truth.

12. Paul was converted by a voice and light from heaven, in the presence of those that travelled with him in his persecuting design.

13. But yet it is a fuller evidence that the doctrine which they delivered, as from God, beareth a divine impress, that, as the light, it is its own evidence.

14. And for the more infallible conviction, they that testified of Christ's miracles, did the like themselves to confirm their testimony. They spake with tongues which they never learned; they healed all diseases; even the shadow of Peter, and the clothes that came from Paul, did heal men; they raised the dead; and they that in all countries converted the nations by their own miracles, attesting the miracles and resurrection of Christ, must needs compel the spectators to believe them.

15. Yet, more than all this, those that believed them were presently enabled to do the like in one kind and degree or other. The same extraordinary gift of the Spirit fell upon the common multitude of believers, by the laying on of the apostles' hands; so that Simon Magus would fain have bought that power with money. And when men witnessed Christ's miracles, and wrought the like themselves; and those that believed them had and did the like, either healing, tongues, prophecy, or some wonders, it was, sure, an infallible way of testifying.

16. When wrangling heretics quarrelled with the apostles, and would draw away disciples to themselves, by disparaging them, they still appealed to the miracles wrought by these disciples themselves, or in their sight; as Gal. iii. 1, 2, 3, 5. And as Christ, when the Jews said he did all by Beelzebub, when he cast out devils, asked them, "By whom do your children cast them out?" Which, had it been false, would have turned all the people from them.

17. Their adversaries were so far from writing any confutation of their testimony, that they confessed the miracles, and had no shift, but either to blaspheme the Holy Ghost, and say that they were done by the devil, or else, by persecution and violence, to oppress them. As if the devil were master of the world, and could remedilessly deceive it against God's will; or God himself would send or suffer a full course of miracles remedilessly to deceive the world, which is to make God like the devil: or, as if the devil were so good, as by miracles to promote so holy, and amiable, and just a doctrine, as that of christianity, to make men wise, and good, and just, and kill their sin. So that this blasphemy of the Holy Ghost makes Satan to be God, or God to be Satan.

18. All the cruelty, powers, learning, and policy of their adversaries was not able to stop the progress of this testimony, much less to prevail against it.

III. It is then most certain, that the first witnesses were not deceived by Christ, nor believers after deceived by them. The next question is, whether we be not deceived by a false historical tradition of these things? Had we seen them all ourselves, we must needs have believed; but at this distance we know not what misreports may intervene. What eyesight and hearing was to them, that tradition is to us. Now the question is, is it certainly the very same fact and doctrine which they received, and which we receive?

And here, let it be premised, that there is no other way of assurance, than that which God hath afforded us, that the reason of man could have desired.

1. If we would see God, and heaven, and hell, this is not a way suitable to the state of probationers that live in flesh on earth. Angels live by vision, and fruition of glory; and brutes, by sense, on sensible things; but reasonable travellers must live by reason, and by believing certain revelation.

2. If God will send his Son from heaven to ascertain us, and we will believe no more than we see ourselves, then Christ must dwell on earth, to the end of the world, and he must be in all places of the earth at once, that all may see; and he must die and rise again before all men in all ages: and how mad an expectation is this!

3. Or if all that deliver us the history must work miracles before our eyes, or else we will not believe them, it is still most absurd. Will you not believe that the laws of the land are genuine, or that ever there were such kings as made them, unless he that tells it you work miracles? Shall not children believe their parents, or scholars their tutors, unless they work miracles?

4. I must premise that there are three sorts of tradition. I. Such as depends on the common wit and honesty of mankind. And this is very much to be suspected, wickedness, folly, and lying being grown so common in the world.

II. Such as depends on the extraordinary skill and honesty of some proved men. And this deserveth much belief; but it is an uncertain human faith.

III. Such as depends on natural necessity, and cannot possibly be false. We have both these last to ascertain us of the gospel history.

This resteth on a distinction of the acts of man's will: some of them are mutably free; and these give no certainty: some of them are naturally and immutably necessary, and man can do no otherwise; and these give even natural, infallible certainty. Such are to love one's self, to love felicity, to hate torment and misery, &c. and to know that which is fully manifest to our sound senses, &c.

When men of contrary interests and temper all confess the truth of known things, about which their interests stand cross, it is a physical evidence of truth.

On this account, men's agreement about natural notices is infallible.

It seems strange that all the world, from Adam's time, are agreed which is the first, second, and third, &c. day of the week, and not a day lost till now. It could be no otherwise, because being a thing of natural interest and notice, if any kingdom had lost a day by oversleeping, or had agreed to falsify it, all the rest of the world would have shamed them.

Thus all Grecians, Latins, Englishmen, &c. agree about the sense of words; for if some would pervert them, the rest would detect it.

Thus we are certain that the statutes of the land are not counterfeit. For men of cross interests hold their lands and lives by them; and if some did counterfeit them, the rest would, by interest, be bound to detect it.

Arg. 1. There can be no effect without an adequate cause: but in nature there is no cause that can make all men agree to assert a known falsehood, or deny a known truth, against all their known interest; therefore there can be no such effect.

Arg. 2. A necessary cause will necessarily effect: but where men's known interest obligeth them to agree of a known truth, this is a necessary cause of certain credibility; therefore it hath a necessary effect.

You know who were your parents, and when and where you were born, &c. by such tradition in a lower degree. This dependeth not on pretended authority, nor on mere honesty; but on natural necessity.

Having premised this, I come to prove, that we have such tradition of physical, infallible evidence, that the faith of the present church, in the essentials, is the same which the first churches received infallibly from the apostles.

1. The world knoweth, that ever since Christ's ascension, all that believed in him were baptized, as all Abraham's covenanting seed were circumcised. And what is baptism, but a profession of belief in Jesus Christ, as dead, risen, and glorified; and a devoting ourselves in covenant to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost? All that ever were christians by solemn vow professed this same faith; and this is such a tradition of christianity as human generation, down from Adam, is of the same humanity in the world.

2. They that were baptized were catechised first; in which the three articles of baptism were opened to them; of which Christ's death, resurrection, and ascension were part; and this hath been an undeniable tradition of the same faith.

3. The sum of the christian faith was, from the beginning, drawn up in certain articles called the creed, which expounded the three baptismal articles; and all churches on earth had the same in sense, and most in words; and all at age that were baptized, professed this creed; which is as full a tradition of the same belief in Christ's birth, death, and resurrection, ascension, and glory, as speaking is a tradition of the same human nature.

4. Before Christ's ascension, he instituted the office of the sacred ministry, which friends and foes confess hath continued ever since. And what is this ministry, but an office of publishing the gospel of Christ, his life, death, miracles, resurrection, grace, &c.? What else have they done in all ages in the world? so that the office is an undeniable tradition.

5. Christ and his apostles instituted the weekly celebration of the remembrance of his resurrection on the Lord's days: friends and foes confess the history, that the first day of the week hath been kept for such memorial ever since, through all the christian part of the world, which proveth the uninterrupted belief of Christ's resurrection, as a notorious, practical tradition.

6. Christ and his apostles, ever since his resurrection, instituted solemn assemblies of christians to be held on those days, and at other times; once a week was the least through the christian world: and what did they meet for, but to preach, hear, and profess the same christian faith?

7. It was the constant custom of christians in their assemblies, and their houses, to sing hymns of praise to Jesus Christ, in remembrance of his resurrection, &c. Pliny tells Trajan that this was the practice by which christians were known by their persecutors: which is a practical tradition.

8. Jesus Christ instituted, and all christians to this day have constantly used, the sacrament of Christ's sacrifice, called the eucharist; to keep in remembrance his death till he come, and profess their belief that he is our life. And as the constant celebration of the passover, with all its ceremonies, was a most certain tradition of the Egyptians' plagues, and Israelites' deliverance, more than a bare written history would be, so hath the Lord's supper been, of the uninterrupted belief of the history of our redemption by Christ.

9. The church hath, from the beginning, had a constant discipline, by which it hath kept itself separate from heretics, who have denied any essential article of this faith, which is a sure tradition of the same belief.

10. None question but christians have, from the beginning, been persecuted for this same faith, and in persecution made confession of it: persecutors and confessors, then, are both the witnesses of the continuance.

11. Whenever heretics or enemies have written against christians, their apologies and defences show that it was this same faith which they owned.

12. Most of the adverse heretics owned the same matters of fact.

13. The Jews were long before in possession of the books of the Old Testament, which bear their testimony to Christ.

14. The books of the New Testament have, by certain tradition, been delivered down to this present day, which contain the matters of fact and doctrine, the essentials, integrals, and accidents of the faith.

15. No enemies have written any thing against the matter of fact, of any moment.

16. Yea, the Jews, and other bitterest enemies, confess much of the miracles of Christ.

17. Martyrs have cheerfully forsaken life and all in confessing it.

18. God, by his wonderful providence, hath maintained it.

19. The devil, and all the wicked of the world, are the greatest enemies to it.

20. The Holy Ghost hath still blessed it, to work the same holy and heavenly nature and life, in all sincere and serious believers.

Quest. This proveth infallibly the tradition of the same faith in the essentials: but how prove you that the same holy Scripture is delivered as uncorrupted?

Answ. All the Bible is not brought down so unchanged as are the essentials of our religion: when there were no Bibles but what scriveners wrote, no wonder if over-sight left few copies without some of their slips. There are hundreds of various readings in the New Testament, and of many no man can be certain which is true: but none of them are such as make any difference in the articles of our faith or practice, nor on which any point of doctrine or fact dependeth.

And the words are necessary but for the matter which they do record.

And, 1. All ministers, and all churches, constantly used this same Scripture publicly and privately, as the word of God, so that it could not be easily altered.

2. They all knew that a curse is pronounced against every one that addeth or diminisheth; which must needs possess them with fear of corrupting it.

3. They took it to be the charter of their own salvation.

4. The work of the ministers was to expound it, and preserve it against corrupters.

5. These ministers and churches were over-much of the world, and could not agree together to corrupt it; and if some did it, all the rest would soon detect it.

6. Heresies and quarrels were quickly to rise among them; so that cross interests and animosities would soon have fallen upon the corrupters.

7. Some heretics made some adding and corrupting attempts, which the church presently condemned, and turned it to their shame.

8. In all the disputations then managed, the same Scriptures were appealed to.

9. The translations into various languages show that the books were the same, without any momentous difference.

10. To this day, when sin and tyranny have torn the church into many factions, they all receive the same canonical Scriptures, except that some receive more apocryphal writings, which yet make no alteration at all of our gospel faith.

Quest. But doth not this laying so much on tradition favour popery?

Answ. No: the difference is here. 1. Papists are for tradition, as a supplement to the Scripture, as if this were but part of the word of God: and, 2. They plead for a peculiar power of being the keepers and judges of that supplemental tradition, which other churches know nothing of.

But we, 1. Plead for the infallible, practical tradition of the essentials of christianity by itself, and in the creed, &c. which is less than the Scripture. 2. And next for the certain tradition of the Scripture itself, uncorrupted in all that faith depends on; which Scripture is the complete record of God's will and law, containing more than essentials and integrals.

So much of God, 1. Manifested in the flesh; 2. Justified in the Spirit.

III. He was seen of angels; that is, angels were the beholding, witnessing, and admiring servants of this great mystery, God manifested in the flesh.

1. Angels preached Christ at his incarnation.

2. Angels ministered to Christ in his temptations, agonies, &c.

3. Angels were preachers and witnesses of his resurrection.

4. Angels rolled away the stone, and terrified the soldiers.

5. Angels preached his return to them that gazed up at his ascension.

6. Angels opened the prison-doors, and set the imprisoned apostles free once, and Peter alone, afterwards.

7. Angels rejoice in heaven at the conversion of all that Christ brings home.

8. Angels disdain not to be the guardians of the least of Christ's disciples.

9. Angels are protecting officers over churches and kingdoms.

10. Angels have preached to apostles, and been the messengers of their revelations.

11. Angels have been the instruments of miracles, and of destroying the church's enemies.

12. Angels will ministerially convoy departed souls to Christ.

13. Angels will gloriously attend Christ at his return, and sever the wicked from the just.

14. Angels will be our companions in the heavenly choir for ever.

Therefore, 1. We should love angels. 2. And be thankful to God for them. 3. And think the more comfortably of heaven for their society. 4. And pray for the benefit of their ministry on earth, especially in all our dangers.

IV. The fourth article is, "preached unto the gentiles." The Jews having the covenant of peculiarity, were proud of their privilege, even while they unworthily abused it; and despised the rest of the world, and would not so much as eat with them, as if they had been God's only people. And, indeed, the rest of the world was so corrupted, that we find no one nation that, as such, renounced idolatry, and was devoted in covenant to the true God alone, as the Jews were. Now that God should be manifested in flesh, to reconcile the heathen world to himself, and extend greater privileges, indefinitely, to all nations, than ever the Jews had in their state of peculiarity, this was a mystery of godliness, which the Jews did hardly yield belief to.

And that which aggravateth this wonder is, 1. That the gentile world was drowned in all idolatry and unnatural wickedness, such as Paul describeth, Rom. i. 2; Eph. ii.; iii. 18, &c. 2. And that God should suddenly and freely send them the message of reconciliation, and be found of them that sought him not, is that wonder which obligeth us gentiles, who once lived as without God in the world, to be thankful to him.

V. The fifth article is, "believed on in the world." The effect of the gospel on the souls of men in their effectual faith, is one of the evidences of the christian truth.

I told you before, that the fifth witness of the Spirit on the souls of all believers, I reserved to be here mentioned. Here, 1. It is a part of the wonder, that Christ should be believed on in the world, even

with a common faith. For, 1. To believe a mean man to be the Mediator between God and man, and the Saviour of the world; yea, one that was crucified as a malefactor; this must needs be a difficult thing.

2. The very Jewish nation was as contemptible to the Romans, being one of their poorest subdued provinces, as the gentiles were to the Jews: and Christ was by birth a Jew.

3. The greatness of the Roman empire then, ruling over much of the world, was such, that by preaching, and not by war, to bring them to be subjects to a crucified Jew, was a marvellous work; and so to bring the conquered nations to become Christ's voluntary subjects.

4. The Roman and Greek learning was then at the height of its perfection: and the christians were despised by them as unlearned barbarians: and that learning, arts, and empire, should all submit to such a King and Saviour, was certainly a work of supernatural power. Christ did not levy armies to overcome the nations, nor did victory move them; but the victors and lords of the world, and these no fools, but the masters of the greatest human wisdom, were conquered by the gospel, preached by a sort of inferior men.

5. And this gospel which conquered them was still opposed by them, and the christians perseeuted as a sort of hated men, till it overcame the persecutors.

It is true that heathenism hath the greatest part of the world, and Mahometans have as much as christians; but one sort got it by the sword, and the other by the doctrine and holy lives of a few unarmed, inferior men.

II. But I use this of the extent of faith, but as a probable, and not a cogent argument: but the main argument is from the sanctifying effect of faith.

I know it will be said, that many, or most, christians are as bad as other men.

But it is one thing to be of a professed religion, because it is the religion of the king and country, and therefore maketh for men's worldly advantage, and they hear little said against it: this is the case of most in the world, christians, Mahometans, and heathens: and it is another to be a serious believer, who, upon trial and consideration, chooseth christianity.

And it is notorious that such serious christians are all holy, sober, and just, and so greatly differing from the corrupted world, as fully proveth that God owneth that gospel which he maketh so effectual to so great a change.

Here consider, 1. What that change is. 2. How hard and great a work it is. 3. That it is certainly a work of God. 4. That the gospel is the means by which God doth it.

I. The nature of his holy work on all serious, sincere christians, is, it sets all their hopes and hearts on the promised glory of the life to come, and turns the very nature of their wills into the predominant love of God and man, and of heaven and holiness. It mortifieth all fleshly lusts, and subjects sense to reason and faith, the body to the soul, and all to God. It sets a man's heart on the sincere study of doing all the good he can in the world, to friends, neighbours, and enemies, especially the most public good; to live soberly, righteously, and godly, is his delight. Sin is his chief hatred, and nothing more grievous to him than that he cannot reach to greater perfection in faith, hope, obedience, patience, and in heavenly love and joy. It causeth a man to contemn wealth, honour, and fleshly pleasure, and life, in comparison of God's love and life everlasting. This change God's Spirit worketh on all true believers.

Those that are ungodly have but the name of christians; they never well understood what christianity is, nor ever received it by a true belief. But all that understandingly and seriously believe in Jesus Christ, are sanctified by his Spirit.

II. And this is a greater work than miracles, in excellency and difficulty.

1. It is the very health of the souls. It is salvation itself; it maketh man in his measure like to God, and is his image. It is a heavenly nature, and is the earnest and preparation for heaven. It delivereth man from the greatest evil on earth, and giveth him the firmest peace and joy, in his peace with God, the pardon of his sins, and the hope of everlasting glory.

2. It is easy to discern how great a work this is, by the deep roots of all the contrary vices in the corrupted nature of man. Experience assureth us that man, by vitiated nature, is proud and ignorant, and savoureth little but the things of the flesh, and worldly interest, and is a slave to his appetite and lust: his bodily prosperity is all that really hath his heart. Yea, if God restrain them not, all wicked men are bitter enemies to all that are truly wise and holy, even among heathens and infidels; if any be but better than the rest, the wicked are their deadly enemies. There is so visible an enmity between godliness and wickedness, the seed of Christ and of the serpent, in the world, as is a great confirmation of the Scripture which describeth it. And it is not the name of christians that altereth men's nature. We here, that have peace from all the world, are under such implacable hatred of wicked men, that call themselves christians, that so many bears or wolves would be less hurtful to us.

3. And the universal spreading of this wickedness over all the earth, in all ages and nations, doth tell us how great a work it is to cure it.

4. And so doth the frustration of all other means, till the Spirit of God do it by setting home the gospel upon the heart. Children will grow up in wickedness, against all the counsel, love, and correction of their parents. No words, no reason, will prevail with them, more than with drunken men or beasts.

5. We find it a very hard thing to cure a man of some one rooted sin, much more of all.

6. The common misery of the world proclaimeth man's vice, and the difficulty of the cure. How else comes the world to live in self-seeking falsehood, fraud, malice, and in bloody wars, worse than wolves and serpents against each other.

7. Lastly, where God cureth this by true believing, it is done with the pangs of sharp repentance, and a great conflict, before God's Spirit overcometh.

III. It is evident, then, that this sanctification of souls is an eminent work of God himself. 1. In that it is yet done on so many of his chosen ones in all ages and places.

2. In that, as hard as it is, he usually turneth the hearts of sinners to himself, in a very little time. Sometimes by one sermon.

3. It is a work that none can do but God, who hath the power of souls.

4. It is a work so good, that it beareth God's own image. It is but the writing of his law and gospel on men's hearts. None is so much for it as God. Satan apparently fighteth against it with all the power he can raise in the world. Mark it, and you will find that most of the stir that there is in the world, by false teachers, and tyrants, and private malice, is but Satan's wars against faith, and holiness, and love. Certainly it is not he that promoteth them.

IV. And it is evident, in experience, that it is the gospel of Christ which God useth and blesseth, to do this great sanctifying work on souls. Among christians none are converted by any other means. And God would not bless a word of falsehood and deceit to such great and excellent effects. All that are made holy and heavenly, and truly conscionable, among us, are made so by Christ's gospel. And all the wicked are enemies to the serious practice of it, or rebels that despise it. The effects daily prove that God himself owneth it as his word.

If you say, there are as good men among the heathens and Mahometans, as holy, heavenly, and just: I answer, it is none of my business to depreciate other men, but I can say, 1. That I have lived above seventy-seven years, and I never knew one serious, holy person in England that was made such by the writings of heathens or Mahometans. 2. Many excellent things are in the writings of some heathens, Plato, Cicero, Hierocles, Plutarch, Antonine, Epictetus, and many others; but I miss in them the expressions of that holy and heavenly frame of mind and life, and that victory over the flesh and world, which christianity containeth.

3. Christ is like the sun, whose beams give some light before it is seen itself at its rising, and after it is set. The light of Jews and heathens was as the dawning of the day before sun-rising. And the light among the Mahometans is like the light of the sun which leaveth it when it is set.

Doubtless, the same God who hath used Mahometans to be his dreadful scourge to wicked christians who abused the gospel by a false profession, hath also used them to do abundance of good against idolatry in the heathen world. Wherever they come, idolatry is destroyed. Yea, the corrupt christians, Greeks, and especially papists, that worship images, angels, and bread, are rebuked, and condemned justly by Mahometans. But oh that they who have conquered so far by the sword, were conquered by the sacred word of truth, and truly understood the mystery of redemption, and the doctrine of the gospel of Jesus Christ!

Object. But they think us idolaters for saying that Christ is God, and believing the Trinity.

I. As to the Trinity: it is no contradiction that one fire or sun should have essentially a virtue or power to move, light, and heat; nor that one soul should have a power of vegetation, sense, and reason; nor as rational, to have a peculiar power of vitality, intellection, and free-will. Why then should the Trinity seem incredible?

II. We do not believe that the Godhead hath any change, or is made flesh, or the manhood made God; but that the Godhead is incomprehensibly united to the human nature by assumption, so as he is united to no other creature, by and for those peculiar operations on the humanity of Christ, which make him our Redeemer.

They that well think that God is all in all things, more than a soul to all the world, and as near to us as our souls to our bodies, in whom we live, and move, and have our being, will find that it is more difficult to apprehend, how God is further from any soul, than that he is so much one with Christ; save that different operations of God on his creatures are apparent to us.

By all this we see that every sanctified christian hath the certain witness in himself that Christ is true: he is truly a Physician that healeth, and a Saviour that saveth all that seriously believe and obey him. The Spirit of God in a new, and holy, and heavenly nature of spiritual life, and light, and love, is the witness.

VI. The sixth article in my text is "received up into glory."

That Christ, after forty days' continuance on earth, was taken up into heaven, in the sight of his disciples, is a matter of fact of which we have all the forementioned infallible proof, which I must not here again repeat.

And, I. If Christ were not glorified now in heaven, he could not send down his Spirit with his word on earth, nor have enabled the first witnesses to speak with all tongues, and heal the sick, and raise the dead, and do all the miracles which they did. A dead man cannot send down the Holy Spirit in likeness of fiery cloven tongues, nor enable thousands to do such works; nor could he do what is done on the souls of serious believers in all ages and nations to this day. He is sure alive that makes men live; and in heaven, that draws up hearts to heaven.

2. And this is our hope and joy: heaven and earth are in his power. The suffering and work which he performed for us on earth was short, but his heavenly intercession and reign is everlasting. Guilty souls can have no immediate access to God. All is by a Mediator: all our receivings from God are by him: and all our services are returned by him, and accepted for his sake. And as he is the Mediator between his Father and us, his Spirit intercedeth between him and us. By his Spirit he giveth us holy desires, and every grace. And by his Spirit we exercise them in returns to him.

And our glorified Saviour hath Satan, and all our enemies, in his power: life and death are at his command: all judgment is committed to him. He that hath redeemed us is preparing us for heaven, and it for us, and receiveth our departing souls to his own joy and glory. He hath promised us that we shall be with him where he is, and shall see his glory. He that is our Saviour, will be our Judge. He will come with thousands of his angels to the confusion of wicked unbelievers, and to be glorified in his saints. He will make a new heaven and a new earth, in which righteousness shall dwell. Angels and glorified saints shall, with Christ our Head, make one city of God, or holy society and choir, in perfect love and joy, to praise the blessed God for ever.

The differences between this world, and that which I am going to.

I. This world is God's footstool. That is his throne.

II. Here are his works of inferior nature and of grace. There he shineth forth in perfect glory.

III. Here is gross, receptive matter moved by invisible powers. There are the noblest efficient communicative powers moving all.

IV. This is the inferior, subject, governed world. That is the superior, regent world.

V. This is a world of trial, where the soul is his that can win its consent. That is a world where the will is perfectly determined and fixed.

VI. Satan winning men's consent hath here a large dominion of fools. There he is cast out, and hath no possession.

VII. Here he is a tempter and troubler of the best. There he hath neither power to tempt nor trouble.

VIII. This world is as the dark womb where we are regenerated. That is the world of glorious light into which we are born.

IX. Here we dwell on a world of sordid earth. There we shall dwell in a world of celestial light and glory.

X. Here we dwell in a troublesome, tempting, perishing body. There we are delivered from this burden and prison into glorious liberty.

XI. Here we are under a troublesome cure of our maladies. There we are perfectly healed, rejoicing in our Physician's praise.

XII. Here we are using the means in weariness and hope. There we obtain the end in full fruition.

XIII. Here sin maketh us loathsome to ourselves, and our own annoyance. There we shall love God in ourselves, and our perfect selves in God.

XIV. Here all our duties are defiled with sinful imperfection. There perfect souls will perfectly love and praise their God.

XV. Here Satan's temptations are a continual danger and molestation. There perfect victory hath ended our temptations.

XVI. Here still there is a remnant of the curse and punishment of sin. Pardon and deliverance are perfected there.

XVII. Repenting, shame, sorrow, and fear, are here part of my necessary work. There all the troublesome part is past, and utterly excluded.

XVIII. Here we see darkly, as in a glass, the invisible world of spirits. There we shall see them as face to face.

XIX. Here faith, alas! too weak, must serve instead of sight. There presence and sight suspend the use of such believing.

XX. Desire and hope are here our very life and work. But there it will be full felicity in fruition.

XXI. Our hopes are here oft mixed with grievous doubts and fears. But there full possession ends them all.

XXII. Our holy affections are here corrupted with carnal mixtures. But there all are purely holy and divine.

XXIII. The coldness of our divine love is here our sin and misery. The perfection of it will be there our perfect holiness and joy.

XXIV. Here, though the will itself be imperfect, we cannot be and do what we would. There will, and deed, and attainment, will all be fully perfect.

XXV. Here, by ignorance and self-love, I have desires which God denieth. There perfect desires shall be perfectly fulfilled.

XXVI. Here pinching wants of something or other, and troublesome cares, are daily burdens. Nothing is there wanting, and God hath ended all their cares.

XXVII. Sense here rebelleth against faith and reason, and oft overcometh. Sense there shall be only holy, and no discord be in our faculties or acts.

XXVIII. Pleasures and contents here are short, narrow, and twisted with their contraries. There they are objectively pure and boundless, and subjectively total and absolute.

XXIX. Vanity and vexation are here the titles of transitory things. Reality, perfection, and glory, are the titles of the things above.

XXX. This world is a point of God's creation, a narrow place for a few passengers. Above are the vast, capacious regions, sufficient for all saints and angels.

XXXI. This world is as Newgate, and hell as Tyburn; some are hence saved, and some condemned. The other world is the glorious kingdom of Jehovah with the blessed.

XXXII. It was here that Christ was tempted, scorned, and crucified. It is there where he reigneth in glory over all.

XXXIII. The spiritual life is here as a spark or seed. It is there a glorious flame of love, and joy, and the perfect fruit and flower.

XXXIV. We have here but the first-fruits, earnest, and pledge. There is the full and glorious harvest and perfection.

XXXV. We are here children in minority, little differing from servants. There we shall have full possession of the inheritance.

XXXVI. The prospect of pain, death, grave, and rottenness, blasteth all the pleasures here. There is no death, or any fear of the ending of felicity.

XXXVII. Here, even God's word is imperfectly understood, and errors swarm, even in the best. All mysteries of nature and grace are there unveiled in the world of light.

XXXVIII. Many of God's promises are here unfulfilled, and our prayers unanswered. There truth shineth in the full performance of them all.

XXXIX. Our grace is here so weak, and hearts so dark, that our sincerity is oft doubted of. There the flames of love and joy leave no place for such a doubt.

XL. By our unconstancy, here one day is joyful and another sad. But there our joys have no interruption.

XLI. We dwell here with sinful companions, like ourselves, in flesh. There holy angels and souls, with Christ, are all our company.

XLII. Our best friends and helpers are here, in part, our hinderers by sin. There all concur in the harmony of active love.

XLIII. Our errors and corruptions make us also hurtful and troublesome to our friends. But there both Christ and they forgive us, and we shall trouble them no more.

XLIV. Selfishness and cross interests here jar, and mar our conversation. There perfect love will make the joy of every saint and angel mine.

XLV. A militant church imperfectly sanctified here liveth in scandal and sad divisions. The glorious church united in God in perfect love hath no contention.

XLVI. Sin and error here turn our very public worship into jars. The celestial harmony of joyful love and praise is, to mortals, inconceivable.

XLVII. Weak, blind, and wicked teachers here do keep the most in delusion and division. There glorious light hath banished all lies, deceit, and darkness.

XLVIII. The wills of blind tyrants is the law of most on earth. The wisdom and will of the most holy God is the law of the heavenly society.

XLIX. Lies here cloud the innocency of the just, and render truth and goodness odious. All false judgments are there reversed, and slander is silenced, and the righteous justified.

L. Government is here exercised by terror and violence. But there God ruleth by light, love, and absolute delight.

LI. Enemies reproach, and persecution here annoy and tempt us. All storms are there past, and the conquerors crowned in joyful rest.

LII. The glory of divine love and holiness is clouded here by the abounding of sin, and the greatness of Satan's kingdom upon earth. But the vast, glorious, heavenly kingdom, to which this earth is but a point and prison, will banish all such erring thoughts, and glorify God's love and goodness for ever.

LIII. This is the world which, as corrupted, is called an enemy to God and us, and which, as such, we renounce in baptism, and must be saved from. That is the world which we seek, pray, and wait for all our lives, and for which all the tempting vanities of this must be forsaken.

LIV. This body and world is like our riding clothes, our horse, our way, and inn, and travelling company; all but for our journey homeward. The other is our city of blessedness, and everlasting rest,

to which all grace inclineth souls, and all present means and mercies tend.

LV. The very ignorance of nature and sensible things makes this life a very labyrinth; and our studies, sciences, and learned conversation, to be much like a dream, or puppet-play, and a childish stir about mere words. But in heaven, a universal knowledge of God's wonderful works, will not be the least of the glory in which he will shine to saints.

LVI. Distance and darkness of souls here in flesh, who would fain know more of God and the heavenly world, and cannot, doth make our lives a burden by these unsatisfied desires. There glorious presence and intuition giveth full satisfaction.

LVII. Our sin and imperfection here render us uncapable of being the objects of God's full, complacential love, though we have his benevolence, which will bring us to it. But there we shall, in our several measures, perfectly please God, and be perfectly pleased in God for ever.

LVIII. All things here are short and transitory from their beginning, posting towards their end, which is near and sure, and still in our eye. So short is time, that beings here are next to nothing; the bubble of worldly prosperity, pomp, and fleshly pleasure, doth swell up and break in so short a moment, as that it is, and is not, almost at once. But the heavenly substances, and their work, and joys, are crowned by duration, being assuredly everlasting.

Such, O my soul, is the blessed change which God will make.

The reasons and helps of my belief and hope of this perfection.

I. Natural reason assureth me, that God made all creatures fitted to their intended use; even brutes are more fit for their several offices than man is. He giveth no creature its faculties in vain; whatever a wise man maketh, he fits it to the use which he made it for; but man's faculties are enabled to think of a God, of our relation, and our duty to him, of our hopes from him, and our fears of him; of the state of our souls related to his judgment; of what will befall us after death, reward or punishment, and how to prepare for it. This nature, and its faculties and powers, are not made in vain.

II. Reason assureth me, that all men are bound by nature to prefer the least probability of a life of everlasting joy before all the prosperity of this world; and to suffer the loss of all this short vanity, to escape the least possibility of endless misery; and nature hath such notices of rewards and punishments after death, that no man can say that he is sure there is no such thing. From whence it followeth, that all men are bound by the very law of nature, to be religious, and to seek first and most their salvation in the life to come. And if so, it is certain that there is such a thing to be obtained; else God had made the very nature of man to be deceived by itself, and to spend the chief part, yea, all his life, through labour and suffering, for that which is not; and so made his greatest duty to be his greatest deceit and misery; and the worst men should be least deceived. But all this is not to be imputed to our wise and good Creator.

III. The universal sense of moral good and evil in all mankind, is a great evidence of another life. The vilest atheist cannot abide to be accounted a knave, a liar, and a bad man; nor will equal a vicious servant with another. All would be thought good, who will not be good. And doth not God make a greater difference than man? and will he not show it?

IV. The world is actually ruled much by the hopes and fears of another life, and cannot well be ruled without it, according to the nature of man; but the Almighty, most wise, and most holy God needs not, and will not rule the world by mere deceit.

V. The gospel of Christ hath brought life and immortality into a clearer light than that of nature; and it must be by believing in Christ that we must have our full satisfaction. Oh, what hath God done in the wonders of redemption to make us sure! And against the doubts that are apt to rise from some hard particular text of Scripture, it must be considered, I. That Christ and his apostles did put the ascertaining seal of the many uncontrolled miracles to the gospel doctrine, primarily; which doctrine, 1. Was delivered and sealed eight years before any of the New Testament was written, and almost seventy before the last. 2. And Christ did not speak in the language in which the gospel is written to us; so that being but a translation as to his own words, the matter is the thing first sealed.

II. And that it was the two legislative mediators, Moses and Christ, who came with the great stream of uncontrolled miracles; it being necessary that men should have full proof that a law or doctrine is of God, before they believe it: but the priests and prophets after Moses, and the preachers and pastors of the christian church, who were not commissioned to bring men any new laws or gospel, but to proclaim and teach that which they received, needed no such new testimony of miracles.

III. The belief of every particular priest or prophet after Moses, or every pastor after Christ and his apostles, was not of the same degree of necessity to salvation as the belief of the law and gospel itself. Therefore, though all the holy Scripture be true, the law and the gospel must be much differenced from the rest.

IV. The history of the law and gospel have full, ascertaining, historical evidence; or else there is none such in the world. Therefore the doctrine must be true.

V. The prophecies fulfilled prove the gospel true.

VI. And the divine impress on the whole.

VII. And the sanctifying work of the Spirit wrought by it, in all nations and ages, on serious believers, is a constant, divine attestation.

VIII. And as my faith hath so sure a foundation, it confirmeth my faith and hope, that it hath been so long and great a work of God, by his word and Spirit on my soul, to raise it to believe, and love, and desire, that holy state of perfection and fruition which I hope for. That which hath made me so much better than I else had been, and turned my heart and life (though imperfectly) to things above the pleasures of the flesh, must needs be of God; and God would never send his grace to work my heart to deceit and lies, and give me such graces as shall all be frustrate; his Spirit is the earnest and first-fruits of glory.

IX. And all the course of religious and moral duty which he hath commanded me, and in which he hath employed my life, were never imposed to deceive me: I am sure, by nature and Scripture, that it is my duty to love God and my neighbour, to desire protection, and to serve God, and do good with all my time and power, and to trust God for my reward, believing that all this shall not be in vain; nor that which is best be made my loss. O blessed be God for commands and holy duty; for they are equal to promises. Who can fear that he shall lose by seeking God?

X. As God hath sealed the truth of his word as aforesaid, so he hath, by an instituted office and ordinance, sealed and delivered to myself his covenant

with the gift of Christ and life, in baptism, and the Lord's supper.

XI. He hath given me such a love to holy things and persons, that I greatly long to see his church in perfect light, and love, and concord: oh! how sweet would it be to see all men wise, and holy, and joyfully praising God! Every christian longs for this; and, therefore, such a state will be.

XII. I have found here the great benefit of the love and ministry of angels, such as is described in Psal. xci. They have kept me night and day, which confirmeth my hope that I shall dwell with them; for I love them better than men, because they love and serve God better.

XIII. That low communion which I have here with God by Christ and the Spirit, in his answer to my prayers, supports, comforts, experiences, tends to more.

XIV. The pleasure which I have by love, in thinking of the happiness of my many, many, many holy departed friends, and of the glory of Christ, and the heavenly Jerusalem, is sure some hopeful approach towards their state.

XV. When I see the fire mount upward, and think that spirits are of a more sublime and excellent nature than fire; and when I see that all that is done in this world, is done by spiritual unseen powers, which move this gross and drossy matter, it puts me past doubt, that my soul, being a spirit, hath a vast and glorious world of spirits to ascend to. God hath, by nature, put into all things an aggregative, uniting inclination: earth hath no other natural motion. The ascent of fire tells us its element is above; and spirits naturally incline to spirits, and holy spirits peculiarly are inclined to the holy.

XVI. I am sure, 1. By understanding that I understand, and by willing that I will, &c. 2. I am sure by these acts, that I have the power or faculties to do them: for none doth that which it cannot do. 3. And I know that it is a substance that hath these powers: for nothing can do nothing.

My soul, then, being certainly an intellective, volitive, vital substance, 1. I have no reason to think, that God, who annihilateth not the least sand, will annihilate so noble a substance.

2. Nor that he will destroy those powers which are its essential form, and turn it into some other thing.

3. Nor that such essential powers shall lie as dead and unactive, and so be continued in vain.

4. There remaining, therefore, nothing uncertain to natural reason, but the continuance of individuation to separate souls; 1. Apparitions and witches have put that out of doubt, notwithstanding many fables and delusions. 2. Christ hath put it more out of doubt. 3. While substance, faculties, and acts continue, it is the error of our selfish state in flesh, which maketh any fear too near a union, which shall end our individuation. The greatest union will be the greatest perfection, and no loss to souls.

XVII. God's wonderful providences for the church and single saints on earth are such as tell us of that love and care, which will bring them afterwards to him.

XVIII. The nature of God taketh off the terror of my departure much; I am sure I shall die at the will, and into the hand, of infinite, essential love and goodness; whose love should draw up my longing soul.

XIX. I am going to a God whose mercies have long told me, that he loveth me better than my dearest friend doth, and better than I love myself, and is a far better chooser of my lot.

XX. As he hath absolute right to dispose of his own, so indeed the fulfilling of his will is the ultimate end of all things, and therefore most desirable in itself: and his will shall be fulfilled on me.

XXI. I go to a glorified Saviour, who came down to fetch me up, and hath conquered and sanctified death, and made it my birth-day for glory, and taketh me for his dear-bought own and interest, and is in glory ready to receive his own.

XXII. I go to that Saviour who, on the cross, commendeth his spirit into his Father's hand, and taught me, with dying Stephen, to say, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

XXIII. I go no solitary, untrodden way, but follow all the faithful since the death of Abel, to this day, (save Enoch and Elias,) who all went by death into that glorious world, where I shall find them.

XXIV. I have so long groaned under a languid body, and in a blind, distracted, and (by man) uncurable world, where Satan, by lies, malice, and murder, reigneth in—alas! how many; and specially am so weary of my own darkness, and sinful imperfection, that I have great reason to be willing of deliverance.

XXV. I have had so large a share of mercies in this world already, in time, and manifold comforts from God, that reason commandeth me to rest in God's time for my removal.

XXVI. I shall leave some fruits, not useless, to serve the church when I am gone: and if good be done, I have my end.

XXVII. When I am gone, God will raise up and use others to do his appointed work on earth: and a church shall be continued to his praise: and the spirits in heaven will rejoice therein.

XXVIII. When I am gone, I shall not wish to be again on earth.

XXIX. Satan, by his temptations, and all his instruments, would never have done so much as he doth in the world to keep us from heaven, if there were not a heaven which conquerors obtain.

XXX. When darkness and uncertainty of the manner of the action and fruition of separated souls would daunt me, it is enough to know explicitly so much as is explicitly revealed, and implicitly to trust Christ with all the rest: our eyes are in our head; who knoweth for us? Knowledge of glory is part of fruition: and therefore we must expect here no more than is suited to a life of faith.

XXXI. All my part is to do my own duty, and then trust God; obeying his commanding will, and fully and joyfully resting in his disposing and rewarding will. There is no rest for souls but in the will of God, and there with full trust to repose our souls in life, and at death, is the only way of a safe and comfortable departure.

XXXII. The glorious marriage-day of the Lamb cannot now be far off, when the number of the elect shall be complete, and Christ will come with his glorious angels, and will be glorified in his saints, and admired in all believers, and there shall be a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness; and that kingdom shall come, where that which God hath prepared for them that love him, eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to have a formal, full conception of it.

Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Amen.

Fear not then, O my soul, to lay down this flesh: mercy hath kept it up for my preparing work; but, oh, what a burdensome and chargeable companion hath it been! It is better than the dwelling-place of perfect spirits? Oh, what are my groans, and all my cold and faint petitions, and my dull thanksgiving, to their harmonious, joyful praise? If a day in

God's courts be better than a thousand, what is a day, yea, what is everlastingness in the heavenly society and work! Oh, how hateful a thing is darkness and unbelief, when the remnants of them thus stop poor souls in their ascent, and make us half unwilling to go home! What! unwilling to be with my glorified Lord! Unwilling to be with saints and angels, who are all life, and light, and love! Unwilling to see the glory of Jehovah! O foolish, sinful soul! hath Christ done so much to purchase the heavenly glory for thee, and now art thou unwilling to go into the possession of it? Hast thou been seeking, and praying, and labouring, and suffering so many years, for that which now thou seemest scarce willing to obtain? Dost thou not judge thyself unworthy of eternal life, when thou no more desirest to enjoy it? All this is long of thy too much adherence unto self and sense: thou art still desiring sensitive satisfaction, and, not content to know thy part, wouldst know that for thyself which Christ knoweth for thee; as if thou couldst better trust thyself than him. Fear not, weak soul, it is our Father's good pleasure to give thee the kingdom: trust infinite power, wisdom, and love: trust that faithful, gracious Saviour who hath so wonderfully merited to be trusted: trust that promise which never deceived any one, and which is confirmed by so many miracles, and by the oath and by the Spirit of God. Whenever thou departest from this house of flesh, the arms of mercy are open to embrace thee; yea, essential, transcendent love is ready to receive thee: the Spirit of love hath sealed thee to that blessed state: Christ will present thee justified and accepted. Most of my old, holy, familiar friends are gone before me, and all the rest that died since the world began. And the few imperfect ones left behind are hasting after them apace, and if I go before, will quickly overtake me: though they weep as if it were for a long separation, it is their great mistake; the gate of death stands all day open, and my sorrowful friends are quickly following me, as I am now following those for whom I sorrowed. Oh, pity them who are left a while under the temptations, dangers, and fears, which have so long been thine own affliction! but be not afraid of the day of thy deliverance, and the bosom of everlasting love, and the society of the wise, and just, and holy, and of the end of all thy troubles, and the entrance into the joy of thy Lord, and the place and state of all thy hope. Oh, say, not notionally only, as from argumentative conviction, but confidently, and with glad desire and hope, to depart and be with Christ is far better than to be here.

But, O my God, I have much more hope in speaking to thee than to myself. Long may I plead with this dark and dull, yet fearful soul, before I can plead it into joyful hopes and heavenly desires, unless thou shine on it with the light of thy countenance, and thou, whom my soul must trust and love, wilt give me faith and love themselves. I thank thee for convincing arguments; but had this been all the strength of my faith and hope, the tempter might have proved too subtle for me in dispute. I thank thee that some experience tells me, that a holy appetite to heavenly work, and a love to the heavenly company and state, doth more to make me willing to die, and think, with pleasure, of my change, than ever bare arguments would have done. Oh, send down the streams of thy love into my soul, and that will powerfully draw it up by longings for the near and full fruition! Oh, give me more of the divine and heavenly nature, and it will be natural and easy to me to desire to be with thee: send more of the heavenly joys into this soul, and it will long for heaven, the place of joy! I must not hope on earth for any such acquaintance with the world above as is proper to the enjoying state. But if the sun can send its illuminating, warming rays, to such a world as this, according to the various disposition of the recipients; doubtless thou hast thy effectual, though unsearchable, ways, of illuminating, sanctifying, and attractive influence on souls. And one such a beam of thy pleased face, one taste of thy complacential love, will kindle my love, and draw up my desires, and make my pains and sickness tolerable; I shall then put off this clothing with the less reluctancy, and willingly leave my flesh to the dust, and sing my *nunc dimittis*, when I have thus seen and tasted thy salvation. O my God, let not thy strengthening, comforting grace now forsake me, lest it should overwhelm me with the fears of being finally forsaken. Dwell in me as the God of love and joy, that I may long to dwell in love and joy with thee for ever. As grace abounded where sin abounded, let thy strengthening and comforting mercy abound when weakness increaseth, and my necessities abound. My flesh and my heart faileth, but thou art the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever: this short life is almost at an end; but thy loving-kindness is better than life: I know not with what pains thou wilt further try me; but if I love thee, thou hast promised that all things shall work together for my good. The world that I am going to by death is not apparent to my sight; but my life is hid with Christ in God: and, because he liveth, we shall live; and we shall be with him where he is; and when he appeareth, we shall appear with him in glory; and shall enter into our Master's joy, and be for ever with the Lord. Amen.

What sensible manifestation of his kingdom Christ gave in his transfiguration.

Sect. I. Our Lord, who brought life and immortality to light, well knew the difficulty of believing so great things unseen: and therefore it pleased him to give men some sensible helps by demonstration. In Matt. xvi.; xvii. 1, 2, &c.; Mark ix. 1; Luke ix. 28, he promised some of his disciples a sight of his kingdom as coming in power; or such a glimpse as Moses had of the back parts of God's glory: this he performed first in his transfiguration, as afterward in his resurrection, ascension, and sending the Holy Ghost to enable them, with power, to preach, and work miracles, and convert the nations.

Sect. 2. By the kingdom of God, is meant God's government of his holy ones, by a heavenly communication of life, light, and love, initially, on earth by grace, and perfectly in heaven by glory. A special theocracy.

Sect. 3. For the understanding of this we must know, that when God had made man good, in his image, he conversed with him in a heavenly manner, either immediately, or by an angel, speaking to him, and telling him his will. But man being made a free, self-determining agent, he was left to choose whom he would follow: and hearkening unto Satan, and turning from God, he became a slave of Satan, and gave him advantage to be his deceiving ruler: not that man's rebellion nullified God's power, or disposing government, or took man from under obligation to obedience; but that, forsaking God, he was much, though not wholly, forsaken by his special, fatherly, approving government, and left to Satan and his own will: but the eternal Word interposing for man's reprival and redemption, undertook to break the serpent's head, and to conquer and cast out him that had deceived and captivated man: and, choosing out a special seed, he made them a peculiar people,

and set up a heavenly, prophetical government over them, himself, by heavenly revelation, making their laws, and choosing their chief governors under him, from time to time, and would not leave it to blind and sinful man to make laws, or choose princes, for themselves, but would keep them in a special dependence upon heaven. But the carnal Israelites having provoked God by odious idolatry to deny them much of the benefit of government, (save when they repented, and cried to him for help,) they thought to amend this by choosing a king like other nations, and ending their dependence on heavenly revelation, and choice for government: and so theocracy was turned into a more human regiment, and God more cast off; though yet he would not quite forsake them. And the rest of the world was yet more left under the power of Satan, and their own corrupted mind and will; so that Satan hath both an internal kingdom in wicked souls, and a visible political government of the wicked kingdoms of the world, ruling them by men that are ruled by him. And as Christ came to cast him out of men's hearts by his sanctifying, conquering Spirit, so also to cast him out of the political government of the kingdoms of the world, and to bring them under the laws, and officers, and Spirit of Christ, and rule them by heavenly power and love as his own kingdoms, that he may bring them to perfection in one celestial kingdom at last. And in this sense we pray, "Thy kingdom come."

Sect. 4. To make men believe that he is the heavenly King sent from God, to cast down Satan's kingdom, was the great business of the preaching of the gospel: this he would demonstrate, as by all his miracles which showed him to have the victory of devils, and to be the Lord of life, so also by visible apparition in glory. And it is said, 1 John v. 7, 8, that there are three witnesses in heaven, and three on earth; so here Christ would have three heavenly and three earthly witnesses of his transfiguration. From heaven he had the witness, 1. Of a voice, proclaiming, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear him." 2. Of Moses, the chief lawgiver. 3. And of Elias, the chief prophet; to tell us, that the law and the prophets are his prognosticating witnesses. But "hear him" notifieth to us, that Christ and his gospel are to be heard above the law and the prophets, and to teach us more than they could teach us: the law was given by Moses, (with its types and shadows,) but grace and truth (the substance so typified) are by Jesus Christ.

Sect. 5. Light and glory are often of the same signification. Christ was transfigured into a lucid, glorious appearance of body: he tells us by this, that he would have us have some sort of idea of his kingdom, fetched from sense: many apparitions of angels have been in lights. Christ appeared to Saul in a visible light, Acts ix. So did he to John, Rev. i. &c.: God and the Lamb are the light of the new Jerusalem. It is an inheritance of the saints in light.

Some seem to me to think too basely of sense, and too far to separate it from intellectual spirits, both as to power, act, and object: and all because they find it in lower creatures. They might accordingly deny substantiality to spirits, because brutes are substances: the higher have all the perfections of the lower, either formally or eminently. It is not a spirit's perfection to be insensible, or to have nothing to do with sensible things, but to be eminently sensible, and to be superior agents on lower sensibles. God is love: and love is complacency: and a high degree of complacency is delight or joy. So that God is essential, infinite joy, but without that drossy quality which is proper to souls in flesh, and all that imperfection which belongs to creatures. Can we tell what it is to enter into our Master's joy, or joyfully to love and praise him, without any sense: I rather think, that as vigorous youth makes men capable of more delight than decrepit, languid, painful age and sickness, so heaven shall, by perfecting our natures, make them capable of unconceivably more joy than any on earth is capable of.

And as we shall have sense in exaltation as to power and act, so we shall have sensible objects. God himself delighteth in all his works, and so shall we. We must not, on pretence of taking the heavenly Jerusalem to be merely spiritual, deprive ourselves of all the sensible ideas of it which God's description offereth to us. Light is sensible; Christ glorified there is sensible; Moses and Elias were sensible to Peter, James, and John. Lazarus and Abraham were sensible to the man in hell, Luke xvi. Stephen saw heaven open, and Christ sitting at the right hand of God. And all eyes shall see him at his glorious return. Heavenly glory is not enjoyed only by mere thinking and knowing, nor as in a dream, but by the most eminent intellectual sensation, exalted and invigorated.

Sect. 6. Say not then, O my soul, that this kingdom of glory is so far above thee, that thou canst have no idea of it. Think not that it is therefore unmeet for thy desiring and joyful hopes, because thou canst not know what it is. Hast thou no conception of the difference between light and darkness? If thou hadst been but one year kept in absolute darkness, wouldst thou have no desiring thoughts of light? The blind think themselves half dead while they are alive. Indeed, the faculty and object must be suitable; light may be too great for our weak eyes, as heat may be torment in an unsuitable degree; but when our souls are perfected, they will be suitable recipients of a more glorious light than we can here endure. Moses is not there covered in a cleft of the rock, because he could see but as the back part of God's glory. We must see here but as in a glass, but there as face to face. Though these organical eyes, as spectacles, shall be laid by, we shall have media more perfect, suitable to our perfect state.

And as I can think of heaven as a region of glorious light, so can I think of it as a place and state of life and love. I know somewhat of the difference of life and death, and that a living dog is better than a dead lion. And I have felt what it is to love my friends, and thence to desire their near communion as my delight; and can I then have no idea of that world, where life, light, and joyful love are the very element of souls, as water is to the fishes?

And as I can have some idea of that state in general, so may I of the state of the perfected spirits of the just which are there. They are connatural to their proper element. They are essential, created life, light, and love. And they want not substance to be the basis of those formal powers, nor objects on which to exercise them. Think not, then, that heaven is so far unconceivable, as not by any idea to be thought of. If we have no conception of it, we can have no desires of it, and no delightful hope. What can we conceive of more certainly than of life, and light, and love; of a region, and of persons essentiated of these? Do we not know what knowledge is, and see what light is, and feel what life and love are?

But it is true that our conceptions hereof are lamentably imperfect; and so they must be till possession, fruition, and exercise, perfect them. Who knoweth what light or sight is, but by seeing; or

what knowledge is, but by knowing; or what love and joy are, but by loving and rejoicing? And who knows what perfect sight, knowledge, love, and joy are, but by perfect seeing, knowing, loving, and rejoicing? No man by an intuitive or immediate perception. But some abstractive conceptions of it we may have by reasoning deduction from that poor degree which we here in the kingdom of grace possess.

Can I perceive substantiality in the dark terrene appearances, which are but mutable lifeless matter agitated and used by invisible powers; and shall I think of those unseen, powerful substances, as if they were less substantial for being spiritual, or were not objects for a knowing thought? Are the stars which I see less substantial than a carcass in a darksome grave? The Lord that appeared in shining glory hath members in their measure like himself; and hath promised that we shall shine as stars in the kingdom of his Father. If some degree of this be here performed in them who are called the children of light, and the lights of the world, how much more will they shine in the world of light! They that call light a quality or an act, must confess it hath a substance whose quality or act it is. Alas! what a deceived thing is a sensual unbeliever, who spendeth his life in the pursuit of fugitive shadows, and walketh in a vain show, and thinks of spiritual, glorious substances, as if they were the nothings or delusions of a dream.

Sect. 6. Christ, Moses, and Elias, here visibly appeared as three distinct, individual persons. This tells us that it is a false conceit that death ceaseth individuation, and turneth all souls into one (of which before): perfect, indivisible, infinite unity is proper to God; from this one is multiplicity. Reason forbids us, when we see the numberless individuals in this world, and see also the numerous stars above, to imagine that all the worlds above us have so much of divine perfection, as to be but one undivided substance, and to have no multiplicity of inhabitants. Yea, some of those Sadducees hold that the stars are worlds inhabited as the earth is. And why then should they think, whithersoever souls go, that they cease their individuation, when they go among individuals? But Christ hath confuted them even to sense. Moses is Moses still, and Elias is Elias still; and all our friends that are gone to Christ are the same still that they were, and may be called by the same names. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are the same in heaven; and Lazarus was Lazarus in Abraham's bosom. When we lay by flesh, and are unclothed, we put not off our personality. Every one shall receive his own reward according to what he hath done in the body, when every one must give account of his own works and talents.

Why then may not I, with distinct conceptions and joyful desires, look after the souls of my departed friends, that are now in the celestial kingdom? Though malignity hath scorned me for naming some few in my "Saints' Rest," being such as the despisers hated, yet I forbear not, on such accounts, to solace myself by naming more, but because they are more than it is fit to number. In all places where I have lived, how many excellent souls (though here they were not perfect) are gone to Christ! How sweet is the remembrance of the communion which I had with many of them in Shrewsbury, and other parts of Shropshire; of many at Dudley, and the adjoining parts; of multitudes at Kidderminster, Bewdley, and other parts of Worcestershire; of abundance at Coventry, and other parts of Warwickshire; and of many where I have sojourned in other parts of the land; and, above all, in London, and the adjoining parts! As Mr. Howe hath elegantly expressed it, in his excellent character of my excellent and dear friend, Mr. Richard Fairclough: what a multitude of blessed saints will arise at the last day out of London! And this earth is, as it were, hallowed with the dust and relics of so many blessed souls. But it is heaven that is spangled with these spiritual stars; the place honoured with them, and they with it, and all by Christ. We are like infants, or lambs, or other young ones, that cry for their dams if they be but out of sight; though they are never so near, if they see them not, they cry as if they were not, or had forsaken them. As Christ told his disciples, that it was needful for them that he departed from them, and yet their hearts for this were sorrowful, till the Holy Ghost came upon them, as better than Christ's fleshly presence, to prepare them joyfully to follow him; so we think of our friends as almost lost to us by separation, till the heavenly Spirit tell us where they are, and prepare us to desire to be with them.

Sect. 6. Elias hath a body now in heaven, and so hath Enoch; but can we think that only two or three that are there with Christ do so much differ from all the rest, as to have bodies when the rest have none? Is there such a dissimilitude of saints in heaven? What are two or three in such a society? Doubtless their bodies are not corruptible flesh and blood, but such spiritual bodies as all saints shall have at the resurrection. But are they in heaven such visible and shaped bodies as they appeared on the mount? The same difficulty poseth us about the risen body of Christ: he would not have Mary touch him, because he had not yet ascended to his Father; he could appear and vanish from their sight at his pleasure; and yet Thomas handled him, and felt that he had flesh and bones. That body of flesh ascended visibly up toward heaven; and yet it is not flesh and blood in heaven, but a spiritual body: for it is not worse than he will make his members. What shall we say to these things? We must say, that we are not capable of knowing them, but have reason to be thankful that we may know so much, more necessary for us. But yet it seemeth probable that the bodies of Christ, and Enoch, and Elias, were changeable according to the region in which they were to be. Christ could take up a body of flesh and blood, and immediately change that state of it into a pure and incorruptible, spiritual body, as it entered into the incorruptible, spiritual region. And so God did by Enoch and Elias. As Paul saith, that we shall not all die, (those that live till Christ's appearing,) but we shall all be changed. And yet if Elias have business on the mount, he can put on the clothing of a grosser body to be seen of men, and can lay it by, or return to his more invisible, spiritual state, when he returneth to the place from whence he came. And no wonder, when angels (and the ancients say Christ, before his incarnation) assumed bodies suitable to their several businesses on earth; yea, such as could eat and drink with men; when they dwelt not in heaven so coarsely clothed.

Sect. 7. But how came Moses to have a body on the mount, who is said to have been buried, and therefore took none with him into heaven? We must still remember, that we inquire of things above our certain knowledge. But in humble conjecture we may say, that it is no more impossible for Moses to assume such a body as he appeared in on the mount, for that occasion, than for angels to appear in human shapes; and departed souls too, as many apparitions have told men. And if bad souls can do it, why not good ones, when God will have it? The tradition seemeth but a Jewish dream, that God kept the body of Moses uncorrupted in the grave; and

that this was it that the devil is said to strive for against Michael, that the body might be corrupted. And say others, that at this transfiguration it rose again. There need no such conceits to our satisfaction. The soul of Moses could assume a body.

Sect. 8. But still the dissimilitude of Enoch and Elias from all the saints in heaven is an unresolved difficulty. If we knew that God would have it so, it might satisfy us. But there is a symmetry in the body of Christ. And it is like that the same region hath inhabitants of the same nature. What shall we think, then, that Enoch and Elias, at their entrance into those regions, laid by their bodies, and became such as Abraham, and other holy souls? Why are they taken up to be so laid by? The corruptibility, no doubt, they did lay by. God knoweth, but it is much unknown to us. Or shall we think, as all those fathers cited by Faustus Regiensis, and as Dr. More, and some of late, that all spirits are souls, and animate some bodies; and so that all in heaven have some bodies. If so, what bodies are they; and how differ they from the resurrection state? As the soul here operateth in and by the igneous spirits in our bodies, it may be so lodged in these as to take some of them with it at death, as the life of a dying plant yet dieth not in the seed. And a man may be said to go unclothed to bed, though he put not off his shift or nearest garment, and to be clothed again when he puts on the rest. And at the resurrection, as there will be a new heaven and earth, so spirits now in heaven may have much more delightful business on the new and righteous earth than now they have, and therefore may have use for an additional body, as much differing from what they have now in heaven, as the new earth and their employment there require; and as the seed doth differ from the plant. And spirits being communicative, will be more happy by more communication. As God delighteth to do good to all his works, so the souls now confined to heaven will delight to be employed in doing good to the new earth, and to animate the bodies suited to such work; though now they have use for no other than such spiritual, lucid receptacles as are fit for the regions where they dwell. And it will be no debasement or dejection for a spirit now in heaven to animate a body at the resurrection fit for the new earth; no more than it was to angels to speak to Adam, and to Moses, to Abraham, Jacob, Manoah, and others; or than it is to the sun to enlighten and enliven things on earth.

It is a foolish thing to think, as some do, that departed souls will be as dormant and unactive as in apoplectic or sleeping persons, for want of organized bodies to act in. Spirits are essentially active, intellective, and volitive; and will God continue such essential powers in vain? Moses and Elias wanted not bodies; and those in heaven can praise Jehovah and the Lamb with holy, concordant love and joy; whether in any sort of ethereal bodies, or without, we shall shortly know.

Sect. 8. It is said that Moses and Elias talked with Christ; this showeth that Christ hath familiar communion with the blessed. He that would come into flesh on earth, and live with man in a humbled state, and refused not familiar converse with poor men and women, and would eat and drink with publicans and sinners, will not refuse everlasting near familiarity with the glorified. If the church be his dearly beloved spouse, and as it were one with him, as his body, surely he will be no stranger to the least and lowest member of it.

Sect. 9. But what was it that they talked about? Luke (ix. 31) saith, "They appeared in glory, and spake of his decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." This was not to make it known to Christ, who came into the world to die for sin: what then was it for? Did Christ tell them of it, as not knowing it before? That is not likely neither. Did he need their comfort, as angels in his trials ministered to him and strengthened him? The particular uses of this speech we know not; but in general we know it was somewhat preparatory to his great sufferings and death.

And must Christ's sufferings and death have such preparation, and must not mine have much premeditation? And do I not need the consolatory messages of God? Carnal men would rather have chosen pleasanter discourse, than the talk of sufferings and death. But that which must be undergone, and requireth greatest strength, must be forethought of, and requireth the most preparing thoughts. It is worse than madness to be surprised with sufferings and death, before it is seriously forethought of. So sharp a trial, and so great a change, require the greatest preparation. He that can refuse to suffer and die, may refuse to talk or think of it. If Christ must have men from heaven to talk with him of his cross, what cause have we to study the cross; even all our lives to foresee it, and, by obedient consent, to submit unto it, and take it up to follow Christ, and even to determine, with Paul, to know nothing in the world but Christ and him crucified; that is, to take this for the only needful and excellent learning! But, alas! how senselessly is death and suffering talked of till it comes! We are to learn how to suffer when suffering is upon us; and to learn how to die when nature, or the physician, passes the sentence of death on us at hand. And it is God's mercy to some of us to make our sufferings long, that we may have a competent time of learning. As we learn to write by writing, and to discourse by discoursing, and every art and trade by practice; even so by suffering we learn to suffer, and the lesson is very hard. Malefactors suffer without learning, whether they will or not; but to suffer obediently, with child-like affections, is the lesson to be learned. Oh! little, too little, do many honest christians think how much of their most excellent obedience consisteth in child-like, holy suffering; therefore they little expect it, and provide for it; and then they are overwhelmed with the unexpected surprisal when it comes. Even in the sufferings which men bring on the faithful for righteousness' sake, how many shrink, and shift off their duty, or venture on forbidden things for safety, because they were not prepared for it! The loss of goods, or imprisonment and want, seem to many almost unsufferable trials. But I can tell such, by some experience, that bodily pain and torment is a far greater trial, which none of them are secured from, and requireth greater strength of faith obediently to accept it at the hand of God: and others can tell them that the violence of temptations, and the terrors of God on a wounded conscience, and troubled soul, are yet far harder than all these: and these are the saddest, because they make the mind unfit at present to improve them, and to refer them to holy ends and uses. Christ, in all his agony, and even when he cried out on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" had his intellectuals free and perfect, to know the nature, the reason, the uses, and end of all his sufferings: but so have not many poor, distressed, troubled, distracted souls. Oh how great a part of christianity is it to understand and rightly bear the cross! Most of our care is how to escape it, or to be delivered from it, rather than how obediently to bear it.

Sect. 10. Experience of a suffering, painful state

is a great help to our understanding of the gospel. It taketh off from me the scandal of Christ's cross, and helpeth me to perceive the great use and reasons of it, when I am under sufferings. Oh! what need have I of such an example as Christ's! All the parts of his sufferings are as useful to teach me how to suffer, as the ten commandments to teach me what to do. That he was put to fly from proud, domineering Pharisees, false teachers, and worldly rulers, and to converse most with the poor, in wildernesses, or various obscure places; that he was hated and persecuted for doing good, and accounted a sinner for neglecting men's ceremonies and traditions; that he was hardly believed, even by them that saw his miracles; and his own disciples were so slow in learning; and that in his suffering they all forsook him and fled, and one denied him with oaths and curses: all these are instructing instances. That Christ's natural, though sinless, aversation to death and suffering, and his fear, should be so powerful, and the sense of God's punishing justice so terrible, as to make his soul sorrowful, even to the death, and cast him into an agony, where he sweat water and blood, and to pray thrice that the bitter cup, if possible, might pass from him, which he came into the world to drink; all these also are teaching parts of the sufferings of Christ. That rulers, and priests, and soldiers, and the rabble, should agree to scorn him, clothe him in derision, spit on him, buffet him, scourge him, make him their jest, that came to save them; that they should make a sinner of him that never sinned, but came to destroy it, and save men from it; yea, to make him no less than a deceiver, a blasphemer, and a usurping rebel against Cæsar, and write this last as his accusation on his cross, thinking to leave his innocency no vindication or defence: for the Lord and Saviour of the world to undergo all this, is very instructing to a suffering believer: that he should, as such a malefactor, be reviled on a cross, and numbered with transgressors, and his side be pierced, and he there cry out to his Father as forsaken by him; that thus dying he was buried, and his soul went to the place of separated souls, and yet into paradise. They are excellent lessons which may be learned from all this.

I am not to suffer for others, nor to make God's justice a satisfying sacrifice for sin, as Christ did; but I must suffer God's fatherly corrections, and the castigation of paternal, healing justice. I must be saved as by fire, and pass through this purgatory, that I may be refined; I must suffer from Christ and for Christ, for my sin, and also for righteousness' sake: and I must, with a filial justification of God's holiness and chastening justice, bear his indignation, because I have sinned against him. I am predestinated to be conformed to Christ's image, in suffering and in sanctity, Rom. viii. 30, &c.: yea, I must "count all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord;" for whom I must not refuse to suffer the loss of all things, and count them dung, that I may win him, and be found in him, and not only know the power of his resurreetion, but also the "fellowship of his sufferings, and be made conformable to his death," Phil. iii. 8—10. Paul rejoiced in such infirmities, and in his sufferings for the church, filling up that which was behind of the afflictions of Christ in his flesh, Col. i. 24. Peter bids us "rejoice, inasmuch as we are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when his glory shall be revealed, we may be glad also with exceeding joy," 1 Pet. iv. 13. "If we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified with him," Rom. viii. 17. It is a great gift to suffer for his sake, Phil. i. 29. It is for the kingdom of God that such suffer, 2 Thess. i. 5. It is happiness and joy to suffer for righteousness' sake, for well doing, 1 Pet. ii. 10; iii. 14, 17; iv. 15, 16, 19; Matt. v. 10, 11. It is the sufferings of Christ that abound in such, that their consolations may abound, 2 Cor. i. 5.

But, alas! I suffer much more for my own sin than for Christ and righteousness: but even this also by the cross of Christ is sanctified, and made a great remedy against my sin. As Christ suffered for our sins, and yet merited by his suffering; so if we accept the castigatory punishment, and exercise repentance and mortification in our suffering, and an obedient submission to the rod, God will take this as acceptable service, and bless it to our further good.

Sect. 11. But how is it that Christ is said to learn obedience by the things that he suffered, and so to be made perfect? Heb. v. 8, 9. Was he unlearned and imperfect before? He had no culpable imperfection; but his satisfactory mediation was imperfect till it was all performed: it was not perfectly done; and when it was done, he thereby was constitutively made a perfect Mediator: as he said upon the cross, "It is finished," and as this human nature received additional acts of knowledge, as he grew up, and conversed with more objects, and so is said to increase in wisdom (as Adam knew the creatures when he saw them); so he had a new acquaintance with obedient suffering, when he was under the experience of it; and is said to learn it, in that he now exercised it.

And should not my suffering be God's school? Should I not learn obedience by it? Surely, as it smartly tells me of the evil of former disobedience, so it calls me to remember in whose hands I am, and with whom I have to do, and what is my duty in such a state. God can do no wrong to his own; he will do nothing finally hurtful to his children. In all our afflictions he is said to be afflicted, to signify that he afflicts not willingly, or without our provocation. Justice is good, and holiness is good; and it is good for us to repent, and be weaned from the flesh and world: and all good must be loved, and the means as such: sharp, heart-breaking sermons are unpleasing to nature; and yet to be loved for their use: and afflictions are God's powerful sermons: the proud and hardened are forced to hear them, who scorn and prosecute preachers for speaking the same things; and shall believers under sufferings be untaught? Words are but words, but stripes go by forcible sense unto the heart: obedient submission to the greatest pains is a serious acknowledgment of God's dominion, and of his wisdom and love, and the certain hopes of a better life. Impatience hath in it somewhat of atheism, or blasphemy: God is not duly acknowledged and honoured. Job's wife would have had him thus purposely provoke God, to end his misery by death: as if she had said, Speak no more well of him, by whom thou sufferest so much, nor honour a God that will not help thee: but patience saith, "I will look unto the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me," Mic. vii. 7.

Impatience showeth a misunderstanding of God's dealing with the afflicted; but patience yieldeth, because it understandeth whence all comes, and what will be the fruit and end. A man that is let blood for his life, is not impatient with the chirurgeon; but a beast will strive, and a swine, or child, will cry.

Our burdens are heavy enough of themselves: impatience maketh them heavier, and is oft more painful than the thing which we suffer: some have gone mad with crosses, which to another would have been light. Patience is our cordial and *nepenthes*,

yea, the health of the soul, by which it is able to bear its infirmities. "In our patience we possess our souls," Luke xxi. 19. Whatever else we lose, we lose not ourselves. He that keepeth his faith, and hope, and love by patience, keepeth his soul: but the impatient lose themselves, as if their other losses were not enough. A poor man singeth that gets his living only by his day labour; when a lord or knight would be tormented with sorrow, if he were reduced to his degree. Striving under our yoke and burden maketh it gall the more: and we cannot so hopefully or comfortably pray for deliverance from the pain which we make ourselves, as from that which God layeth on us; though also there, we must pray for the grace that must save us from our own impatience.

Patience preventeth many sins which impatience causeth; hard thoughts of God, if not hard and unseemly words: "Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly." Impatience tempteth men to think that piety and prayer are in vain, and to condemn the generation of the just, and to leave off duty, and say, Why should I wait on God any longer? yea, and to venture on false and sinful means, in hopes of deliverance and ease.

Were it to men, we have much to allay our impatience; but against God impatience hath no just excuse. Infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, can do nothing that deserveth blame: we have God's promise that all things shall work together for our good: and is he not to be trusted? or is the means of our good to be accused?

Impatience is unseemly for them that believe that heavenly rest and glory are at hand; where all their pains and sorrows will end. Were a man on the rack, and were sure to have all that he desired after it, he would the more easily endure it. Why else did the martyrs so patiently suffer? It is incongruous to complain of any thing that brings a man to heaven.

Christ himself was innocent, and yet accused not God for his sufferings. But we suffer justly for our faults; and it is so much less than they deserve, that the sins which we suffer most for are said to be forgiven us, in that the everlasting punishment is forgiven. Should we so often sinfully please the flesh, and yet must it not smart? Shall we so often grieve the Spirit of God, and not be grieved? Shall we lose our time, neglect our duty, forget our home, fall in love with the world, and yield to temptations, and defile our souls with filth and vanity, and must not correction tell us of our sinful folly? "If we suffer for our faults, and bear it patiently, it is not thankworthy," 1 Pet. ii. 20.

Our merciful Father doth use to shame us for our impatience, by the blessed end of our afflictions. The end that God made with Job showed the reasonableness of his patience. When our afflictions are over, do not all believers see cause of thankfulness for them, and say, It is good for me that I was afflicted? The pain is past, and the benefit remaineth. And if all that is past was mercy to us, why should we much fear that which is to come. Heaven will end all, and shame impatience for ever.

Our patience is much of our perseverance: what a deal of labour do those impatient men lose, that learn, and pray, and are somewhat religious, and have not patience at the last assault to bear the trial, but fail when they seemed to be near the crown!

Hold out, then, poor desponding soul! lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and run with patience the race which is set before thee, looking to Jesus, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross. God will not deceive thy hopes. Sin hath brought pain and death on man; but Christ hath sanctified it, and is the Lord of life. Yet a little while, and the heavenly possession shall turn thy sorrows into everlasting joy, and thy moans and groans into thanks and praise, and there shall be no more sickness, pain, or death. O foolish, unbelieving hearts! that cry out of suffering, and fear deliverance; that would fain be free from all affliction, and yet fly from the only state of freedom; that are impatient under their calamity, and yet afraid of passing to the only rest!

Sect. 12. But it is neither pain alone, nor death alone, that will sufficiently try our strength, and exercise our faith and patience. It must be great pain (and often long) in order to a certain, expected death. These two conjunct were the case of Christ; the torment of his agony, scourging, crucifying, piercing, and desertion, and the certainty of death that followed. Great pains, with hopes of recovery and ease, may be borne, even by a worldly man; because there is still the worldly hope of better: and so there is no denial of all, while life itself is not denied. We must receive the sentence of death in ourselves, if we will find that we trust in God alone, and trust him as one that raiseth the dead, that is, for another and better life.

As long as a man hath any hope of life and ease, a man's faith is not tried to the uttermost, by actual forsaking all. And yet an easy death alone doth not fully try a man; for they that know that all must die, may submit to this, who cannot bear long pains before it. But great and long pains, and the sentence of death together, are the trial.

And if God will so try me, why should I repine? Flesh will groan, but the mind may obediently submit. It is but flesh; that flesh that hath tempted and imprisoned my soul. I have too much loved it, and am too loth to leave it: and is it not mercy from God to make me weary of it? God is engaged against idols, that is, all that is loved and pleased before him; and if any thing, that is likest to be this flesh. Its corruptibility tells us, that both its pleasure and its pain will be but short. Long pain is usually tolerable: and intolerable pain will conquer nature, and not be long. The grace of Christ is sufficient for us, and his strength is manifested in our weakness, when he will not take the thorn out of our flesh, though, as Christ and Paul did, we pray thrice, or oftener.

And to be impatient with death is to repine that we are born mortal men; and to fly from heaven and all true hopes, and all the felicity purchased by Christ: and is this renouncing the world, and trusting Christ for life everlasting? And why fear we that which endeth all our pains and fears? A true believer never suffereth so much, but his mercies are far more and greater than his sufferings. His soul is united to Christ: his hopes of heaven have a sure foundation: he is sealed up to glory: rest and joy are near at hand; and former mercies should not be forgotten: and should not such men patiently endure? Oh what a shameful contradiction is it, to choose heaven as our only portion, to believe in Christ for it, and to seek it as the business of all our lives, and yet to be loth to die, that we may obtain it, and to fly with fear from that which we so seek and hope for! What a contradiction is it to call God our God and Father, the God of love, and to call Christ our gracious, glorified Redeemer, and to fly from his presence with distrustful fear! Almighty love may correct us, may kill us, but it cannot finally hurt true believers.

So much of Moses' and Elias' discourse of the sufferings and death of Christ.

Sect. 13. Sure it is not true that the souls of the fathers, before Christ's coming, did not enter into heaven, but lay in some inferior *limbus*. For Moses and Elias came from heaven; their shining glory showed that, and their discourse with Christ, and the voice and glory that went with them. And it is not to be thought that they were separated from the rest of the souls of the faithful, and, with Enoch, were in heaven by themselves alone, and the rest elsewhere. Though it is said that God's house hath many mansions, and there are various degrees of glory, yet the blessed are all fellow-citizens of one society, and children in one family of God. And they that came from east and west, shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God; and Lazarus is in Abraham's bosom, and the believing thief with Christ in paradise.

Sect. 14. It seems that Moses and Elias appeared thus, to foreshow the resurrection of Christ, and of the faithful, and to make it easier to the three disciples to believe it. Why should they doubt whether Christ should rise, when they saw that Moses was risen before him? And why should they doubt of the resurrection of the faithful, and the glory following, when they saw these glorified saints? Some think that this apparition was for the strengthening of Christ himself, whose human nature had use for such ministry also of angels, but it is more certain that it was for the strengthening of the disciples' faith, and of ours by their testimony. As it is said, "This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes," John xii. 30.

Sect. 15. It is much worth our noting, in what a communion this specimen of the kingdom of heaven was represented in the holy mount. Here was a voice of God, and a glimpse of his glory: here was our Redeemer in a glimpse of his glory: here was a Moses and Elias in a glimpse of their glory: and here were three beloved disciples yet in the flesh, and in weakness of faith, which needed such confirmation. God our Father, and our Saviour, the saints of heaven, and those on earth, are all of one society or kingdom. There is a near relation, and a near communion among them all. When the eternal Word disdained not so wonderful condescension as to come to us in the form of a servant, even of a poor, despised, crucified man, it is less wonder that Moses and Elias should come down as his witnesses and servants. Heb. xii. 23, &c. the heavenly Jerusalem, and city of the living God, of which we are enrolled burgesses or heirs, hath many parts. There is the assembly of the first-born, and innumerable angels, and the spirits of the just made perfect, and Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, and God, the Judge of all. Oh, what holy, glorious, joyful company shall we have above! Christ and his angels will not despise the least of saints.

Sect. 16. But what was the introduction to this apparition and transfiguration? It was Christ's praying, "He went up into a mountain to pray, and, as he prayed, he was transfigured," Luke ix. 28, 29. Surely this is written to invite and encourage us to pray. We are in greater need than Christ. It is folly in unbelievers to think prayers vain, because God is unchangeable. We are not unchangeable; and the exercise of faith, dependence on God, and true desires, being the condition required in a due receiver, maketh those blessings become ours, which else we had been uncapable of. God, who commandeth fervent prayer, hath promised to answer it. Though we must not think to be the rulers of the world, nor have whatever our flesh or folly doth desire, because we ask it earnestly, yet true prayer is the appointed way for obtaining what we need, and is best for us, and we are fitted to receive. And as Christ had this wonderful return to his prayers, his servants have experience that their choicest mercies for soul and body have come this way.

Sect. 17. Though the three disciples were admitted to this glorious society, how different was their case from that of Christ, and Moses, and Elias! In the beginning of the heavenly concourse, they were asleep with heaviness, even while this glorious company stood near them. Alas! such is our infirmity in flesh, and such a clog are these earthly bodies to us, that when God is present, and heaven is before us, and we have the greatest cause to watch and pray, a heavy, weary, sluggish body, even fettereth an active spirit, and we sleep, or turn away in wandering thoughts, when we should seriously converse with Christ and heaven. Alas! what unworthy servants hath our Lord! Are such as these meet for his work, his love, his acceptance, or his kingdom? But oh, how merciful a Saviour have we, who taketh not his poor servants at the worst, but when they have served him thus in his agony, he gently rebuketh them; "Could you not watch with me one hour?" and that with an excuse, "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Sect. 18. It is a matter of great moment to understand in what cases this excuse will hold, and our weakness will not make the willingness of the spirit unacceptable to God. If a drunkard, fornicator, or other sensualist should say, My spirit is willing to leave my sin, but my flesh is weak, and a temptation doth prevail, *Video meliora proboque*, &c.; this excuse would not prove God's forgiveness. If a man live in known sin, which he could forbear were he truly willing, and say, "To will is present with me, but to do I am unable; it is not I, but sin that dwelleth in me;" this would be a frivolous excuse; and yet to the sleepy disciples it was a good excuse, and I think to Paul, Rom. vii. Where, then, is the difference? There are some acts of man which the will hath not power to rule, and some that it can rule. The will hath not power always to keep a sleepy man awake: this sleep might be of the flesh without any will at all; and this excuseth from all guilt. There are some acts of man which the will cannot rule, but by a great degree of power and endeavour: as perhaps, with much ado, by preventing and resisting diligence, the disciples might have kept awake; in this case, their sleep is a fault, but a pardoned fault of weakness. Some persons are liable to inordinate fear and grief, which so surpriseth them by the constitution of their bodies, that the greatest unwillingness would not hinder them. And some could do more to resist these passions than they do, but very hardly with the greatest diligence; these are accordingly excusable in degree. Paul would have perfectly obeyed God's law, and never have sinned. But there is no perfection in this life: mere imperfection of true grace, which is predominant in the will, doth not damn men. But there are acts which are so subject to the will, that a sincere will, though imperfect, can command them. He that doth these, (or doth the contrary,) it is not because he sincerely would, and cannot, but because he hath but uneffectual wishes, and is not sincerely willing, if he know them to be what they are; especially if they be materially great sins which he yieldeth to, which true grace more strongly resisteth than it doth an idle word, or thought, or action. In short, all omissions or commissions, in which the will is positively or privatively guilty, are sinful in some degree; but only these do damn the sinner, which are inconsistent with the predominant love of God, and heaven, and holiness, in the soul.

Sect. 19. When the disciples awaked, they saw these glorious ones in converse. Did they hear what they said, or did Christ after tell them? The latter is most probable. Doubtless, as Moses tells us how God made the world, which none could tell him but by God's telling them first, so the apostles have written many things of Christ which they neither saw nor heard, but from Christ, that told it them by word, or inspiration. How else knew they what Satan said and did to him in his temptations in the wilderness, and on the pinnacle of the temple? How knew they what his prayer was in his agony? And so in this instance also. But Christ's own testimony was enough to put them out of doubt, to them that daily saw his confirming miracles.

Sect. 20. How great a difference was there between mount Sinai and this mount! When God delivered the law to Moses, that mount was terrible in flame, and smoke, and thunder, so that the people trembled and fled; but now here is nothing but life, and light, and love from heaven. A merciful Redeemer, whose face shone as the sun, with heavenly company, appearing nearly to the disciples, pitying and bearing with their heaviness and infirmity, strengthening their faith and hope, and proving to them a resurrection, and a heavenly kingdom, by a visible apparition of some of its possessors. This was not a frightful, but a confirming, delectable sight: the law in terror was by Moses, but grace and truth, peace and pleasure, are by Christ.

This was an inviting and delighting, and not an affrighting, apparition. Was it not a shameful infirmity, and a sin, that Peter should deny Christ after such a sight as this, and the rest of the disciples forsake him and fly? What! after they had seen the kingdom of God come in power, and Christ's face shine as the sun in its brightness, could they forget all this? Or could they doubt whether he or his persecutors were the stronger, and liker to prevail at last? Oh how frail, how uncertain, how bad a thing is depraved man!

But though Christ found them asleep, and though he foreknew that they would forsake him, he forsook not them, nor used them as they deserved, but comforted them with a glimpse of heaven; for he died for his enemies.

Sect. 21. But this was but once in all the time of his abode among them. It was an extraordinary feast, and not their daily bread; they had Christ still with them, but not transfigured in glory, nor Moses and Elias in their sight. We are too apt to think, that if God give us a joyful, extraordinary glimpse of heaven, we must have it always, or that he forsaketh us, and casts us off when he denieth it us. Oh that we were as desirous of holiness and duty as we are of the joy which is the reward! But our Father, and not we, must be the chooser both of our food and feast. Moses did not dwell on mount Nebo, that he might still see the land of promise: it was enough to have one sight of it before his death. As flesh and blood cannot enter into heaven, so it is little of heaven that entereth into it.

Sect. 22. When the disciples awake, they see his glory, and the two men that stood with them. It must not be a sleeping but an awakened christian that will have a sight of heavenly glory. As we must love God with all the heart, and soul, and might, all must be awakened in seeking him, and in attending him, before we can have a joyful foretaste of his love. Carnal security, supine neglect, and dull contempt, are dispositions which render us uncapable of such delights. Heavenly joy supposes a heavenly disposition and desires. Angels sleep not, nor are clogged with bodies of clay: earth hath no wings: it must be holy vivacity that must carry up a soul to God, notwithstanding the fetters of flesh. It is with each other's souls in the body that we converse together on earth. And it is not sluggish, but lively faith, and fervent desire, that must converse in heaven with Moses and Elias, and our living Head.

Sect. 23. But how did Peter know Moses and Elias, whom he had never seen before? Perhaps glorified saints do bear each one his notifying signature, and need not names and sound of words to make them known: perhaps Christ told the disciples who they were that talked with him: perhaps he made them know it by inspiration, as the prophets have their knowledge. Any of these ways God could notify them: it is not needful that we know which of them it was; but that they were known, is certain. We shall be no strangers to any saints in heaven, and therefore not to our old acquaintance. Whether we shall have any greater love to them, or delight in them, for old acquaintance' sake, or because they were instruments of our good on earth, I know not; but I know that our love to them, with whom we had holy comfort on earth, may well render heaven more familiar to us now, and more suitable to our desires. Oh how great a number of my godly friends are there! They are so many that I cannot make a catalogue of their names, but the memory of abundance of them doth delight me. And when we meet there, we shall be far better known to each other than we were to the most intimate on earth.

Oh, let christians now so converse together, as remembering that they must meet in heaven, where all that was secret will be brought to light. If we now put on any vizor, and seem better than we are; if we hide any sin, or base corruption; if we, by fraud or falsehood, deceive our friends, all this will be opened when we meet in heaven. It is a daily grief and shame to my soul, to think of the sins that I have committed against some that are now in heaven, which I either excused, extenuated, or hid, and to think how much evil they will know of me there, which on earth they knew not by me. But God who pardoneth them, will cause his servants there to forgive each other; but the detected sin, for all that, will be an odious, shameful thing. Lying and hypocrisy are there no cloak, but an aggravation, of the shame. If we cannot confess, and take shame to ourselves, by repentance, upon earth, how shall we appear in the open light, and see the faces of those whom we have wronged. What diminution it will make of our joy, I know not, but it must needs be a dishonour to have been false to God or man, and especially when we meet where sin is perfectly hated, to think how we either sinned together, or that we tempted and insnared one another in any sin: how it will affect us then I do not fully know, but it is now to me a far greater grief to think of any in heaven whom I have tempted or wronged, than it was while they lived with me on earth. And I think there is somewhat of this nature common to good and bad: even the consciences of wicked men do haunt them for notable injuries to others, especially concealed ones, and especially for persecuting the servants of God, when they are dead, more than while they lived. Insomuch that (though I doubt not of real apparitions) I am ready to think, that some that say they are haunted by the sight and the voice of such as seem to them to be deceased persons, are rather haunted by their own consciences, which strongly represent those persons to their imaginations.

But on the other side, it is a great delight to me to think of the good which I received from many

that are now in heaven; of the profitable sermons which I have heard from some, and the profitable conversation which I have had with others: how oft we sweetly consulted together of the things which concern everlasting life: how many days in public and private we spent in preparation, and in some prospect of the blessedness which now they enjoy. And it is not a small mercy to me, that I can think of multitudes now in heaven, of whose conversion and salvation God hath made my weak endeavours a prosperous means. Oh what a mercy is it to think on, that while I am yet compassed with temptations, and languishing in weakness, and groaning in pain, and, worst of all, burdened with a dark and sinful soul, so many are past all this with Christ, by means of any help which he sent them by my labours. It hath oft humbled me greatly to read in the lives of such men as John Janeway and Joseph Allen, how much of their proficiency they ascribed to my writings, and how far they overwent me, and left me quite behind them in holy delights and praises of God! But how much more am I below a multitude now in heaven, who called me father here on earth!

And if here I must rejoice with them that rejoice, as well as mourn with them that mourn, why should I not much more rejoice with all the blessed society above; and more familiarly with my old acquaintance, pupils, and dear friends? My love should be most to the best; and therefore, more to them than to any other of my friends; and therefore, my union with them being closer, and their felicity far greater, I should think with more joy of them than of any left behind. They are safe in the harbour, past all our dangerous storms and waves; and though they know, or will know, more of my sins than they did on earth, and hate them more, yet they that feel the comfort of the pardon of their own, will imitate God in pardoning me, and rejoice in God's forgiveness of me. Though their vile bodies lie like common dust, how much better do they now know the love of God, the mysteries of grace, the heavenly glory, the state of spirits in the city of God, than I do who was wont to preach it to them. God, that sent down Moses and Elias to show that saints in heaven and on earth have communion, will bring me and my friends now in heaven together again, into a far sweeter communion than ever we had here.

Sect. 24. It is no great wonder that Peter should be transported with this glorious sight, and greatly delighted with this heavenly communion, and say, "Master, it is good for us to be here." Would not a sight, a glimpse, of heaven, have transported any holy soul; yea, even those that now lie in tears and fears, and are overwhelmed with doubts and troubles? When they are groping after God, and groaning on their knees, because they feel more of his frowns than of his love, if then they had such a sight as this, what a change would it make upon them! Perhaps you will say, that the doubt of their own sincerity might still deprive them of their joy. No; this sight would banish doubts and troubles. It is a communication of love, and such as will fully convince the communicants.

Without such a miraculous glimpse of glory, God sometimes giveth some of his servants such a mental illustration, and inward glimpse and taste of heaven, as greatly overcometh all the fears of pain and death; such many old and later martyrs have had. It was a strange word of the godly bishop of St. David's, Mr. Farrar, to his neighbours, "If I stir in the fire, believe not my doctrine:" and accordingly he stirred not. If he had not had some prophetical inspiration, this could not have been justified from being a presumptuous tempting God. And Mr. Baynam's case was a mere wonder, who, in the flames, called to the papists to see a miracle, professing to them, that in the fire he felt no more pain than if he had been laid on a bed of down or roses.

I am just now reading in Melch. Adam's lives of the German Philosophers, the Life of Olympia Fulvia Morata, which ended with some such experience. In many ages there hath been some one rare woman, who hath excelled men in the languages, philosophy, and other human learning. Such a one was this Olympia Fulvia Morata, of Ferrara. She married Andr. Gundler, a physician: she removed with him into Germany; and was by the way convinced of the guard of angels, by her young brother falling out of a high window, on cragged stones, without any more hurt than if it had been on the soft ground. In Germany, she thus wrote to Anna Estensis, a Guisian princess: As soon as, by the singular goodness of God, I was departed from the Italian idolatry, and came with my husband into Germany, it is incredible how God changed my soul, (or mind,) which, being formerly most averse (or abhorring) to the divine Scriptures, am now delighted in them alone, and place in them all my study, labour, care, and mind; and as much as possible, contemn all the riches, honours, and pleasures, which formerly I was wont to admire. But the cross presently following, in God's usual method, her husband and she were, by soldiers, stripped naked, save the shift next the body, and narrowly escaping with life, were put so to wander from place to place, none daring to entertain them, even when she was sick of a fever; till at last they found liberal entertainment, in which she shortly fell into a mortal disease, of which she died. And in her last sickness, and after much torment of body, near death, she pleasantly smiled. Her husband asked her the cause; who said, I saw a certain place which was full of a most clear and beauteous light; intimating that she should quickly be there, and saying, I am wholly full of joy. And spake no more till, her eyesight failing her, she said, I scarce know any of you any more; but all things else about seem to be full of most beauteous flowers; which were her last words; having a long time professed, that nothing seemed more desirable to her, than to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, in all her sickness magnifying his mercies to her.

Many have thus joyfully laid down the flesh to go to Christ; what wonder, then, if Peter was loth to lose the pleasure of what he saw?

Two things are necessary to great and solid joy: first, that the object be truly and greatly amiable, and delectable; and, secondly, that the apprehensions of it be clear and strong. As to the first, we have so great and glorious things to delight us as would feast our souls with constant joy, were not the second, alas! much wanting. What man could choose but be even in Peter's rapture continually, if he had but ascertained heavenly glory, apprehended by him, in as satisfactory a manner as these sensible things are? If I lay in prison, yea, or in torment of colic, stone, or any such disease, and had but withal such apprehensions, or sight, of assured glory, surely the pain would not be able to suppress my joy. What a mixture, what a discord, would there be in my expressions! torment would constrain my flesh to groan, and the sight of heaven would make me triumph. I cannot but think how this great discord would show the difference between the spirit and the flesh. What a strange thing it would be to hear the same man, at the same time, crying out in pain with groans, and magnifying the love of God with transporting joy! But we are not yet fit for such joyful

apprehensions; our weak eyes must not see the sun, but through the allaying medium of a humid air, at a vast distance, and by the crystalline humour, and organical parts of the eye. Fain we would get nearer, and have sight, or clearer apprehensions, of the spiritual society, and glorious world. We study, we pray, we look up, we groan under our distance, darkness, and unsatisfying coneeptions; but yet it must not be. We must be ripened before the shell will break, or the dark womb will deliver us up to the glorious light; but Christ vouchsafed that to his three apostles which we are unworthy of, and yet unfit for. O happy sight! O happy men! It is incongruous to say, What would I not give for such a sight! lest it should savour of Simon Magus' folly; and I have nothing to give: but it is not incongruous to say, What would I not do, and what would I not suffer for such a sight! Yea, Christ puts such kind of questions to us; oh that I had better answered them in the hour of duty, and in the hour of temptation! When he asked, "Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" I have been ready, with James and John, to say, I can; but when the trial comes, (as they after in his suffering forsook him and fled,) how insufficient is my own strength to perform my promise! When he did impose on me the denying of myself, forsaking all, taking up the cross and following him, I yielded, and covenanted by vow to do it; but it was by the help of the Holy Spirit, which he promised to give me. I stand, Lord, to my covenant; help me to perform it; and give me, though not his present sight, yet some of Peter's mental apprehensions, and a glimpse, a taste, of that which transported him with delight. Let who will (or who thou wilt) take the riches and grandeur of the world. O give me some delightful taste of that which I am made for, redeemed for, and which thy Spirit hath long taught me to seek and hope for, as my all!

Sect. 25. Peter was not weary with the sight of this heavenly apparition. Why should I be weary of the believing contemplation of greater things? Though sight affect us more sensibly than mere believing and thinking, yet these have their happy office, which may be effectual. And Christ, who thus appeared in glory to Peter, hath said, "Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed." And Peter himself saith of them that see not Christ, that they "rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory," in believing. Oh how unexcusable am I for every weary prayer or meditation of such a glory; and for yielding to Satan and a backward heart, which have oft made me shorten these sweet employments, when I had time, and leave, and need, to lengthen them! What! weary of communion with Christ! weary of speaking to my heavenly Father, for endless blessedness, upon such joyful terms of hope as he hath given me! weary of the thoughts of the city of God, the heavenly society and work! weary of exciting divine love, and exercising it in divine praise, which are the works of angels, and all the heavenly host! Oh, how justly might God be, as it were, weary of me, and of my weary serviees; yea, of the best that I can offer him, which hath in it so much to give him cause!

Sect. 26. Peter did not fly from this glorious prospect; but would fain have had more of it, and have dwelt upon the holy mount. And when God will call me to a more glorious vision and fruition in heaven, shall I draw back, and be unwilling to go? Was that mount a better place than heaven? Is not Christ now to be there seen in greater glory? Is the Jerusalem above, the glorious company of saints and angels, no better and more desirable a sight, than Moses and Elias were on the mount? Alas! when we have read, and heard, and thought, and talked so much of heaven, and done and suffered so much for it, that yet we should draw back with fear and unwillingness to go to it! Oh what lamentable weakness of faith, and power of flesh, doth this discover! When I read Peter's words, "It is good to be here," I am grieved that I, who dwell in a world so near like hell, among the implacable haters of holiness and holy peace, and in a painful, tired body, and who have thought, said, and written so much of heaven, do yet say, with no stronger desire and joy, "It is good to be there." When I see all natural appetites desire earnestly their proper food, and even the brutes desire their beloved company, shall my holy appetite be so dull and indifferent? Lord, quicken it by the fuller communications of thy Spirit, and save me from this hated, dangerous disease.

Sect. 27. But Peter spake he knew not what, when he talked of building tabernacles on earth, for the fruition of that which is proper to heaven. Alas! this is our common malady and folly: we would have Christ in the splendour of his glory; but we would have him here: we would see Moses and Elias, if they will come down to us: we would have that in the flesh, which flesh and blood cannot possess. Oh if we knew in what land, what city, what country, what private house, we might live in the least glimpse of the heavenly glory, how joyfully should we run to such a habitation! Merchants make towards the most gainful place for trade: poor men inquire after the most fertile and delectable countries for plantation: gentlemen delight themselves with a sweet and pleasantly-seated mansion: but if saints on earth could find a plaee where they could see what Stephen, or Paul, or the apostles saw, and have a little of heaven without dying and putting off this body, what a desirable dwelling would that seem to them! And yet, alas, how cold are our desires of the time and place where we shall have much more! We have Christ on earth, in the manner and measure that we are capable: we have here some communion with heaven, as verily (though not so sensibly) as our eye hath with the sun. God will not deny believers their title, their earnest, and some first-fruits; but when we would have our all, or our best on earth, or that on earth which is proper to heaven, we know not what we desire or say.

Are we, vile, dirty sinners in flesh, now fit for heavenly sights or joys? Or is this world a place for building tabernacles where we may see the Lord, and take up our rest? What! in a world of temptations, of wickedness, of sufferings, where we are daily wrestling for our lives, and fighting, not merely against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world, even spiritual wickedness (or wicked spirits) in high places, (above the greatest men that are their servants), Eph. vi. 12. But that which is of the earth is earthly. Our earthly part would have an earthly felicity; but when we know that it is corruptible, and a dying thing, and that we have here no continuing city, both faith and reason bid us seek for one to come. The unfaithful steward had so much wit as to make sure of another habitation, when he knew that he must be no longer steward.

God hath so constantly confuted and befooled me, by his marvellous providence, whenever I have said, Soul take thy ease, and have thought of building tabernacles on earth, as hath convinced me, that such folly is not the least part of the danger of a soul, from which his mercy did so watchfully save me. If a little health and ease, or a pleasant habit-

ation, or beloved company and friends, have but flattered me into earthly delight and hopes, and made me say, "It is good to be here;" I never was long without some pains, and dangerous sickness, or some loss or cross in friends, or some removal by personal or public changes, to tell me, that I knew not what I said, and that rest and happiness are not here. As the laborious ants and bees are long gathering a heap of treasure, and furnishing a hive with winter provisions, and a contemptuous foot soon spurneth about the one, and the chief owner of the hive destroyeth the other; so (while I neglected wealth and honour) when I have but treasured up the choicest books, and taken pleasure in my works and friends, God saw that such pleasure needed an allay, and hath taken away books and friends together, or driven me oft from them and my habitation, to tell me, sensibly, that I have higher to look, and further to go; and that Moses and Elias appeared not to turn earth into heaven, and make me think that now I am well, but to invite my soul to their celestial habitation. When Christ hath comforted me by hearing prayers, by great deliverances, by wonderful success of my defective labours, by comfortable friends, by public mercies, it was not, by making my condition pleasant, to keep down my desires from heaven, but to draw them thither by such foretastes. Contentment with our condition, as without more of the world, is a great duty; but to be content with the world, or any thing on earth, without more holiness and communion with God, and without a part in the heavenly perfection, is a heinous and pernicious sin.

But, alas! it is a far worse mistake than Peter's, which deceiveth the greatest part of men. They say, indeed, as he, "It is good to be here" (till melancholy or misery make them intolerable to themselves); but it is not because they have seen a glimpse of heaven on earth, or tasted the sweetness of the holy society and work, but because their bodies are in health, their purses full, their appetites pleased, and their inferiors do their wills, and honour them. This is all the heaven that they love; and, to leave all this is the death which they abhor and fear. And they will not hear God, and the experience of all mankind befooling them, till near the night that their souls shall be required, and then, whose will all their treasure be?

Sect. 28. But yet it was a greater part of Peter's dotage, to think of tabernacles for Christ, Moses, and Elias, and of detaining of heavenly inhabitants upon earth. If you would offer the lowest saint in heaven an earthly kingdom in exchange for his condition, with what disdain would he despise the offer! Christ's kingdom was not of this world, nor would Moses and Elias change their lot with Alexander or Cæsar. Poor trifles allure us, and seem somewhat to us, (as toys to children,) while we are dreaming in the flesh; but if once we be delivered, and see what the celestial glory is, what a change will it make upon our judgments! We fear now in the dark to go unto that world of light, and are loth to put off the rags of flesh, and to depart from a known though a dirty, falling habitation: but if we get to heaven, we shall be loth to return to earth again, and be so coarsely clothed: when once we are there, a world would not hire us to come back into this corruptible body, till God will make it spiritual and incorruptible. Our friends, whose deaths we passionately lamented, would be loth now to change their company for such as we are, or their abode for such a wicked world as this, or their work for the best of ours on earth: no wonder that departed souls appear not to their friends on earth: most apparitions are of devils, or miserable souls, to whom it is no loss or condescension. Were I once in heaven, could I possibly be willing to be turned again into a Bedlam world, and laid under the feet of blinded pride, and raging madness, and live among Sodomites, (called christians,) whose god is their belly, and who glory in their filthiness and shame, and mind nothing, with love, but earthly things; and are bitter enemies, not only to the cross, but to the government of Christ? Would I be again among dogs and swine; yea, devils in flesh, who hate and persecute the regenerate seed, and all that will not receive their mark, and be as mad and bad as they? Would I again be groaning here in pain, or tired with a weary body, and more with a feeble, sinful soul, weak in faith, cold in love, of doubtful hope, and imperfect duty? Would I be here again in the prospect of a grave, with fear of dying; as strange as now to the heavenly felicity? Lazarus will not come from Abraham's bosom for the rich man's wealth and belly-pleasure, no, not to warn his sensual brethren. Had Peter seen heaven as he saw the glory on the mount, he would never have made so blind a motion for Christ, Moses, and Elias, to continue there, who have so much better a habitation.

Sect. 29. But this glorious apparition was but short; as the glory of God's back parts to Moses, which did but pass by. Presently a cloud cometh, and separateth the company, and ends the pleasant sight. When christians receive some extraordinary sense of the love of God, some sweet foretastes of promised happiness, they must not look that this should be ordinary, or always so. When some fervent prayer is extraordinarily answered, and a sacrament sweetened with unusual drops of heavenly sweetness, or a holy discourse or meditation hath raised us higher than ever before, we must not expect that this should be our constant diet, and God should thus feast us all the year. The times of fasting also have their turn. Moses did not dwell on mount Horeb, nor mount Nebo or Pisgah, from whence he saw the land of promise. God's children do not always laugh and sing; while they have their sinning times, they will have their suffering and crying times. How suddenly doth the lark come down to the earth, who before was soaring out of sight, and singing pleasantly in the higher air, as if it had been aspiring towards the sun. A luscious diet is not best for such as we, that have so many corruptions to be cured by cleansing means: cordials must not be all our physic: unwarrantable expectations of greater or more continued joys than we are meet for is injurious both to God and to ourselves. Desires of more we may and must have; but those desires must look up to heaven, where, indeed, they may be satisfied.

Sect. 30. The joy of these spectators was turned into fear (saith the text) when they entered into the cloud. No wonder: the change was sudden and great; from a sight of the kingdom of God in power unto a dark cloud. Just now they seemed almost in heaven, and presently they knew not where they were: from glorious light to a kind of prison of obscurity.

Such changes here we are liable to. The same soul that lately tasted of transporting joy, may lie in terror, hardly resisting temptations to despair. The same person that was confident of the love of God, may be quickly, not only doubting of it, but sinfully denying it: the same that had assuring evidence of sincerity, may shortly conclude that all was but hypocrisy. The same that was triumphing in the sense of love, may cry out, O miserable man that I am! And the same that magnified the grace of

Christ, may say, the day of grace is past; especially if either the tempter get the advantage of a melancholy body, or of casting the soul into renewed guilt of some wounding sin, or into impatient discontents with the things that befall it in the world.

There is a stability in the essentials of holiness: it is life eternal that is here begun: but, alas! the degrees of grace, the exercise of it, the evenness and integrity of our obedience, and accordingly our comforts, are lamentably liable to change; even as all worldly things are mutable to the ungodly, though their hardened hearts are too little changeable. Expecting nothing but joy from God, or expecting more than we are meet for, maketh our dejections the greater, and more grievous. None are cast lower with terror, trouble, and almost despair, than some that have been most transported with joy; when some other christians of an even conversation have an evenness and constancy of holy peace, though no such joys.

Sect. 31. The cloud separated the company; Moses and Elias are seen no more; no, nor the glory of Christ: but yet Christ is not separated from them; his ordinary presence still abideth with them. Christ doth not leave the soul when extraordinary joys do leave it: it loseth not his saving grace, nor the presence of his Spirit, as oft as it loseth heavenly delight. Desire showeth love to him, and to his holiness; and he never forsaketh those that love him: as long as the soul breatheth after Christ, and after more communion with God, and, conscious of its imperfection, would fain be perfect, and resolveth to continue waiting for increase of faith and holiness in the use of the means which Christ hath appointed, it is not forsaken. Christ, by his Spirit, dwelleth and worketh in that soul. It may enter into a cloud, and Christ may be unseen, and seem quite lost, but the cloud will vanish, and he will appear; and he will first find us, that we may seek and find him. If he appear to us but as in his humiliation, and as crucified, and thereby humble us, and crucify us to the world and the flesh, with the affections and lusts thereof, and cause us but to seek first his kingdom and righteousness, he will raise us higher, and show us his glory, when grace, and conquest, and perseverance have prepared us. We are in a cloudy world and body; and our sins are yet a thicker cloud between God's glorious face and us: but as God is God, and heaven is heaven, so Christ is Christ, and grace is grace, when we see it not, but fear that we are undone, and entering into outer darkness; and at sun-rising, all our darkness, and all our doubts and fears, will vanish.

Sect. 32. "There came a voice out of the cloud, This is my beloved Son; hear him," Luke ix. 35. Had I heard such a testimony from heaven, would it not have set my faith above all doubts and unbelief? For the voice that thus owned Christ and his word, might imbolden me fully to trust all his promises, as it bindeth me to obey his precepts.

God's love is effective and communicative; and as his life and light cause life and light, so his love causeth love; and Christ that is called his beloved Son, is likest him in love: none loveth us so much as God our Father, and his beloved Son, who is also as God, essential love. And shall I think with cold or little love of such a God, and such a Saviour? It is as unreasonable to fly from God or Christ, as fearing that he wanteth love to a capable soul, as to fly from the sun, as wanting heat or light. Oh, what an unruly, froward thing is the corrupted soul of man! When we think of God's judgment, and how we are in his hands, as to all our hopes, for soul and body, we fear, and are uncomfortable, lest we have not so much love and mercy as should cause us confidently to trust him: we could trust some friends with life and soul were we in their power; but infinite love itself, and a loving Saviour, we can hardly trust, so far as to quiet us in pain or death. And yet when Christ, to cure this distrust, hath manifested his love by the greatest miracles that ever God showed to mortal men, even by Christ's incarnation, his life, his works, his death, resurrection, intercession, and the advancement of human nature in him above angels, the greatness of this incomprehensible love occasioneth the difficulty of our believing it; as if it were too great and wonderful to be credible: thus dark and guilty sinners hardly believe our Father's love, whether it be expressed by ordinary, or by the most wonderful effects.

Sect. 33. As Christ is called the Son of God, so also are all his members: we have so far the same title, that we might partake of the same comforts: he is God's only Son by eternal generation, and the hypostatical union upon his miraculous conception; but through him we are sons by regeneration and adoption. And shall not the love of such a Father be trusted, and the presence and pleasing of such a Father be desired? If Manoah's wife could say, "If he would have killed us, he would not have accepted a sacrifice of us;" I may say, If he would have damned me, or forsaken my departing soul, he would not have adopted me, nor made and called me his Son. Christ was made his incarnate Son, that we might be made his adopted sons; and we are made his adopted sons, for the sake, and by the grace, of Christ his natural Son.

Sect. 34. The command, "hear him," is relative, as to Moses and Elias. 1. Hear him whom the law and the prophets typified and foretold, and were his servants, and preparatory instructors, to lead us to him. 2. Hear him before Moses and the prophets, where his coming and covenant abrogateth the law of Moses, and as a greater light, he obscureth the less: he hath revealed more than they revealed; and the same more clearly: life and immortality is more fully brought to light by him: his gospel is as the heart of the Holy Bible: we use the Old Testament books, especially, as the witnesses of Christ.

Sect. 35. And whom shall we hear so willingly, so obediently, as Christ? Abraham sent not Dives' brethren to the king, or to the high priest, to know what religion he should choose, or what he should do to escape hell torments; but it was Moses and the prophets that they must hear. But God, from heaven, hath sent us yet a better Teacher, and commanded us to hear him. Moses was faithful in God's house as a servant, but Christ as a Son: his authority is above kings and high priests; and they have no power now but from him; and therefore none against him or his laws: all commands are null to conscience which contradict him: the examples in Daniel iii. and vi. and of the apostles, tell us, whether God or man should be first obeyed: therefore it is that the Bible is more necessary to be searched and learned than the statute book, or canons. Were man to be heard before Christ, or against him, or as necessarily as he, why have we not law-preachers every Lord's day to expound the statutes and canons to all the people? And why are they not catechised out of the book of canons, or law, as well as out of the Bible?

And sure if we must hear Christ and his gospel before priests or princes, or before our dearest friends, much more before our fleshly lusts and appetites, and before a profane and foolish scorner, and before the temptations of the devil. Oh had we heard Christ

warning us, when we hearkened to the tempter and to the flesh, how safely had we lived, and how comfortably might we have died!

Sect. 36. But this word, "hear him," is as comfortable as obligatory. Hear him, sinner, when he calls to thee to repent and turn to God: hear him when he calleth thee to himself, to take him for thy Lord and Saviour, to believe and trust him for pardon and salvation: hear him when he calleth, "Come to me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden: ho, every one that thirsteth, come: whoever will, let him drink of the water of life freely." Hear him when he commandeth, and hear him when he promiseth; and hear him before the worldly wise, when he teacheth us the way to God: hear him, for he knows what he saith: hear him, for he is true, and faithful, and infallible: hear him, for he is the Son of God, the greatest messenger that ever God sent: hear him, for he purposely came down in flesh, that he might familiarly teach us: hear him, for none else in the world hath made known the things of God like him, and none can do it: hear him, for he meaneth us no hurt: he is our dearest friend, and love itself, and saith nothing but for our salvation, and promiseth nothing but what he will perform. Yea, hear him, for every soul that will not hear him shall be cut off.

Hear him, therefore, if he contradict thy fleshly appetite: hear him, if great or small, if any or all, shall be against it: hear him, if he set thee on the hardest work, or call thee to the greatest suffering: hear him, if he bid thee take up the cross, and forsake all and follow him, in hope of a reward in heaven: hear him, if he call thee to lay down thy life; for none can be a loser by him.

Hear him now in the day of grace, and he will hear thee in the day of thy extremity, in the day of danger, sickness, death, and judgment, when the world forsaketh thee, and no one's hearing else can help thee.

Sect. 37. But, I was not one that saw this vision: had I seen it myself it would have satisfied me, and confuted all my doubts. *Answ.* But it is the will of God that the ministry and testimony of men shall be a means of our believing: it is faith, and not sight, that must be the ordinary way of our salvation; else Christ must have showed himself, and his miracles, resurrection, and ascension, to every one in the world that must believe in him: and then he must have been visible at once in every kingdom, parish, and place on earth, and continued so to the end of the world; and must have died, risen, and ascended many millions of times, and in every place. They that will put such laws on their Lawgiver before they will believe in him, must be saved without him, and against him, if they can. This is more unreasonable than to tell God that you will not believe that there is a heaven or hell unless you see them. But God will have us live and be saved by believing, and not by sight. And he will use man for the instruction and salvation of man, and not send angels with every message.

Sect. 38. But why did Christ show this vision but to three of his disciples? *Answ.* He is not bound to tell us why: but we may know that a sight of heavenly glory is not to be ordinarily expected on earth. Why did God show the back parts of his glory to none but Moses, no, not to his brother Aaron? Why did he speak to him only in the bush, and on the mount? Why did he translate none to heaven without dying but Enoch and Elias? Why did he save but Noah, and seven with him, in the ark? These are not things ordinary, nor to be common to many.

Sect. 39. But by this it appeareth, that even among his twelve apostles Christ made a difference, and preferred some before the rest; though he set no one over the rest in any governing authority, yet some of them were qualified above the rest, and esteemed and used by him accordingly. Peter is called the first, and, it seems, was qualified above the rest, by his more frequent speaking and familiarity with Christ, and his speeches and miracles after the resurrection; though yet the faction that said, "I am of Cephas," or "I am of Paul," was rebuked as carnal; so far was Christ from directing the churches to end all difference by obeying Peter as their supreme ruler. James and John are called the sons of thunder: they had some more eminent qualification than the rest; so that James was the first martyred apostle, and John the disciple whom Jesus specially loved. Ministers of the same office and order may much differ in gifts and grace, in labour and success, and in God's acceptance and reward, and in the church's just esteem and love. All pastors were not such as Cyprian, Basil, Gregory, Nazianzen, Chrysostom, or Augustin. And the rest must not envy at the preference of Peter, James, and John. Andrew seems to be Peter's elder brother, and knew Christ before him; as Aaron was elder brother to Moses, and yet must give God leave to choose to give pre-eminence to whom he will.

Sect. 40. But why did not these three apostles tell any of this vision till after Christ's resurrection? *Answ.* Christ did forbid it them. And it was according to the method of his revelation. He would make himself known to the world by degrees; and more by his works than by bare words; and these works were to be finished, and all set together, to be his convincing witness to the world. And the chief of these were his resurrection, ascension, and sending down the Holy Ghost: the apostles could not say till then, Jesus is risen, ascended, and hath given us the seal of the Spirit; therefore he is the Son of God. Christ first preached repentance like John Baptist; and next he told them that the kingdom of God (by the Messiah) was come, and was among them; and then he taught them to believe his word to be sent from God, and to be true; and he taught them the doctrines of holiness, love, and righteousness towards men: and he wrought those miracles which might convince them that what he said, or should say, deserved their belief; but yet before his resurrection, his apostles themselves understood not many of the articles of our creed; they knew not that Christ was to die for sin, and so to redeem the world by his sacrifice, nor that he was to rise, ascend, and reign, and intercede in glory; and yet they were then in a state of grace and life, such as believers were in before Christ's incarnation. And sure no more is required of the nations that cannot hear the gospel.

But the resurrection was the beginning of the proper gospel state and kingdom, to which all before was but preparatory; and then, by the Spirit, christianity was formed to its settled consistence, and is a known, unalterable thing.

And it is a great confirmation to our faith, that Christ's kingdom was not settled by any advantage of his personal presence, preaching, and persuasion, so much as by the Holy Ghost in his apostles and disciples, when he was gone from them into heaven.

Sect. 41. But how are we sure that these three men tell us nothing but the truth? *Answ.* This is oft answered elsewhere. The Spirit which they spake and worked by was Christ's witness and theirs. They healed the sick, raised the dead, spake various languages which they never learned; and preached

and recorded that holy doctrine committed to them by Christ, which itself contained the evidence of its divinity, and of their truth; and Christ then and to this day hath owned it, by the sanctifying efficacy of the same Spirit, upon millions of souls.

How holy a doctrine doth Peter himself deliver, as confirmed by this apparition! "We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty; for he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; and this voice, which came from heaven, we heard when we were with him in the holy mount," 2 Pet. i. 16—18. The words, "in whom I am well pleased," are only here and in Matthew; Mark and Luke omitting them, tell us, that the evangelists undertook not to recite all that was said and done, but each one so much as seemed necessary for him to say.

Sect. 42. And now what remaineth, O my soul, but that thou take in the due impression of this apparition of the glory of Jesus and his saints; and that thou joyfully obey this heavenly voice, and hear the beloved Son of God, in whom the Father is well pleased?

I. As we that are born in another age and land must know what Christ said, by the transmission and certain testimony of them that heard him, infallible tradition, by act, word, and record, being our way of notice, as immediate sensation was theirs; so even the glorious apparition itself may, by the mediation of their infallible record, be partly transmitted to our imagination. An incorporate soul is so used to a mixed way of knowing by imagined ideas received by sense, that it would fain have such a sort of knowledge of separated souls, and other spirits, and of their glorious state, and place, and work, and is hardly fully satisfied without it. Seeing Christ hath partly condescended to this our culpable weakness, lose not the help of his condescension. Let this clear description of the heavenly sight make it to thee partly as if thou hadst been one of the three spectators; till thou canst say, Methinks I almost see the face of Christ shine as the sun, and his raiment whiter than the snow; and Moses and Elias (no doubt, in some degree of glory) standing with him; methinks I almost hear them discoursing of Christ's death, and man's redemption: and by this sight I partly conceive of the unseen heavenly company and state. Methinks I see the cloud receive them, when Peter had been transported with the sight; and I almost feel his pleasant raptures, and am ready to say, as if I had been with him, "It is good for us to be here:" methinks I almost hear the heavenly voice, "This is my beloved Son, hear him." And shall I yet doubt of the celestial society and glory? Had I once seen that, what a sense would it have left upon my heart, of the difference between earth and heaven, man and God, flesh and spirit, sin and duty! How thankfully should I have thought of the work of redemption and sanctification!

And why may I not accordingly put myself as into the case of them who saw all Christ's miracles, and saw him risen, and ascend towards heaven? or, at least, of all those ordinary christians who saw all the wonders done by the reporters of these things? I can easily receive a pleasing idea of some foreign, happy country, which a traveller describeth to me, though I never saw it; and my reason can partly gather what great things are, if I see but lesser of the same kind, or somewhat like them. A candle showeth somewhat by which we may conceive of the greatest flame. Even grace and gracious actions do somewhat notify to us the state of glory; but the sight on the mount did more sensibly notify it.

Think not, then, that heavenly contemplation is an impossible thing, or a mere dream, as if it had no conceivable subject matter to work upon: the visible things of earth are the shadows, the cobwebs, the bubbles, the shows, mummeries, and masks; and it is loving them, and rejoicing and trusting in them, that is the dream and dotage. Our heavenly thoughts, and hopes, and business, are more in comparison of these than the sun is to a glow-worm, or the world to a mole-hill, or governing an empire to the motions of a fly. And can I make somewhat, yea, too much, of these almost nothings; and yet shall I make almost nothing of the active, glorious, unseen world; and doubt and grope in my meditations of it, as if I had no substance to apprehend? If invisibility to mortals were a cause of doubting, or of unaffecting, unsatisfying thoughts, God himself, who is all to men and angels, would be as no God to us, and heaven as no heaven, and Christ as no Christ, and our souls, which are ourselves, would seem as nothing to themselves; and all men would be as no men to us, and we should converse only with carcasses and clothes.

Lord, shine into this soul with such a heavenly, potent, quickening light, as may give me more lively and powerful conceptions of that which is all my hope and life! Leave me not to the exercise of art alone, in barren notions; but make it as natural to me to love thee, and breathe after thee: thou teachest the young ones both of men and brutes to seek to the dam for food and shelter: and though grace be not a brutish principle, but works by reason, it hath its nature and inclining force; and tendeth towards its original, as its end. Let not thy soul be destitute of that holy sense and appetite, which the divine and heavenly nature doth contain. Let me not lay more stress and trust upon my own sight and sense, than on the sight and fidelity of my God, and my Redeemer. I am not so foolish as to live as if this earth were no bigger than the little of it which I see: let me not be so much more foolish as to think of the vast and glorious regions, and the blessed inhabitants thereof, and the receptacles of justified souls, as if they wanted either substantiality or certainty, to exercise a heavenly conversation here, and to feast believing souls with joy, and draw forth well-grounded and earnest desire to "depart and be with Christ."

Sect. 43. II. Hear then, and hear with trust and joy, the tidings and promises of him whom the voice from heaven commanded man to hear. He is the glorified Lord of heaven and earth: all is in his power. He hath told us nothing but what he knew, and promised nothing but what he is able and willing to give. Two sorts of things he hath required us to trust him for; things notified by express, particular promises, and things only generally promised and known to us.

1. We may know particularly that he will receive our departing souls, and justify them in judgment, and raise the dead, and all the rest particularly promised. And we know, in general, that we have a heavenly city and inheritance, and shall see God, and be with Christ in everlasting happiness, loving and praising God with joy in the perfected, glorious church of Christ. All this, therefore, we must explicitly believe. But it is little that we know distinctly of the consistence and operations of spirits and separated souls, as to a formal or modal conception: a great deal about the place, state, and mode, their acting, and fruition, is dark to us; but none of

it is dark to Christ: here, therefore, an implicit trust should not only bound and stop our selfish and overbold inquiries, but also quiet and comfort the soul, as well as if ourselves knew all.

O my soul, abhor and mortify thy selfish trust, and unbelieving thirst to have that knowledge of good and evil thyself, which is the prerogative of thy Lord and Saviour. This was the sin that first defiled human nature, and brought calamity on the world. God hath set thee enough to learn; know that, and thou knowest enough. If more were possible, it would be a perplexity and a snare, and he that increaseth such knowledge would increase sorrow: but when it is both unprofitable and impossible, what a sin and folly is it to waste our time, and tire and deceive our minds, in long and troublesome searches after it; and then disquietly to murmur at God and the holy Scriptures, and die with sad, distrustful fears, because we attain it not: when all this while we should have understood, that this part of knowledge belongs to Christ, and the heavenly society, and not to sinful mortals here; and that we have without it as much as may cause us to live and die in holiness, safety, peace, and joy, if we can but trust him who knoweth for us. Christ perfectly knoweth what spirits are, and how they act, and whether they have any corporeal organ, or vehicle, or none; and what is the difference between Enoch and Elias, and those that left their bodies here; and what a resurrection will add to souls, and how it will be wrought, and when; and what is meant by the thousand years' previous reign; and who they be that shall dwell in the new earth, and how it will be renewed. All the dark passages of Scripture and providence he can perfectly resolve: he knoweth why God leaveth the far greatest part of the world in Satan's slavery, darkness, and wickedness, and chooseth so few to real holiness; and why he maketh not men such as he commandeth them to be; and why he leaveth serious christians to so much weakness, error, scandal, and division. These, and all other difficulties, are fully known to Christ. And it is not the child, but the father, that must know what food and clothing he should have, and the physician that must know what are the ingredients of his medicines, and why.

Lord, open my eyes, then, to see what thou hast revealed; and help me willingly to shut them to the rest; and to believe and trust in thee for both: not to stagger at thy sealed promises, nor selfishly to desire particular knowledge, which belongs not to me, as if I could trust myself, and my own knowledge, and not thine. Lord, teach me to follow thee, even in the dark, as quietly and confidently as in the light (having the general light of thy promise of felicity). I knew not the mystery of thy conception, incarnation, or the way of the workings of thy Spirit on souls. No wonder if much of the resurrection and unseen world be above my reach; much more that thy infinite majesty is incomprehensible to me. How little do the brutes that see me know of my thoughts or me! I have no adequate knowledge of any one thing in the world, but somewhat of it is unknown. O blessed be that love and grace that hath given me a glorified Head in heaven, to know all for me which I know not: hear and trust him, living and departing, O my soul! who hath told thee that we shall be with him where he is, and shall behold his glory; and that a crown of salvation is laid up for us, and we shall reign with him, when we have conquered and suffered with him; and hath bid us live in joyful hope of our exceeding, eternal, heavenly reward, and at our death to commend our spirits into his hand: receive us, Lord, according to thy promises. Amen.

SHORT MEDITATIONS

ON

ROMANS v. 1—5.

OF THE

SHEDDING ABROAD GOD'S LOVE ON THE HEART BY THE HOLY GHOST.

Experience of the want of this effusion of God's love, and some small taste of its sweetness, make me think the thoughts of this very suitable to one expecting death.

The words contain a golden chain of highest blessings on all true christians.

I. They are supposed to have faith, that is, both a general trust in God's revelations and grace, and a special trust in Jesus Christ, as given by the Father's love to be the Redeemer, to justify, sanctify, and glorify his people. I have oft proved this justifying faith to be no less than our unfeigned taking Christ for our Saviour, and becoming true christians, according to the tenor of the baptismal covenant. As to the acts, it is formally trust—one in three; the understanding's assenting trust, the will's consenting trust, and the executive power's practical, venturing, obeying trust.

II. All true believers are justified; even all that consent to the baptismal covenant, and choose God to be their God, and Christ to be their Saviour, and the Holy Ghost to be their Sanctifier, and give up themselves to him by true resolution, as their only Ruler, hope, and happiness; though this be done with so great weakness, as endeth not all doubts, nor quieteth the mind.

To be justified is not to be accounted such as have no sin; but, 1. To be made such by pardon through Christ's merits, and by true faith, as God will take by special love and favour unto life. 2. To be accounted such by God. 3. To be virtually sentenced such by the law of grace and faith, and to be just in law sense. 4. At last to be judged such by public sentence. 5. And to be used as such.

Not justified by the law of innocency, or of Moses, but by Christ's law of grace.

Not justified perfectly till the time of perfection. Much punishment on soul and body is yet to be taken off, and more sins daily to be pardoned, and we, before the world, to be sentenced as just to life everlasting.

III. The justified have peace with God. They are reconciled, and in a state of love and friendship. It signifieth mutual peace, but with great inequality. God's love and favour to us is the stable, constant part. Our consent also, and acceptance of his terms of peace, is constant in its truth: but our sense of God's love, which is the peace possessed by the soul, is weak and unconstant, and too oft quite lost or obscured by ignorance, mistake, and fear. But it must be known that this is a diseased state, unnatural to the believer as such; as it is unnatural for a woman married to a faithful husband, to lie in terror, thinking that he will kill her, or doth not love her; or for a child to think the same of a loving father. Faith, of its own nature, tendeth to the soul's peace and joy, in the sense of God's love. And how is Christ offered to us, but as a Saviour, to bring us by grace to glory? And he that accepteth him as such, whereby he is justified, doth sure believe that he is offered as such; for none can accept what he thinks not to be offered. And this implieth some hope, at least, that Christ will be such to us; and did faith work strongly and kindly, its effect would be a constant, joyful state of soul, as pleasant health and mirth is to our natures. All our distrustful fears and griefs, and disquietness of soul, are for want of more faith, as sickness and pain is for want of the vital causes of health.

IV. This peace with God is only "through our Lord Jesus Christ." Though it be a vain dream to think, by justifying faith is meant Christ only, and not faith; yet it is no other faith but the foresaid believing trust on Christ. Therefore, as faith is our part, so it supposeth Christ, and all the works of his office, and righteousness, on his part, as its object. Christ is the purchasing cause; but our trust and acceptance is that which is pleasing to God, and chosen by him to be our part, without innocency, or keeping the Jewish law.

Since man once sinned, God's justice, and man's conscience, tell us, that we are unfit for God's acceptance or communion immediately, but must have a suitable Mediator. Oh! blessed be God for this suitable Mediator. Without him I dare not pray, I cannot hope, I dare not die; God would else frown me away to misery. All the hope of pardon and salvation that I have, all the access to God, and the mercies and deliverances that I have received, have been by this Author and Finisher of our faith. Into his conducting hands I give my soul; and into his preserving hands both soul and body; and into his receiving hands I commend my departing soul.

V. Ver. 2, "By whom we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand;" that is, into this state of blessed christianity, peace with God,

and the following blessings: as it is by marriage that a woman hath right to her husband's estate and honours, and by inheritance that a child comes to his father's maintenance and land. This is no diminution to God's love. To say it is all by Christ, is not to take it as ever the less from God the Father. It is more to give us Christ, and life in him, than to have given us life without a Christ, John iii. 16; 1 John v. 10—12. As God is nevertheless the giver of light to the earth, for giving it them by the sun. Second causes diminish not the honour of the first.

VI. "And rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Here is, 1. The beatifical object—"the glory of God." 2. The beatifical act—"rejoice." 3. The mediate, causing act—"hope." All presupposing faith and justification.

1. The "glory of God" is that glorious appearance of God to man and angels, which maketh happy, 1. The mind by beholding it. 2. The will by loving it, and receiving the communications of love. 3. The executive powers by joyful praise, &c.

2. Though some foretastes are here, it is yet said to be hoped for; and we hope for that which is not seen. When faith is said to be that which we are justified or saved by, it includeth hope, though, more precisely taken, they are distinct. "We are saved by hope." The same word is oft translated trust and hope; and faith is trust. To trust Christ for salvation, includeth hoping that he will save us. But hope is denominated from the good hoped for, and faith from the cause by which we hope to obtain it.

Hope doth not necessarily imply either certainty or uncertainty. It may stand with both in various degrees.

3. Rejoicing is made by God the very naturally desired state of the soul. It is, when natural, the pleasant efflorescence of the spirits, or their state of health.

It is pleasure that is the spring or poise of all motion sensitive in the world. *Trahit sua quemque, voluptas.* Appetite, or will, is the active principle; and congruous, good, or delectable, is the object. The world is undone by the seduction of false, deceitful pleasure; and men are blessed only in true and durable pleasure. And though we that made not ourselves are not so made for ourselves as that our pleasure or felicity in God should be so high in our desire as God himself, who is the ultimate object of our love; yet, seeing such an object he is, and the love of him (and received from him) is our felicity, these are never to be separated.

What have I to rejoice in, if this hoped-for glory be not my joy? All things else are dying to me: and God himself is not my felicity, as he afflicts me, nor as he giveth me the transitory gifts of nature, but as he is to be seen in glory. If this be not my joy, it is all but vanity. What, then, should all my thoughts and labour aim at more, as to myself, than to hope for and foretaste this glory. No sin lieth heavier on me than that my hopes of glory raise me to no higher joy; and that the great weakness of my faith appeareth by such dull thoughts of glory, or by withdrawing fears. Sure there is enough in the glory of God, soundly believed and hoped for, to make a man rejoice in pain and weakness, and to make him long to be with Christ. I live not according to the nature of christianity, if I live not as in peace with God, and in the joyful hopes of promised glory.

VII. "Not only so, but we glory in tribulation." Glory is so transcendent, and tribulation so small and short, that an expectant of glory may well rejoice in bodily sufferings. It is tribulation for Christ and righteousness' sake that we are said to glory in: the rest, for our sins, it is well if we can improve and patiently bear. Yet in them we may rejoice, in hope of glory, though we glory not of them. Oh! if all the painful, languid days, and nights, and years that I have had, as the fruit of my sin, had been sufferings for that which I am now hated and hunted for, even for preaching Christ when men forbid me, how joyfully might I undergo it! but yet, even here, approaching glory should be my joy. Alas! my groans and moans are too great, and my joy too little.

VIII. "Knowing that tribulation worketh patience." That which worketh patience is matter of joy; for patience doth us more good than tribulation can do hurt: why, then, do I groan so much under suffering, and so little study and exercise patience, and no more rejoice in the exercise thereof?

IX. "And patience, experience." It is manifold and profitable experience, which patient suffering brings. It giveth us experience, as of nature's weakness, and the great need of faith; so of the truth of God's promises, the love and tenderness of Christ, the acceptance of our prayers; and the power of the Spirit's aid and grace. Oh what abundance of experiences of God and ourselves, and the vanity of creatures, had we wanted, if we had not waited in a suffering state! alas! how many experiences have I forgotten!

X. "And experience, hope." A bare promise should give us hope: but we are still distrustful of ourselves, and of all the clearest evidences, till experience help us, and set all home. Oh what an advantage hath a christian of great and long experience for his hope and joy! And yet when notable experiences of God's providence are past and gone, an unbelieving heart is ready to question, whether the things came not by mere natural course; and, like the Israelites in the wilderness, dangers and fears bear down even long and great experiences. This is my sin.

XI. "And hope maketh not ashamed." That is, true hope of what God hath promised, shall never be disappointed. They that trust on deceitful creatures are deceived, and ashamed of their hope: for all men are liars, that is, untrusty; but God is true, and ever faithful. Oh what a comfort is it that God commandeth me to trust him! Sure such a command is a virtual promise, from him that cannot fail that trust which he commandeth. Lord, help me to trust thee in greatest dangers, and there to rest.

XII. "Because the love of God is shed abroad upon our hearts, by the Holy Ghost which is given to us." It is the love of God shed abroad on our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which must make us rejoice in hope of the glory of God, even in tribulation.

Here I must consider, I. What is meant by the love of God. II. Why, and how, it is shed abroad on the heart by the Holy Ghost.

I. By the love of God is meant the effects of his love. 1. His special grace. 2. The pleasant gust or sense of it.

II. God's love thus shed on the heart, presupposeth it expressed in the gospel and providence, and contains all these particulars.

1. The sanctifying of the soul by renewing grace. This is the giving of the Spirit, as he is given all true christians.

2. Herein the Holy Ghost makes us perceive the exceeding desirableness of the love of God, and maketh us most desire it.

3. He giveth the soul some easing hope of the love of God.

4. He quieteth the doubts, and fears, and troubles of the soul.

5. He raiseth our hopes, by degrees, to confident assurance.

6. Then the thoughts of God's love are pleasant to the soul, and give it such delight as we feel in the love and fruition of our most valued and beloved friends.

7. The soul in this state is as unapt to be jealous of God, or to question his love, as a good child or wife to question the love of a parent or husband, or to hear any that speak evil of them.

8. This, then, becomes the habitual state of the soul, in all changes, to live in the delightful sense of the love of God, as we do live in pleasure with our dearest friends.

O blessed state, and first-fruits of heaven! and happy are they that do attain it. And though lower degrees have their degree of happiness, yet how far short are such, in goodness, amiableness, and comfort, of those that are thus rich in grace!

This presupposeth, 1. Knowledge of God and the gospel. 2. True belief, and hope. 3. A sincere and fruitful life. 4. Mortification as to idol, worldly vanities. 5. A conviction of our sincerity in all this. 6. A conclusion that God doth love us.

But yet it is somewhat above all this. A man may have all this in his mind and mouth, and yet want this gust of effused love upon his heart. These are the way to it, but not itself.

This is the greatest good on this side heaven; to which all wealth and honour, all fleshly pleasure and long life, all learning and knowledge, are unworthy to be once compared: briefly,

1. It is the flower and highest part of God's image on man.

2. It is the soul's true communion with God, and fruition of him, which carnal men deride: even as our eye hath communion with the sun, and the flourishing earth enjoys its reviving heats.

3. It is that which all lower grace doth tend to, as childhood doth to manhood: and what is a world of infants, comparatively, good for?

4. It is that which most properly answereth the design of redemption, and the wonders of God's love therein; and all the tenor of the gospel.

5. It is that which is most fully called the Spirit of God or Christ in us: he hath lower works, but this is his great work, by which he possesseth us, as God's most pleasant habitation: "For we have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the spirit of power and love, and a sound mind," 2 Tim. i. 7.

6. It is only that which all men, in general, desire, I mean, the only satisfying content and pleasure that man is capable of on earth. All men would have quieting and constant pleasure; and it is to be found in nothing else but the effused love of God.

7. It is that which will make every burden light, and all affliction easy: when the sense of God's love is still upon the soul, all pain and crosses will be but as blood-letting by the kindest physician, to save the patient's life. God will not be suspected, or grudged at, in suffering; his love will sweeten all.

8. It will overcome abundance of temptations, which no men's wit, or learning, or knowledge of the words of Scripture, will overcome. No arguments will draw a loving child, or wife, from the parents, or husband, that they know doth love them. Love is the most powerful disputant.

9. It puts a mellow, pleasant sweetness into all our duties. When we hear the word, or receive the sacrament, it is to such a soul as pleasant food to the most healthful man; when we pray, or praise God, it comes from a comforted heart, and excites and increaseth the comfort it comes from. Oh who can be backward to draw near to God in prayer or meditation, who tasteth the sweetness of his love! This is religion indeed, and tells us what its life, and use, and glory is. This is true walking with God in the best degree. When the soul liveth in the taste of his love, the heart will be still with him, and that will be its pleasure. And God most delights in such a soul.

10. This is it that putteth the sweetest relish on all our mercies. Deny God's love, and you deny them all. If you taste not his love in them, you taste little more than a beast may taste; poor food and raiment is sweet, with the sense of the love of God. Had I more of this, I should lie down, and rise, and walk in pleasure and content. I could bear the loss of other things; and though nature will feel pains, I should have pleasure and peace in the midst of all my pains and groans. This is the white stone, the new name; no man well knoweth it who never felt it in himself.

11. There is no dying comfortably without this experienced taste of the love of God. This will draw up the desires of the soul; love tasted, casteth out fear: though God be holy and just, and judgment terrible, and hell intolerable, and the soul hath no distinct idea of its future state out of the body, and though we see not whither it is that we must go, the taste of God's love will make it go joyfully, as trusting him; as a child will go any whither in his father's power and hand.

But all the knowledge in the world without this quiets not a departing soul. A man may write as many books, and preach as many sermons of heaven, as I have done, and speak of it, and think of almost nothing else, and yet till the soul be sweetened and comforted with the love of God shed abroad on it by the Holy Ghost, death and the next life will be rather a man's fear than his desire. And the common fear of death which we see in the far greatest part even of godly persons doth tell us, that though they may have saving desires and hopes, yet this sense of God's love on the heart is rare.

What wonder, then, if our language, our converse, our prayers, have too little savour of it, and in comparison of joyful believers' duties, be but like green apples to the mellow ones.

My God, I feel what it is that I want, and I perceive what it is that is most desirable: O let not guilt be so far unpardoned as to deprive my soul of this greatest good, which thou hast commended to me, and commanded, and which in my languishing and pains I so much need! Did I beg for wealth or honour, I might have it to the loss of others. But thy love will make me more useful to all, and none will have the less for my enjoyment; for thou, Lord, art enough for all; even as none hath the less of the sunlight for my enjoying it. The least well-grounded hope of thy love is better than all the pleasures of the flesh; but without some pleasant sense of it, alas! what a withered, languishing thing is a soul! Thy loving-kindness is better than life; but if I taste it not, how shall I here rejoice in God, or bear my heavy burdens.

O, let me not be a dishonour to thy family, where all have so great cause to honour thy bounty by their joy and hopes; nor, by a sad and fearful heart, tempt men to think that thy love is not real and satisfactory. I can easily believe and admire thy greatness, and thy knowledge. Let it not be so hard to me to believe and taste thy goodness and thy love, which is as necessary to me.

If there be any thing (as surely there is) in which the divine nature and Spirit of adoption consisteth, as above all the art and notions of religion, which

are but like to other acquired knowledge, sure it must be this holy appetite and habitual inclination of the soul to God, by way of love, which is bred by an internal sense of his loveliness, and loving inclination to man; which differenceth a christian from other men, as a child differs towards his father, from strangers, or from common neighbours. Till the love of God be the very state and nature of the soul, (working here towards his honour, interests, word, and servants,) no man can say that he is God's habitation by the Spirit; and how the heart will ever be thus habited, without believing God's love to us, it is hard to conceive.

Experience tells the world how strongly it constraineth persons to love one another, if they do but think that they are strongly beloved by one another. In the love that tends to marriage, if one that is inferior do but know that a person of far greater worth doth fervently love them, it almost puts a necessity and constraint on them for returns of love: nature can scarce choose but love in such a case. Love is the loadstone of love. A real taste of the love of God in saving souls by Christ and grace, is it that constraineth them to be holy; that is, to be devoted to that God in love.

III. But this must as necessarily be the work of the Holy Ghost, and can be no more done without him than the earth can be illuminated, and the vegetables live, without the sun. But all the approaches of the Holy Spirit suffice not to produce this great effect, and give us the divine, holy nature.

The same sunshine hath three different effects on its objects.

1. On most things, as houses, stones, earth, it causeth nothing but accidents of heat, colour, and motion.

2. On some things it causeth a seminal disposition to vegetable life, but not life itself.

3. In this disposed matter it causeth vegetable life itself.

So doth the Spirit of God, 1. Operate on millions but lifeless accidents, as the sun on a stone wall. 2. On others dispose and prepare them to divine life. 3. On others so disposed it effecteth the divine life itself, when holy love is turned into a habit like to nature.

That none but the Holy Ghost doth make this holy change is evident; for the effect cannot transcend the causes. 1. Nature alone is dark, and knoweth not the attractive amiableness of God, till illuminated; nor can give us a satisfactory notice of God's special love to us.

2. Nature is guilty, and guilt breedeth fears of justice, and fear makes us become wild, and fly from God, lest he should hurt us.

3. Nature is under penal sufferings already; and feeleth pain, fear, and many hurts, and foreseeth death; and under this is undisposed of itself, to feel the pleasure of God's love.

4. Nature is corrupted and diverted to creature vanity, and its appetite goeth another way, and cannot cure itself, and make itself suitable to the amiableness of God.

5. God hateth wickedness, and wicked men; and mere nature cannot secure us that we are saved from that enmity.

Diligence may do much to get religious knowledge, and words, and all that which I call the art of religion; and God may bless this as a preparation to holy life and love. But till the soul's appetite incline, with desire, to God and holiness, divine things will not sweetly relish.

And this is a great comfort to the thoughts of the sanctified, that certainly their holy appetite, desire, and complacency, is the work of the Holy Ghost. For, 1. This secureth them of the love of God, of which it is the proper token. 2. And it assureth them of their union with Christ, when they live because he liveth, even by the Spirit, which is his seal and pledge. 3. And it proveth both a future life and their title to it; for God maketh not all this preparation for it by his Spirit in vain.

But, alas! if it were not a work that hath great impediment, it would not be so rare in the world. What is it in us that keepeth the sun of love from so shining on us as to revive our souls into holy contentments and delight?

It must be supposed, 1. That all God's gifts are free, and that he giveth not to all alike; the wonderful variety of creatures proveth this. 2. The reasons of his differencing works are his own will, and inferior reasons are mostly unknown to us, of which he is not bound to give us an account.

3. But yet we see that God doth his works in a casual order, and one work prepareth for another; and he maketh variety of capacities, which occasion variety of receptions and of gifts; and he useth to give every thing that to which he hath brought it into the next capacity and disposition.

And therefore, in general, we may conclude that we feel not God's love shed abroad upon the heart, because the heart is undisposed, and is not in the next disposition thereto: and abused free-will hath been the cause of that. That we have grace, is to be ascribed to God: that we are without it, is to be ascribed to ourselves.

1. Heinous guilt of former sin may keep a soul much without the delights of divine love; and the heinousness is not only in the greatness of the evil done materially, but oft in our long and wilful committing of smaller sins, against knowledge, and conscience, and consideration. The Spirit thus grieved by hardened hearts, and wilful repulses, is not quickly and easily a Comforter to such a soul; and when the sinner doth repent, it leaveth him more in uncertainty of his sincerity when he thinks, I do but repent, purpose, and promise now; and so I oft did, and yet returned the next temptation to my sin: and how can I tell that my heart is not the same, and I should sin again if I had the same temptations? Oh what doubts and perplexities doth oft wilful sinning prepare for!

2. And sins of omission have here a great part. The sweetness of God's love is a reward which slothful servants are unmeet for. It follows a "Well done, good and faithful servant." There is needful a close attendance upon God, and devotedness to him, and improvement of gospel grace, and revelation, to make a soul fit for amicable, sweet communion with God; all that will save a soul from hell will not do this.

He that will taste these divine love-tokens must, 1. Be no stranger to holy meditation and prayer, nor unconstant, cold, and cursory in them; but must dwell and walk above with God. 2. And he must be wholly addicted to improve his Master's talents in the world, and make it his design and trade on earth to do all the good in the world he can; and to keep his soul clean from the flesh, and worldly vanity. And to such a soul God will make known his love.

3. And alas! how ordinarily doth some carnal affection corrupt the appetite of the soul! When we grow too much in love with men's esteem, or with earthly riches, or when our throats or fancies can master us into obedience, or vain desires of meat, drink, recreation, dwelling, &c. the soul loseth its appetite to things divine; and nothing relisheth

where appetite is gone or sick. We cannot serve God and mammon, and we cannot at once taste much pleasure both in God and mammon. The old, austere christians found the mortification of the fleshly lusts a great advantage to the soul's delight in God.

4. And many errors about God's nature and works much hinder us from feasting on his love.

5. And especially the slight and ignorant thoughts of Christ, and the wondrous workings of God's love in him.

6. And especially if our belief itself once shake, or be not well and firmly founded.

7. And our slight thoughts of the office and work of the Holy Ghost on souls, and our necessity of it, and our not begging and waiting for the Spirit's special help.

8. And lastly, our unfaithful forgetfulness of manifold experiences and testimonies of his love, which should still be as fresh before us.

Alas! my soul, thou feelest thy defect, and knowest the hinderance, but what hope is there of remedy? Will God ever raise so low, so dull, so guilty a heart, to such a foretaste of glory, as is this effusion of his love by the Holy Ghost? The lightsome days in spring and summer, when the sun reviveth the late naked earth, and clothes it with delectable beauties, differs not more from night and winter, than a soul thus revived with the love of God doth differ from an unbelieving, formal soul.

Though this great change be above my power, the Spirit of God is not impotent, backward, barren, or inexorable. He hath appointed us means for so high a state; and he appointeth no means in vain. Were my own heart obedient to my commands, all these following I would lay upon it; yea, I will do it, and beg the help of God.

I. I charge thee, think not of God's goodness and love, as unproportionable to his greatness and his knowledge; nor overlook, in the whole frame of heaven and earth, the manifestation of one any more than of the other.

II. Therefore let not the wickedness and misery of the world tempt thee to think basely of all God's mercies to the world; nor the peculiar privileges of the churches draw thee to deny or contemn God's common mercies unto all.

III. I charge thee to make the study of Christ, and the great work of man's redemption by him, thy chiefest learning, and most serious and constant work; and in that wonderful glass to see the face of divine love, and to hear what is said of it by the Son from heaven; and to come boldly, as reconciled to God by him.

IV. Oh see that thy repentance for former sins against knowledge, and conscience, and the motions of God's Spirit, be sound, and thoroughly lamented and abhorred, how small soever the matter was in itself; that so the doubt of thy sincerity keep not up doubts of God's acceptance.

V. Let thy dependence on the Holy Ghost, as given from Christ, be henceforth as serious and constant to thee as is the dependence of the eye on the light of the sun, and of natural life upon its heat and motion. Beg hard for the Holy Spirit, and gladly entertain it.

VI. Oh, never forget the many and great experiences thou hast had, these almost sixty years observed, of marvellous favour and providence of God, for soul and body, in every time, place, condition, relation, company, or change, thou hast been in! Lose not all these love-tokens of thy Father, while thou art begging more.

VII. Hearken not too much to pained flesh, and look not too much into the grave; but look out at thy prison windows to the Jerusalem above, and the heavenly society that triumph in glory.

VIII. Let all thy sure notices of a future life, and of the communion we have here with those above, draw thee to think that the great number of holy souls that are gone before thee, must needs be better than they were here; and that they had the same mind, and heart, and way; the same Saviour, Sanctifier, and promise, that thou hast; and therefore they are as pledges of felicity to thee. Thou hast joyfully lived with many of them here; and is it not better to be with them there? It is only the state of glory foreseen by faith, which most fully showeth us the greatness of God's love.

IX. Exercise thyself in psalms of praise, and daily magnifying the love of God, that the due mention of it may warm and raise thy love to him.

X. Receive all temptations against divine love with hatred and repulse; especially temptations to unbelief: and as thou wouldst abhor a temptation to murder, or perjury, or any other heinous sin, as much abhor all temptations which would hide God's goodness, or represent him to thee as an enemy, or unlovely.

Thus God hath set the glass before us, in which we may see his amiable face. But alas! souls in flesh are in great obscurity; and, conscious of their own weakness, are still distrustful of themselves, and doubt of all their apprehensions, till overpowering objects and influences satisfy and fix them. For this my soul with daily longings doth seek to thee, my God and Father: O pardon the sin that forfeits grace. I am ready to say, Draw nearer to me; but it is meeter to say, Open thou mine eyes and heart, and remove all impediments, and undisposedness, that I may believe and feel how near thou art, and hast been to me, while I perceived it not.

XIII. It is God's love shed abroad on the heart by the Holy Ghost, which must make us "rejoice in hope of the glory of God:" this will do it, and without this it will not be done.

This would turn the fears of death into joyful hopes of future life. If my God will thus warm my heart with his love, it will have these following effects in this matter.

I. Love longeth for union, or nearness, and fruition; and it would make my soul long after God in glorious presence.

II. This would make it much easier to me to believe that there is certainly a future blessed life for souls; while I even tasted how God loveth them. It is no hard thing to believe that the sun will give light and heat, and revive the frozen earth; nor that a father will show kindness to his son, or give him an inheritance. Why should it be hard to believe that God will glorify the souls whom he loveth, and that he will take them near himself; and that thus it shall be done to those whom he delights to honour?

III. This effusion of divine love would answer my doubts of the pardon of sin: I should not find it hard to believe that love itself, which hath given us a Saviour, will forgive a soul that truly repenteth, and hates his sin, and giveth up himself to Christ for justification. It is hard to believe that a tyrant will forgive, but not that a father will pardon a returning prodigal son.

IV. This effusion of divine love will answer my fears, which arise from mere weakness of grace and duty: indeed, it will give no other comfort to an unconverted soul, but that he may be accepted if he come to God by Christ, with true faith and repentance; and that this is possible. But it should be easy to believe, that a tender father will not kill or

cast out a child for weakness, crying, or uncleanness: divine love will accept and cherish even weak faith, weak prayer, and weak obedience and patience, which are sincere.

V. This effused love would confute temptations that are drawn from thy afflictions; and make thee believe that they are not so bad as flesh representeth them: it would understand that every son that God loveth he chasteneth, that he may not be condemned with the world, and that he may be partaker of his holiness, and the end may be the quiet fruit of righteousness; it would teach us to believe that God in very faithfulness doth afflict us; and that it is a good sign that the God of love intendeth a better life for his beloved, when he trieth them with so many tribulations here: and though Lazarus be not saved for his suffering, it signified that God, who loved him, had a life of comfort for him, when he had his evil things on earth. When pangs are greatest, the birth is nearest.

VI. Were love thus shed on the heart by the Holy Ghost, it would give me a livelier apprehension of the state of blessedness which all the faithful now enjoy: I should delightfully think of them as living in the joyful love of God, and ever fully replenished therewith. It pleaseth us to see the earth flourish in the spring; and to see how pleasantly the lambs, and other young things, will skip and play: much more to see societies of holy christians loving each other, and provoking one another to delight in God. Oh then what a pleasant thought should it be, to think how all our deceased, godly friends, and all that have so died since the creation, are now together in a world of divine, perfect love! how they are all continually wrapped up in the love of God, and live in the delight of perfect love to one another!

O my soul, when thou art with them, thou wilt dwell in love, and feast on love, and rest in love; for thou wilt more fully dwell in God, and God in thee: and thou wilt dwell with none but perfect lovers: they would not silence thee from praising God in their assembly: tyrants, malignants, and persecutors, are more strange there (or far from thence) than toads, and snakes, and crocodiles, are from the bed or bedchamber of the king. Love is the air, the region, the world, they live in: love is their nature, their pulse, their breath, their constitution, their complexion, and their work; it is their life, and even themselves and all. Full loth would one of those spirits be to dwell again among blind Sodomites, and mad, self-damning malignants upon earth.

VII. Yea, this effused love will teach us to gather the glory of the blessed from the common mercies of this life: doth God give his distracted, malignant enemies, health, wealth, plenty, pleasure, yea, lordships, dominions, crowns, and kingdoms; and hath he not much better for beloved holy souls?

Yea, doth he give the brutes life, sense, delight, and beauty; and hath he not better things for men, for saints?

There are some so blind as to think that man shall have no better hereafter, because brutes have not, but perish. But they know not how erroneously they think. The sensible souls of brutes are substance, and therefore are not annihilated at death: but God put them under us, and made them for us, and us more nearly for himself. Brutes have not faculties to know and love God, to meditate on him, or praise him, or, by moral agency, to obey his precepts: they desire not any higher felicity than they have: God will have us use their service, yea, their lives and flesh, to tell us they were made for us. He tells us not what he doth with them after death: but whatever it is, it is not annihilation, and it is like that they are in a state still of service unto man: whether united, or how individuate, we know not: nor yet whether those philosophers are in the right, that think that this earth is but a small image of the vast superior regions, where there are kingdoms answerable to these here, where the spirits of brutes are in the like subjection in aerial bodies, to those low, rational spirits that inhabit the aerial regions, as in flesh they were to man in flesh. But it is enough for us that God hath given us faculties to know, love, praise, and obey him, and trust him for glory, which he never gave to them, because they were not made for things so high. Every creature's faculties are suited to their use and ends.

And love tells me, that the blessed God, who giveth to brutes that life, health, and pleasure, which they are made and fitted for, will give his servants that heavenly delight in the fulness of his love and praise, and mutual, joyful love to one another, which nature fundamentally, and grace more immediately, hath made them fit for.

Blessed Jehovah! for what tastes of this effused love thou hast given me, my soul doth bless thee, with some degree of gratitude and joy: and for those further measures which I want, and long for, and which my pained, languid state much needs, and would raise my joyful hopes of glory, I wait, I beg, from day to day. O give me now, at the door of heaven, some fuller taste of the heavenly felicity: shed more abroad upon my heart, by the Holy Ghost, that love of thine, which will draw up my longing soul to thee, rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God.

END OF VOL. III.

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